# CHAPTER 4

## LAHU SHI ASPECT AND AN ANALYSIS OF CONSTRUAL

### 4.0 Introduction to an analysis of construal

Linguistic expressions are directly connected to conceived situations or scenes. However, it is not adequate to characterize the meaning of an expression just by identifying or describing the situation in question since expressions can differ in meaning, while pertaining to the same situation. Compare the two expressions in (4). (Taken from Langacker 2000: 208)

(4)     a. *The scar extends all the way from his wrist to his elbow.*

        b. *The scar extends all the way from his elbow to his wrist.*

Notice that (4) a and b are semantically different, although they describe the same scene (the scar on his arm). This is due to how the speaker mentally scans the scene. One can scan from the wrist to elbow or from the elbow to wrist.

The attempt of this chapter is to show that some cognitive abilities are involved in Lahu Shi. In other words, the wording we choose to linguistically encode a situation hinges on the way in which the situation is mentally construed. The discussion is organized under two main sections, perspective and profiling. The former is meant to be the basis for linguistic investigation of construal in Lahu Shi. It is the latter that is the main focus of this chapter.

### 4.1 Perspective as a facet of construal

Perspective relates to the position from which a scene is viewed. The term subsumes two specific notions **vantage point** and **orientation** which are important

for our discussion. Consider the three situations given by a Lahu Shi informant below.

## Situation 1

Three men, Ehrkhad, Ehrsanx, and Ehrdawx, wanted to go to their orchard, but they set out one after the other at different intervals. Ehrkhad went off to the orchard first, and now he was waiting for the others there. Not long afterwards, Ehrsanx left for the orchard and he was on his way. At last, Ehrdawx set off towards the orchard, and he met a woman on his way. She said 'I've heard someone just walking passed. Who is he?'

Ehrdawx answered.

(5) *Ehrsanx*     *kho*     *lo*     **veh**     *tod*     *law*        **(Situation 1)**

      *Ehrsanx*     *orchard LOC*   **go**     *walk*    *Pt.*

      *Ehrsanx is going to the orchard.*

## Situation 2

Then Ehrdawx caught up with Ehrsanx and overtook him. Ehrdawx then met another woman. She said 'I've heard someone coming this way. Who is he?'

Ehrdawx answered in (6),

(6) *Ehrsanx*     *kho*     *lo*     **lag**     *tod*     *law*        **(Situation 2)**

      *Ehrsanx*     *orchard LOC*   **come**    *walk*    *Pt.*

      *Ehrsanx is coming to the orchard.*

**Situation 3**

Ehrdawx arrived at the orchard and met Ehrkhad. Ehrkhad asked where is Ehrsanx?

In answer to this question a perfectly reasonable reply would be either (5) or (6). The focus here is on the two possible ways to reply to the question in Situation 3. They are quite distinct in meaning but they are used to express the same conceived situation (Ehrsanx was walking towards Ehrkhad and Ehrdawx). To analyze why the reply *veh tod law* 'is going' is perfectly acceptable, situation 1 and 2 need to be examined first.

In (5), the answer of Ehrdawx corresponds to his vantage point (his position from which a scene is viewed; Ehrsanx was walking away from him), and his orientation (the direction in which the viewer Ehrdawx is facing; he was behind Ehrsanx). As a result, Ehrdawx's answer is *veh tod law*. In other words, the speaker's vantage point and orientation at the time of speaking is important in the selection of the verb *veh* which can be glossed as 'to go' in English describing motion away from a place or a speaker.

In (6), on the contrary, the vantage point of Ehrdawx has changed (now Ehrsanx was walking towards Ehrdawx), and so has his orientation (he was in front of Ehrsanx). His reply thus is *lag tod law* 'is coming'. As with *veh*, the speaker's perspective at the time of utterance is important in the selection of the verb *lag* 'to come' which is describing motion toward and not away from a place or a speaker.

The answer *veh tod law* 'is going' is acceptable in Situation 3, even though Ehrsanx was coming towards the speaker.

I suggest that (5) *veh tod law* is acceptable in situation 3 because Ehrdawx can mentally locate himself as if he was walking after Ehrsanx.

The answer (6) *lag tod law* 'is coming' of Ehrdawx to Ehrkhad presupposes the normal selection of the verb he perceives in relation to his actual physical position, this in turn reflects his real vantage point and orientation of his visual field. The alternate answer ignores the real vantage point and orientation, and mentally locates the speaker in terms of a conceived (imaginary) position with respect to the situation at the moment of speaking. In reply to Ehrkhad's question, Ehrdawx is saying implicitly that he overtook Ehrsanx, whereas there is no such implication in the answer *lag tod law* 'is coming'.

It can be said from this that the choice of each answer not only depends on the conceived situation, but also from the way one chooses to construe it (our construal of it).

## 4.2 Profiling as a facet of construal for aspect

According to Comrie (1976: 3), aspects are "different ways of viewing the internal constituency of a situation". Payne (1997: 238) puts it like this; "aspect is a grammatical category which relates to the internal temporal shape of events and states". The underlying nature of aspect is 'the internal temporal shape of a situation' derived from how one perceives that situation. The problem is how aspect marking derives 'the internal temporal shape' of a situation. Since a verb itself does not inherently have aspectual meaning[16], therefore an aspect marker must have certain semantic effects of deriving the internal constituency of a situation.

I suggest that the resulting aspectual meaning is derived from the change of profile[17]. In order to elucidate this remark, one notion of profile should be addressed

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[16] Except some verbs as *finish, begin.*

[17] This idea relating aspect to a change in profile has been discussed at length by Croft (2000) in relation to English.

again. As seen in Section 3.2.1.1, profile[18] (and base) is a critical part of the meaning of the expression, for example *radius,* and *chord* invoke the same base (*circle*) but profile different aspects of that base. They are different semantically because they profile different subparts of the background conception (*circle*). Profile is also essential for categorizing word classes (e.g. verb, noun)[19]. It thus can be said that every linguistic expression has a profile as a part of its semantic value. I am suggesting that an aspect marker serves the semantic function of changing the nature of the profile of a process more specifically, the temporal profile (cf. Langacker 1991b, 1999; Taylor 2002). In this section, I focus on how some aspect markers observed in Lahu Shi make a change on the nature of the profile of a process resulting in semantic and grammatical differences.

## 4.2.1 Perfect aspect in Lahu Shi

According to Comrie (1976: 56-61), there are several types of perfect aspect. The most typical one expresses a state resulting from an earlier event, which is called the 'perfect of result'[20] (i.e., 'the continuing relevance of a previous situation'). The perfect in Lahu Shi, however, does not focus on the resulting state, but instead focuses on the final stages of an event. Moreover, it does not make any reference to place in time. In Lahu Shi, the aspectual particle *vehor* indicates the perfect of result as exemplified in (7)[21].

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[18] Profile can also be understood as a viewing effect: 'an expression's profile is the focus of attention within its immediate scope' (Langacker 2002: 222).

[19] A noun profiles a region in some domain while a verb profiles an interaction conceived through time. See Langacker 1991 for a thorough discussion of word classes and profiling.

[20] The term 'perfect of result' may mislead our understanding of Lahu Shi *vehor* in a sense that it should focus only on the resulting-state. Bear in mind, however, that the aspect operations grammaticalized in any given language may not line up exactly with this notion. As seen, Lahu Shi *vehor* does not follow exactly with the notion. Neither do the other Lahu Shi aspects.

[21] This analysis is adapted from Taylor (2002: 211-214).

