

Chapter 8

Sentence types

8.1 Introduction

This chapter presents various Eastern Lawa sentence types. It includes declarative sentences, (8.1), interrogative sentences, (8.2) and imperative sentences (8.3).

8.2 Statements (declarative)

The word order of declarative sentences is normally regarded as the basic word order of a language (Konig and Siemund 2007:284). The word order in declarative sentences in Lawa can be either SVO, VSO or VOS, but is most commonly VSO. See section (3.3).

Declarative sentence structure is schematized below²⁶. The order of the verb and the NP_{SUB} are interchangeable. The NP object follows the NP subject and the verb²⁷. Adjuncts occur at the end of the clause. Temporal adverbs can occur either at the end of the clause (most commonly) or at the beginning.

S: [V NP_{SUB} NP_{OBJ} PP_{LOC/GOAL} NP_{ADV_{TIME}}]

Example (178) illustrates a simple declarative sentence with a temporal adverbial, an NP object and a beneficiary.

(178) LC.106

<i>k^hanat</i>	<i>ʔaj</i>	<i>ɲoʔ</i>	<i>nom</i>	<i>ʔenmam</i>	<i>t^hɔ</i>	<i>laʔ</i>	<i>ʔəŋ</i>
that.time (TH)	I	drink	milk	Enmom	that	for	me

(During) that time I drank that Enmom milk for myself.

²⁶ Optionality is not marked

²⁷ Unless a new participant is introduced in which case the NP subject is likely to be right dislocated resulting in a VOS word order.

8.3 Questions (interrogative)

This section discusses different ways of forming questions in Eastern Lawa. It discusses ‘Yes-No’ questions, ‘Tag’ questions, ‘Or-Not’ questions and ‘Content’ questions. Interrogative pronouns were listed in section 4.3.

8.3.1 ‘Yes-No’ questions

‘Yes-No’ questions are typically used to inquire about the truth or falsity of the proposition they express (Konig and Siemund 2007:291). In Eastern Lawa, the word order of ‘Yes-No’ questions is the same as that of declarative sentences. The question particle *?am* is optionally added to the beginning of the clause and *?ah* is added to the end. *?am* and *?ah* signal the sentence is interrogative. The general schema for ‘Yes-No’ questions in Lawa is as below.

$$S_{\text{YES-NO QUESTION}} = [(?am) S ?ah]$$

Sentence (179) is an example of a ‘Yes-No’ question in Eastern Lawa. The question particle *?am* is optional in this sentence.

(179)

<i>(?am)</i>	<i>?u:</i>	<i>pa?</i>	<i>ɔpwh</i>	<i>?ah</i>
Q.PRT	NEG	2SG	get	Q.PRT
Didn't you get it?				

The answer is either *ɔpwh ?əŋ* ‘got it’ or *ɔpwh tew* ‘didn’t get it’.

8.3.2 Tag questions

Tag questions are formed by adding the negative particle *?u:* to declarative sentences. Tag questions are composed of two parts, the first part is a simple declarative part and the second part is an interrogative part composed of *?u:* with a repetition of the verb as in (180). The word order in the first part is VS. The structure of tag questions is schematized as below.

$$S_{\text{TAG QUESTION}}: [--- V ?u: V]$$

(180)

hew (pa) ?u: pa? hew
go 2SG NEG 2SG go
(Will you) go, or not?

Example (181) has a subordinate clause which are the thoughts of the boy, and includes a tag question.

(181) R.21

ka"ɔw? lɔŋ kit sam hew ?u: hew
boy try think FUT go not go
The boy thought "Should I go or not?"

8.3.3 'Or-Not' questions

Example (182) is an interrogative 'Or-Not' sentence in which the speaker asks someone for a choice. An 'Or-Not' question is formed by using the word *lɔwh* which means 'or-not'. The schema for 'Or-Not' question formation is as below.

$S_{\text{'OR-NOT' QUESTION}}: [V \textit{lɔwh} S]$

(182)

kaj lɔwh pɛ ja? pa?
have or.not mango of 2SG
Do you have mangos or not?

(183) LC.43

kuat ?ia lɔwh ma? pi?apəŋ jɔŋ
want have.get or.not you female maybe
Did you want to have a granddaughter or not?

8.3.4 Content questions

In content questions, question words are used to replace one of the constituents of the corresponding declarative clause (Kroeger 2005:205). Question words in Lawa content questions appear *in situ*. A question word can also be used by itself to form a content question. Section (4.3) listed interrogative pronouns, or content question words.

Noun phrases, verb phrases, prepositional phrases, and adverbial phrases can be questioned (Bickford 1998:232). The question particle *?ah* is optionally used in content questions. Some of the question words change their meanings depending on the contexts. For example, *juh jaŋ man* 'do how what' can be used for several meanings: 'how', 'why' and 'what happened'.

