CHAPTER 3

VERB PHRASE

3.0 Introduction

A verb is the part of speech which expresses action, process, and the like. It functions in a clause as a predicate (Shopen 1985). According to Payne (1997:54) verbs are divided into various classes based on tagmemic theory, as follows:

1) Weather verbs, e.g, to rain, to be hot, etc.

2) State verbs, e.g, (be) broken, melt, etc.

3) Involuntary processes, these verbs answer the question "what happened to the topic, e.g what happened to Sue? "She died."

4) Bodily functions, e.g cough, sneeze, hiccup, burp, etc.

5) Motion verbs, these verbs describe voluntary activity. Motion verbs may be simple motion (swim, run) and locomotion (swim in the pool, run into the room).

6) Position verbs, e.g, stand, sit.

7) Action verbs, these verbs describes voluntary acts but do not involve patient, e.g, dance, sing, etc.

8) Action-process verbs, these verbs are voluntary actors and affected patient, e.g, kill, hit, etc.

9) Factive verbs describe the coming into existence of some entity, e.g, build, form, etc.

10) Cognition verbs express concepts, e.g, know, think, etc.

11) Sensation verbs express sense concepts, e.g, see, hear, etc.

12) Emotion verbs express concepts like fear, love, etc.

13) Utterance verbs, e.g, speak, say, etc.

14) Manipulation verbs express concepts which are the use of physical or rhetorical force to have someone do something, e.g, force, urge, etc.

This chapter discusses verbs especially verb phrases in Lahu Shi. According to Healey (1992:69) verb phrases may consist of some elements as follows:

1) Head may express concepts which were described previously.

2) Aspect is about time that something happens.

3) Augmentative, intensifier is about increasing the force of action. Some languages add some words to indicate intensifier.

4) Auxiliary is a subclass of verbs. It acts in auxiliary role to head verb.

5) Manner acts as an adverb to modify a verb, such as "spoke up".

6) Modality involves capacity or intentions of the actor, factuality of action, for example, can do.

7) Mood tells the kind of response or result required by the speaker.

8) Negative such as "not" in English.

9) Quantifier qualifies the head verb.

10) Repetitive such as "again" in English.

11) Tense is the relative time of the action, for example, will do.

Some of elements mentioned above may occur in Lahu Shi verb phrases, which will be described in the following section.

3.1 Structure of the Lahu Shi verb phrase

According to Matisoff (1982) there are not only simple sentences but also compound sentences in Lahu Na. A simple sentence contains a single final verb phrase. A compound sentence contains two or more non-final verb phrases.

There are two types of head verbs: simple head verbs and concatenated head verbs. The simple head verb consists of a single verb whereas the concatenated head verb contains more than one verb.

Manson (1995:29) says that in Lahu Na a concatenated or compound verb is a sequence of two roots. Its characteristics are as follows:

1) A sequence of two roots functions as a unitary verb.

2) A sequence of two roots expresses a situation where either a single event is described by two different names, or two different events take place (roughly) simultaneously or in no particular order. The two roots are also synonymous.

3) A sequence of two roots cannot be separated. The intervention of another element causes the meaning change.

4) The roots may be bound or free morphemes.

5) The meaning of a concatenated verb is not transparent.

Manson (1995:30) also explains three other types of concatenation constructions. These constructions are the Subject-Verb Compound, the Object – Verb Compound, and the "Result" Complement Compound.

> The Subject – Verb Compound consists of a noun
> followed by a verb and the noun is the subject of the verb.
>
> The Object – verb Compound consists of a noun followed
> by a verb but the noun is the direct object of the verb.
>
> The "result" complement Compound is a sequence of two
> lexical verbs (not bound morphemes) which function as a
> unitary verb though the sequence is not fully lexicalized.
> The two verbs express an action and a result.

As mentioned previously, Lahu Shi and Lahu Na are in the same language family, therefore the Lahu Shi verb construction is quite similar to that of Lahu Na. Lahu Shi verb phrases may also be simple head verb or concatenated head verb. The following sections will describe the Lahu Shi verb phrase structure by considering their functions in the verb phrase: action verb and auxiliary verb.

3.2 Action verbs in Lahu Shi

Action verbs are determined by the characteristics given by Payne (1997). Action verbs may describe voluntary acts which do not involve a patient, or they may describe an action-process involving a patient. It is possible to subclassify verbs as transitive or intransitive in all languages (Schachter 1992). This is determined based on whether or not they occur with objects. Therefore action verbs in Lahu Shi may be intransitive verbs, transitive verbs, or bitransitive verbs. The verb phrases may contain one head verb called a simple head verb or they may contain a concatenated head verb which contains more than one head verb.

