A Grammar of Lakkja, South China

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The University of Melbourne
Australia, 2019
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Abstract

This thesis proposes to present a synchronic investigation of the Lakkja language which is spoken in South China with approximately 9,000 speakers. It aims to offer a full descriptive grammar of Lakkja by observing, documenting and analysing the language as manifested in its sound system, lexicon and grammar, not only to provide valuable data for typological and comparative studies but also help to preserve a precious cultural heritage for mankind.

Adopting a functional-typological approach, this study begins with an introduction of the language and its people, including the topography, demography, ethnographic issues and sociolinguistic situations in Lakkja-speaking area, along with the typological profile of the language, the background, significance and methodology of this research, followed by an account of the phonological properties and changes before giving a description of the internal structure of words and morphological processes. The forms and functions of the noun phrase are discussed, as are the characteristics and functions of the verb phrase, as well as the semantic and syntactic properties of adjectives and adverbs. Serial verb constructions are treated in some detail, along with the temporal-aspectual system. An overall account of sentence types are explored. Grammatical relations between verbs and its arguments concludes the thesis from morpho-syntactic perspectives.

The sound system of Lakkja generally follows the principles of historical phonology in Tai-Kadai languages. Lakkja by and large preserves the historical voiceless and voiced distinction in tonal selection. The sound system is not stable and undergoing a tendency of being simplified as a result of language contact. Monosyllabic words constitute the majority of Lakkja words, while loan words from local Chinese are disyllabic or polysyllabic. Word formation in Lakkja is characterized by affixation, compounding, reduplication and phonological alternation. A significant number of noun classifiers and lexical words may function as prefixes and suffixes to signify a specific entity or to mark gender, case and number, among others. A few typological features such as circumfix are found in Lakkja, which is quite unusual cross-linguistically. Compounding is typically derivational, head-initial and endocentric, with noticeable exceptions. Complex semantic properties and syntactic behaviours are noted in the noun phrase and the verb phrase. Constituent order determines the semantic relations and syntactic functions to a great extent. There is a continuum between morphology and syntax in certain lexical items, blurring the boundary between adjectives and
adverbs, between nouns and verbs. A considerable number of Lakkja words have dual or multiple membership, with some in the process of being grammaticalized.

Lakkja clauses include simple and complex clauses as well as simplex, subject-less and verbless clauses. Intonations and clause-final particles play a significant role in differentiating various types of sentences. Although Lakkja may be described as having an SVO (AVO) word order, the semantic, syntactic and thematic relations between arguments present a more complex picture.

Lakkja holds a key to Kam-Tai. It is hoped that this study may shed some light on our understanding of the internal structure of Kam-Sui and Tai-Kadai, contact-induced language change, and more importantly, the relationship between Tai-Kadai and Austronesian.
Chapter 1

Introduction

This thesis is a descriptive analysis of Lakkja, a Kam-Tai language found in South China with approximately 9,000 native speakers. The chapter presents a brief ethnographic and sociolinguistic sketch by introducing the language and its speakers, the research aims, theoretical framework and research methodology, literature review, fieldwork and data management, as well as the structure of the work.

1.1 The language and its speakers

The Lakkja language, also spelled as Lakkia, is genetically classified as a member of the Kam-Tai language family of the Tai-Kadai or Kra-Dai stock. The Kam-Tai family is one of the largest and the best-known language families in mainland Southeast Asia. The position of Lakkja within Tai-Kadai can be represented in Figure 1.1:

**Figure 1.1** The Tai-Kadai family tree (Edmondson & Solnit 1997: 2)

Lakkja is spoken in Dayaoshan (The Grand Yao Mountains), Jinxiu Yao Autonomous County, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region in south China (Figure 1.2), with approximately 9,000 speakers. Ethnically, Lakkja speakers identify themselves as a subgroup of Yao of Hmong-Mien, a distinct group of people residing in South China and surrounding regions, and one of the 56 officially recognized minority groups within the PRC.
The 2013 government census shows a total population of 155,888 in Jinxiu County, including five branches of Yao and other people of other ethnic groups such as Han Chinese, Zhuang, Miao, Dong, etc. Specifically, Zhuang accounts for the largest proportion of 43% or so; Yao makes up 39% of the population; Miao and Dong jointly make up less than 0.1%; the rest is mainly Han Chinese people. The population of Yao speakers in Jinxiu is approximately 62,000 in 2013, with Lakkja speakers accounting for nearly 10,000 according to official figures.

Lakkja is the autonym or self-designation of this speech community. Chinese people call them Chashan Yao, meaning “Yao in the Tea Mountains”. In the language, \textit{lak}^{24} is a classifier for human beings and \textit{kja}^{24} denotes “mountain”. Lakkja thus literally means ‘people who live in mountains’; the term is also used as the name of the language.

Speakers of the Lakkja group have been officially included as part of the ethnic Yao (Mien) in China. Although this language comes from the Kam-Tai linguistic branch, the Lakkja people are culturally similar to Yao people, which is a highly diverse linguistic group in China. There are mainly three distinct varieties within members of the Yao community from a cultural
perspective: Iu Mien, Bunu, as well as Lakkja. With no division of dialects, Lakkja is similar to Iu Mien phonetically, to Hmong Djua or Bunu in constituent order, but mutually unintelligible with either. Lexically, Lakkja is 45% similar to Dong, 23% to Lachi and Qabiao, and 22% to Gelao (Ethnologue).

1.2 Habitat

1.2.1 Geographic setting and climate

Jinxiu Yao Autonomous County, one of the Yao inhabiting areas, is located in the east of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, covering a total area of 2513 square kilometres from 109°50' to 110°27' east longitude and from 23°40' to 24°28' north latitude. Jinxiu county town is approximately 240 kilometres away from Nanning, the capital city of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, and 81 kilometers away from Liuzhou, the largest industrial city in Guangxi.

Dayaoshan covers almost the entire territory of Jinxiu County between Gui River and Liu River. As to the climate, Dayaoshan is situated in the subtropical zone with an annual average temperature of 17-18°C, rich in natural resources.

Lakkja people mainly inhabit in the middle and north-eastern part of the Dayaoshan. The majority of Lakkja villages are built along mountains and rivers, with a few in mountain passes where it was historically easy to defend and difficult to attack. The size of Lakkja villages is restricted by the amount of arable lands. Therefore, there are traditionally ten to fifty households in a Lakkja village.

1.2.2 History

Before the turn of Yuan and Ming Dynasty, Dayaoshan was a depopulated zone. Among the five branches of Yao who currently inhabit Dayaoshan, Lakkja was the earliest who migrated into this area.

According to the local gazettes of Jinxiu Yao Autonomous County and Jinxiu Yao Autonomous County Annals¹, the ancestors of Lakkja are believed to have migrated to Dayaoshan from Hunan Province, Guangdong Province and other counties in Guangxi Province in around the late 1300s. After over 200 years of development by Lakkja ancestors,

¹ Special thanks to Mr. Zhao Mokun, Chief of Jinxiu County Bureau of Ethnic and Religious Affairs, and Ms. Luo Shan, the undersecretary of Publicity Department of Jinxiu County, who have offered access to the local gazettes and various sources as listed in reference section.
other Yao branches, including Hualan Yao, Ao Yao, Pan Yao, and Shanzi Yao, began to migrate into and jointly develop this area with Chashan Yao.

According to relevant historical materials of Guangxi Yao people (Liu and Mo 2002), it is believed that Lakkja ancestors moved to Dayaosan from different directions at different times. There are roughly three migration routes in history. The first route was from Hunan Province. This group of Lakkja people entered Dayaosan from the north in around 1369 AD and currently lives in villages such as Liuding and Liuduan. They were the first to migrate into Dayaosan. These records are basically consistent with the contents of the ‘story songs of history’ that have been circulated around Liuduan Village. The second route began from Guangdong Province. They migrated in early 1370s from the northeast to their current settlement in villages including Jinxiu, Liula, Xidi, Baisha etc. The third route, according to Jinxiu Annals, was from the counties of Guizhou, Xiangzhou and Zhangzhou in Guangxi Province. This group of Lakkja was the latest one to migrate into Dayaosan.

1.2.3 Economy

1.2.3.1 Means of production and occupancy forms

Means of production in Lakkja include paddy fields, mountains, forests, and rivers. In the early times, the possession of means of production had a close relationship with the time of migration. Therefore, Lakkja, as the first group migrating into Dayaosan, occupied the largest and the best fields, forests and rivers in this area.

The settlements of Lakkja were usually along the mainstreams and tributaries of rivers such as Jinxiu River and Panwang River, accounting for over 50% of the area of Dayaosan. However, in Lakkja society, there were various occupancy forms of the property. For example, most paddy fields belong to private households; the occupancy of mountainous lands and rivers were divided into four forms: collective ownership, collective ownership by a village, public ownership by several households, as well as private ownership which was comparatively rare.

In fei55 ŋa:n214 ‘The Four Villages’ (also called kjat24 hjie:n51 ‘the upper segment’, refers to the four villages including Jinxiu, Baisha, Liula, Xidi that are located on the upper reaches of Jinxiu River), almost every household occupied forests, most of which were used for bird catching and herb planting while a small number were rented to Pan Yao and Shanzi Yao who were late arrivals.

Sources: Liu and Mo 2002; Editorial Committee for Jinxiu Dayaosan Yaozushi 2002
Such occupancy forms in Lakkja took shape from early Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) when they migrated into Dayaoshan, and have experienced a series of evolution with the founding of the People’s Republic of China and development of society.

1.2.3.2 Agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry and fishery

Throughout history, Lakkja is recognized as an agricultural group. They mainly grow rice, with other grains and crops as supplementary. In Lakkja, fields are generally ploughed with animal power. In ancient times, the buffalo was the totem worshipped by Lakkja, indicating buffaloes were the main force of farming, and that a good harvest was in sight.

Lakkja people have been growing rice in Dayaoshan for more than 600 years. They have established a set of effective farming practices, and strictly arrange farming activities according to the season. During the whole process of farm work, women have equal rights and occupy a significant position in the division of labour; men and women perform their farming duties in the daytime and often sing folk songs at night for entertaining as well as for finding lovers. It is also noteworthy that young men from different villages may form a team and help other villages with cultivation, showing the cohesion of the community and the spirit of collectivism.

Comparatively, other grains and crops are in a secondary position in local food system and are planted normally after the completion of paddy field farming. They generally choose hilly areas that are not far from their villages. During the months from July to November, they firstly cut down the small trees, mansions and thorns in the selected areas. Then from December to January, they burn the land and cultivate the soil before growing a variety of crops including sweet potatoes, corns, taros, cassavas, buckwheats, hazelnuts, millets, among other things. Most of these crops are used to feed livestock, make wine, and make snacks. Lakkja people has the habit of dropping around at night, and hosts often prepare steamed taros and baked sweet potatoes for guests.

Moreover, Jinxiu County, with a forest coverage rate of 87.5%, has the largest forest for water resource conservation in Guangxi. Therefore, Lakkja is abundant in forest products and native products such as fir, pine, bamboo, camellia, tea, cinnamon, vanilla, mushrooms, fungus, mangosteen, dried bamboo shoots, medicinal herbs, etc. Among these products, vanilla was a high-income specialty in Lakkja. For over 600 years, Lakkja people had paid great attention to natural environment protection when planting vanilla, and strictly abided by the production rules, for example, crop rotation, fallow system and pest control. However, in the 1980s, Jinxiu County experienced a surge of vanilla planting, during which the excessive use of the land and the misuse of chemical fertilizers led to the extinction of the precious native vanilla.
Furthermore, since Lakkja people live in the mountains, hunting is also one of the important means to maintain the standard of living. Main hunting methods include collecting, waiting, and chasing, such as pok\textsuperscript{24} kju:ə\textsuperscript{24} (do - creek) ‘making bird basin’, tsu:ŋ\textsuperscript{51} let\textsuperscript{24} (assemble - rein) ‘making loop to catch squirrels’, kou\textsuperscript{214} ba:ŋ (wait - flying squirrels) ‘waiting for flying squirrels’, ho:m\textsuperscript{214} tu\textsuperscript{231} (chase - animal) ‘rounding up’, etc. Among various hunting methods, pok\textsuperscript{24} kju:ə:i\textsuperscript{24} ‘making bird basin’, which originated from the middle of the Ming Dynasty, is the oldest and the most interesting. The bird basin is usually made of bamboo and is channelled with creek water. When the nearby birds are attracted by the sound of running water, and fly into the basin to drink or bathe, they will be trapped by the glue on the bamboo strips and finally become delicious food for hunters. Though such a device of hunting is destined to disappear in the modern society because of protection of wild animals, it has irreplaceable cultural value as a traditional phenomenon with a history of nearly 600 years.

Another unique hunting method is to\textsuperscript{214} pleu\textsuperscript{231} (pass - wasp) ‘tracing wasps’, a way to locate the honeycomb of Dilong wasps, one of the largest and the most nutritious wasps in Jinxiu County. Dilong wasps normally builds their nest in a hole in the ground or in a tree hole. Though they are ferocious and extremely toxic, Lakkja hunters are brave and intelligent enough to find and catch them. Since Dilong wasps like using the yellow pulp from hawthorn trees as the material to build their nest, when Dilong wasps come to take the pulp, hunters attract them with the meat of crickets or birds and then grid a string with a white duck feather on the waist of the wasp to locate it. When the wasp flies to its honeycomb, the hunters who are waiting around will send shouts to each other until the wasp flies back to the nest. Afterwards, the hunter locates the honeycomb and mark it with thatch as his own. Finally, after autumn, the hunter will come to burn the nest, take the honeycomb as well as some pupas to make food.

Similarly, there are multiple methods for fishing in Lakkja, such as te:u\textsuperscript{55} phla\textsuperscript{51} (to fishy with a hook and line - fishy) ‘to fish’, pok\textsuperscript{24} ja:ŋ\textsuperscript{214} (do - alley) ‘making alleys for fishing’, ho:m\textsuperscript{214} phla\textsuperscript{51} (chase - fish) ‘catching fish’, tshap\textsuperscript{55} phla\textsuperscript{51} (spear - fish) ‘spearing fish’, \textit{na:u}\textsuperscript{11} phla\textsuperscript{51} (decoct - fish) ‘poisoning fish’, tsi:u\textsuperscript{55} ko:p\textsuperscript{11} (illuminate - frog) ‘flashing to catch frogs’, among others.

Besides, every household keeps three to five pigs and about two dozen chickens and ducks. Last but not the least, basketwork, stonecutting, pottery, and pewter are also sources of income. People exchange goods and products in the rural market every other day.
1.3 Sociolinguistic situation

Since Jinxiu County is a multi-ethnic-populated area where five Yao branches inhabit together with other ethnic groups such as Zhuang and Han, the sociolinguistic situation is very complex. People residing in Jinxiu Town and the neighbouring villages speak their own ethnic languages or dialects within their ethnic community, and prefer to speak local Chinese dialect when communicating with people from different branches or ethnic groups. Normally, Southwest Mandarin, the local Chinese dialect, is the predominant lingua franca, while Lakkja and the mother tongues of other minority groups are not the first preferred language due to ethnic diversity in this area, especially in Jinxiu Town and nearby villages.