(7)  *Ekhadlar  yehg  lo  kawq  -aq*  **vehor**

*Ekhadlar  home  LOC  come back  move towards the speaker  **PERF***

*Ekhadlar has come back home.*

The verb *kawq* 'come back' itself profiles a complex temporal relation. It profiles a process in which a trajector (tr) is initially outside of the landmark (lm). Then the tr moves towards the lm, when it occupies a series of locations in relation to the lm. Finally, it arrives at the lm. *Kawq* here profiles a dynamic event, which involves a change in the relation between trajector and landmark over time, as sketched in Figure 19. Notice that it is the whole series of relations (all five states of the process) that is profiled (not just a portion). This whole series in bold represents the nature of the profile of *kawq* (heavy lines represent profiling)[22].
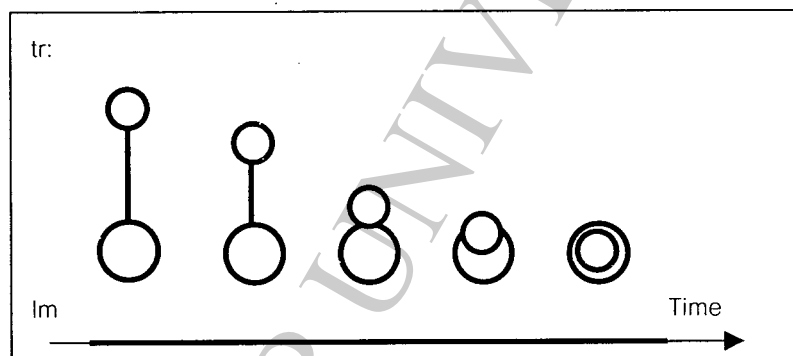
Figure 19. A complex temporal relation *Kawq: Tr comes back lm*

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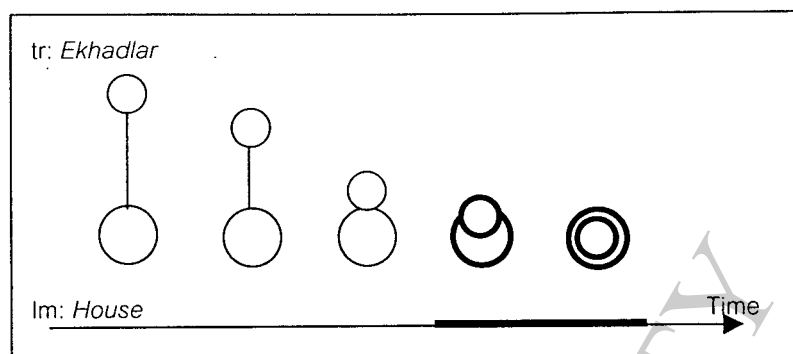[22] This analysis is adapted from Taylor (2002: 212-214).

Figure 20. A complex temporal relation

*Kawq + vehor: Ekhadlar has come back home.*

What the aspect marker *vehor* does is that it restricts the profile to the last few final stages of the trajector's path[23] rather than just the end state. It changes the nature of profiling of the process *kawq*. Notice in Figure 20 that only the last two final stages of the relation along with the last time segment is profiled, as opposed to Figure 19.

Because *vehor* does not profile just the end-result (last state) of the trajector's path, it is perfectly acceptable to say (7), even though Ekhadlar has not reached home yet. That is to say, not only can we say (7), when Ekhadlar is already inside the house, but also when he is in the vicinity of the house (e.g. at the gate).

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[23] Note that the diagram presented here is just an attempt to represent the changing relation which is designated by the particle *vehor*. Thus, it does not exactly represent the actual process of *kawq* 'come back'. Only five states of the process are shown explicitly, but they represent a continuous series (for one reason, it is impossible to depict the complete conception of any given process in a sequence as discrete states). By 'the last two final stages', I do not mean its very literal sense (thus it can be 'the last three' or 'the last four' depending on how detailed a diagram is.) That the last two of the relation is in bold is meant merely to illustrate that it is not only the end point which is profiled, but also a certain portion of its previous state (it is not an attempt to specify the definite profile, by no means).

Take, as another example, the process *cad* 'eat'. In answer to (8),

(8)    *Nadsehnx*    *awr*    *cad*    **vehor**  *la*

       *Nadsehnx*    *rice*    *eat*    **PERF** *QM*

       *Has Nadsehnx eaten yet?*

A perfectly reasonable reply would be *eh, awr cad vehor* 'yes, she has eaten' which can then be followed by a sentence like *She is now eating in the kitchen, She is not finished* or *She is almost finished.* This can be taken as evidence that *vehor* does not impose quite a tight restriction of profiling on the end point because the perfect of result aspect can be used while the action has not quite reached the end state.

It should be emphasized in Figure 20 that although the last two states are in profile, the previous unprofiled movement of the trajector is still a necessary part of the base of the expression. If Ekhadlar had not been away from his house, we could not say that *Ekhadlar yehg lo kawq vehor* 'Ekhadlar has come back'. What we should say is that he was inside the house. In other words, a situation of Ekhadlar's having been away from home (this is the necessary base) is essential to the semantic value of (8), but it does not itself constitute that value. The particle *vehor* has the semantic effect of changing the profile of the verb stem; thereby deriving the aspectual meaning of perfect of result. The difference of meaning is a matter of construal, which is analyzed here as a difference in profiling. In Langacker's terminology, *vehor* is the **profile determinant** (see Section 3.3). That is, the profile of the conceived event (e.g. Ekhadlar's coming back home) is determined by the profile of the aspect marker.

## 4.2.2 Completive aspects in Lahu Shi

There are two kinds of completive aspects in Lahu Shi: *peg vehor* and *peor.*
Each will be discussed in turn.

The perfect *vehor* can be combined with an aspectual verb *peg* 'finish' to
express completive aspect which is the completion of an event[24]. Consider the
expression in (9).

(9) *ngag mednged tawx **peg vehor***

  *I  clothes  sew **COMPL1***

  *I finished sewing the clothes.*

Sentence (9) is also a relational profile, which is not in a single tr-lm
configuration, but in a series of relations over time as represented in Figure 21.
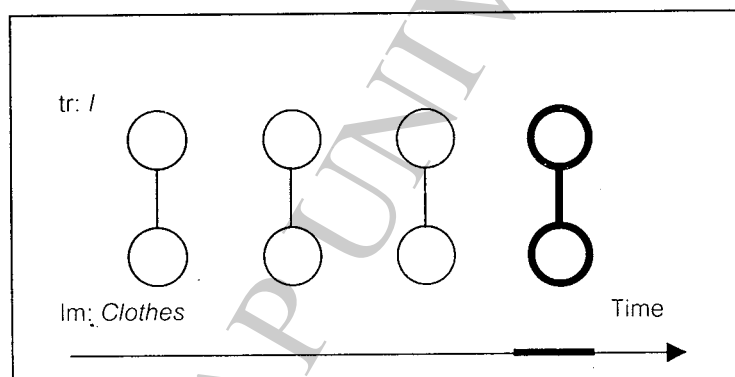


Figure 21. A temporal relation: *I finished sewing the clothes.*

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[24] According to CG, all linguistic expressions profile something. A verb profiles a process (a temporal relation).
Most verbs do not profile a static relation, but a dynamic event (for example *kawq* 'come back' in (7)). The
profile is complex in that it involves a change in the relation between tr and lm over time. That is, the whole
series of relations is profiled (see Figure 19.). The whole profiling is construed as a continuos series. However,
there are some verbs that are not profiled in such way due to their inherent aspectual meaning, for example *peg*
'finish'. It is the end-point of a complex relation of *peg* that is designated.

The combination[25] of *peg* and *vehor* imposes a tight restriction of profiling on the end point of the situation, that is the completion of making clothes. In other words, the verb *tawx* 'sew' itself profiles the change over time (the whole series of relations is profiled), but the contribution of *peg* 'finish' and *vehor* 'perfect' to the verb changes its nature of profiling.