3.2.1 Intransitive verbs

An intransitive verb requires no object. It describes a property, state, or situation involving one participant (Payne 1997). The participant acts as a subject of the verb who performs some activity. The following examples illustrate intransitive verbs in Lahu Shi.

Example 28 : Sentence #29 (C/D)

Kheh te	*lehq*	*ix mag*	*teq geha*	*kaw*	***koeq***	*lehq*
so	*CONJ*	*3Dual*	*together*	*accompanying*	***return[home]***	*CONJ*
adv:tm	*Pnf*	*pro*	*adj*	*Pn*	***v***	*Pnf*

"Then the two of them set off together returning...."

The above clause contains two main elements; subject, verb. In the verb elements contains only one head verb "koeq" means "return [home]". There is no object element in the clause.

Example 29 : Sentence #17 (C/D)

Ix mag	***tuhz***	***kae***	*lehq*
3Dual	***leave***	***go***	*CONJ*
pro	***v***	***v***	*Pnf*

"The two left......"

There are two main elements in the above clause. They are subject "Ix mag" and verb. The verb element contains two head verbs "tuhz" means "leave" and "kae" means "go", together they mean "left". There is no object element.

3.2.2 Transitive verbs

A transitive verb is a verb that requires object. Sometimes it is hard to distinguish whether a verb is transitive or intransitive. Payne (1997:171) categorizes transitive verbs as having semantic transitivity and grammatical transitivity. For example in English, a verb "eat" may be a transitive verb in semantic transitivity or it may be transitive or intransitive verb in grammatical transitivity. You can say "I'm eating" or "I'm eating lunch".

Elson and Pickett (1988) determined such type of this verb by looking at their object. If the verb includes the object, it is classified as a transitive. On the other hand the verb which does not include the object is classified as an intransitive. Below are some examples of intransitive verbs.

Example 30 : Sentence #41 (C/D)

Phid	u ve	Sehx	sir	haq	**pheq**	**kha**	lar haz	lehq
dog	that	amulet		OM	**spit**	**out**	immediately	CONJ
n	det	n		Pn	v		prt	Pnf

"the dog immediately spit out the amulet……"

The above clause contains two noun phrases. One is a subject "Phid u ve", the other is an object "Schx sir haq". The object is determined according to the word order of the language (SOV). There is also an object marker "haq" marked at the end of the phrase. Therefore the phrase "Schx sir" acts as the object of the clause.

Example 31 : Sentence #31 (C/D)

Phid	u ve	Sehx	sir	haq	**ke**	**mehg**	lehq
dog	that	amulet		OM	**place**	**holdin_mouth**	CONJ
n	det	n		Pn	v	v	Pnf

"The dog held the amulet in its mouth….."

There are two noun phrases in the above clause; "Phid u ve" acts as a subject and "Schx sir haq" acts as an object. They are determined by the word order of the language (SOV), and there is also an object marker "haq" at the end of the following noun phrase. The verb element contains two roots "ke" (place) and "mehg" (hold in mouth). Together they mean "held".

3.2.3 Bitransitive verbs

Bitransitive verb is a subcategory of transitive. It occurs with an indirect object. There are a few verbs which require two objects, direct and indirect objects. These types of verbs are called bitransitive verbs. They permit three nominals in a clause. They are subject, object, and indirect object (Elson and Pickett 1988). In English, either direct object or indirect object may immediately follow the verb. See examples below:

Example : (a)   Dang gives the book to me.

"the book" is a direct object following the verb.

Example : (b)   Dang gives me the book.

"me" is an indirect object following the verb.

Matisoff (1982:157) says that in Lahu Na an indirect object usually precedes a direct object. If the direct object precedes, it acquires a slight additional emphasis. Consider the examples below:

Example : (a)   /ŋà   thàʔ   lìʔ   chi   pî   a/

2s   accusative   book   CHI   give   MILD IMPERATIVE

pro   Pn   n   det   v   prt

"Please give me this book".

Example : (b)   /lìʔ   chi   ŋà   thàʔ   pî   a/

book   CHI   2s   accusative   give   MILD IMPERATIVE

n   det   pr   Pn   v   prt

"Please give me this book".