8.3.4.1 Content questions: Who

The Eastern Lawa word *pen* 'who' is used to get information about people. Example (184) demonstrates a content question using *pen* 'who'.

(184) LC.182

?am mah pen ma pia ?əŋ
 Q be **who** mother father his
 Who are his parents?

8.3.4.2 Content questions: What

The Eastern Lawa word *man* 'what' is used to get information about 'things'. Examples (185) and (186) have content questions using *man* 'what'.

(185) LC.54

mah man t^hɔ
 be **what** that
 What is that?

(186)

mah man mai pa?
 be **what** name 2SG
 What is your name?

8.3.4.3 Content questions: When

The Eastern Lawa word *saŋman* 'when' is used to get information about when an event will happen. Examples (188) and (187) show content questions using *saŋman*.

(187)

puj tʰɔ sam hew jik ja? te? saɲman
3SG FUT go field of his when
When will he go to his field?

(188) LC.46

nat la pa? saɲman neh mɔ tʰɔ
appointment for you when eh doctor that
When is the appointment for you eh? (With) the doctor.

8.3.4.4 Content questions: Where

The Eastern Lawa word *ka?nom* ‘where’ is used to get information about locations. Examples (189) and (190) illustrate content questions using *ka?nom*.

(189)

bun hew ka?nom
Boon go where
Where did Boon go?

(190) LC.2

?am keh pa? ka?nom neh
Q give.birth you where eh
Where did you give birth?

8.3.4.5 Content questions: Why

The Eastern Lawa word *juhman* ‘why’ is used to get information about why something occurred. Example (191) shows a content question using *juhman* ‘why’.

(191)

hew pa? wiaɲ juhman
go 2SG Chiang Mai why
Why did you go to Chiang Mai

8.3.4.6 Content questions: How

The Eastern Lawa word *jaŋman* 'how' is used to get information about how something happens. Examples (194), (192) and (193) demonstrate content questions using *jaŋman* 'how'.

(192)

juh pa? jaŋman
do.make 2SG how
How did you do that?

(193) LC.240

keh mah jaŋman
able be how
How would (you) be able?

(194) LC.243

keh ?u: joŋ jaŋman
able not know how
How could (he) not know?

8.3.5 Ability questions

The Eastern Lawa word *keh* 'able' is used in questions with other question words to ask for information about ability

The general schema for ability questions is as follows:

S_{ABILITY} : [(?am) *keh* V *lɔwh* --- ?ah]

Example (195) shows an ability question regarding riding a bike.

(195)

keh kʰap lɔwh pa? lot tʰip ?ah
able ride or.not 2SG bicycle (NT) Q.PRT
Can you ride a bike or not?

8.4 Commands (imperatives)

In Eastern Lawa imperative clauses, the one being told to do something is usually omitted. However, they may be optionally expressed.

Examples (196) and (197) compare declarative and imperative sentences. Example (196) is the declarative sentence while (197) and (198) are examples of imperatives using the same proposition as (196).

Simple declarative:

(196)

(?aj) hew sewm te?
I go plant.rice PRO.SUBJ
I went and planted my rice

Imperative:

(197)

~~hew~~ ~~sewm~~ te?
go plant.rice PRO.SUBJ
Go plant rice!

One way of softening the command is by attaching a polite particle to the verb as in example (198).

(198)

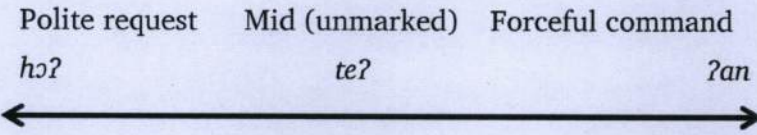
~~hew~~ ~~sewm~~ hɔ?
go plant.rice (polite.imperative)
Go plant rice (polite)

Commands can be made stronger by using an imperative intensifier particle. The imperative intensifier particle ?an is added to the verb in (199) to give it the strongest force possible.

(199)

hew sewm ?an
go plant.rice PRT
Go plant rice!!

Diagram showing scale of politeness/forcefulness:



8.4.1 Negative commands

In Eastern Lawa, negative commands are formed using the negative operator *pu:* which is only used for imperative sentences. *pu:* always appears in the initial position of the clause. Examples (200) and (201) demonstrate the negative imperative.

(200)

pu: *ca?* *jiŋ* *sa?ta?* *sɔ?* *tʰɔ*
NEG.IMPER possible pull tail dog 3SG
Don't pull that dog's tail!

(201)

pu: *ca?* *^mbia*
NEG.IMPER possible forget
Don't forget!

See section 6.3.3 for more on negative imperatives.

8.5 Summary

This chapter discussed different sentence types including declarative, interrogative and imperative sentences. The interrogative formations, included 'Yes-No' questions, tag questions, 'or-not' questions and content questions. Then positive and negative imperatives were presented as well as the constructions for softening and strengthening commands.