In reply to the question in (10),

(10)    *nawg*    *mednged*     *tawx*    **peg**    *vehor*       *la*

       *you*     *clothes*     *sew*    **COMPL1**        *QM*

*Have you made the clothes?*

It is quite natural to reply *eh, mednged tawx peg vehor* 'yes, I have made the clothes'. However, it is strange to answer (10) with '*I am almost finished*', or '*I am making clothes*'. This answer is perfectly acceptable, though, if (10) has only the perfect *vehor* because *vehor* profiles more than the end result state. This illustrates that the semantic effect of both *peg* and *vehor* is important to the profiling of a given process because each aspect marker adjusts the profile.

The second completive aspect is *peor*, which has semantic value similar to the completive aspect (*peg vehor*) in a sense that it also profiles the end (or the termination) of the situation. Consider the expression in (11).

(11)    *ngag*    *apoq te khoz*    *tawx*    **peor**

       *I*      *shirt*        *sew*    **COMPL 2**

*I have made a shirt.*

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[25] Although *peg*, as a grammatical unit, inherently has aspectual meaning it cannot occur by itself. It needs to occur with the aspect marker *vehor*. This shows that *vehor* serves not only the semantic function of changing the nature of the profile of a process, but the function of turning a verb into a finite clause, that is to say, it functions as a grounding element. However, since it is beyond the scope of the paper, to simplify matters, I will ignore the precise contribution of *vehor*, that is its role of grounding, to the process.

Although *peg vehor* and *peor* are both completive aspects, they are by no mean the same. They have different semantic effects. What makes *peor* different from *peg vehor* is the base (the conceptual context of the expression). In (11), *peor* also invokes another activity of making, for example, a dress.
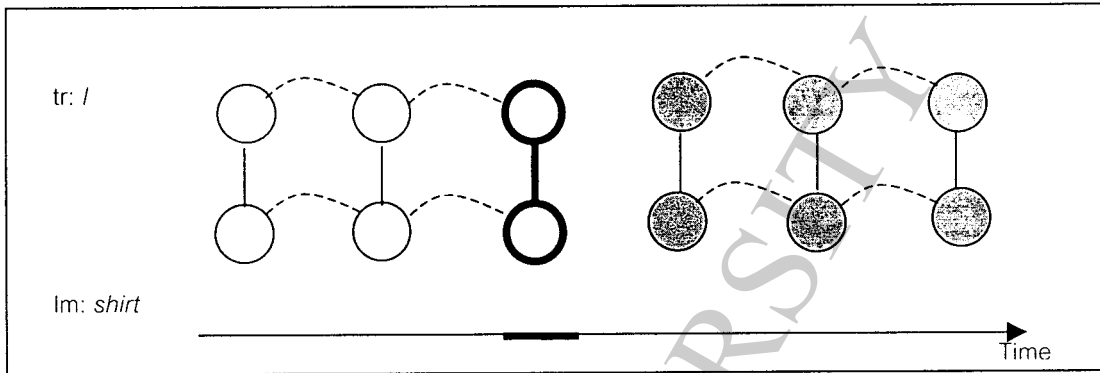


Figure 22. A temporal relation: *I finished making a shirt.*

A series of the two gray circles[26] joined by a line represents another activity of 'making a dress', which the speaker intends to make. This conceptual context is not invoked by the verb stem (and its participants) itself. It is the semantic effect of *peor* which not only profiles the end stage of the situation (making a shirt) but also invokes the knowledge of the speaker, namely, her intention to make a dress after her finishing making a shirt (in this particular example). Sentence (11) thus implies there is some continuing activity (I finished making a shirt, but I have not made, say, a dress yet). If the speaker had not intended to make any other clothes, there would be no basis for such a use of *peor*.

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[26]A series of two gray circles connected by a line is meant to represent the conceptual base of the process (an afterthought of the process) which is not inherently evoked by the verb itself, but by the speaker's knowledge. The dashed, curved lines indicate that each successive relation corresponds to the previous.

Take, as another example, the expression in (12).

(12)a. *Ekhadlar yehg lo kawq -aq* **peor**

    *Ekhadlar home LOC come back move towards the speaker* **COMPL2**

    *Ekhadlar came back home (but he is not home/here now).*

b. ***Ekhadlar* *yehg lo kawq -aq***

    *Ekhadlar home LOC come back move towards the speaker*

    **peg vehor**

    **COMPL1**

    *\*Ekhadlar has come back home.*

c. *ihehd yehg lo kawq -aq*

    *they home LOC come back move towards the speaker*

    **peg vehor**

    **COMPL1**

    *They have come back home.*

Sentence (12) a implies that now Ekhadlar is not home (he came back home and then he went out). In other words, not only does *peor* profile the end-state of the process (arriving home), it also evokes the afterthought of the process (going out/not being here) which is a part of the base of the expression. However, there is no such implication in (12) c, which only highlights the end state of arriving home. Notice that (12) b is ungrammatical due to conceptual incompatibility between the participant *Ekhadlar* and *peg vehor*. This suggestion will be further discussed towards the end of this section.

From the examples in (12), it can be said that both *peor* and *peg vehor* have a completive profile. What distinguishes between the two is that *peor* has a semantic

effect which evokes an abstract **succeeding** activity as part of the base of the expression. But there is no such effect in *peg vehor*. However, *peg vehor* is not merely a simple completive aspect. It has another semantic value, that of a '**collective**' profile designating the whole event. An example will clarify this remark (See also Appendix A).

(13) a. *ngag   ha                    sehr   ni   te   **peor***

     *I      dry field in hills      three   day   do   **COMPL2***

     *I have worked in my fields for three days (but there is some more work needed to be done)*

  b. *\*ngag ha                    sehr   ni   te   **peg**   **vehor***

     *I      dry field in hills      three   day   do   **COMPL1***

     *\*I have worked in my field for three days (end result).*

Example (13) b is considered unacceptable. In order to elucidate this unacceptable sentence, the conceptual meaning of the expression needs to be considered first. Unlike *mednged tawx* 'making clothes' in (9) above, the concept *ha te* 'farming in hills' in (13) a presupposes a rich network of domain-based knowledge necessary for the understanding of the semantic unit. This includes a sequence of farming activities, for example, clearing new fields, slashing grasses, leaving them to dry out, and burning them, making holes for the seeds, etc. It takes a certain amount of time to finish each activity. In (13), the contribution of *sehr ni* 'three days' to the process just specifies the completion of on activity which took three days. What *peor* does is it designates the end-state of the individual activity (not the end-state of the whole sequence of activities). That is, it implies that the succeeding activities are not done yet. In other words, it is one activity that is finished not the whole sequence.

The entire farming domain[27] is part of the knowledge used to interpret the use of *peor*. This domain the linguistic expression (*ha sehr ni te*) evokes, however, is necessary to its meaning but it is not sufficient. The semantic value of (13) a has to involve the way the speaker perceives the scene. It is the grammatical element *peor* that embodies conventional imagery, which constitutes an important part of its semantic value. In choosing *peor*, the speaker construes the situation in a certain way. The meaning of (13) a thus includes both the knowledge system it evokes and the particular construal the speaker imposes on the scene.

Sentence (13) b, however, is unacceptable. I claim that it is because of the collective profile of *peg vehor*. That is, the contribution of *peg vehor* to *ha sehr ni te* 'working in fields for three days' creates semantic conflict. The expression *ha sehr ni te* invokes one activity of the whole event, and it implies that **there are certain succeeding activities to do**. *Peg vehor*, on the other hand, has the semantic value of collective profile. That is, it designates the whole event, which expresses the completion of the event or **there is no succeeding activity to do**. Consequently, Sentence (13) b is not communicable. It only says that the participant spends three days to work in fields, but it does not tell whether farming is finished or whether there is more work that needs to be done. This illustrates that the difference in semantic value between *peg vehor* and *peor* shows up grammatically.

The remainder of this section focuses on the collective profile of *peg vehor* – the second semantic effect (of *peg vehor*) which makes the two completives different from each other. Compare the two expressions in (14).

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[27] The notion of domain (See section 3.2.1.2) is quite similar to Lakoff's Idealized Cognitive Models (1987).