In Example (b), the speaker wants to emphasis "this book" not "that one".

Like in Lahu Na, in Lahu Shi the direct object follows the indirect object. If the direct object precedes the indirect object, it acquires a slight additional emphasis. The following is the example illustrating their order.

Example 32 : Sentence #29 (C/D)

awg sehr	phad	**ngag**	haq	**awr**	maq		car	vad."
owner		**1S**	OM	**food**	NEG	-strong	feed	eat
n		**pro**	Pn	**n**	adv		v	v

"The owner wouldn't feed me any food,"

Sentence #29 contains three elements; subject, object, verb. The verb element has a negative marker "maq" preceding the two verb roots "car" and "vad". These two different verbs explain the same event, "feed". The verb phrase occurs with two objects; an indirect object "ngag" which is indicated by the object marker "haq" and a direct object "awr". In general the object marker marks the direct object. It is marked at the indirect object to indicate the other object. Therefore "car vad" is a bitransitive verb.

3.3 Auxiliary verbs

Manson (2001:11) says closed classes contain a fixed number of members and usually just a small number of words, including pronouns, demonstratives, articles, conjunctions, interjections, and auxiliaries.

Payne (1997:84) defines auxiliary verbs saying "auxiliaries are verbs in that they satisfy the morphosyntactic definition of verbs (whatever that may be for the language)". They occur in the verb position and carry at least some inflectional information. Such information can be subject or object agreement and tense or aspect

or mode marking. This information is normally associated with verbs. In summary, auxiliary verbs are verbs that help other verbs. They occur with the main verbs of the clauses carrying some information in the verb phrase (eg. as a modality, aspect).

Matisoff (1982:200) describes versatile verbs in Lahu as "juxtapository productivity". The versatile verbs may occur before their head verb, called pre-head versatiles, or they may occur after their head verb, called post-head versatiles. English uses a lot of subordinating devices, such as –ing complements, modal auxiliaries, adverbs, prepositional phrases, and whole subordinate clauses.

In Lahu Shi, auxiliary verbs show juxtapository productivity. They modify their main verbs and may occur before or after the main verbs. The following are some auxiliary verbs found in the text.

3.3.1 The auxiliary verb "gha"

The auxiliary verb "gha" shows modality. Modality is a semantic domain involving possibility and necessity. There are four domains of modality as follows: (Manson 2001:45)

(1) Participant-internal modality is a kind of possibility or necessity to a participant engaged in a state of affairs, for example:

Boris can get by with only five hours sleep ➡ Possibility

Boris needs to sleep ten hours a night ➡ Necessity

(2) Participant-external modality is circumstances that are external to the participant engaged in a state of affairs. It makes this state of affairs possible or necessity.

To get to the station, you can take Bus 66 ➡ Possibility

To get to the station, you have to take Bus 66 ➡ Necessity

(3) Deontic Modality identifies the enabling or compelling circumstance external to the participant, for example:

John may leave now ➡ Permission / Possibility

John must leave now ➡ Obligation / Necessity

(4) Epistemic modality refers to a judgement of the speaker. A proposition may be judged to be uncertain or probable relative to some judgements, for example:

John may have arrived ➡ Uncertainly / Possibility

John must have arrived ➡ Probability / Necessity

Given here are some examples of using the verb "Gha".

Example 33 : Sentence #6 (C/D)

awg	*phad*	*mawd*	*u*	*ve*	*liz*	*maq*	*gha*	*ca*	*bawez*	*che*	*yaog.*
husband				*that*	*FOC*	*war*	*must*	*go and*	*shoot*	*CHE*	*DECL*
n				*det*	*disc*	*n*	*v*	*v*	*v*	*Pu*	*Pf*

"The husband **had to** go to fight in the war."

"Gha" in Sentence #6 is deontic modality preceding the main verb "ca" and "bawez". It indicates enabling or compelling circumstances external to the participant. In this situation the husband must go to fight in the war, it is obligatory.

Example 34 : Sentence #36 (C/D)

ngad	*lux*	*u*	*ve*	*haq*	*yug*	*gha*
fish	*large*		*that*	*OM*	*grab*	*able to*
n	*adj*		*det*	*Pn*	*v*	*v*

"(They) **were able to** catch the large fish."

In Sentence #36 "gha" follows the main verb "yug". It is participant-internal modality that indicates capacity of doing something.