Even the five branches of Yao people in Jinxiu County use different languages as their native language: Pan Yao, Ao Yao and Shanzi Yao speak Mien, which belongs to Mienic branch of the Hmong-Mien stock; Chashan Yao (Lakkja) uses Lakkja, a member of the Kam-Tai language family of the Tai-Kadai or Kra-Dai stock; the language of Hualan Yao belongs to Hmongic branch of the Hmong-Mien stock. The Yao people have had close contacts with Han and Zhuang people inside and outside Dayaoshan throughout history. Therefore, the languages in Jinxiu such as Lakkja have been affected to varying degrees.

The Tai-Kadai languages often have different dialects and vernaculars. For example, Dong is divided into Northern Dong and Southern Dong; Zhuang is further classified into Northern Zhuang and Southern Zhuang by Chinese scholars; and there are three dialects in Mien. People generally have difficulty communicating in different dialects, but there is usually no trouble talking with those who speak different vernaculars since the pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar are basically similar among varieties of the same language.

In view of its internal features, Lakkja is considered as a language without dialects since the linguistic differences shown in various areas are too subtle to distinguish them as dialects. Normally, the language spoken in ქჰჸ ნა:ნ "The Four Villages", including Jinxiu, Baisha, Liula, Xidi in Jinxiu Town, is recognized as standard Lakkja, which is the research subject of this thesis. Compared to standard Lakkja, there are four vernacular areas in Jinxiu County: Jintian, Liuduan, Luomeng, Lingzu. For example, people of Jintian vernacular speak ჰჸ "go" while the pronunciation is ჸ ჸ "go" in standard Lakkja; the main difference between Liuduan vernacular and standard Lakkja is the disappearance of the consonant cluster ჸ, e.g. pl ჸ "eye" becomes ჸ, ჸ ჸ becomes ჸ in Liuduan. People in Luomeng vernacular area use ჸ "right" rather than standard ჸ "right". In Lingzu vernacular area, the standard consonants ჸ and ჸ respectively correspond to ჸ and ჸ, e.g. ჸ becomes ჸ(see §2.7.2 for further
discussion). Such differences point to the results of historical sound change, and these characteristics may reveal where the speaker comes from. Likewise, for Yao speakers, their accent indicates which branch they come from; the same is true of Zhaung people who speak Lakkja.

The issue of language preference is interesting in areas like Jinxiu County, where different ethnic groups live side by side and various languages and cultures coexist. It is estimated that Lakkja is actively spoken by approximately 9,000 people, who, according to Lan (2011), can be divided into two types: full fluency (3,000/9,000) and limited fluency. The former refers to those who speak Lakkja as their first language and who are able to speak Chinese with other Yao branches, minority groups, strangers, visitors, or in public places, and may speak some Zhuang with Zhuang people; the latter are those who can only speak basic Lakkja with family members or on special occasions.

Although Lakkja is still the mother tongue of some people in Dayaoshan, the majority of the Lakkja speakers are bilingual because of the need to communicate with villagers who don’t speak Lakkja. It is fair to say that Lakkja is still the common language used by Lakkja people at home and among group members in daily interaction such as village meetings, religious chanting, farming activities, rural transactions as well as song festivals. Lakkja speakers use local Chinese dialects when they communicate with people from other ethnic groups. For example, Southwestern Mandarin is the preferred language to use in market places when Lakkja speakers conduct exchanges with local Zhuang and Han vendors or buyers. A number of Lakkja people also are fluent speakers of Zhuang and Cantonese, and a small number may speak the ethnic language(s) of the other four Yao branches residing in Jinxiu. Furthermore, educated adults generally have good command of Lakkja, Southwest Mandarin and Mandarin Chinese. Although Lakkja people over thirty or forty years old have a good command of Lakkja, teenagers and youngsters tend to speak (limited) Lakkja at home and feel more comfortable speaking Southwest Mandarin, and many children are even monolingual, mastering Mandarin Chinese as well as Southwest Chinese rather than any ethnic languages. A number of elderly people, especially those over 70 years old, are also monolingual, only speaking Lakkja rather than Chinese.

Speaking of education, Mandarin is the medium of instruction, while Lakkja is hardly heard inside and outside the classroom in school. The teachers normally conduct classes in Mandarin Chinese and the students also answer questions in Mandarin Chinese, which is quite unusual in such a remote rural area surrounded by high mountains and other non-Chinese speaking groups. Furthermore, Southwest Mandarin seems to be the only language one can
hear spoken by students on the lively sports ground, and by teachers as soon as they leave the classroom.

Given the fact that the villages far from Jinxiu Town have relatively difficult access to the outside world, Lakkja vernaculars are maintained better than standard Lakkja, though the situation may change with the development of society.

Though Mandarin Chinese is not yet the predominant language in Lakkja speaking areas, it appears to have become the functional language, leading to explicit changes in Lakkja phonology, morphology and syntax. Lan (2011) observes the profound impact of Chinese dialects on Lakkja, including a large number of Chinese loanwords, changes of word formation, the wide-spread use of Chinese structural particle de [的 ”of”], along with certain phonological changes. It is also a tendency in the settlements of minority groups that the ethnic minority languages are increasingly impacted and threatened by Chinese languages. For example, younger generations prefer to speak a kind of ethnic language with simplified pronunciation, Chinese syntax and Chinese loan words.

Language maintenance is becoming an issue in Lakkja due to the rapid development of local society and the profound cultural impacts from outside. Though the government introduces policies to protect endangered languages and to encourage language maintenance and the use of minority languages like Lakkja, there are not enough organizations or any schools for minority language teaching and learning. In addition, the use of information technology such as mobile phones and televisions is exacerbating the impacts of dominant culture and language, posing a further threat to the survival of Lakkja language.

Apart from its endangered situation, Lakkja occupies an important position within Kam-Tai. For one thing, it has a complicated sound system which is quite unusual within languages of the same group and across languages in the region. Lakkja undoubtedly holds a key to Kadai, especially in phonology. For another, Lakkja might provide valuable lexical and phonological data for comparative studies, especially in the classification of Tai-Kadai stock and the possible genetic connection with Austronesian (see §1.7.1.3). Also noteworthy is the fact that the issues of language maintenance and preference deserve attention in areas where Lakkja villages and speakers of other languages intersect.

1.4 Culture

Lakkja people have developed prevailing culture and customs throughout history in every aspect of daily life. Below are some unique points in Dayaoshan.
1.4.1 Architecture

Most of the ancient Yao architecture is recorded to have been built with thatch and on mountain slopes. It is hard to verify whether Lakkja houses and buildings remain the same as they were recorded before the group migrated to the current location, but most part of their architecture in Dayaoshan looks antique and old-fashioned, indicating a far-reaching influence of traditional culture.

In view of the architectural forms, Lakkja houses can be divided into two types: one is narrow and long, the other horizontal and wide. The layout of the former type normally includes animal stalls, a hall, bedrooms, an inner hall as well as a kitchen, with storage rooms built upstairs. This type of houses is often short of natural light and fresh air since there is only a skylight on the roof but no windows on the walls. The second type is generally lined horizontally with three rooms, of which the left and the right rooms are mostly used as bedrooms and tool-sheds with windows, and the room in the middle serves as the hall, equipped with the main gate. Some may build their storage rooms next to the house while some build them upstairs in the house. Additionally, there is a kitchen and animal stalls at the back of the house.

Lakkja houses are characterized by deep structure, plenty of doors, and tall walls. Generally speaking, there are four to seven doors from the front to the back, with some to prevent livestock from entering rooms, some to seclude spaces, some to ward off ghosts, and some to easily escape to the neighbours for defence in times of war. The doors are usually decorated with solemn plaques, exquisite couplets, gold and silver painting powder, colourful scrolls or carvings. Furthermore, the houses are normally built high for defence, with bedrooms or girls’ embroidery rooms on the second floor. It is also typical that there is a stilted structure over the right side (or left side) of the main gate, where girls traditionally meet their lovers there.

After the 1980s, with the economic development and cultural exchanges, there are nowadays reinforced concrete houses and buildings in Dayaoshan, especially in Jinxiu Town where traditional Lakkja architecture is very rare. Fortunately, a number of ancient house protection areas have been established such as Liuduan Village.

1.4.2 Kinship

Lakkja kinship system is characteristic and complicated. Traditionally, it can be divided into three types: original family and relatives, foster relatives, and deceased relatives.
The kinship terms for original family and relatives can be further divided into the immediate and the collateral. Immediate relative terms cover eight generations, including four ascending generations (marked respectively as ‘+1’, ‘+2’, ‘+3’ and ‘+4’), three descending generations (marked respectively as ‘-1’, ‘-2’ and ‘-3’), and the ego’s generation (marked as ‘0’). Table 1.3 illustrates (father marked as F, mother as M, brother as B, sister as Z, younger as y, elder as e, son as S, daughter as D, and so on. For example, FFM denotes father’s father’s mother).

Table 1.3 Lakkja kinship terms for immediate relatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generations</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+4</td>
<td>koŋ²⁴ ƞja::ƞ²⁴</td>
<td>FFFF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pa²¹⁴ ƞja::ƞ²⁴</td>
<td>FFFM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+3</td>
<td>koŋ²⁴ lou¹¹</td>
<td>FFF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pa²¹⁴ lou¹¹</td>
<td>FFM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+2</td>
<td>koŋ²⁴</td>
<td>FF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pa²¹⁴</td>
<td>FM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+1</td>
<td>pe⁵⁵</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pa²⁴</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>at⁵⁵ jen¹¹</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pa²⁴ jen¹¹</td>
<td>Z</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fak⁵⁵ kjai²⁴</td>
<td>FyB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pe⁵⁵ jai²⁴</td>
<td>FyBW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-1</td>
<td>nuj¹¹ kjai²⁴</td>
<td>S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nuj¹¹ kjai:u²⁴</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-2</td>
<td>nuj¹¹ kjha:n⁵¹ kjai²⁴</td>
<td>SS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nuj¹¹ kjha:n⁵¹ kjai:u²⁴</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-3</td>
<td>nuj¹¹ kjha:n⁵¹ len²⁴</td>
<td>SSS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nuj¹¹ kjha:n⁵¹ len²⁴</td>
<td>SSD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are three subtypes of collateral relatives: paternal, maternal, and uxorial, as listed below (wife marked as W, husband as H, cousin as C, female as f, male as m):

Table 1.4 Lakkja kinship terms for paternal relatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>koŋ²⁴ ƞja::ƞ²⁴</td>
<td>FFB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pa²¹⁴ ƞja::ƞ²⁴</td>
<td>FFBW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loŋ²¹⁴</td>
<td>FEB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pa²¹⁴ ƞja::ƞ²⁴</td>
<td>FEBW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FyB</td>
<td>pe²¹⁴</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ko³¹ or a²⁴</td>
<td>FZH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at⁵⁵ jen¹¹</td>
<td>mC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at⁵⁵ jen¹¹ bok⁵⁵</td>
<td>emC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at⁵⁵ jen¹¹ kjai²⁴</td>
<td>ymC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at⁵⁵ jen¹¹ kjai:u²⁴</td>
<td>efC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at⁵⁵ jen¹¹ kjai:u²⁴</td>
<td>yfC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1.5 Lakkja kinship terms for maternal relatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>koŋ²⁴  tações⁵⁵  njja:ŋ²⁴</td>
<td>MFF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>koŋ²⁴  tás⁵⁵</td>
<td>MF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>na¹¹</td>
<td>MB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kā²⁴  lie:ŋ¹¹</td>
<td>MZH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lōu¹¹ pi:u⁵¹</td>
<td>mC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.6 Lakkja kinship terms for uxorial relatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pe²⁵</td>
<td>WF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or su⁴⁵</td>
<td>WFeB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lōŋ²¹⁴</td>
<td>WFyB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>njūːr²³¹</td>
<td>the term by which parents-in-law and parents refer to each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kā²⁴  tsa:ŋ¹¹</td>
<td>the term by which parents-in-law refer to son-in-law and by which son-in-law refers to himself</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the relatives mentioned above, Lakkja has a tradition of foster care, that is, parents will entrust their child to the care of someone or something. This happens when a child is sick or weak and believed to be difficult to grow up under the care of biological parents. In that case, someone who has many children or has a strong child will be asked to help raise the unhealthy child. Traditionally, a male child will be entrusted to a female as his ‘mother’ while a female child to a male as her ‘father’. Besides, under the guidance of *Tong Shu*, a Taoist book, biological parents can also choose an ancient book, a huge rock, a tree, the sun, etc. as the foster parent of their child. The terms for foster relatives are as follows (foster marked as f).
**Table 1.7** Lakkja kinship terms for foster relatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>su⁵⁵</td>
<td>FF (human)</td>
<td>nie¹¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>su⁵⁵ fa:ŋ ⁵¹</td>
<td>FF (rock)</td>
<td>nie¹¹ fa:ŋ ⁵¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>su⁵⁵ tsei⁵⁵</td>
<td>FF (tree)</td>
<td>nie¹¹ tsei⁵⁵</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>su⁵⁵ tau²⁴ wan²³¹</td>
<td>FF (sun)</td>
<td>nie¹¹ tau²⁴ wan²³¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la:u¹¹ khaı²⁴</td>
<td>the term by which biological parents and foster parents refer to each other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nuy¹¹ tsie:ŋ¹¹</td>
<td>the term by which foster parents refer to the fostered son or daughter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Moreover, deceased relatives have specific terms that are distinct from those listed above. See Table 1.8 for details (deceased marked as d).

**Table 1.8** Lakkja kinship terms for deceased relatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Literal trans.</th>
<th>Free trans.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ou¹¹ laŋ²³¹</td>
<td>[inside - mountain]</td>
<td>‘deceased parent(s)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ou¹¹ laŋ²³¹ kjei²¹</td>
<td>[inside - mountain - male]</td>
<td>‘dF’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ou¹¹ laŋ²³¹ kja:u²⁴</td>
<td>[inside - mountain - female]</td>
<td>‘dM’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>miŋ²¹⁴ kəm²³¹</td>
<td>[fate - bitter]</td>
<td>‘deceased sibling(s)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>miŋ²¹⁴ jie:m²¹</td>
<td>[fate - ominous]</td>
<td>‘dS or dD’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or miŋ²¹⁴ kəm²³¹</td>
<td>or [fate - bitter]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Also noteworthy is the fact that traditionally, Lakkja people have at least two names: an ethnic name (Yao name), formal name (or Han name, Chinese name, written name); some men may also have a religious name.