(14) a. *ngag*    *nazchuhd*      *dawg*    **peor**

     *I*       *medicine*      *drink*   ***COMPL2***

     *I have taken the medicine.*

  b. *ngag*    *nazchuhd*      *dawg*    **peg**    **vehor**

     *I*       *medicine*      *drink*   ***COMPL1***

     *I have taken the medicine.*

Example (14) a expresses the situation in which the speaker has finished taking his dose but there is more left in the course of medication. Example (14) b, in contrast, says that he has finished taking the entire course of medicine (there is no medicine left).

The evidence in (14) shows that *peg vehor* expresses not only the completion of a process (verb), but also the completion of a thing (noun). *Peg vehor*, on the other hand, not only restricts the profile to the end-state of a situation, but also lends its '**collective**' profile to a noun, causing it to be construed as a '**bounded plural mass**' of a thing type[28]. Before going further, the import of this statement should be defined first.

*Plural mass* a plural mass is a noun whose amount of an entity type does not have a definite number. The number is plural but left open.

*Bounded plural mass* when a plural mass is bounded, the amount of an entity type is construed as a whole.

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[28] See the discussion of **type** and **instance** in Section 3.3.1

I am claiming that there is a semantic extension of the collective profile from a process (a verb) to a thing (a noun). In considering these notions it will be useful to pay separate attention to the semantic aspects of nouns in Lahu Shi.

Like Lahu Na (Manson 1995: 7), Lahu Shi does not make the distinction between count nouns and mass nouns and between singular and plural. That is, a simple noun[29] designates an entity type which is inherently unspecified for both the count-mass and number distinctions. Nouns, in Lahu Shi, distribute rather like mass nouns in English, as in (15). In order to quantify a noun, it is necessary to do so by means of a numeral classifier, as in (16).

(15) *ngag* **phid** *cawg* *che* *yaog*

      *I*    **dog**    *have*    *Pt*    *Pt*

      *I have a dog/ dogs*

(16) *Ix mag* *geh* *daq* *jad* *che* *phid* *teq* **kheh**

      *3ʳᵈ Dual* *COM* *good* *very* *Pt*    *dog*    *one*    **CLF: animal**

      *cawg* *che* *yaog*

      *have*    *Pt*    *Pt*

      *They have a very good dog.*

Whether it is a count or mass noun or whether the meaning is singular or plural is understood from the other words accompanying the noun (as in 16) or can be inferred from context, (as in 15). However, it should be noted here that there are some words that have plural or singular meaning inherently (e.g. plural and singular pronouns).

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[29] The analysis of Lahu Shi nouns is not in the scope of this paper. The discussion of nouns is meant only to explain the conceptual property of *peg vehor.*

The present focus is on the situation described in (14) b in which the quantity of medicine is irrelevant and it does not need to be indicated. The problem is where the concept of a '**bounded plural mass**' in (14) b (a course of medicine) comes from. This semantic content, I claim, cannot be inferred from context. It is *peg vehor* that is capable of deriving the concept, causing a noun (a thing type) to be profiled collectively and construed as a bounded plural mass. This is depicted in Figure 23.
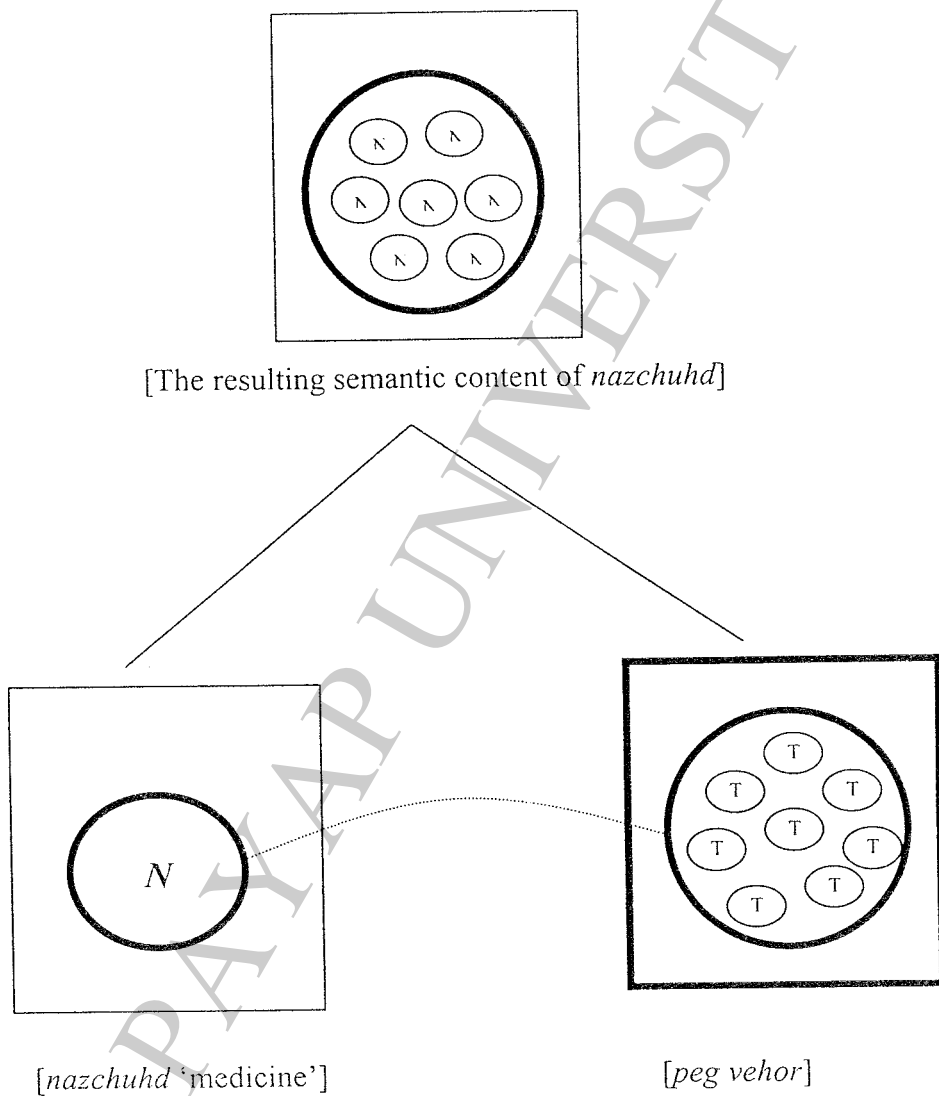


[The resulting semantic content of *nazchuhd*]

[*nazchuhd* 'medicine']          [*peg vehor*]

Figure 23. Semantic effect of the completive *peg vehor*

In Figure 23 *nazchuhd* profiles an entity of the type 'medicine' (represented by the circle labeled 'N'). *Peg vehor* profiles a set of an unspecified plural number of entities, all of the same type, but the identity of which is not specified (a number of entities are represented by circles labeled 'T'. Notice that only the big circle is profiled. That is, attention is focused to the amount of a thing type as a whole. *Peg vehor* is the profile determinant (see Section 3.3), in that the resulting semantic content of *nazchuhd* inherits the collective profile and thereby is construed as a bounded plural mass. Therefore it can be said that in (14) b the resulting effects of *peg vehor* are that the end-point of taking medicine activity is designated, and that the medicine is profiled collectively causing it to be construed as a course of medicine not an individual dose. That *peg vehor* is able to lend its collective profile to a noun is also evidenced from the omission of the main verb, as exemplified in (17) (See Appendix 2 A for more examples of *peor* and *peg vehor*).

(17)  *nazchuhd*    **peg**    **vehor**

   *medicine*    **COMPL1**

   *(All) medicine is finished.*

Notice that omitting the main verb does not result in an ungrammatical sentence. In uttering (17), the speaker does not emphasize the completion of the process, but instead that the noun 'medicine' is finished (i.e., the speaker does not say how, though). The fact that the completion of medicine is still conveyed in (17) even though the main verb is omitted should support my claim that there is a semantic extension of the collective profile from a process (a verb) to a thing (a noun). This difference in grammatical behavior between *peor* and *peg vehor*, I claim, is based on their distinct profiles and semantic values. Observe the expressions in (18).

