

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

1. SUMMARY

In summary, Rawang verb and noun morphology manifests that addition is the most active process. Subtraction is observed as a verb derivation process, but still needs to be confirmed. Replacement and suppletion are not observed. Addition is manifested by compounding and affixation.

1.1. Verb Morphology

Compounding in verb formations is merely reduplication of semantically similar verbs. Derivation is observed as deriving verbs from nouns by deleting any syllable that precedes the last syllable. Since compounding and derivation are not extensive, there are only a few phonological changes that occur. One tone change that may occur in either compounding or derivation is for the falling tone which changes into mid-tone. In compounding, a palatalization process in which /s/ changes into /sh/ is observed.

Inflection is the most significant and productive process in Rawang verb morphology. A number of prefixes and suffixes and one discontinuous morpheme are involved in the inflectional verb morphology.

Rawang verbs can be divided into final and non-final verbs. Though they take some of the same inflections, they differ in that final verbs have sentence-final marker suffixes while non-final verbs take non-final verb marker suffixes. The following diagram summarizes the final transitive verb structure, which the intransitive verb resembles except for

the lack of patient markers. All tagmemes are optional except for the verb stem. A final verb may be composed of a minimum of two elements or a maximum of eleven elements.

Md	Neg	Ag	Ca	Rcp	Stem	Bnf	Ori	Num	Pt	SFM1	SFM2	SFM3
laq-	mα-	ē-	dα-	α-		-shī	-bǒ	-ng	-φ	-e	-má	-ó
lα-			tα-			-ā	-zǒ	-φ	-à	-à	-è	-sà
tα-						-ām	-ap	-shì	-ò	-dī	-á	
						-kē	-yàng	-l			-nà	
							-zaq	-nǒng			-ná	
							-nǒng				-ā	
							-rat				-ānǒ	
							-rā				-ēnǒ	
											-é	

Diagram 19: Final Verb Structure With Slot Filler Affixes

Many of the verb affixes have allomorphs. The conditioning factors of the morpheme variations are phonological, morphological and grammatical.

A couple of phonological factors are observed. The first factor is assimilation. The vowels of the prefixes and the first syllables of **CαCV(C)** type syllables are assimilated to the vowel /e/ of the non-first person agent marker {ē-}. This assimilation could be called as a morphologically conditioned process because those vowels change into /e/ even if the allomorph /na-/ of the morpheme {ē-} occurs in the structure. Another phonological conditioning is involved with the syllable structure. For example, /na-/, the allomorph of {ē-}, occurs before **αCV(C)** type syllables and before the reciprocal marker prefix /α-/.

Morphological conditioning also is observed. For example, a lateral /l/ is inserted before the vowels /-á/, /-ó/, and /-é/, when they occur after the /-e/ imperfective marker; thus, the allomorphs /-lá/, /-ló/, and /-lé/ occur after /-e/.

Grammatical conditioning on the morpheme variation also is observed. The perfective marker {-à} has allomorphs /-à/ and /-ì/. They are conditioned by mutually exclusive patterns of subject-object agreement marking on the verb.

A multi-occurrence of a morpheme {-ng} which is particular to the Rawang language is observed. The first person singular marker /-ng/ is suffixed to the verb stem, benefactive, orientation and SFM1 suffixes at the same time, i.e., several instances of /-ng/ are suffixed to those items simultaneously. But it occurs only on open syllables and syllables with /k/ or /q/ finals.

A couple of morphophonemic processes are observed.

- 1) Backing: The front high unrounded vowel /i/ of some open syllable stems changes into central high unrounded vowel /ø/ when followed by /ng/.
- 2) Merging: The central high unrounded vowel /ø/ is deleted when the front high unrounded vowel /i/ follows, but the tone on the vowel /ø/ moves onto the following vowel /i/ and replaces the existing one. Thus, for instance, this process merges /bø/ and /i/ into /bí/.
- 3) Lengthening: A grammatically conditioned vowel lengthening occurs. The vowels of close syllable verb stems are lengthened when followed by /i/ and /o/ and when the agent is not in the first person singular.
- 4) Neutralization: Another process is neutralization. /-shì/, /-ì/, and /-nəng/ (dual-plural distinction) are neutralized before the morphemes /-à/ first person patient and /-à/ completeive, and only the

allomorph /-s/ occurs. Since the first person patient marker and perfective marker are homophonous, the conditioning can be described as phonological.¹³

Non-final verbs differ from final verbs in that non-final verbs do not have mood markers and sentence final markers. Instead they have non-final verb marker suffixes. Other affixes are the same for non-final and final verbs. In non-final verb formations, it is observed that there is no significant morphophonemic process, which is different from that of final verbs. It is only in non-final verbs that the discontinuous morpheme is observed.