Ethnic names are mostly monosyllabic, with only a small number disyllabic. Most have semantic meanings, e.g. ko:ŋ⁵⁵ 红 ‘red’, mom²¹⁴ 肉 ‘meat, flesh’, liŋ²³¹ 猴 ‘monkey’, ma:n²³¹ 蛮 ‘savage’, tshu:i²⁴ pou²⁴ 水保 [water - protect], etc., but a few names have no concrete meaning, e.g. siŋ⁵¹. Ethnic names may follow a kinship prefix that signals one’s position in the family hierarchy, e.g. ko⁵¹ ko:ŋ⁵⁵ ‘Aunt ko:ŋ⁵⁵’. Also, a kinship prefix may indicate the changes of one’s status of a generation in a family. For example, after a woman becomes a mother, a prefix pa²⁴ ‘mother’ may precede her name, e.g. pa²⁴ ko:ŋ⁵⁵ ‘Mother ko:ŋ⁵⁵’. However, some prefixes such as pe⁵⁵ ‘father’, nũ:i²³¹ ‘uncle’, ko:ŋ⁵⁵ ‘grandfather’, are sometimes used before an ethnic name to show respect for the elders rather than to denote true relationships.
Religious names are normally entitled to a man after \textit{to}^{11} \textit{tsa:i}^{55}, a religious ceremony of initiation among Yao people. Though not all Lakkja people profess a religion and not all religious men experience his ceremony of \textit{to}^{11} \textit{tsa:i}^{55}, two religions, \textit{ta:u}^{214} (Tao) and \textit{mu}^{11} (or \textit{plai}^{214} in Lakkja, Shi or Wu in Chinese, ‘the religion of sorcery’) have great influence in Lakkja. A typical religious name includes a surname, the religious branch (\textit{ta:u}^{214} \textit{道} or \textit{wi:n}^{11} \textit{玄} for Tao, and \textit{siŋ}^{55} \textit{胜} or \textit{fa:p}^{24} \textit{法} for Wu), and his ethnic name. For example, \textit{fo}^{51} \textit{wi:n}^{11} \textit{thie:n}^{51} 苏玄天, in which \textit{fo}^{51} is his surname, \textit{wi:n}^{11} denotes the religion, and \textit{thie:n}^{51} is his ethnic given name. By contrast, religious men without a religious name normally have \textit{pu}^{11} 扶 ‘to support with the hand’, a Chinese character, between their surname and ethnic name, e.g. \textit{tie:n}^{231} \textit{ma:n}^{231} 田扶蛮. Likewise, some women may undergo a similar ceremony and have \textit{nu}^{11} ‘woman, from Chinese \textit{女}’ or \textit{ti}^{11} ‘surname, from Chinese \textit{氏}’ to represent the religious branch, e.g. \textit{tsem}^{51} \textit{ti}^{11} \textit{si:u}^{24} 金氏少.

Since there was no writing system of their own to record their language, Lakkja people resorted to using Chinese characters from early 1400s, and teachers in class started giving the students a Chinese name (Han name) from 1930s. Therefore, a Lakkja villager may have three names, for example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic name</th>
<th>Religious name</th>
<th>Formal name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>\textit{ni:n}^{231} 年</td>
<td>\textit{leu}^{231} \textit{ta:u}^{214} \textit{ni:n}^{231} 刘道年</td>
<td>Liu Shaoyun 刘绍云</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the past, ethnic names were used in daily life, religious names were used in religious activities, while Chinese names, as the products of Chinese influence, are generally used in written language. With the development of society, however, religious rites and religious names have gradually disappeared. After the 1970s, ethnic names and formal names gradually combined together and there are no more ethnic names for Lakkja people.

### 1.4.3 Administrative and social structure

There are mainly three traditional administrative systems in Dayaoshan: \textit{pa}^{11} \textit{jen}^{11} ‘consanguineous kinship’, \textit{tsie}^{11} ‘community’, and \textit{tsei}^{24} \textit{pa:i}^{231} ‘board’.

The ancient \textit{pa}^{11} \textit{jen}^{11} structure denotes the relatively distant blood relationship among Lakkja. Such an organization is generally small in scale. A typical \textit{pa}^{11} \textit{jen}^{11} is composed of three to five households. Families in one \textit{pa}^{11} \textit{jen}^{11} organization are expected to help each other in daily life and family affairs such as funeral and marriage, though fighting and revenges have
also happened among blood relatives. The $pa^{11} jen^{11}$ structure gradually disintegrated after the 1950s. It was revived after the reform and opening-up policy in recent decades.

In the past, each Lakkja village had its own $tsie^{11}$, which was not only the god worshipped by the whole village, but also an administrative organization that relied on religious beliefs. Every village built a temple with a statue of the god of $tsie^{11}$ and chose a $tsie^{11} lou^{11}$ [community - old] by divination to serves as the leader of the village community. There were mainly three duties of the community leader: the first was to do daily cleaning in the temple and to burn incenses for the god on the first and fifteenth of each month; the second was to organize the annual community festivals in February and August; and the third was to publish agricultural regulations during the two community festivals. Furthermore, the primary-level organization of $tsie^{11}$ was referred to as $tsa:p^{24}$ in Lakkja, which was generally composed of five to ten households. Unlike $tsie^{11} lou^{11}$, $lak^{24} tsa:p^{24}$, the leader of a $tsa:p^{24}$ was elected by the people, and are responsible for implementing the regulations announced by $tsie^{11} lou^{11}$ and for undertaking some tasks in production and religious activities. Though such a community system gradually disappeared after 1940s, ‘The Four Villages’ in Jinxiu still retains some small activities to worship the god of $tsie^{11}$.

The board system of $tsei^{24} pa:i^{231}$ functioned as a unique social organization system in Lakkja. It was first created by Lakkja in early Ming Dynasty and then gradually propagated to other Yao branches and ethnic groups. In order to maintain social order and production order, Lakkja people along with other Yao branches in the region engraved their regulations on a big board made of stone, wood or paper, and made a system for everyone to follow. The regulations were normally formulated through village assemblies. Therefore, the board system was regarded as a social as well as legal system, and exhibited some democratic characteristics to a certain extent. Besides, every board organization had a leader called $tsei^{24} pa:i^{231} kjeu^{51}$ who was chosen because of his good reputation rather than by vote or hereditary system. For over six hundred years, this system in Dayaoshan had functioned to protect the interests of the Lakkja people and maintain internal social order, leaving a profound impact on the society even until today.

1.4.4 Food

The staple food of the Lakkja is rice. They also eat other staples such as corn, sweet potatoes, taros, cassavas and buckwheat as supplementary food.

Unlike Chinese where there is general term for courses of meat and of vegetables, Lakkja dishes are divided into meat dishes and vegetable dishes: meat dishes are referred to as $foh^{55}$,
and vegetable dishes are called wok\textsuperscript{24}. f\textsubscript{on}\textsuperscript{55} includes meat of domestic animals and wild animals. Domestic animals mainly include pigs, chickens, ducks, geese and cattle, among which pork and chicken are the main meat food. In addition to domestic animals, Lakkja people also eat wild animals as supplementary, such as wild boars, yellow weavers, civets, field pigs, squirrels, wild cats, pangolins, awn mice, and almost all birds, as well as many kinds of fish, shrimps and frogs. wok\textsuperscript{24} can be further divided into cultivated vegetables such as Chinese cabbage, turnip, leek, celery, coriander, chili, amaranth, green onion, ginger, cucumber, tomato, lotus bean, red bean, etc., and uncultivated vegetables including bamboos, fungus and leaves such as various kinds of bamboo shoots, mushroom, agaric, banana heart, lily, fern, wild leek, among others.

In the old days, almost every Lakkja family would make pickled meat, fruits and vegetables with rice wine and salt for food flavouring or storage, such as pickled pork, pickled bird meat, pickled frog meat, pickled hawthorns, pickled pears, etc. Among them, pickled bird meat is a unique local delicacy that is made from snowbirds. Generally, good pickled snowbirds have to be marinated for at least one year, and the juice of those that has been marinated for more than ten years can be used as a medicine to treat dysentery.

Apart from pickled food, Lakkja specialties also feature in poːŋ\textsuperscript{55} ‘pork blood sausages’ and saːŋŋjìeŋ\textsuperscript{214} ‘bamboo shoots with glutinous rice and pickled bird meat’. Wine is also a must for dinner, and many families make their own wine. In fei\textsuperscript{55}ŋaːn\textsuperscript{214} ‘The Four Villages’ in Jinxiu, Lakkja people also need to ‘make offerings’ to ancestors before every meal, that is, after the meals are prepared, a family member should stand at the table and respectfully say something to ‘invite’ their ancestors to ‘eat’ together. During festivals, the elderly or the head of the family should also propose a toast to the ancestors and say something auspicious before they start a feast.

1.4.5 Costumes

Lakkja has its own unique ethnic costumes. In Lakkja, men typically wear loose trousers and jackets that are similar to traditional Tang suits with cloth buttons, with navy or black cloth wrapped around their head. Costumes for women are usually complex, including a buttonless top, a patterned belt, a black square apron, short trousers above the knees, and long socks under the knees. The clothes are mainly black, blue or white. Women typically wear sandals at home and embroidered shoes during festivals.
The differences in Lakkja costumes are mainly reflected in women's headwear. In some villages, horn-shaped silver boards are used as headwear, while other villages use hat-shaped headwear. Besides, the headwear of married women and unmarried women are also different.

Lakkja people have intense fondness for silver jewelleries. Both men and women like to wear silver headwear, bracelets, rings, etc. In the old days, everyone wears silver bracelets, which was regarded as a precious gift as well as a token for engagement. Furthermore, the quantity and quality of bracelets worn on women's arms often reflect the wealth of their families.

1.4.6 Marriage and birth control

Lakkja marriage customs generally reflect the characteristics of their ancient, free and economical tradition both before and after marriage. Though the forms may vary from village to village, dating and marriage in different villages still have a lot in common, such as free love, monogamy, virilocal or uxorilocal marriage, partial intermarriage, etc. Similar to other minority groups such as the Zhuang and the Miao (Hmong) in South China, Lakkja villages also have special festivals and events during which men and women sing folk songs to each other as a form of marriage proposal.

To be more specific, before marriage, Lakkja men and women make their own free choices in socializing, along with sexual freedom to some extent. There are two typical ways of dating. One is referred to as ‘play on the hillside’, that is, during the Spring Festival, unmarried men and women with festive costumes gather on the hillsides and look for a partner by singing folk songs. Unfortunately, this dating custom has disappeared since the 1950s due to political reasons. The other is ‘climbing the house’. As mentioned in §1.4.1, there is a balcony-like stilted structure on the upper left or upper right of the door. At night, the male lover will come alone or be accompanied by his friends to sing for his lover. If the woman waiting upstairs responds, the male lover is expected to climb up onto the ‘balcony’ from the ground to date with her. However, ‘climbing the house’ is not always successful. If the woman does not want to date with someone, then she won’t open the door or help him climb. Therefore, men must win the woman's heart before climbing.

In Lakkja, traditionally people get engaged at the age of twelve or thirteen, and then get married at the age of sixteen or so. There are mainly three forms for Lakkja people to get married, varying from region to region.

The first one is prevalent in ‘The Four Villages’ in Jinxiu and the other six villages along the Jinxiu River such as Liu Village, Meng Village, etc. The procedure for this engagement practice is relatively simple. Whether it is a virilocal or uxorilocal marriage, after the man and
woman consummate a relationship by ‘playing on the hillside’ and determine their minds to get married, the parents of the ‘taking’ party will ask a matchmaker to discuss with the parents who are to marry off their son or daughter. Such an engagement only rely on verbal agreement and does not require any ritual or exchange of goods. But anyone who breaches must make compensation to the other party.

The wedding ceremony is also simple, which is often chosen on a date before the Spring Festival by Master of Shi (witch). Take a virilocal marriage as an example. On the wedding day, a matchmaker rather than the bridegroom will carry a chicken to escort the bride. In the bride's home, the head of the family worships their ancestors and then have dinner with the whole family and the matchmaker. Then late at night, the matchmaker ignites the torch and leads the bride to the groom’s home. It is noteworthy that in Lakkja, the bride must wait until dark to enter the groom’s village so that they can avoid lak⁴ m̥aːt⁴ ‘the four-eyed people’, that is, pregnant women and their husbands who traditionally signify bad luck. Later, the family of the groom make sacrifice to their ancestors, have dinner together, send off the matchmaker, and go to bed. The next day, the wedding ceremony eventually ends up with a breakfast before the family opens the door.

As for dowry, traditionally it includes paddy field, hilly field, bedding, clothing, silverware, labor tools, etc. On the wedding day, the bride only carries tools such as sickle and hatchet, with the rest to be retrieved afterwards at night.

In Lakkja, ceremony and banquet are two parts of a wedding. Banquets are not necessary in marriage, and the scale of the banquet varies from family to family. Furthermore, banquets are not necessarily held on the wedding day. It can be postponed till the second year of marriage or one month after their first child is born. Accordingly, the number of dowries can be affected by the scale and time of the banquet.

The second form of Lakkja marriage is recognized in villages such as Liuding, Liuduan, Changtan, Yangliu, etc. After establishing a relationship by ‘climbing the house’, couples can get engaged on their own or with the help of a matchmaker, though some engagement proposals are possibly rejected by their parents. Unlike the first type, the dowries must include all the property that the bride (or the groom in an uxorilocal marriage) inherits.

The third form is found in villages close to Chinese districts such as Lingzu, Bale, Shangbuquan, Xiabuquan, Dishui, etc. Marriage customs in these areas are, on the one hand, more complicated due to the influence by Chinese culture, and on the other hand, maintain the remnants of communal marriage. For example, wedding ceremony may contain seven stages including proposal, birthday confirmation, engagement, wedding day report, dowry
presentation, wedding ceremony, and the return of a bride. Besides, there was a custom called ‘burn a torch’ before 1950s, which was regarded as a form of communal marriage. For example, in Lingzu and some other villages, after a couple was married for over a month, the wife could invite her lover to her home, which is also her husband’s home, while her husband works at home during the daytime and goes to his lover’s home with a burning torch at night. And, furthermore, the child that are born during ‘burn a torch’ is socially connected with his or her biological father by calling him uncle (father’s elder brother) or even father, and abiding by some funeral and sacred rules for him.

Due to traditional ideology of childbearing and their strong birth control measures, the population of Lakkja villages grows very slow and the society maintains long-term peace and stability. The typical family planning in Lakkja is that a couple only have two children regardless of gender, with one keeping the family, and the other to be married off. Such a tradition which indicates the concept of sustainable development is believed to be closely related to the limited natural resources and their friendly folk customs. However, constrained by the degree of development of the society, there were two methods that were commonly used for birth control: medicated abortion, and infanticide, of which the latter was more widely spread in the past and gradually disappeared by 1950s. Historically, it was reported that Lakkja people also implemented a system of later marriage and later childbearing about a hundred years ago, when only men over thirty and women over twenty were allowed to marry.

With the improvement of living standards and changes in policies, marriage customs and childbearing ideology have also changed since the 1950s. It has become a common phenomenon that a family has more than two children and the population of Lakkja has also grown considerably.

1.4.7 Funerals

Lakkja people also regard funerals as an important part of their culture and life, which is closely related to the natural environment and the religious and moral concept of the group. Lakkja funeral customs have its own characteristics. According to the age of the deceased, the forms of burial are generally divided into three types separately for adult, juvenile, and young child.