(18) a. * *yawd*     *yehg lo*    *kawq -aq*                     *peg vehor*

       *3ʳᵈ person home LOC return motion towards the speaker*    COMPL1

       *He has returned home (but he is not here now).*

     b. \* *imad*      *yehg lo*    *kawq -aq*                   *peg vehor*

       *They: dual home LOC return motion towards the speaker*    COMPL1

       *The two of them have returned home (but they are not here now).*

     c. *ihehd yehg*    *lo*      *kawq -aq*                   *peg vehor*

       *they*    *home*    *LOC*    *return motion towards the speaker*   COMPL1

       *They have returned home (but they are not here now).*

Although the three sentences express the very same process (returning home), Only Sentence (18) c is grammatical. To explain this one needs to look at the distinction between *yawd, imad,* and *ihehd.*[30]

There are some words that are singular or plural inherently (they are not unspecified or 'neutral' in nature like *nazchuhd* 'medicine', exemplified above). The pronoun *yawd* 'he' in (18) a has the concept of singularity in nature. That is, it is the specified number (one person) which is evoked from the expression itself, whereas *nazchuhd* is inherently unspecified. However, *peg vehor* has the conceptual property of collective profile and the construal of a bounded plural mass. Therefore, the reason (18) a is ungrammatical is that the coexistence of *peg vehor* with *yawd* is conceptually incompatible. It is conceptually impossible to collectively profile *yawd* which inherently specifies a singular person. Regarding *imad* it is also conceptually incompatible with *peg vehor*. This conceptual clash is due to a linguistic pattern of

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[30] It should be noted here that although *Ihehd yehg lo kawaq peg vehor* in (18 c) is acceptable, it is more common to say *Ihehd yehg lo kawaq vehor*. That is because it is more preferable to use *peg vehor* with animals or inanimate objects.

Lahu Shi. That is, Lahu Shi has dual number *imad* for referring to just two of something and also has plural number *ihehd* for referring to more than two.

This means that the conception of plurality in Lahu Shi excludes dual number. Since *imad* has **dual** number (which conceptually does not evoke the conceptualization of a collective group) but *peg vehor* has the property of collective profile and the construal of a bounded **plural** mass, their coexistence thus causes a conceptual clash. *Ihehd*, on the other hand, has the concept of plurality in nature which is conceptually compatible with *peg vehor*. *Ihehd* is thus able to receive the collective profile causing it to be construed as a bounded plural mass (a group of people). The example (18) above is evidence that the concept of a bounded plural mass is not inferred from context but from *peg vehor*. It also illustrates the valence[31] of *peg vehor* is in part motivated by its semantic structure. That is, *peg vehor* cannot occur with any pronoun, it has to occur with a plural pronoun. In other words, which pronoun can be used and which cannot is determined by the semantic structure of *peg vehor*.

Returning to example (12) a. above, it is ungrammatical because Ekhadlar is a proper name. This has an inherent value of one particular person. Like *yawd*, Ekhadlar has the concept of singularity in nature and it is thus conceptually conflicting with *peg vehor*.

The completives *peg vehor* and *peor* can thus be defined as the end of a set of activities and the end of a subset of a set of activities, respectively.

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[31] A linguistic unit's valence is its disposition to combine with other units (Taylor 2002: 266).

## 4.2.3 Progressive aspects in Lahu Shi

In Section 4.2.1-4.2.2, I illustrated the aspectual elements which are expressed analytically, and whose meanings are crucially dependent on construal and essential for their grammatical properties. In this section, I show that some aspectual elements in Lahu Shi are grammaticalized (i.e., a lexical content word becomes a grammatical word). It is found that the progressive aspect construction in Lahu Shi derives historically from two lexical elements, namely, *chehd* 'stay' and *tod* 'walk'. Each will be discussed in turn.

## 4.2.3.1 The progressive aspect *'chehd'*[32]

The main burden of this section is to show how the concept of progressive is derived from *chehd*.

Consider the following uses of *chehd*.

(19) a. *yaqni   ngag   yehg   huh   chehd   che   yaog*

     *today   I   house   LOC   stay   Pt   Pt*

     *I stay at home today.*

   b. *Ehrkhad   awr   cad   chehd   lar*

     *Ehrkhad   rice   eat   PROG1   Pt*

     *(I saw) Ehrkhad eating rice.*

In (19) a, *chehd* is the content verb of the sentence (i.e. main verb) meaning approximately the same thing as English 'stay'. It would be no dispute to say that (19) a is a prototypical use of *chehd*. Sentence (19) b, however, does not seem to be

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[32] According to Matisoff (1982: 240), In Lahu Na when *cheh^* 'stay' occurs after the main verb of the sentence, it serves as a V$_{var}$ (a variable post-head versatile verb). That is, 'when it combines with the main verb, it entails a new semantic interpretation that then is different in a predictable way'. V$_{var}$ is a verb which occurs after the head verb and has an aspectual meaning. (Note that *cheh^* is Lahu Na not Lahu Shi).

anything like (19) a. Although *chehd* in (19) b is basically a **location** verb[33], no actual location is involved in it. It is another use of *chehd* (progressive marking) which involves some kind of semantic attenuation. The problem is to give an account for this phenomenon.

My attempt here is to go beyond a mere description of the linguistic phenomenon, and analyze it in light of what is known about the mind. Following Langacker's analysis of *go* (1991b: 330-333), I suggest that the distinctive use of *chehd* does not derive from metaphorical extension of a basic location sense (i.e., a spatial notion is being mapped on to a temporal notion (cf. Lakoff and Johnson: 1980 [34]), but from the abstract conceptual structure of 'continuation' of *chehd*.

In elucidating this remark, the conceptualization of spatial location of *chehd* should be taken into consideration first. Intuitively, at successive points in time (e.g. 10 a.m., 11 a.m..... 6 p.m. and so on) the participant in (19) a occupies the same spatial location (*house*). The participant is at the same location over time. There is the **continuation** of remaining in the same location. From this abstract conceptual structure of spatial domain, one is able to recognize the commonality between continuation of being in the same location and continuation of doing the same activity. That is, in (19) b instead of Ehrkhad's 'continuing' being at the same place,

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[33] The source of the notion 'location verb' is from *The Evolution of grammar* (Bybee, et al 1994). It refers to locative source of progressive aspect (for example, 'sit' is a locative source of progressive in Alyawarra, 'stand' in Dakota, 'stop' in Tok Pisin) (1994: 128). Locative source is one of several lexical sources of progressive in languages of the world.

[34] The essence of metaphor is "understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (Lakoff and Johnson 1980:5). They claim that the major function of metaphor is to understand difficult, complex, abstract, or a less clearly delineated concept in terms of more concrete concepts. For example, *That flat tire cost me an hour*, we are able to understand this statement by trying to understand the concept TIME in terms of the concept MONEY which is a more concrete and clearly delineated concept. The concept we try to understand (TIME) is called the 'target domain', and the concept used for this purpose (MONEY) is called the 'source domain'. Our ability to conceive one thing in terms of another makes a language creative. In order to do this, target and source domain must not share major characteristics, but they must share some. Those minor characteristics do not have to match exactly but they have to be sufficiently similar, which leads to semantic motivation that allows us to interpret or create a new concept.

he continues doing the activity of eating. This is possible because of our ability to conceptualize an entity in differing degrees of detail (schematic vs. elaborated)[35], which includes *chehd*. We can conceptually eliminate the particulars associated with *chehd*, and conceptualize only its abstract and schematic notion of continuation (see the discussion of schema in Section 3.4). Since *chehd* can be conceptualized schematically (not specifically), it thus can be instantiated not only in the domain of space but in the domain of time as well, which enables us to recognize the commonality between 'spatial continuation' in (19) a and 'temporal continuation' in (19) b. This is why the progressive sense of *chehd* derives, not from metaphorical extension, but from the abstract characterization of continuation.