The verb "gha" may also be counted as a main verb. The main verb is a head of a verb phrase acting as the predicate in the clause. It occurs alone in expressing an action or state of being (Healey1992). Manson (2001:11) says "All the words of a language can be divided into two major categories: lexical and grammatical. The lexical words form four major classes: noun, verb, adverb, and adjective referred as "open class". Their memberships are unlimited. The other is "closed class" with limited memberships (see 3.3).

Example 35 : Sentence #12 (C/D)

Jawd mawd	u ve	Sehx sir	haq	**gha**	vehr
king	that	amulet	OM	**able to**	COMPLETE
n	det	n	Pn	v	Vv

"The king **got** the amulet…….."

Example 36 : Sentence #7 (C/D)

jawd mawd	u ve	Sehx sir	**gha**	tug
king	that	amulet	**must**	PURP
n	det	n	v	Pv-nom

"The king **wanting** the amulet…….."

There is only"Gha" in the two clauses above. It acts as a head of a verb phrase in the predicate of the clauses. The meanings are varying. It means, "got" when it occurs with an auxiliary verb "vehr" in sentence #12. It also means "purpose to do something" when it occurs a verb particle "tug"in sentence#7.

3.3.2 The auxiliary verb "chehd"

"chehd" is an aspect marker which is marked an imperfective aspect. Manson (2001:44) explains aspect as follows:

> Aspect is the internal temporal organization of the situation. It is described by the verb. There are two different aspects; perfective and imperfective. The perfective aspect refers to a whole situation. It implies that the situation has an end-point. The imperfective aspect refers to some part of a situation. It does not include an end-point. Imperfective aspect may be divided into three sub-types. They are continuous (a situation taking place over longer period of time relative to some other point), habitual aspect (a situation occurring habitually over a long period of time), and stative aspect (an event being perceived as a state). Below are some examples of perfective and imperfective.
>
> (a) Perfective : John ate the whole pizza (before Mary got home).
>
> (b) Imperfective : John was eating pizza (when Mary got home).

There are some examples illustrating the use of "chehd" below.

Example 37 : Sentence #9 (C/D)

"Nawg	*phad mawd*	*bawz daq*	*kig*	*lo*		*chehd*	***chehd***	*che*	*yaog.*
2S	*husband*	*battlefield*		*LOC*	*place*	*dwell*	***CONT.***	*CHE*	*DECL*
pro	*n*	*n*		*Pn*		*v*	***Vv***	*Pu*	*Pf*

"Your husband **is living** on the battlefield."

"Chehd" in Sentence #9 is continuous marker. It indicates that the husband continues to be on the battlefield.

"chehd" may act as a head of phrase in the predicate of the clause. An example is shown below:

Example 38 : Sentence #18 (C/D)

"Nawg	vawr	chuhr	huh	**chehd**	lawz.
2per	FOC	here		**dwell**	+pleasant
pro	prt	n		**v**	Pf

"You **stay** here please."

"chehd" is a main verb in Sentence #18. It is a stative verb, means "remain".

3.3.3 The auxiliary verb "vehr"

The auxiliary verb "vehr" is also an aspect marker. It shows the perfective aspect. The perfective aspect implies the whole event has occurred. "Vehr" always follows the main verb. The following are some examples illustrating perfective events.

Example 39 : Sentence #32 (C/D)

Clause #1

Sehx sir	a	kaz	khuh	che	geh	veh	lehq
amulet		water	in		fall	enter	COMPLETE	CONJ
n		n	Pn		v	v	Vv	Pnf

"The amulet fell into the water....."

Example 40 : Sentence #32 (C/D)

ngad	lux	maz	teq	kheh	lehd	dawg	ve	vehr	che	yaog.
fish	large	much	one	animal	thus	swallow	leave	COMPLETE	CHE	DECL
n	adj	adj	num	clf	disc	v		v	Vv	Pu	Pf

"......a big fish swallowed it and left".

"vehr" in the two clauses above implies the whole event is completed. The two events were finished before the next part of the story. They are completed events.

3.4 Summary

This chapter describes verb phrases as action verb and auxiliary verb. The action verbs may be a single head verb (containing one head verb), or a concatenated head verb (containing two or more head verbs). Single and concatenated head verbs may require a direct object (transitive verb), or both direct and indirect objects (bitransitive verb), or they may not require any object (intransitive verb). The auxiliary verbs may show modality or aspect, for example, "gha" may act as a modality, "chehd" and "vehr" may express aspect.