There is a series of rituals for adults before burial, such as num11 en51 ho51 ‘water to wet one’s whistle’, au51 num11 ‘ask for water’, ou11 tei24 to51 ‘enter the door’, ha:m55 tshie51 ‘call for the car’, la11 ti214 ‘look for a place’ among others. These processes are mainly conducted by the descendants to show their respect and pray for the afterlife happiness of the deceased. Also, Taoists are normally invited to host some religious rituals.
Due to the influence of Taoism, funerals for adults generally take the form of cremation, which can be traced back to the Ming Dynasty. Later on, various inhumations gradually become prosperous in limited areas that are affected by neighbouring Zhuang and Han villages.

By contrast, dead juveniles and babies are believed to be managed by other gods rather than Tao, so they are not buried by cremation. The burial for juveniles is all simple inhumations and the deceased are typically buried in a specific common burial place. The person responsible for the funeral will carry the dead body on the back, walk from the back door of the deceased’s home to the cemetery, and then finally bury the body in the coffin. Besides, the burial of babies is usually called ‘hanging burial’. After the baby dies, the corpse will be wrapped in rags or furs and be placed in a bamboo basket. The basket will then be taken into forests and hung on a branch of a tree so that the corpse naturally decomposes.

1.4.8 Festivals

There are many festivals in Lakkja. In the old days they celebrated at least one festival almost every month, among which some festivals were celebrated in specific manner such as the Spring Festival, the February Community Festival, the Yellow Cattle Festival, the Rice Transplanting Festival, the Ancestor Worshiping Festival, the Fresh Food Tasting Festival, Festival of Doing Merits, etc.

The Spring Festival is the grandest festival of the year, during which pork is an essential food and a major gift for family and friends. The Spring Festival in Lakkja usually begins with pig killing, which is usually on the day before New Year's Eve. On that day, the host will invite relatives and friends to have a big dinner and taste the most delicious parts of the pig, while the dinner on New Year’s Eve is only for family members. Lakkja’s Spring Festival also has the habitudes of putting up red couplets, setting off firecrackers, and staying up all night. Then on the New Year's Day, Lakkja people also visit relatives and friends and pay a New Year call to each other.

Since the Spring Festival is the beginning of the year and the end of the year's production activities, Lakkja people often take a rest and enjoy themselves during the festival. From January the first to the fifteenth, people wearing festive costumes will dance and sing with music in villages as well as along the mountainside and the streams. Besides, the Spring Festival is also a good time that young men and women date and fall in love, while older women embroide and weave and older men drink tea and play chess.

The February Community Festival and the August Community Festival, which are collectively referred to as tsen⁵¹ tsie¹¹ [eat - society], are the days when villagers get together
and sacrifice the god of the community, and when the village community holds a mass meeting and promulgate production regulations. During sacrifice, the Community Pig, which is fed by the villagers in turn, will be killed and partly divided by the villagers with the remaining reserved for the sacrifice dinner. Traditionally each family will send a man to attend the ceremony, the meeting, as well as the dinner.

The Rice Transplanting Festival is the most popular among young men and women. Since villages in Dayaoshan are located in different altitude regions with various temperature conditions, the Rice Transplant Festival normally lasts for more than 20 days in April. During the festival, young men and women from various villages will gather in one village as volunteers to help them transplant rice seedlings, while the local villagers only need to provide board and accommodation. It is fascinating for young people since they do farm work during the day and sing and dance and date with lovers at night.

The Ancestor Worshiping Festival, also called *fon*₅⁵ *koy*₅⁵ *lou*₁¹ [send - ancestor] in Lakkja, is celebrated from July 7th to July 14th of the lunar calendar to worship ancestors. During the festival, each family sets a table with incense burners and tea cups on it for worship, along with portraits and name lists of ancestors hanging on the wall. On the morning of July 7th, the whole family will ‘greet’ the ancestors back home with chicken, pork and glutinous rice cake, and from that day, they will worship the ancestors with incenses and tea before every meal. Finally, on July 14th, each family will make rice noodle soup with duck's internal organs and duck blood to ‘serve’ the ancestors, and then at night, Lakkja people will send the ancestors away with a duck-based rich dinner, hell money, and a carry pole with food through specific rite.

In the old days, each family had their own paddy field. When the crops were about to mature at the end of August and the beginning of September of the lunar calendar every year, Lakkja people would generally cook new rice with old rice together and celebrate the Fresh Food Tasting Festival with chicken, duck, pickled birds and other meat of wild animals, which was also indicating a good harvest in advance.

Last but not the least, *pok*²⁴ *koy*²⁴ *tak*⁵⁵ [do - merit - virtue] is the most solemn ceremony to worship gods in Lakkja, as well as a very special traditional festival which aims not only to pray for peace and good harvest but also to gather people through activities and enhance internal unity and cohesion. This festival is normally held every twelve to twenty years, varying from village to village, and occasionally jointly organized by several villages. After determining the date of the festival, it often takes more than a year to lay the groundwork such as rebuilding the merit bridge in autumn after agricultural harvests, feeding the merit pigs,
raising food and making costumes. Then during the festival, the village will hold a three-day feast called \textit{tsen}^{51} \textit{koŋ}^{24} \textit{tak}^{55} \text{[eat - merit - virtue]} and invite people to drink together.

1.4.9 Religion and beliefs

Religion and beliefs in Lakkja can be mainly divided into three types: nature worship, ancestor worship, and Taoism and the religion of sorcery.

1.4.9.1 Nature worship

Religiously, in ancient times Lakkja people believed that everything was spiritual, since people at that time lacked the understanding of natural phenomena and thus felt a reverence for nature.

Nature worship is mainly reflected in the custom of worshipping natural objects as parents, as mentioned in §1.4.2. If a child stays weak for a long time, he or she will be entrusted to the care of something under the guidance of Master of Tao or Master of Shi. The worship ceremony is usually held around the Spring Festival, which includes a series of processes conducted near the chosen foster parent such as putting up red paper, burning incenses, setting off firecrackers, etc. After the ceremony, the child must pay a New Year call to the foster parent during the Spring Festival in at least three years.

In addition, scarecrows at the edge of the fields were also considered as gods because they could protect the fields from being destroyed by birds and beasts. Similarly, some accidental natural phenomena such as landslides, the fall of the tree, etc., were regarded as the power of gods. When such circumstances occur, Lakkja people would kill chickens and ask Master of Shi to pray for them.

However, such natural worship has gradually faded or even disappeared due to the spread of natural science and the campaign to wipe out ‘superstitions’ since the 1950s and particularly during the Cultural Revolution.

1.4.9.2 Ancestor worship

Ancestor worship is universal among ethnic groups, of which the premise is that the soul exists. Lakkja people show greatest deference for their ancestors because it is believed that they should be grateful to their ancestors who have worked hard to create a happy life for the future generations. Therefore, each family in Lakkja has a memorial tablet for ancestor worship in their house.

The main rituals of ancestor worship include \textit{tsouj}^{55} \textit{jie}: \textit{ŋ}^{214} ‘provide food’, \textit{pok}^{24} \textit{fa}:\textit{m}^{51} \textit{wan}^{231} \text{[do - three - day]}, \textit{pok}^{24} \textit{ŋi}^{214} \textit{lok}^{24} \text{[do - twenty six]}, \textit{pok}^{24} \textit{fa}:\textit{m}^{51} \textit{pei}^{51} \text{[do - three - year]},
Among others, for example, "tsoŋ55 jie: ŋ214 ‘provide food’ denotes the habit that ancestors must be invited to ‘eat’ together with the family before every meal. During festivals, the elders of the family are also expected to propose a toast to the ancestors and ask them to bless the family. Besides, "pok24 thiŋ24 miŋ231[do - Pure Brightness (5th solar term)] designates tomb-sweeping activities that are similar to those on Tomb-sweeping Day in Han and Zhuang districts. However, Lakkja people may visit graves not only on Tomb-sweeping Day but also before or after it.

1.4.9.3 Taoism and Sorcery

Sorcery and Taoism are the religions that have great impact in Lakkja.

Lakkja ancestors started believing in witchcraft before migrating to Dayaoshan, and they continued to perform witchcraft activities after settling down here. The religion of witchcraft is referred to as "plai214 in Lakkja, and Shi or Wu in Chinese. There are wizards or male religious masters in Lakkja, but no witches. And there are no specific organizations or professional religious personnel in Lakkja "plai214. A variety of gods are worshiped such as Zhang Daoling, Dasheng, Liang Wang, Lei Wang, Deng Yuanshuai, and so on. They have many scriptures and religious instruments such as leather drums, cymbals, small brass bells, and bronze swords. During large-scale religious ceremonies, masters of Shi as the priests typically perform different ritual dances with witch costumes and instruments according to different themes.

Taoism is one of the oldest religions in China. Lakkja also has a long history of professing Taoism, which can date back to 1410 AD.

Although it is hard to identify the specific time when Lakkja started to believe in Taoism, it is certain that Taoism has been closely related to Shi over the past several centuries in Lakkja, which has led to their different functions in social life. To be specific, Shi is mainly responsible for releasing the souls from suffering while Taoism is in charge of blessing activities.

The gods worshipped by Lakkja Taoism include Yuqing, Shangqing, Taiqing, Jiuku, Zhuling, etc. They have unconsolidated organizations called "ta:n231, of which the lord is mainly responsible for managing religious activities. In the rites, masters of Tao wear a black hat and a robe marked with statue, dragons or tigers. Besides, they also have many scriptures and instruments such as tambourines, cymbals, wooden knockers, and bells.
1.4.10 Taboos

Lakkja has many taboos in every aspect of life. Some of them no longer exist, while some are still widespread.

In dietary respect, Lakkja people traditionally avoid eating dog meat and cat meat. In addition, masters of Shi and Tao also avoid eating a kind of fish called small snakehead. Furthermore, puerperae are strictly forbidden to kill birds and beasts with a shotgun, or to eat beef, eagle meat, red beans, etc. within 33 days of giving birth.

There are also many taboos in daily life. For example, if there are wooden branches on the door or an X-shaped obstacle at the door, it is very likely that this family has asked the master of Tao or Shi to exorcise the ghost, and thus outsiders are usually unwelcoming to enter the house so as not to bring ghosts back in there. Another example is that branches with red paper on the door are the sign that an infant has just been born to this family. In addition, it is strictly forbidden to hammer nails in the house. People are not allowed to step on or knock at the stove, and they are not allowed to burn camphor wood. In the morning, people should not talk about bad things such as death, injury, falls, snake bites, etc. If one has to mention something bad on the New Year's Day, he or she should refer to it as a smooth thing rather than telling the truth, that is, telling a winning story when actually losing money.

Moreover, many taboos are recognized in agricultural production. For example, on March 3rd and March 15th of the lunar calendar, Lakkja people are not supposed to use cattle to cultivate the field; on April 4th and 8th of the lunar calendar, they are not allowed to use the buffaloes; the Beginning of Summer (7th solar term) is the birthday of cattle and buffaloes, and thus they will take a rest and be fed with the best fodder; all production activities have to avoid pregnant women and their husbands.

In housing construction, masters of Tao or Shi will be asked to choose an auspicious day for building new houses; women must not give birth in the master bedroom; unlucky people should cross a basin filled with boiling water and grapefruit leaves before going back home; people are not allowed to whistle inside a house.

1.4.11 Education

Lakkja people had been illiterate and stayed in a relatively primitive cultural and educational level for a long time before 1940, but they were adept at accepting new things from Han Chinese and other ethnic groups.
In the early days, Lakkja people learned Chinese characters mainly by studying books of Shi and Tao. By the middle of the 18th century, Lakkja villages began to set up old-style private schools, which led to a slight improvement of educational level among a small number of people. However, most of them, especially women, were still illiterate until 1940.

In 1940, the Kuomintang ruled Dayaoshan by force, breaking the closed state of Dayaoshan that had lasted for more than 600 years, and then promoted policies of assimilation and education, which included the establishment of schools. Later on, after the founding of P. R. China, especially after the 1980s, the educational level in Dayaoshan has significantly increased. By the end of the 20th century, Lakkja already had their own professors, writers, contemporary dancers, doctors, international students, etc.

1.4.12 Folk art

In addition to material civilization, Lakkja people have also created rich spiritual civilization such as folk literature, music, dance, painting, handcrafts, drama, among others.

Lakkja folk literature mainly includes myths, legends, tales, ballads, jie:ŋ lei11 lyrics, recited lyrics, etc. Myths and legends mostly tell stories related to gods who created people and adventures in wonderland, indicating the rich imagination of Lakkja people. Folk tales are more abundant than myths and legends, covering stories about nature, human beings and animals; some of them reflect class struggle, some about nature, ghosts and gods, some about life of families, some about love; and there are also animal stories that expose the evil of human nature and praise valuable virtues through personification. jie:ŋ lei11 songs, which mainly prevailed in the Ming and Qing Dynasties, also cover a wide range of contents such as love, labor, praise of labor and life; the first and last sentences of each song typically end with jie:ŋ lei11, by which the singer calls the listener(s). In addition, the contents of ballads cover aspects such as history, customs, love, lifestyle, ghosts and gods, among other things. There are also some field songs introduced from Han Chinese areas. The last kind of folk literature is recited lyrics that come without music, referring to speeches used to enact laws or mediate disputes, such as speeches of tsei pa:i231 ‘board’; they are often expressed by comparison, parallelism, exaggeration, metaphor, etc., and have multiple values in literature, philosophy, and history.

There are many kinds of melodies and tunes in Lakkja folk music such as the tunes of jie:ŋ lei11 songs, field songs, Tao music, Shi music, suona horn, and so on. Among them, jie:ŋ lei11 tunes are the most popular. They can be categorized into singing tunes and shouting tunes: singing tunes are usually soft and mellow whereas shouting tunes powerful and resounding. Furthermore, the existing instruments in Lakkja are mainly percussion instruments.
such as leather drums, various kinds of cymbals, copper bells, and wooden knocker. Besides, stringed instruments include erhus, while wind instruments include flutes, among others. Flutes made of straws and pianos made of bamboos are the most popular among children.

Traditional folk dances in Lakkja are mainly used for religious rituals, including Shi dances and Tao dances.

There are two main types of folk paintings, namely religious paintings and decorative paintings. Religious paintings are mainly painted in red, yellow, blue, green and black. They focus on the facial expressions of gods and ritual scenes and are used for religious sacrifices. In addition, paintings of this kind depict not only the gods but also symbolic portraits of ancestors. The other kind of paintings denotes the decorative painting on the eaves of houses, mostly describing landscapes, flowers, birds, figures, dragons and phoenixes. It is said that this painting art was introduced from the Han Chinese and Zhuang areas during the Ming and Qing Dynasties.