## 4.2.3.2 The progressive aspect '*tod*'[36]

In this section, I introduce another progressive, namely *tod*. Then I show the similarities and differences between the two progressives *tod* and *chehd*.

Consider the uses of *tod*.

(20) a. *ngag*   **tod**   *gheh*   *jad*   *che*   *yaog*

    *I*     **walk**   *fast*   *very*   *Pt*   *Pt*

    *I walk very fast.*

  b. *Ehrsanx*     *cixsir*   *cad*   **tod**     *lar*

    *Ehrsanx*     *fruit*   *eat*   **PROG2**   *Pt*

    *(I saw) Ehrsanx eating (and moving from one place to another at the same time).*

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[35] An entity can be construed differently according to the degree of specificity. For example, the same entity might be described by any of the following: *creature, animal, mammal, dog, poodle.*

[36] According to Matisoff (1982: 228), In Lahu Na when *to^* 'walk' occurs after the main verb of the sentence, it serves as a V$_V$ (post-head versatile verb). V$_V$ is a verb which is juxtaposed after the head verb.

As with *chehd,* in (20) a, *tod* is the content verb of the main sentence which can be glossed as 'walk' in English. It is a prototypical use of *tod.* Sentence (20) b, however, is an example of another use of *tod* to express progressive aspect. Although *tod* in (20) b is basically a motion verb, no walking/transportory is involved in it.

In (20) b, at successive points in time, Ehrsanx occupies different spatial locations. In order to move from one (spatial) location to another, he needs to continue moving his feet. As with *chehd*, one can also recognize the commonality between continuation of movement and continuation of time. Because *tod* is conceptualized schematically, it thus can be instantiated in both spatial and temporal domains. It is this schematic notion that captures what is common between the lexical form in (20) a and the grammaticalized form in (20) b.

The idea that both *tod* and *chehd* are used to express progressive might seem counterintuitive. This reaction is probably based on the assumption that *tod* and *chehd* have different conceptions (e.g. motion verb vs. location verb). As a matter of fact, this is perfectly reasonable. Although, they are different activities, at the schematic level they share the same conceptual schema (i.e. the concept of continuation). This notion is depicted in Figure 24.

[continuation] (schema)
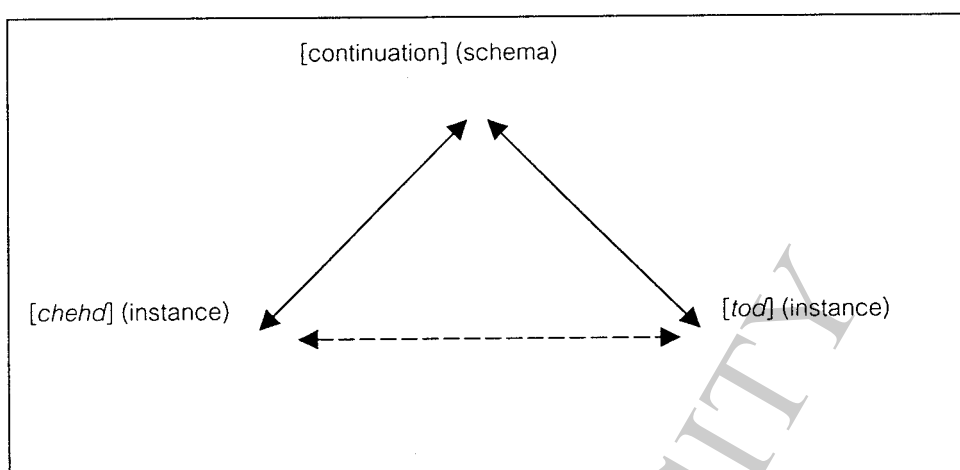
[*chehd*] (instance)     [*tod*] (instance)

Figure 24. A schematic representation of the relation between a schema
and its instances   (Adapted from Taylor 2002: 125)

Figure 24 illustrates the schema-instance relation in which there are two
instances (*chehd* and *tod*) [37]of the schema (continuation). *Chehd* and *tod* are related
by similarity of a concept of continuation. The schema encapsulates the way in which
*chehd* and *tod* are perceived to be similar; consequently they both are progressive
aspects.

The shared semantic effect (continuation) of *chehd* and *tod* can be depicted in
Figure 25.

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[37] Note that *tod* and *chehd* discussed here are the grammaticalized forms.
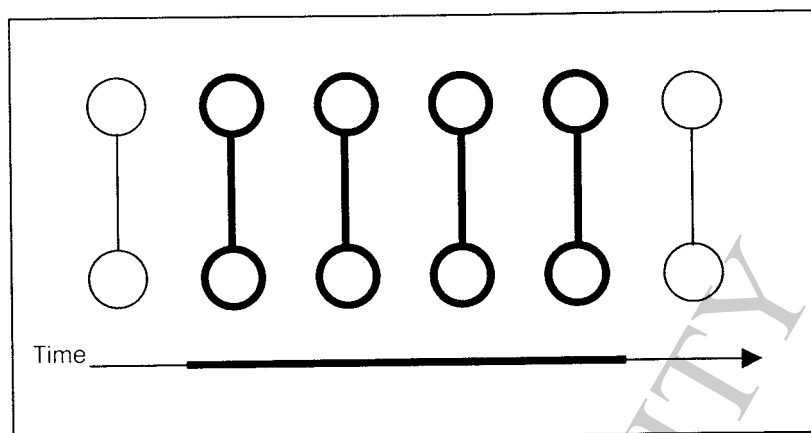
Figure 25. A schematic representation of the progressive aspects:

*tod* and *chehd*

The two progressive aspects derive an ongoing process by restricting the profiled relationship to an internal portion of the overall event. In Figure 25 the beginning and end-point of the process are not profiled. They are part of the base of the process. Without the onset and offset of the designated process conceived as the base there would be no basis for conceptualizing the continuation over time.

However, the two are by no means the same. They flesh out the schema in contrasting ways. As a result, although they both are progressive aspects, they have different semantic effects on the same process. I turn now to the difference between *chehd* and *tod* and that their difference is due to the fact that they are derived from the two distinct lexical sources, and that they are not semantically void at the grammatical level.

With respect to *chehd*, the semantic content idea of remaining in the same location is not completely lacking in its grammatical use. Consider the expression in (21).

(21)  *Ehrkhad*     *cex*     **chehd**     *lar*

  *Ehrkhad*     *run*     **PROG1**     *Pt*

  *(I saw) Ehrkhad running.*

The sentence in (21) only invokes the conception of Ehrkhad's running, not a specific length of distance that he ran.

Now compare (21) with the expression in (22).

(22)  *Ehrdawx*     *cex*     **tod**     *lar*

  *Ehrdawx*     *run*     **PROG2**     *Pt*

  *(I saw) Ehrdawx running (in distance).*

The semantic value of *tod* is also in a continuation of process (i.e., causing the process to be construed as an ongoing activity). However, it is the semantic idea of motion that still remains in (22). The consequence is that (22) implies a long distance of Ehrdawx's running (i.e., extensive running), while there is no such implication in (21).

This illustrates that the two progressives convey much more than simple aspectual meaning. What they convey seems to be directly derivable from their lexical sources (location and motion), which causes them to be distinct semantically and functionally from one another. These semantic effects show up grammatically.