1.2. Noun Morphology Summary

In noun morphology, compounding, and derivation are prominent. Compounding is observed as various combinations of two or three lexical items such as nouns, classifiers, process verbs and adjectival verbs. Three element compounds are primarily two element compounds in which one element is embedded by another two element compound. For most of the compound nouns, preceding elements modify the following elements. Of **noun + classifier** combinations, those which are indefinite are analyzed as words and those which refer to specific things are analyzed as phrases.

In noun derivation, four prefixes and one suffix are observed. /α-/ changes some process verbs into nouns. /ãng-/ changes classifiers and verbs into nouns and nouns into derived nouns. /dã-/ changes verbs and /tã-/ changes some classifiers into nouns. /-shú/ is suffixed to some transitive verbs to change them into nouns which refer to the agent of the verb. Inflection is not observed in noun morphology.

¹³ In this instance, the distinction between the first person patient marker and the perfective marker is not clear, either, since these markers are homophonous.

2. SOME IMPLICATIONS FOR TRANSLATION

In translation, a word is viewed as a bundle of meaning components (Larson 1984). The translation process involves analyzing these meaning components in the source language and re-expressing them in a natural form of the receptor language (Barnwell 1980). Thus, understanding the meaning (information) packaging in both the source language and the receptor language is important.

Since the Rawang verbs comprise both process verbs and adjectival verbs, the meaning concepts that Rawang verbs convey are both events and attributes. Along with these events and attributes, other concepts are also packaged in a verb at word level.

Generally, a Rawang verb at word level includes such elements of meaning as tense, spatial orientation, aspect, mood or modes, voice and agreement. These concepts are marked by affixes, various co-occurrences and omission of the affixes (in other words, by the appearance of zero morphemes).

Tenses can be distinguished as simple present, simple past, simple future, near-remote, and far-remote. However, these ideas are not always conveyed by clear-cut morphemes. For example, future sense is expressed by several co-occurrences of morphemes of different slots. Spatial orientation distinguishes the meanings such as toward-remote, from-remote, at-remote, speaker at higher location, and speaker at lower location. Generally, aspects expressed at word level can be labelled as perfective and imperfective. Co-occurrences of aspect markers with tense and spatial orientation markers result in several types of perfective and imperfective meanings.¹⁴

¹⁴ In fact, all tense, spatial orientation and aspect are interrelated to each other.

Besides tense, spatial orientation and aspect, the Rawang verbs also convey moods of the speaker. Moods expressed at word level are permissive, concessive, emphasis, optative, interrogative, and imperative.

Interrogative can be informational, yes/no, or confirmatory questions. Imperative is refined further by SFM2 markers as requestive and hortatory.

Active-passive distinction at word level is made only by the discontinuous morpheme which denotes passive-perfective. This morpheme also implies that the action is done in preparation for a certain purpose. Other voices are reflexive, reciprocal, causative, middle benefactive, and substitutive benefactive.

Rawang verbs also convey agreement between both subject and object of the verb. This agreement distinguishes person and number. Person is distinguished by first, second and third persons. Number is distinguished by singular, dual and plural. First person singular is marked differently.

The main concept conveyed in nouns is THING. In some compound nouns, the preceding elements modify the following elements. In noun-classifier compounds specific-generic distinction is made.

In order to translate from a language into the natural form of Rawang, the information mentioned above should be extracted from the source language.

For example, to translate tenses into Rawang, the translator should examine the tense in the source language: how far the referred time is from the present moment and whether it is present, past or future. Trying to find such meaning components will help to overcome the problem of semantic skewing and help to produce the natural form in the receptor language.

However, it should not be forgotten that the meanings of a word in a source language cannot always be equivalent to the meanings of the corresponding word in the receptor language. The necessary information

should sometimes be extracted from larger contexts. For example, a Rawang verb sometimes does not express aspects explicitly. e.g. The word /dibí/ (/dī/ = go, /bǝ/ = toward remote, /-i/ = perfective) can mean either 'went', 'has already been going', or 'has gone' in English. The explicit aspect can be drawn from inferring to time settings.

3. SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This paper presents the morphology of verbs and nouns, but it does not cover the structure of adverbials. It is mentioned in Chapter One that reduplication is prominent in adverbialization. Adverbials exhibit several different patterns of reduplication and several other morphological processes. A study on these adverbializations may be of interest for future study.

Some other language analysis studies, e.g. grammatical analysis of topics such as case system, syntax and morphosyntax, and discourse study on traditional chants, would be valuable for Tibeto-Burman linguists. Comparative studies on Rawang dialects would also be informative since there are over seventy dialects of the Rawangs. Along with these mother tongue dialects, the Rawangs speak other languages such as Jingphaw, Burmese, and Lisu, too. This causes much language change. Studying these changes would also be beneficial for future research.