Lakkja people are also good at handicrafts. Local folk crafts mainly include embroidery, weaving, silverwares and wood carving. Lakkja girls traditionally begin to learn embroidery from a young age, and make their own dowry accessories by hand after they grow up. Weaving is also a traditional technique that Lakkja women learn from an early age. They usually weave ribbons to tie the waist and wrap the head. There are also many kinds of silver ornaments in Lakkja such as hair clips and similar types of headwear, earrings, spoons, necklaces, bracelets, combs, rings, etc. When a young lady wears splendid attires, the silver jewelries on her body might even weigh up to four kilograms in total. Besides, wood carving is also an important traditional craft with beautiful patterns and high artistic values.

The folk dramas in Lakkja mainly denote Tea-leaf Picking Opera, which was introduced from the Han Chinese and Zhuang areas and has become an inseparable part of Lakkja culture and art.

It is also noteworthy that a group of Lakkja intellectuals has appeared since 1949, of whom the most famous are Jin Baosheng, a scholar, Mo Yiming, a writer, and academics such as Liu Baoyuan and Su Defu.

1.4.13 Medicine

Villagers in Dayaoshan mainly relied on various herbs to treat diseases before the 1950s. According to survey, there were more than 500 kinds of medicines used by Lakkja doctors, among which more than 100 kinds are used to treat diseases. With the rapid development of
Chinese and Western medicine, Yao medicine is nowadays still popular and trusted by local people in Lakkja, and is used by them for healthcare.

1.5 Research scope, aims and significance

There are four fundamental tasks for any science: description, explanation, prediction, and evaluation. This project is concerned mostly with the first two, which an aim to fill the gaps in the research of Lakkja by undertaking a full description of the language. The project attempts to examine in considerable detail the phonological, morpho-syntactic properties of Lakkja, as well as other typological features such as grammaticalization and lexicalization processes in this language.

More specifically, this project aims to achieve the following outcomes:

(1) Collect and collate first-hand data from naturalistic linguistic materials such as daily conversation, stories, folk songs and other texts, through meticulous fieldwork by way of participation, observation and documentation, using latest digital information technology.

(2) Describe and investigate the sound system, patterns of word formation and other grammatical features such as grammaticalization and lexicalization in Lakkja. Not only will this project enhance our understanding of the linguistic and cultural situations in South China and surrounding regions, it will also contribute to the theoretical debate over tonal genesis and the ultimate linguistic affiliation of Kam-Tai.

(3) Examine the features of Lakkja as a language, and compare it with other members in Kam-Tai family to see which genetic classification is linguistically sound. In addition, I will also look at the relations between Lakkja and languages in the Yao (Hmong-Mien) community, as Lakkja is officially grouped with Yao. This will provide some insight on the issue of language and identity.

(4) Findings from the project will help confirm and explain any possible connections between Kadai and Austronesian.

The thesis is envisaged to result in a comprehensive description of Lakkja, with in-depth analysis of the important aspects of grammar of the language, which will provide an important resource for anthropological, ethnographical, historical-comparative and typological studies.
1.6 Theoretical framework and research methodology

1.6.1 Theoretical framework

This study adopts the theoretical framework of basic linguistic theory as advocated by Dixon (2010) and Shopen (2007). It aims to write a full descriptive grammar of Lakkja by observing, systematically documenting and analysing the language as manifested in its sound system, lexicon, and grammar. Emphasis will be laid on investigating and interpreting grammatical features, developing rules from authentic data using a deductive method.

More specifically, this study will:

(1) Strive to present a full description and analysis of the grammatical features as reflected synchronically in the language. This project will look at Lakkja from a wide range of perspectives through meticulous data collection and analysis so as to reveal aspects of its grammar.

(2) Carry out an in-depth study of the grammatical phenomena as manifested in the language. The researcher will observe the language from the perspectives of an observer and a participant to gain a full view of its grammatical features. Ample examples will be provided to illustrate language use. Certain grammatical facts that are yet to be critically analysed will also be recorded and described for future studies.

(3) Present a systematic account of all the systems, patterns, and construction types on the basis of observation and analysis, bearing in mind that grammar is a system that is made up of parts that are correlated. Data will be examined and analysed at different levels in order to see the correlations between certain terms and construction types. This study aims to look at the grammar as a system, rather than focusing on just a few construction types at the expense of losing sight of the whole picture.

(4) Gather first-hand data and examine them in the framework of linguistic theory so as to induce rules that capture grammatical features that are found to be unusual among languages of the same family and other languages in the region. Data used in this study come from authentic linguistic material such as daily conversation, stories, folk songs and other texts.

1.6.2 Methodology

This study adopts a fieldwork-based, descriptive and inductive methodology. Field investigation provides the foundation for linguistic research. For a language like Lakkja which
lacks written records, sample linguistic data meticulously and accurately transcribed from fieldwork is a prerequisite for analysis.

Data for this study basically come from texts of natural speech such as fairy tales, legends, stories and conversations. A small sample come from folk songs and common sayings. These are authentic materials that are used by members of the community.

In order to obtain more detailed materials, I have designed a local vocabulary list of 3000 words which is based on previous studies, and a number of situational dialogues for consultants. The pronunciations and conversations have been recorded and then transcribed after interviews. Then the accuracy of the data has been checked with the speakers. In some cases, with consent from the speakers, I have also made recordings of their actual daily conversations. In addition, hypotheses relating to grammatical organization have been examined. This involves generating predicted sentences on the basis of the putative structures and rules, and putting them to Lakkja speakers (with a suitable context). If some of them are to be corrected, the hypothesis will be adjusted and then a further check will be carried out.

As to phonological data collection, this study adapts William J. Gedney’s methodology on Tai dialects (Gedney 1989b, Hudak 2004). Due to the genetic and geographic correlations between Lakkja and Tai languages, I have conducted studies on the initials to determine whether there are similar tonal splits in Lakkja with Gedney’s checklist and elicitation questionnaire for determining tones. Also I used the software Praat for sound spectrogram analysis. Details of data collection will be given in Section 1.8.

After fieldwork, data collation and analysis have been carried out using inductive methods. From utterances observed as the community goes about its daily business, and from example sentences gathered during the construction of a lexicon, grammatical structures and rules have been worked out, along with the systems of morphology and phonology.

Furthermore, this project has also documented the Lakkja language as a communicative system that mirrors social and cultural interaction among members of the Lakkja community, as well as between speakers of Lakkja and adjacent social groups. I propose to account for the syntax and lexicalization patterns of Lakkja from a syntactic-semantic perspective, combining with anthropological and ethno-linguistic analysis. Also, special emphasis has been given to description and analysis of the rich linguistic and cultural phenomena in Lakkja, and how these are reflected in the unique ethno-syntactic structure of the language under investigation. Particular attention has been paid to the interplay between syntax and semantics, as well as the influence from nearby languages on the phonological, syntactic and semantic structure of the Lakkja language.
By continuing to work in this way, over a period of three years, a complete grammar of the Lakkja language has been built up, each part relating to other parts within an integrated whole. Description and explanation are all in terms of the established scientific theory.

1.7 Literature review

This section presents an overview of previous work on the language, divided into three parts: 1) basic description and analysis of Lakkja, 2) comparative studies and the grouping of Lakkja, 3) the position of Lakkja in Austronesian studies, followed by some reviews on typology and fieldwork methods.

1.7.1 On Lakkja

Linguists started conducting research into Lakkja mainly from the 20th century.

1.7.1.1 Earlier works

No serious description of Lakkja was available prior to the 1960s.

The first study of the language was conducted by Mao and Chou. In their 1962 paper, they made a brief description of the Yao language where a concise overview of Lakkja was provided, including the phonological system, word formation, and a short grammar sketch, along with a very brief discussion of its genetic affiliation. The paper, translated into English by Y. H. Chang in 1972, provides a valuable account of the language for later analyses and comparative studies.

Following Mao and Chou, Zhang (1992), Liu (1999) and Lan (2011) have published several papers and monographs on phonology and lexicon. Zhang (1992) offered a study on nasalized vowels in Lakkja, proposing a hypothesis on the genesis and development of these sounds. As mentioned earlier, Lakkja has a complicated sound system, which includes nasalized vowels, glottalized nasals, voiced and voiceless nasals, among other things. Zhang’s work represents a serious attempt to tackle the important issue of sound change and development.

Despite these initial efforts, work on Lakkja prior to the 1992 was sketchy, and far from being adequate for serious synchronic and diachronic studies. It was not until the end of the millennium that a dictionary of Lakkja was compiled by Liu Baoyuan (1999), a native speaker who is also a scholar. Liu’s dictionary has over 8000 entries, arranged according to semantic fields. This 400-page work serves as the starting point for our research.
Work on the description of Lakkja picked up momentum in the 21st century. Lan Qingyuan made important attempts to describe Lakkja from both synchronic and diachronic perspective. His paper (2005) examines Chinese loan words in Lakkja, dividing them into four layers: current, modern, middle ancient and ancient. This was followed by a research monograph (Lan 2011), which describes the phonology, basic grammar and part of the lexicon of Lakkja.

Liu (1999) and Lan (2011) so far remain the only two book-length studies on the language. It is worth noting that the phonological systems described by these researchers are brief and somewhat inconsistent, which need further work. The grammar descriptions by Lan also call for substantiation.

To my knowledge, except Mao and Chou’s paper (1962), no comprehensive account of Lakkja is yet available in western sources.

1.7.1.2 The position of Lakkja in Tai-Kadai

Although the basic subgrouping of the Tai-Kadai languages has been evident at least since Li’s classic article on Tai and Kam-Sui (Li 1965), it has long been a point of contention among scholars as to the position of Lakkja within Kadai. As the English version of Mao and Chou’s paper (1962) was published, comparative studies concerning Lakkja have turned into a hot research topic and a number of papers focusing on the grouping issue of Lakkja were published. Among them mention must be made of André G. Haudricourt, David B. Solnit, and Theraphan L-Thongkum. These scholars offered some insightful observations, as discussed below.

Prior to the publication of Li’s Kam-Sui material, several other languages that seemed clearly related to Tai, including Lati, Laqua/Laha, Gelao and Hlai, had been grouped together by Benedict under the name Kadai (Benedict 1942). Li demonstrated that Kam-Sui languages are, in his words, “definitely related to, but sufficiently distinct from the Tai languages as to form a distinct group.” Following this, Haudricourt (1967) further examined the Kadai stock in great detail. Haudricourt was the first to make use of Lakkja materials and distinguish it from both Tai and Kam-Sui. The Kadai stock thus can be symbolized as in Figure 1.9:

**Figure 1.9 Haudricourt’s classification of Lakkja under Tai-Kadai (1967)**

![Figure 1.9 Haudricourt’s classification of Lakkja under Tai-Kadai (1967)]
In 1988, Solnit published an article, “The position of Lakkja within Kadai”, in his co-edited comparative Kadai monograph, which proposed that tonal correspondences and the lexical evidence of the numerals are sufficient evidence for grouping Tai, Kam-Sui, Lakkja, and Be together as Kam-Tai. Based on the concept of shared innovation, he placed Lakkja somewhat closer to Kam-Sui than to Tai, since Lakkja shared more innovations with Kam-Sui than with Tai. Lakkja splits off from the Kam-Sui line of descent earlier than Kam-Sui proper, as shown in Figure 1.10:

**Figure 1.10** Solnit’s classification of Lakkja under Kam-Tai (1988:237)

While there is little doubt that Lakkja is a language within the Kam-Tai branch of the Tai-Kadai family, controversies exist whether Lakkja is closer to Tai or to Kam-Sui. To this point, Zhang (1990) agreed with Solnit, furnishing evidence mainly from morphological and phonological perspectives. She added some materials showing that Lakkja shared more phonological features with Kam-Sui such as voiceless nasal and palatal stops. Also evident was the fact that more cognate words were found in Lakkja that are shared with Kam-Sui than with Tai, which served as another basis for her classification.

In stark contrast, however, L-Thongkum argued in her 1992 paper that different sets of lexical items and different techniques of comparing could yield different results, and that Lakkja should be placed closer to Tai than to Kam-Sui. Following the data of Mao and Zhou (1962), and comparative Tai studies of Li (1977) and comparative Kam-Sui studies by Thurgood (1988), L-Thongkum (1992) carried out her research by proposing a reconstruction of Proto-Lakkja. The field notes collected during her stay in Jinkxiu in 1989 also provided important references, where the phonological system of Proto-Lakkja and 243 Lakkja roots were tentatively reconstructed, and the roots of Proto-Lakkja were compared with those of Proto-Tai and Proto-Kam-Sui. L-Thongkum then concluded that Lakkja was as close to Tai (6 out of 9 exceptional tones in 133 shared roots with Tai and Kam-Sui) as it is to Kam-Sui (5 out of 9 exceptional tones), while it shared more lexical retentions and innovations with Tai than with Kam-Sui. Therefore, it was evident from the data and analyses supplied that Lakkja seemed closer to Tai than to Kam-Sui.

Obviously, L-Thongkum provided not only a new perspective to figure out the grouping issue of Lakkja, but also the basic data which could help us to infer some characteristics of
Proto-Kadai. As Solnit (1988) pointed out, defining retention and innovation largely implies some knowledge of the reconstructed proto-language whose features have been either retained or changed. In the case of Kadai, however, a proto-language has yet to be reconstructed. There does exist a fairly detailed reconstruction of Proto-Tai (Li 1977) and the outlines of a Proto-Kam-Sui (Li 1965; Thurgood 1988). In addition, Matisoff’s article (1988) provides a reconstruction of Proto-Li tones and initials. Before L-Thongkum’s paper came out, the remaining languages had still been too scantily recorded or established to allow any intermediate-level reconstruction.

Admittedly, though, there were many limitations in L-Thongkum’s analyses which undermine her reconstructions as well as her subgrouping conclusion. For one thing, her comparison was based on 243 reconstructed roots of Proto-Lakkja which seemed very limited and insufficient for solid comparative work. The data could be biased, as she herself admitted, in that there was more available information at that time on the Tai languages than on any of the other languages, and that modern dialects were used instead when reconstructed forms did not exist. For another, unlike Haudricourt, Solnit and Zhang, L-Thongkum persistently used Lakkja as the starting point for any direction of comparing, which literally limited the representativeness of samples. Also her tonal comparison was too narrow an approach to make the conclusion from phonological perspective. In order to confirm the present reconstruction and to give a complete picture of the Proto-Lakkja phonological system, more data are needed.

Despite this, L-Thongkum’s research on reconstruction of Proto-Lakkja to a certain extent has contributed to a better understanding of the classification of Lakkja and to comparative studies of Tai-Kadai languages more broadly. In practical terms, what is available is Proto-Tai, the outlined Proto-Kam-Sui, some substantial indications of the shape of Proto-Li, and the preliminary reconstruction of Proto-Lakkja. Scholars can conduct synchronic and diachronic comparative studies of Proto-Kadai from these four bases, although crucial data from outlier languages are badly needed.