As mentioned, the semantic notion of location in the progressive *chehd* is not completely lacking. A semantic effect of this idea is to highlight the location of the event. I will refer to this semantic effect of *chehd* as '**locational restrictedness**'. That is, it causes a process to be construed as restricted or situated within a particular (spatial) location. For example, the activity in (19) b *Ehrkhad cad chehd lar* '(I saw) Ehrkhad eating' implies that at successive points in time the eating activity proceeds

through time but at the same spatial location. Although the location is not expressed explicitly, the implication of the process being restricted locationally is very important for the distinction between the two progressives. That is, *chehd* emphasizes the location of a situation, whereas, there is no such implication conveyed in *tod*.

It should be noted that in order to use *chehd* it does not mean that the participant must strictly eat on the spot – not moving forward or around the area. That is to say, *chehd* can be used, even though the participant eats and moves around in the area, as long as the participant does not move from one spatial location to another.

The semantic effect of *tod*, in contrast, is '**locational unrestrictdedness**'. It does not make reference to any location. The idea of the activity performed at the same place is not inherent to *tod* since the semantic notion of motion is not completely lost. A process is thus construed as the activity in motion. For example, the sentence in (20) b *Ehrkhad cad tod lar* '(I saw) Ehrkhad eating (and moving from on place to another at the same time)'. Ehrkhad does not remain at the same (spatial) place while he is eating. Rather, he is eating and physically moving (from one spatial place to another) simultaneously. It can be said that the function of *tod* is to lend the concept of motion to the process, causing it to change its internal shape. What *tod* emphasizes is thus the moving process (i.e. moving from one place to another). This illustrates that the semantic effect of *tod* is not opposite to that of *chehd*. As a result, 'locational unrestrictedness' does not truly convey the semantic effect of *tod*. A better term to convey the conception of moving from one spatial location to another, I suggest, is a '**locational shift**'. What it does is it imposes a specific image of a trajector moving from one location to another on the conceptual content of the process/situation.

The distinct functions between *chehd* and *tod*, that is, spatial boundedness and spatial unboundedness/spatial shift can be depicted in Figure 26.

(a)                                    (b)



The progressive *chehd*                The progressive *tod*

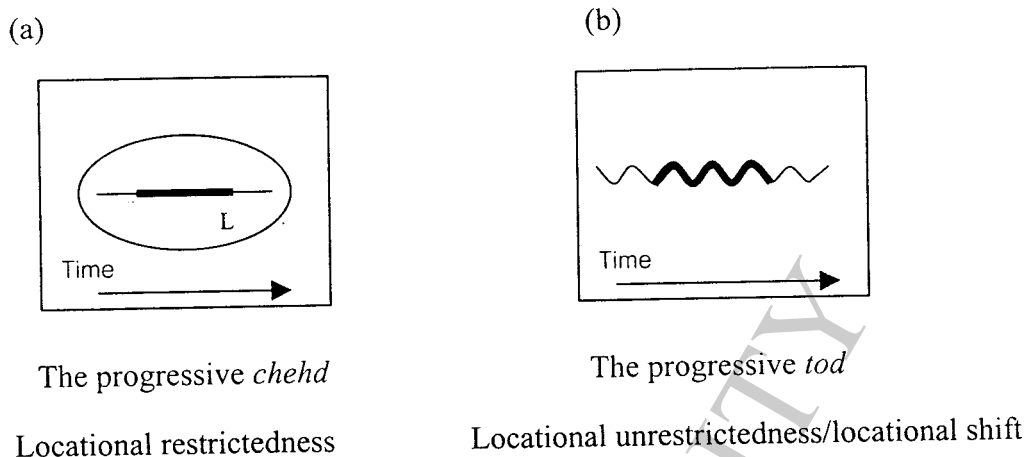Locational restrictedness          Locational unrestrictedness/locational shift

Figure 26. The semantic effects of the progressives *chehd* and *tod*

The progressives *chehd* and *tod* are represented abstractly in Figure 26, where heavy lines represent the continuation over time. The oval labeled 'L' in Figure 26a stands for the location. That is to say, *chehd* locates the designated process in a particular spatial location. *Tod*, in contrast, is spatially unbounded. It lends the idea of motion of the designated process from one spatial location to another. The idea of motion, together with spatial shift, is represented by the wavy line, sketched in Figure 26b.

It should be noted that although *tod* would seem to be conceptually incompatible with 'still' processes (events in which it is impossible to be performed and in motion simultaneously, for example, *yuhq* 'sleep' ??*Ehrkhad yuhq tod aq* 'Ehrkhad is sleeping in motion'). However, there are certain situations that the co-occurrence between, say, *yuhq* 'sleep' and *tod* is perfectly acceptable. That is when the participant (*Ehrkhad*) is sleeping in a moving vehicle (or on a moving animal (e.g. elephant, horse) If, however, a vehicle does not move, *tod* cannot be used). This shows that *tod* does not place a restriction on the motion made by the participant (walking, running). As long as the participant is not at the same place (although it is a

vehicle that carries him from one place to another), *tod* can co-occur with 'still' verbs (See Appendix B).

The examples of *tod* discussed so far only illustrate situations in which *tod* causes a process to be construed as the activity in motion, i.e., the participant performs the activity and moves from one place to another simultaneously. It should be emphasized that '**simultaneity**' is not the main issue of *tod*. It is also possible to have situations in which the participant moves from one place to another before performing the activity – the motion and the activity are in **sequence**, as shown in (23)

(23)   *ngag*   *awr*   *te*   **tod**   *che*   *awg*

      *I*   *rice*   *do*   **PROG2**   *Pt*   *Pt*

*I am moving (to another location) to cook rice.*

In uttering (23), it does not mean that the participant is cooking and moving from one place to another at the same time (this is strange). Rather, it means that the participant moves from one spatial location to another in order to cook rice. As a result, functionally this expression is acceptable only when the participant does not cook rice at his own place. The 'situation' restriction is due to the semantic effect of *tod* – locational shift. That is to say, 'cooking rice at one's own place' lacks the concept of locational shift; consequently, this usage event is incompatible with *tod*. This shows that the resulting effect of *tod* (whether it derives simultaneous reading or sequential reading) depends on types of activities. Moreover, its linguistic use (whether or not it is functionally acceptable) depends on usage events. In this particular example, the context that needs to be considered is where the participant cooked rice.

Another linguistic facet that makes *tod* distinct from *chehd* is its expandability; that is, a process designated by *tod* is not instantiated at the moment of speaking. However, *tod* is still considered progressive since it profiles the continuation over time, though that of the general picture of the situation. An example will clarify this remark.

**Situation:** In the morning Ehrkhadpanx went to catch fish at his pond. On his way, Ehrkhadpanx met a friend. His friend asked 'what are you doing here?' Ehrkhadpanx answered (24).

(24)a. *ngag* *ngad* *ber* **tod** *che* *yaog*

      *I* *fish* *hook* **PROG2** *Pt* *Pt*

      *I am moving (to another location) to catch fish.*

  b. *? ngag ngad* *ber* **chehd** *che* *yaog*

      *I* *fish* *hook* **PROG1** *Pt* *Pt*

  *I am catching fish.*

When he reached the fishpond, he met another friend. His friend asked him what he was doing there. In reply to this question, he also said (24) a.

After fishing for a few hours, he had a lunch break. While he was eating, his friend walked past and asked him what he was doing there. Again, the perfectly reasonable answer is (24) a.

In reply to his friends' question, Ehrkhadpanx does not answer what he is doing at the moment the question is asked (going to the fishpond, arriving at the fishpond, or taking a break). Instead, he tells his friend about his moving (from one place to another) to do the fishing activity. The question is why the progressive *tod* can function in this manner but not *chehd.*

My suggestion is that *tod* with its concept of continuation over time is more expandable than *chehd*. To assert (24) a, the speaker does not state that he is doing the activity at the moment of speaking but that this activity began in the past, continues at the present, and will be (presumably) carried on in the future (i.e. his moving from home to the pond to do fishing). In other words, *tod* causes the designated situation to be construed as expandable. *Tod* is not fully instantiated at the moment of speaking (a 'true' present time). Consequently, any portion of the situation (e.g. going to the fishpond, arriving at the fishpond, or taking a break) will count as a valid instance. It can be said that the contribution of *tod* causes a process to be construed as a sequence, it profiles the continuation over time of the general picture of the situation and not the continuation of the situation at the moment of speaking.