1.7.1.3 Austronesian studies and Lakkja
In 1942, Paul K. Benedict presented evidence for a radical revision of the then accepted phylogenetic grouping of languages in Southeast Asia and the Pacific in his paper *Thai, Kadai, and Indonesian: A New Alignment in South-eastern Asia*. Following Schlegel (1901), Benedict proposed that the Tai family of languages should be taken out of the Sino-Tibetan phylum and, together with the Kadai group in South China, be joined in a phylum with the family of languages, which he called Austro-Thai. His hypothetical language ancestral to Thai and
Austronesian was not dignified by its name until the 1960s and 1970s, when material from Kam-Sui and other mainland languages, including Lakkja, made possible a huge expansion of the original thesis. It soon became evident from a consideration of the lexical material that the Malayo-Polynesian or Austronesian phylum (including Indonesian) was itself part of a larger phylum, Benedict’s Austro-Thai, which includes Miao-Yao and Tai-Kadai languages as well (Benedict 1975).

In fact, it was the numerals in several lesser-known Tai-Kadai languages which resemble Austronesian that first led Benedict to the hypothesis linking Tai with Austronesian. He then set up those languages under the name “Kadai” to designate the entire stock between Tai and Austronesian. With more descriptive materials published during 1960s, Benedict expanded previous ideas. Although the data was still limited, Lakkja provided a number of crucial links to support his hypothesis, including its consonant clusters, pronouns, numerals when compared to Austronesian and other Tai-Kadai languages.

This fact gives some insight into the classification of Tai-Kadai, and also puts into new perspective the problem of the homeland of Austronesian family of languages. Since then, a number of scholars such as Soren C. Egerod, Kurt Wulff and Ward H. Goodenough have followed Benedict’s way, arguing that “there has been room for all kinds of argument about the details, but not about the fact of relationship” (Benedict 1975), while Gedney (1976), Dahl (1977) and others, in contrast, believed that the “evidence” is nothing more than chance similarity.

However, in his 1994 article, Thurgood noticed the tendency for scholars within the field of historical linguistics to choose between a genetic relationship and no relationship at all, largely ignoring the possibility of a contact relationship, whereas the truth seems to lie somewhere between their extremes, with regard to the fact that forms alone could also come from contact, as with the French forms in English. He proposed three possible ways to account for the Austronesian look-alikes in Tai-Kadai: common inheritance, that is, the two languages families are genetically related; language contact, that is, the forms were borrowed into Tai-Kadai from Austronesian; and chance, that is, the forms are merely look-alikes and nothing more. He disagreed with the possibilities to establish regular correspondences on the basis of only unique patterns and the possibilities to build a case for genetic relationship only on the basis of those unique correspondence forms, and thus had reservation over the concept of shared innovation. Furthermore, with evidence from materials and reconstructions including Lakkja, Thurgood observed that the genetic hypothesis was only consistent with part of the data, while the borrowing hypothesis lies consistent with all of it. Beyond that, the
reconstructions and the subgrouping evidence showed that Tai-Kadai borrowing was from an early Austronesian source and that contact occurred in southwestern China and predated the Austronesian movement out onto the islands.

These findings seemed to suggest that there was now no real evidence for a genetic relationship between Austronesian and Tai-Kadai. But Thurgood also added that from a prehistorian’s viewpoint, the appeal of the Austro-Tai hypothesis was in the fact that it accounted for apparent early contact between these language groups. It was the possible early, intimate contact that was of interest. Thus, the fundamental insight for the genetic hypothesis recognized a historical relationship between Tai-Kadai and Austronesian. But it turned out that this is not a genetic relationship, but rather language contact.

However, it is worth noting that there are also factors which might lead to analytical errors in Thurgood’s paper. On the one hand, it was only the Tai-Kadai forms that were being critically examined here, while the Austronesian forms were included only for the sake of comparison. This method was quite similar to L-Thongkum’s, as discussed above. One the other hand, as Thurgood himself noted at the end, Wulff, Sagart, and others were partially right in insisting that there were clear lexical connections between Austronesian and Chinese, but Thurgood recognized these lexical similarities as early contact between pre-Austronesians and Chinese, totally rejecting the idea of a possible genetic relationship.

In recent years, there have been several proposals about the genetic links between Tai-Kadai and the Austronesian languages. Sagart is one of those who acquired an influence for their scientific merit. On the basis of his research on Chinese and Austronesian connections, Sagart (2004) proposed for the Austronesian family a new higher phylogeny, called AAK (Austronesian Ancestor of Tai-Kadai), taking as evidence numerals and other basic vocabulary items in languages such as Lakkja. He also argued that contrary to common sense, Tai-Kadai languages are a subgroup of Austronesian (specifically: a branch of Muic, coordinate with Proto-Malayo-Polynesian and Northeast Formosan).

In his 2005 article, Sagart further raised an entirely different type of argument against Thurgood’s borrowing hypothesis. Thurgood in his 1994 paper mentioned a piece of linguistic ‘folk mythology’ that basic vocabulary, such as numerals, body parts, pronouns, and so on, cannot be borrowed, which was widely accepted by scholars and thus might weaken his borrowing hypothesis. But he argued that the mythology was obviously not based on linguistic reconstructions and correspondence patterns, because there were a number of counterexamples in Southeast Asia, like borrowed numerals in Thai. Nearly ten years later, Sagart pointed out that the vocabulary items shared by Tai-Kadai and AN were too basic to be
borrowed. The shared forms included the 1sg, 2sg and 2pl personal pronouns; all the numerals above ‘one’; body-part terms like ‘eye’, ‘tongue’, ‘hand’; terms for natural objects like ‘moon’, ‘water’; verbs like ‘die’, etc. Table 1.11 shows some examples.

Table 1.11 A sound correspondence between Austronesian and Tai-Kadai
(Sagart 2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PAN</th>
<th>PMP</th>
<th>Tai</th>
<th>Lakkja</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘die’</td>
<td>maCay</td>
<td>matay</td>
<td>ta:i¹</td>
<td>plei¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘eye’</td>
<td>maCa</td>
<td>mata</td>
<td>ta¹</td>
<td>pla¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘bird’</td>
<td>manuk</td>
<td>nok⁸</td>
<td>mlok⁷</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sagart went further than Thurgood, noting that “borrowing such a set of vocabulary was probably not impossible, but if so, one should also expect to find many, many loanwords in the cultural vocabulary. This was precisely where the difficulty arises: items of cultural vocabulary shared by Tai-Kadai and Austronesian were quite scarce (terms for rice cultivation, for instance, were all but missing)” (Sagart 2015).

As discussed above, Sagart holds that neither chance nor borrowing is likely explanations for the lexical comparisons between Tai-Kadai and Austronesian. The only remaining explanation is genetic, as Benedict argued. His most recent paper (Sagart 2019) proposes the origins for the three Tai-Kadai tones in the segmental endings of Proto-Southern Austronesian, claiming that “the building blocks for Kra-Dai tones are shown to be in place during the Formosan phase of Austronesian phonological history”. He strongly believes that Austronesian is the parent language of Tai-Kadai and Malayo-Polynesian even though the evidence is still relatively limited.

Blench (2018) also argues that based on the volume of cognates, especially in basic vocabulary, Austronesian and Daic (Tai-Kadai) must be related, and “borrowing can be excluded as an explanation”. His 2018 paper examines all existing proposals and makes comparisons between Tai-Kadai and different subsets of Austronesian. The evidence presented by him suggests complex multi-genetic relationships between various branches of Daic and subsets of Austronesian, notably Proto-Austronesian, Formosan, Proto-Malayo-Polynesian, and Proto-Philippines. However, the value of using basic vocabulary in modelling relationships is questionable in the absence of a Proto-Daic reconstruction for comparing Daic and Austronesian.
As more linguistic evidence is required for further comparative studies, this thesis seeks to search for pivotal data from such a crucial language as Lakkja.

1.7.2 On Typology
As mentioned in §1.6.2, this study adopts the theoretical framework of linguistic typology as advocated by Dixon (2010, 2012) and Shopen (2007).

In his 3-volume *Basic Linguistic Theory*, Dixon focuses on grammar, which in his opinion is built on the relations between items chosen from lexical word classes. He provides chapters on aspects of methodology and principles, and deals in fair detail with a number of grammatical topics, with brief discussion of phonology and some notes on how a dictionary/thesaurus (or lexicon) should profitably be presented.

Shopen’s much-quoted three-volume survey, *Language Typology and Syntactic Descriptions*, brings together a team of leading scholars to explore the syntactic and morphological structures of the world’s languages. Clearly organized and broad-ranging, it covers topics such as parts of speech, passives, complementation, relative clauses, adverbial clauses, inflectional morphology, tense, aspect, mood, and deixis. The contributors look at the major ways that these notions are realized, and provide informative sketches of them at work in a range of languages.

The present study will follow the steps of the theoretical framework mentioned above to present a full description and analysis of the grammatical features in Lakkja, bearing in mind that grammar is a system that is made up of parts that are correlated. Data will be examined and analyzed at different levels in order to see the correlations between certain items and construction types.

1.7.3 On Gedney’s box
To collect the accurate tonal system of Lakkja, the fieldwork of this study will adapt William J. Gedney’s methodology on Tai dialects.

The tonal systems in Tai-Kadai languages are always troublesome from the very beginning. The system of tonal contrasts in any particular language or dialect is unique, considering the phonetics of the tones, the number of permitted tonal contrasts, as well as the list of morphemes on which particular tones occur (Gedney 1989b). Gedney has done extensive work on Tai historical linguistics, one of the best-known contributions being his checklist and
elicitation questionnaire for determining tones in Tai dialects, which originally appeared in 1972 (reprinted as Gedney 1989b).

According to Gedney, the diagram below displays a maximum of possible tonal distinctions. It’s generally agreed among scholars that the Tai languages stemmed from Proto-Tai, a reconstructed common ancestor with three tones on open syllables and no tonal contrast on checked syllables. The tonal splits were then determined by whether the initial consonants were voiced or voiceless. For the D category, besides the phonetic nature of the initials, the splits also depended upon vowel length. The voiceless group, moreover, underwent further splits conditioned by friction sounds, voiceless unaspirated sounds, and glottal and preglottalized sounds (Hudak 2004). All of these splits would allow for a possible maximum of twenty contrasts as shown in the diagram, which is already more refined than necessary.

Table 1.12 Gedney’s tone box for comparative Tai

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initials at the time of tonal splits</th>
<th>Proto-Tai tones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voiceless friction sounds, *s, hm, ph, etc.</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voiceless unaspirated stops, *p, etc.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glottal, *ʔ, ʔb, etc.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voiced, *b, m, l, z, etc.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Smooth Syllables
Checked Syllables (syllables ending in -p, -t, -k)

Due to the genetic and geographic correlations between Lakkja and Tai languages, I will conduct future studies on the initials to determine whether there are similar tonal splits in Lakkja. Besides, it is highlighted in Liu’s dictionary that tones in checked syllables are further restricted in their occurrence according to the length of their vowels, which is not described in Lan’s book. Gedney’s box no doubt indicates the possibility of tonal splits conditioned by vowel length. §2.5.3 gives a further discussion on this issue.

In short, it is safe to conclude that available descriptive research of Lakkja is far from enough and little had been known about the morphology and the syntax of Lakkja previous to this study. A systematic description of Lakkja has thus become an urgent task.
1.8 Data management

Data in this draft are based on my fieldwork in 2017 and 2018, as well as Liu Baoyuan’s Han-Yao dictionary (1999), and Lan Qingyuan’s book on Lakkja (2011).

The first set of data was collected between May and November 2017, in cooperation with Prof. Lu Tianqiao, a Chinese scholar who was undertaking an academic project on Lakkja funded by Chinese Languages Protection and Research Centre (中国语言资源保护研究中心). After that, a second field research was conducted in October 2018 for data collation and extension.

During the fieldwork, there were mainly three language consultants who offered significant assistance with my data collection. My main language consultant is Mr. Su Shaohua (male, aged 65). After dropping out of junior high school, he has been working as a farmer. He also worked as a history teacher for several years in Jinxiu, his hometown. It is worth mentioning that Mr. Su is deeply influenced by his father Prof. Su Defu, a well-known scholar on Yao languages and culture. Thus, as a native speak of Lakkja, he is not only fluent in Lakkja, local Chinese and Mandarin Chinese, but also has a passion about Yao languages and culture, which greatly facilitates my fieldwork. My second language consultant is Master Su Xianting (male, aged 90), who has been a Taoist Master in Jinxiu for many years and thus enjoys high status and commands universal respect in his community. In his nineties, Master Su is still very energetic and is the most familiar with his own language and culture. He remembers words that are not commonly used in daily life. Considering he’s not fluent in Mandarin Chinese and may not shoulder too much workload at this age, I invited him as an adviser, providing hints for Mr. Su Shaohua, my main language consultant. The third language consultant is Ms. Tao Yuying, who is currently a manager at local hotel and is in her forties. She is good at singing, and provided us with an abundance of data on Lakkja folk songs and stories. However, though Ms Tao is also a native speaker in Lakkja and has been living in Jinxiu County for almost all her life, she was born in a Lakkja village near Jinxiu and thus sometimes has an accent of Lakkja vernacular. Her pronunciation is more similar to Liu’s data and these differences contributed to our understanding and research of vernacular variations. Throughout the project, all the three language consultants showed strong sense of responsibility and love for their own language and culture.

Data used in this study come from naturalistic linguistic materials such as daily conversation, stories, folk songs and other texts. During fieldwork, Chinese Languages Protection Centre provided us with professional recording equipment including video cameras,
microphones, lighting, recording pen, and noise reduction devices and software, which ensures the quality of the data in this project.

Besides, Liu’s dictionary offers a valuable database, and Lan provides a number of Chinese loanwords along with a short grammatical sketch. The phonological systems provided by them are brief and somewhat inconsistent, and I will deal with those inconsistencies in the following chapters on the basis of fieldwork.

This study follows research ethics and ensures the confidentiality of all data collected from interviews and surveys in every step of the research. Specifically, all contact information is kept private; interviewees have been made completely aware of the thesis and the objectives regarding the interviews; all the interviews and surveys have been on the principle of equality and free will; if necessary, pseudonyms will be assigned; besides, digital data such as audio files of interviews will be used only according to interviewees’ agreement.

The volume of digital data during fieldwork is approximately 50 GB. Digital research data and records are stored in excel, MP4 or MP3 formats with at least two sets of copies. I also compare records to existing dictionary and research with IPA and professional software like Praat to double check the accuracy of my data. All the data has a retention period of 5 years post publication (minimum retention period). As the principal investigator, I will be responsible for the storage. All the digital data will be stored and managed in a networked drive and also an external hard-drive. Negotiated access to data may be considered.