The progressive *chehd*, on the other hand, is fully instantiated at the moment of speaking (i.e., it cannot hold over a period of time). The consequence is that the expression in (24) b is considered unacceptable in the three circumstances exemplified above. In fact, it is used when the fishing activity is performed at the moment the question is asked, as shown in (25).

(25)  *ngag   ngad   ber   **chehd**        che    yaog*

      *I      fish   hook   **PROG1**      Pt     Pt*

      *I am catching fish.*

The examples discussed so far illustrate the different semantic effects of *chehd* and *tod* which are used to describe different conceived situations. In the following discussion *chehd* and *tod* describe the same situation.

**Situation 1:** There are three people, Naleh, her friend, and another person. Naleh left home to go to the market. Later, her friend stopped by and asked another person where Naleh was. In reply to the question, it is acceptable for the other person (who knew Naleh was going to the market) to say either (26) a or (26) b.

(26) a. *Naleh  kax  lo  veh  **chehd**  lar*

      *Naleh  market LOC  go  **PROG1**  Pt*

      *(I saw) Naleh is going to be at the market.*

  b. *Naleh  kax  lo  veh  **tod**  lar*

      *Naleh  market LOC  go  **PROG2**  Pt.*

      *(I saw) Naleh is going to the market.*

The two sentences can be employed to describe precisely the same objective situation. However, this same scene can be construed by means of alternative images. In (26) a, the goal/location of the situation (market) is profiled owing to the semantic effect of 'locational restrictedness'. The market in (26) b, on the contrary, is merely a part of a two-participant process. Since *veh* itself is a motion verb, it is not construed the same way as are non-motion verbs. The concept of motion thus is not at issue. That is to say, the overall effect of *tod* is to profile the ongoing process.

**Situation 2:** On the way to the market. If Naleh was met on the way to the market, the most common answer which the speaker would give to the question 'where is Naleh?' or 'Have you seen Naleh?' is (26)b.

This example illustrates our ability to mentally construe a situation in alternative ways. The very wording that a speaker chooses in order to linguistically encode a situation is based on the way in which the situation is mentally construed. However, it is not necessary that the alternative conceptualizations describing the same scene are **entrenched**[38] and conventionalized equally. In contrast to Situation 1, although Situation 2 can be construed in alternative ways, (26) b. is most commonly

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[38] When an expression is repeatedly used, it becomes more 'entrenched' or 'automated' and is employed by a speaker without attention to their internal structure (Langacker 1987: 59)

thought of[39] – it is more entrenched and conventionalized. The higher frequency of use of (26) b, I suggest, is motivated by the prototypical image of the scene (the facet of the scene – Naleh was going to the market – is rendered more salient than others) which is symbolized by *tod* in (26) b.

This shows that even though we have the capacity to conceptualize the same situation in alternative ways, the different images do not have equal status in every situation.

## 4.2.4 Habitual aspect in Lahu Shi

In Section 4.2.3, I discussed the progressives *chehd* and *tod*. In this section, I show that the two progressives can derive habitual meaning.

Progressive refers to only one specific instance of the process, as occurring at the same time as the time of speaking. In order to obtain the habitual reading, the progressive (*chehd* or *tod*) has to co-occur with an adverb(s) of time. The contribution of the progressive in interaction with the adverb habitualizes the process and causes it to be construed as the normal practice during the time given by the adverb. The concept of continuation over time of *tod* and *chehd* is also expandable[40]. Compare the two expressions in (27).

(27) a. *ngag*   *nazchuhd*   *dawg*       ***chehd***    *che*   *awg*

      *I*      *medicine*   *drink*      ***PROG1***   *Pt*    *Pt*

      *I am taking medicine.*

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[39] For example, in English the two sentences (*The book is on the table* and *The table is supporting the book)* could be used to describe the same objective scene although they embody different images and thus are semantically different. However, it is the former that is used more commonly.

[40] It should be noted here that expandability of *tod* habitual aspect is different from that that of *tod* progressive. *Tod* habitual conveys 'normal practice', while *tod* progressive conveys 'the general picture of a given specific event' (see Example 24).

| b. | *ngag* | *nazchuhd* | *dawg* | ***don*** | ***chehd*** | *che* | *awg* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *I* | *medicine* | *drink* | ***ADV: freq*** | ***PROG1*** | *Pt* | *Pt* |

*I take medicine.*

Sentence (27) a implies that the participant is taking medicine at the moment of utterance. There is no such implication in (27) b. Sentence (27) b, in contrast, implies the normal practice of the speaker – that is he takes medicine regularly. The example suggests that *don* lends its temporal expandability to the situation, causing 'the progressive' to be able to expand from the strict interpretations (the precise moment of speaking) so as to incorporate larger periods of time which include the present. In addition, only one specific instance designated by the progressive is construed as the successive occurrence of several instances.

However, as mentioned in Section 4.2.3, the progressive *chehd* does not have only the semantic effect of continuation over time, but also the effect of locational restrictedness. That is, in uttering (27) b, the speaker implies that his normal practice of taking medicine is performed in a particular place (e.g. home). Compare this effect of *chehd* with the locational shift effect of *tod* in (28).

| (28) | *ngag* | *nazchuhd* | *dawg* | ***don*** | ***tod*** | *che* | *awg* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *I* | *medicine* | *drink* | ***ADV: freq*** | ***PROG2*** | *Pt* | *Pt* |

*I take medicine.*

Sentence (28) also expresses the normal practice of taking medicine. However, owing to the locational shift effect of *tod*, the practice is performed in different places (e.g. the participant always takes medicine with him wherever he goes).

Take, the expressions in (29), as another example.

(29) a. *cigni*   *khawq ngag*   *bawqsir thez don*   ***chehd***   *che*   *awg*

    *this*   *year*   *I*   *football kick*   *ADV: freq* ***PROG1***   *Pt*   *Pt*

    *This year I play football.*

  b. *cigni*   *khawq ngag*   *bawqsir thez don*   ***tod***   *che*   *awg*

    *this*   *year*   *I*   *football kick*   *ADV: freq* ***PROG2***   *Pt*   *Pt*

    *This year I play football.*

Both expressions in (29) express the habit of playing football in one year. However, in (29) b it implies that this event is not performed at his hometown or country. That is, he goes to play football in a different place for one year. There is no such implication in (29) a. The footballer does not move away to play football (he may play football in different provinces but he always goes back home). These examples show that the semantic effects of *chehd* and *tod* (locational restrictedness and locational shift) are very evident.

## 4.3 Conclusion of construal in Lahu Shi aspect

There are few linguists who have not tried to explain the notion of aspect in regard to 'viewing'. Recall that the traditional definition of aspect is a grammatical category which deals with how the event is viewed, such as whether it is progressive, perfective, completive. The importance of viewing to understanding of the notion of aspect is undeniable.

The analysis presented here illustrates that aspect does involve viewing but not in a mere literal sense. Viewing effects or 'profiling' in CG extend beyond perception to conception. It shows that profiling is involved in Lahu Shi aspect. In other words, the wording we choose to linguistically encode a situation hinges on the way in which the situation is mentally construed.

This analysis shows that the notion of profile, one aspect of construal, is crucial to the analysis of both semantic and grammatical meaning. All linguistic expressions profile some aspect of a predication (e.g. a verb profiles a process). This includes grammatical words like aspect markers. The contribution of aspect to a verb in CG has an influence on the nature of its profile (causing it to change its internal shape). Its presence thus is crucial to the overall meaning of the sentence. Moreover, the inherent meaningfulness of aspect markers influences their use in syntactic contexts. In other words, their distinct grammatical behaviors are motivated by their different inherent profiles and semantic properties.