1.9 Structure of the work

This monograph is divided into nine chapters. Chapter one presents an introduction to the language, the social and cultural situation of the Lakkja group, as well as the research background and methodology. Chapter two outlines the main points of Lakkja sound system. Chapter three offers an investigation of word formation and morphological processes. Emphasis is laid on the four major morphological processes including affixation, reduplication, tonal alternation and compounding. Chapter four examines the noun phrase, with discussion on its syntactic function, semantic properties, nominalization and relative clause. Chapter five focuses on the verb phrase, exploring issues such as verb sub-categorisation, syntactic function, negation, temporal-aspectual systems, construction types, among others. This is followed by chapter six which treats adjectives and adverbs in some detail, including their characteristics, syntactic function, semantic properties, and comparison. Chapter seven presents an account of sentence types and several construction types at sentence level. Chapter eight provides an analysis on grammatical relations, dealing with issues such as the semantic roles,
nominative/accusative marking of classifier doublets, relation between subject and object, subject and topic, passivity, transitivity, as well as construction types. This is followed by chapter nine summing up the findings of this project and proposing directions for future research.
Chapter 2
The Sound System

The following description seeks to present a detailed account on the sound system of Lakkja. Analysis will be devoted to the distribution of consonants, vowels, tone classes, tone sandhi, vernacular variations, sound changes, phonological alternations, among others.

As mentioned in §1.8, data in this study are based on my fieldwork in 2017 and 2018, as well as Liu Baoyuan’s Han-Yao dictionary (1999) and Lan Qingyuan’s book on Lakkja (2011). The phonological systems provided by Liu and Lan are brief and somewhat inconsistent. Based on fieldwork, we will deal with those inconsistences in this chapter.

2.1 Phonotactics

Like other Kam-Sui languages, the phonological pattern of Lakkja is based on the syllable. Each syllable has distinctions in tone, initial (consonant, consonant cluster or no consonant), nucleus (vowel or diphthong) and optional final consonant. In Lakkja, if we consider all glides as marginal in a syllable and therefore consonantal, a syllable consists of at least two segments: VT or CT. It may be expanded to \((C_1C_2)V_1(V_2V_3C_3)T\). \(V_1\), \(V_2\) and \(V_3\) designate vowel phonemes, \(C_1\), \(C_2\), and \(C_3\) are the three distributional classes of consonant phonemes, and \(T\) denotes tones. \(C_2\) basically has four members /l/, /w/, /j/ and /h/; \(C_3\) has six members /m, n, ŋ, p, t, k/. \(V_1\) consists of fifteen vowels: /i, y, u, e, ø, o, e, ã, ẽ, ê, ə, ã, õ, ũ/; \(V_2\) consists of six members /i, u, e, ĕ, ø, ə/; \(V_3\) consists of only two members /i, u/.

In other words, initial consonants mainly consist of simple consonants and complex consonants involving a number of palatalized and labialized sounds and consonant clusters with liquid /l/. Nucleuses of syllables mainly include simple vowels, diphthongs and several triphthongs. Finals are typically made up of simple vowels and simple consonants. No consonant clusters are found to occur in the final position.

Lakkja syllables with different finals can be divided into two types. Those ending in vowels or final nasals are referred to as smooth syllables, while those ending with final -p, -t, and -k are checked syllables.

Table 2.1 summarizes the structure of Lakkja syllables. 14 syllable types can be recognized in Lakkja.
Several features can be observed for Lakkja syllables. First of all, a glottal stop ʔ is normally used in a syllable with zero initial, that is, a syllable beginning with a vowel instead of a consonant. A number of syllables of this kind can be recognised in Lakkja. However, due to the fact that glottal stops are in the process of disappearing, syllables with zero initials are not recorded with a glottal stop ʔ.

Secondly, only one syllabic consonant is found in my data, namely, the general negator ɘ²⁴.

Thirdly, syllables with the structures CVT, CVVT, CVCT are the most common in my data, while those with the structures VT, VCT, VVT, and CCVVVT are less common.

Last but not the least, no examples are found in my data for the structures CVVVCT or CCVVVCT. In other words, triphthongs do not combine with consonant finals.

### 2.2 Consonant phonemes

Lakkja has 23 consonant phonemes, which can be divided into nine natural classes: unaspirated voiceless stops, aspirated voiceless stops, voiced stops, voiced nasals, voiceless nasals, fricatives, liquids, and glides. The consonant system is as in Table 2.2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Syllable structure</th>
<th>Lakkja</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Lakkja</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VT</td>
<td>a¹¹</td>
<td>‘kill’</td>
<td>i³⁷</td>
<td>‘cucumber’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VCT</td>
<td>ək²⁵</td>
<td>‘at, in’</td>
<td>uk²⁵</td>
<td>‘exceed’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VVT</td>
<td>ou²⁴</td>
<td>‘enter’</td>
<td>au²⁴</td>
<td>‘want’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT</td>
<td>η²⁴</td>
<td>‘no, not’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVT</td>
<td>ma²³¹</td>
<td>‘you (2SG)’</td>
<td>ja²¹⁴</td>
<td>‘farmland, field’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVCT</td>
<td>jak²⁵</td>
<td>‘lock’</td>
<td>wok²⁴</td>
<td>‘vegetable’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCVT</td>
<td>mlo²³¹</td>
<td>‘black (dirty)’</td>
<td>phla⁵¹</td>
<td>‘fish’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCVCT</td>
<td>bliy²³¹</td>
<td>‘leech’</td>
<td>mlok⁵⁵</td>
<td>‘bird’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVVT</td>
<td>wei¹¹</td>
<td>‘buy’</td>
<td>fie²⁴</td>
<td>‘write’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCVVVT</td>
<td>blaur²³¹</td>
<td>‘night’</td>
<td>pleu⁵⁵</td>
<td>‘break’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVVCT</td>
<td>bien⁵¹</td>
<td>‘month’</td>
<td>jiem⁵¹</td>
<td>‘evil’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCVVCT</td>
<td>ηjiej:ŋ³⁵</td>
<td>‘towards’</td>
<td>kjie:jŋ³¹</td>
<td>‘tail’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVVVCT</td>
<td>tuə:i⁵⁵</td>
<td>‘correct, right’</td>
<td>fuə:i⁵⁵</td>
<td>‘drill’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCVVVCT</td>
<td>kjuo:i²⁴</td>
<td>‘creek’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2.2 Lakkja consonant phonemes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Labials</th>
<th>Dentic</th>
<th>Dental-</th>
<th>Palatals</th>
<th>Velars</th>
<th>Glottals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stops</strong></td>
<td>Vl. unasp.</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>ts</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>asp.</td>
<td>ph</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>tsh</td>
<td>kh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vd.</td>
<td>?b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nasals</strong></td>
<td>Vd.</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vl.</td>
<td>m̥</td>
<td>n̥</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fricatives</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td></td>
<td>s</td>
<td>h</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Glides</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>w</td>
<td>j</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Liquids</strong></td>
<td>Vd.</td>
<td>l</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vl.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A consonant may occur in a syllable initially, but not all consonants can occur finally. Only m, n, η and p, t, k can occur in a syllable finally, while others don’t (see §2.4 for further discussion on syllable finals).

The initial consonants may consist of a simple consonant or consonant cluster.

### 2.2.1 Simple initial consonants

All consonants may be used as the initial of a syllable. There are three types of stop consonants: unaspirated, aspirated, and voiced.

The consonants p, t, k, ts and ?b are unaspirated stops. ph, th, tsh, and kh are aspirated stops and affricatives, among which a constrst is made between apical ts and tsh. Unlike many other Tai-Kadai languages, words taking aspirated sounds are not few in number.

There is only one voiced stop ?b. Words taking this voiced stop occur infrequently. It is recorded with a preceding ? in Liu’s dictionary, while in our fieldwork it’s found that pre-glottal quality ? often disappears. That is, ?b may sound like b, and as a result, only b is used in thesis transcriptions. In addition, ?b occasionally sounds like a pre-nasalized consonant to a non-native speaker.

f, s, h are fricatives. f is a labio-dental fricative.

m, n, η are voiced nasals, which have voiceless counterparts m̥, n̥, η. Brief comparisons between minimal pairs have been made in Praat, among which the contrast of η and η is the most typical, as shown in Figure 2.3-2.4:
Figure 2.3 Spectrogram and waveform for the Lakkja word "ŋo" 'five'
(consonant in red circle)

Figure 2.4 Spectrogram and waveform for the Lakkja word "ŋ̥o" 'pants'

It is obvious from the spectrogram that there are less formant dots (red dots) for ŋ than for its voiced counterpart, suggesting lighter energy of the voiceless consonant. And it is worth noting that there is an apparent voice bar below 524 Hz for ŋ while no such indicators for ŋ̥. The significant differences strictly keep pace with the phonological features of voiceless nasals that are in general characterized by the presence of nasal flow and the absence of oral flow.

The other two voiceless nasals m̥ and n̥ may exhibit some other features in Praat (Figure 2.5-2.8).
**Figure 2.5** Spectrogram and waveform for the Lakkja word $ma^{24}$ ‘open (mouth)’

**Figure 2.6** Spectrogram and waveform for the Lakkja word $ma^{24}$ ‘(grow) up’
The spectrograms of these two pairs exhibit subtle differences in voice energy. The greatest indicator of the contrast between voiced and voiceless nasals lies in the duration of the voice period. More specifically, during the production, the voiceless nasals typically begin with a period of voiceless closure, resulting in a slightly shorter voice bar in the spectrogram than their voiced counterparts which begin with voiced closure.

Moreover, as to nasals, Liu and Lan also mention \( \eta \) and its voiceless counterpart \( \eta' \), but in my fieldwork, my consultants Mr Su Shaohua and Master Su Xianting use \( \eta j \) and \( \eta' j \) for all \( \eta \) and \( \eta' \). After discussion with consultants, we realize that \( \eta \) and \( \eta' \) are variations derived from Lakkja vernaculars. Thus, we decide to remove \( \eta \) and \( \eta' \) from the system. Though Liu was a
native speaker of Lakkja, he was influenced by his mother who was born and grew up in a village near Jinxiu. When compared to standard Lakkja spoken in Jinxiu County, vernacular variations can be found frequently in Liu’s dictionary.

Besides, \( \eta \) was occasionally recorded as \( h \) by some scholars. For example, strictly speaking, \( pei^51 \ ha:i^24 \) ‘this year’ should be transcribed as \( pei^51 \ \eta a:i^24 \). However, the speakers also accept \( h \) for \( \eta \) due to the phonological tendency of being simplified.

It is also worth noting that native words with aspirated consonants and voiceless nasals only occur with tones in odd number, namely, Tone 51, Tone 24, and Tone 55 (see §2.5).

The voiceless liquid \( l \) is only found to occur with a handful few words in my data, such as \( toŋ^51 \) ‘much, more’, \( lap^55 \) ‘dark’, \( la^24 \) ‘afterwards’, \( la:k^24 \) ‘collapse’. Spectrograms have also been produced for them as in Figure 2.9-2.10:

**Figure 2.9** Spectrogram and waveform for the Lakkja word \( lai^51 \) ‘good’
The figures also constitute a perfect illustration of the contrast between voiced and voiceless consonants by exhibiting much lighter formants and shorter duration of the latter. Labial \( w \) and labial-dental \( v \) are not contrastive phonemes in Lakkja.

No uvular sounds or pre-nasalized consonant initials are found in Lakkja.

A syllabic \( \eta^{24} \) ‘not, no’ is found in Lakkja. No other consonants are found with such function.

Examples of simple initial consonants are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consonants</th>
<th>Lakkja</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( p )</td>
<td>( pai^{51} )</td>
<td>‘go’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( ph )</td>
<td>( phaːg^{24} )</td>
<td>‘blue’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( b )</td>
<td>( baːn^{24} )</td>
<td>‘village’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( m )</td>
<td>( ma^{11} )</td>
<td>‘horse’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( m̥ )</td>
<td>( m̥ai^{55} )</td>
<td>‘widow’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( f )</td>
<td>( faːm^{51} )</td>
<td>‘three’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( w )</td>
<td>( wei^{231} )</td>
<td>‘buy’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( t )</td>
<td>( tok^{55} )</td>
<td>‘be’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( th )</td>
<td>( them^{51} )</td>
<td>‘needle’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( n )</td>
<td>( ni^{231} )</td>
<td>‘this’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( η )</td>
<td>( ηi^{51} )</td>
<td>‘in this way’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( l )</td>
<td>( laη^{231} )</td>
<td>‘mountain’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( l̥ )</td>
<td>( lɔ̄η^{51} )</td>
<td>‘many’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( ts )</td>
<td>( tsi^{51} )</td>
<td>‘I, me’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following table is a list of contrasting pairs of simple initial consonants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial Consonant</th>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tsh</td>
<td>tshik</td>
<td>‘ruler’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td>sãn</td>
<td>‘bamboo shoots’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j</td>
<td>jom</td>
<td>‘cloud’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>kai</td>
<td>‘chicken’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kh</td>
<td>khu</td>
<td>‘pig’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ŋ</td>
<td>ŋa:n</td>
<td>‘at ease’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ŋ̃</td>
<td>ŋ̃a:n</td>
<td>‘agree, consent’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>hou</td>
<td>‘two’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.2 Complex initial consonants:

There are 17 complex initial consonants, including 8 labialized consonants, 5 palatalized consonants, and 4 bilabial consonant clusters with the liquid $l$.

Labialized consonants and palatalized consonants in Lakkja are recognized as consonant clusters. However, in the Tai-Kadai case, they may also be treated as simple consonants by some scholars in view of diachronic sources. As shown in Table 2.11-2.12, palatalization seems to be restricted to $k$, $kh$, $ŋ$ and $h$ only. Labialization is not found in other consonants.
Table 2.11 Lakkja labialized consonants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consonants</th>
<th>Lakkja</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tw</td>
<td>twei(^{51})</td>
<td>‘stack’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tshw</td>
<td>tshwei(^{51})</td>
<td>‘urge’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sw</td>
<td>swei(^{55})</td>
<td>‘although, though’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jw</td>
<td>jwe:n(^{11}) peru(^{55})</td>
<td>‘pencil’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kw</td>
<td>kwa:k(^{24})</td>
<td>‘hoe’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khw</td>
<td>khu(^{51})</td>
<td>‘dog’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ηw</td>
<td>ηwak(^{24})</td>
<td>‘blackfly’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hw</td>
<td>hwāi(^{51})</td>
<td>‘not, no’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kj</td>
<td>kjja:η(^{51})</td>
<td>‘tall’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hj</td>
<td>hjuo(^{51})</td>
<td>‘shoes’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ηj</td>
<td>ηja(^{214})</td>
<td>‘hate’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nj</td>
<td>ηja:η(^{55})</td>
<td>‘solid’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples of labialized and palatalized consonants are as follows.

Table 2.12 Lakkja palatalized consonants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consonants</th>
<th>Lakkja</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kj</td>
<td>kj</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kj</td>
<td>kj</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nj</td>
<td>nj</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nj</td>
<td>nj</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following is a list of contrasting pairs of labialized and palatalized consonants:

- k - kj: ko\(^{51}\) ‘fruit’ kjo\(^{231}\) ‘skull’
- h - hj: huo\(^{51}\) ‘flower’ hjuo\(^{51}\) ‘shoes’
- k - kw: ka:i\(^{24}\) ‘abstain’ kwa:i\(^{55}\) ‘smart’
- t - tw: tei\(^{24}\) ‘mouth’ twei\(^{51}\) ‘pile’
- tw - tshw: twei\(^{51}\) ‘stack’ tshwei\(^{51}\) ‘urge’
- kw - ηw: kwa:k\(^{24}\) ‘hoe’ ηwak\(^{24}\) ‘blackfly’

In Lakkja, clusters of initial consonants are permitted with l as the second member of the cluster. They are:

\[ pl \quad plh \quad bl \quad ml \]
Words taking these four consonant clusters are much fewer in number than those taking labialized and palatalized consonants.

It is worth noting that a small number of words exhibit free variations between consonant clusters and initial consonants, indicating that initial consonants with liquid /l/ are in the process of disappearing. For instance, my main speaker Mr. Su sometimes tends to replace /bl/ with /l/, though another older speaker Master Su doesn’t. For example, Mr. Su pronounces “night” as /lau/\(^{231}\), while Master Su is consistent with Liu’s dictionary by using /blau/\(^{231}\). This consonant loss happens sometimes among native speakers but it is not the case with all words. For example, most words such as /bla/\(^{231}\) “fondle”, /nii\(\grave{\text{i}}\)/\(^{55}\) /blie:\(\grave{n}\)/\(^{51}\) “confinement in childbirth”, and “swamp cabbages” /blok/\(^{55}\) /bu\(\grave{\text{u}}\)/\(^{51}\) still have /bl/ as their initial consonants.

The following chart shows examples of consonant clusters formed with liquid /l/.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consonants</th>
<th>IPA</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pl</td>
<td>pla:yi(^{51})</td>
<td>‘fragrant’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phl</td>
<td>phla(^{51})</td>
<td>‘fish’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bl</td>
<td>bla(^{231})</td>
<td>‘fondle’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ml</td>
<td>mlok(^{55})</td>
<td>‘bird’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some examples of contrasting pairs of simple consonants vs. consonant clusters are given below:

- pl - p: /pla\(^{51}\)/ ‘eye’ /pa\(^{51}\)/ (disposal marker)
- pl - phl: /pla\(^{51}\)/ ‘eye’ /phla\(^{51}\)/ ‘fish’
- ph - phl: /pha:u\(^{55}\)/ ‘wave’ /phla:u\(^{55}\)/ ‘warm’
- phl - l: /phla:u\(^{55}\)/ ‘warm’ /la:u\(^{51}\)/ ‘mix’
- l - ml: /let\(^{24}\)/ ‘tie, strap’ /mlet\(^{24}\)/ ‘dense’

### 2.2.3 Zero initials

Many syllables in Lakkja begin with a vowel inherently preceded by a glottal stop /ʔ/. Syllables of this kind are conventionally recorded by Chinese scholars as having no initial consonants, commonly referred to as syllables with zero initials. Since glottal stops are in the process of disappearing, in the study the glottal stop /ʔ/ is not assigned to syllables of this type and such syllables are treated as zero initials. For example, /ʔuk/\(^{55}\) ‘out’ is recorded as /uk/\(^{55}\), /ʔeːi\(\grave{\text{i}}\)/\(^{24}\) ‘sharp’ as /eːi\(^{24}\)/, /ʔat/\(^{55}\) /jen\(^{11}\)/ /kjäː/u\(^{24}\)/ ‘sisters’ as /a\(\grave{\text{t}}\)/\(^{55}\) /jen\(^{11}\)/ /kjäː/u\(^{24}\)/, /ʔat/\(^{55}\) /jen\(^{11}\)/ /nu\(\grave{\text{j}}\)/\(^{11}\)/ /kjäː/u\(^{24}\)/ ‘nephew’ as /ʔat/\(^{55}\) /jen\(^{11}\)/ /nu\(\grave{\text{j}}\)/\(^{11}\)/ /kjäː/u\(^{24}\)/.
2.3 Vowel phonemes

Lakkja features a complicated system of simple vowels, diphthongs and triphthongs.

2.3.1 Simple vowels

Lakkja has 9 simple vowels as in Table 2.13:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Front</th>
<th>Central</th>
<th>Back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Close</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close-mid</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>ə</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open-mid</td>
<td>ɛ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Lakkja, except the central ə and the high rounded y, there is a nasalized counterpart to each simple vowel, including ĩ, ē, ě, ā, ō, and ũ. Compared to the regular forms, the nasal vowels typically have lower sonorant energy and lighter voicing. Figure 2.14-2.17 provide examples of illustrative spectrograms.

Figure 2.14 Spectrogram and waveform for the Lakkja word ha⁵¹ ‘bully’
**Figure 2.15** Spectrogram and waveform for the Lakkja word $lak^{24}$ $pok^{24}$ $ha^{51}$ ‘weaver’

**Figure 2.16** Spectrogram and waveform for the Lakkja word $ʦɛ^{23}$ $wa^{51}$ ‘tea leaf’
As illustrated above, in the higher region, the formants for nasal vowels are a little lighter and the red dots are more scattered than they are in the regular forms, suggesting the typical lighter voicing of nasalisation.

Length is a major distinctive factor in the vowel system. Except loanwords, all the simple vowels are long when occurring without codas. Vowel length is not significant without a coda. Length contrast exists for \( a \) and \( \ddot{a} \), and less frequently for \( i, u, o, \ddot{a} \) and their nasalized counterparts \( \dddot{i}, \dddot{o}, \dddot{u} \).

It is worth noting that there are two vowels introduced from Chinese: \( y \) and \( \gamma \), which occasionally occur in Chinese loans. The latter is only found in recent Chinese loan words.

Not all consonants can combine with all vowel finals. A number of vowels have some restrictions on their distribution. For example, the front vowel \( e \) rarely combines with bilabial \( b \) in my data; \( y \) is not found to co-occur with other consonants except for palatal and velar consonants \( k, ts, tsh, j, \) and \( s \); \( \gamma \) most frequently occurs with palatals \( s, tsh, \) and \( ts \), such as \( s\gamma^{55} \) ‘private’, \( ts\gamma^{24} \) kjin\(^{24} \) ‘funding, capital’.

There are some restrictions on nasal vowels \( \dddot{i}, \dddot{e}, \dddot{e}, \dddot{a}, \ddot{a}, \dddot{u} \) as well (Table 2.18). Firstly, the front nasal vowels \( \dddot{i}, \dddot{e}, \) and \( \ddot{a} \) are more active than the back vowels \( \ddot{o} \) and \( \ddot{u} \) when combining with consonant initials. The close-mid front \( \dot{e} \) is the least active, which most frequently occurs as an element of the vowel cluster \( i\dot{e} \) instead of as a simple vowel; but when it occurs alone as the nucleus of a syllable, it only combines with four consonant clusters \( kj, khj, nj, \) and \( hj \). Secondly, the nasal vowels seem to be less active with plosive consonants, especially with \( p \) and \( t \), and aspirated stops \( kh, ph, th, \) and \( tsh \). For example, the close and close-mid front vowels
ɪ and ē are not found at all in my data to combine with aspirated plosives, and the close back vowel ū only combines with aspirated tsh and aspirated kh. Meanwhile, nasal vowels never co-occur with th since the aspirated dental consonant is commonly found in Chinese loans that lack nasal vowels. Thirdly, all the six nasal vowels in Lakkja seem not to occur in syllables beginning with voiceless nasals ɲ, ɳ, ɲ, voiceless consonant cluster ɲj, voiced and voiceless liquids l and l, consonant clusters with liquid l, glottalized consonants b and bl, as well as zero initials that are normally preceded by a glottal stop ʔ. Furthermore, nasal vowels co-occur more frequently with palatalized consonants than with labialized ones. For the latter, only Ĭ, Ė, ā combine with them occasionally. Below is a co-occurrence map of consonants and nasal vowels.

Table 2.18 Co-occurrence of Consonants and Nasal vowels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ĭ</th>
<th>Ė</th>
<th>Ė̃</th>
<th>ā</th>
<th>ņ</th>
<th>ū</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ts</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʔ</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ph</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>th</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tsh</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kh</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʔb</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɲ</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɳ</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɲ</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɲj</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>w</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition, speaking of tones, Tone 51 occurs more often in syllables with nasal vowels, and Tone 214 is less frequent in such syllables.

Furthermore, there are several variations in Lakkja, such as \(ə\) and \(e\), \(u\) and \(ə\), \(o\) and \(ɔ\). For example, \(blən^{231}\) ‘wake’ is recorded as \(blen^{231}\) by Liu, and \(khjum^{24}\) ‘sour’ is recorded as \(khjam^{24}\), while my speakers tend to use the schwa \(ə\). These differences might be attributing to the influence of Chinese.

Following are examples of simple vowels:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vowels</th>
<th>IPA</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>(mi^{231})</td>
<td>‘have’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e)</td>
<td>(lep^{24})</td>
<td>‘ten’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ɛ)</td>
<td>(ple^{55})</td>
<td>‘run’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Examples of minimal pairs of simple plain vowels are given below.

- **a** - **ɛ**
- **i** - **y**
- **u** - **o**

The following contrasting pairs are recognized for the plain vs. nasal vowels:

- **a** - **ã**
- **i** - **ĩ**
- **e** - **ĕ**
- **e** - **ĕ**
- **u** - **ū**
- **o** - **ō**

In addition, stress is not a primary phoneme, although we may recognize different degrees of stress. Lakkja does not have a strong contrast between different stresses.

### 2.3.2 Clusters of vowels

Diphthongs and triphthongs are treated as clusters of vowels. The following clusters of vowels in Table 2.19 may be recognized.
Table 2.19 Lakkja diphthongs and triphthongs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vowels</th>
<th>Lakkja</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ie</td>
<td>mie\textsuperscript{231}</td>
<td>‘hand’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i:u</td>
<td>mi:u\textsuperscript{214}</td>
<td>‘temple’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ie:u</td>
<td>pie:u\textsuperscript{231}</td>
<td>‘duckweed’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ei</td>
<td>tsei\textsuperscript{55}</td>
<td>‘tree’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eu</td>
<td>heu\textsuperscript{55}</td>
<td>‘(time) before’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ε:u</td>
<td>me:u\textsuperscript{41}</td>
<td>‘cat’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a:i</td>
<td>ta:i\textsuperscript{231}</td>
<td>‘table’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ai</td>
<td>kjai\textsuperscript{51}</td>
<td>‘snow’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a:u</td>
<td>khja:u\textsuperscript{24}</td>
<td>‘wine’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>au</td>
<td>nau\textsuperscript{231}</td>
<td>‘cow’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uə</td>
<td>luə\textsuperscript{51}</td>
<td>‘remain’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uə:i</td>
<td>juə:i\textsuperscript{231}</td>
<td>‘trace, mark’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are totally 24 diphthongs and 2 triphthongs: ie:u and uə:i, of which the latter has a variant uei.

Triphthongs occur more often with Chinese loans.

Apparently, not all diphthongs have nasalized counterparts. Only ie, i:u, ε:u, a:i, ai, a:u, au, o:i, uə, and u:i do.

Some of the diphthongs have a distinction between long and short vowels, such as a:i and ai, a:u and au, while the others, like ie and i:u, have no long/short distinctions.

ie is pronounced as a vowel glide, with i as the main vowel.

In addition, except for ie and uə, no other diphthongs or triphthongs are allowed to take final -p, -t, -k. ie may combine with all the six final consonants -p, -t, -k, -m, -n, -ŋ, while uə may only combine with final -t, -k, -n, -ŋ.

Examples of diphthongs and triphthongs are as follows:
o:i  ko:i$^{51}$  ‘should, ought to’
ou  hou$^{24}$  ‘two’
u:i  mu:i$^{1}$  ‘maternal’
ui  phlu$^{51}$  ‘spit’
āi  wāi$^{231}$  ‘drunk’
āu  ʔāu$^{55}$  ‘stew’
ā:i  hwā:i$^{51}$  ‘no, not’
ā:u  kjā:u$^{24}$  ‘female’
iē  piē$^{51}$  ‘cry’
ī:u  kji:u$^{55}$  ‘urine’
ē:u  tshē:u$^{24}$  ‘cymbal’
ō:i  kjō:i$^{24}$  ‘weak (at knees)’
ū:i  kū:i$^{51}$  ‘bear (animal)’
uō  khuō$^{51}$  ‘dog’

The following is a list of contrasting pairs of clusters of vowels:

\[
\begin{align*}
i:u &- ī:u & & kji:u^{24} & & \text{‘mouse’} & & kji:u^{55} & & \text{‘urine’} \\
eu &- ē:u & & \text{theu}^{51} & & \text{‘autumn’} & & \text{the:u}^{55} & & \text{‘hop’} \\
e:u &- ē:u & & \text{tshē:u}^{51} & & \text{‘copy’} & & \text{tshē:u}^{24} & & \text{‘cymbal’} \\
ai &- a:i & & \text{pa:i}^{51} & & \text{‘go’} & & \text{pa:i}^{51} & & \text{‘put, place’} \\
au &- a:u & & \text{la:u}^{231} & & \text{‘night’} & & \text{la:u}^{231} & & \text{‘fish for’} \\
a:u &- ā:u & & \text{kja:u}^{24} & & \text{‘break’} & & \text{kjā:u}^{24} & & \text{‘female’} \\
uō &- uō & & \text{khuō}^{24} & & \text{‘waistband’} & & \text{khuō}^{51} & & \text{‘dog’} \\
u:i &- ū:i & & \text{ku:i}^{214} & & \text{‘cabinet’} & & \text{kū:i}^{24} & & \text{‘caudal vertebra’} \\
i:i &- ie:i & & \text{li:u}^{24} & & \text{‘you (2PL)’} & & \text{lie:u}^{231} & & \text{‘fat’} \\
u:i &- uō:i & & \text{fu:i}^{51} & & \text{‘ash’} & & \text{fuō:i}^{55} & & \text{‘drill’} \\
u:i &- o:i & & \text{ku:i}^{55} & & \text{‘cloth’} & & \text{ko:i}^{51} & & \text{‘should’}
\end{align*}
\]

Moreover, in Lakkja, there is also a syllabic ŋ$^{24}$ which may occur as a word, such as ŋ$^{24}$ “no, not”.

### 2.4 Finals

Lakkja finals can be divided into two groups: single vowel finals and complex finals.
Single vowel finals are all phonetically long vowels. Complex finals are quite symmetrical, consisting of two parts: the nucleus and the coda, as discussed in §2.1. Only vowels can occur in nucleus position. Lakkja codas are formed by high vowels -i, -e, -u, -y, -ɿ, nasals -m, -n, -ŋ and voiceless unaspirated stops -p, -t, -k. No other vowels or consonants occur in the coda position. Table 2.20 may illustrate.

Table 2.20 Lakkja finals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High Vowels</th>
<th>Nasal</th>
<th>Stops</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Front</td>
<td>-i, -y</td>
<td>-m</td>
<td>-p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-front</td>
<td>-e</td>
<td>-n</td>
<td>-t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>-ɿ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back</td>
<td>-u</td>
<td>-ŋ</td>
<td>-k</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The pronunciation of -i and -n is sometimes quite slight. -ɿ and -y only occur in Chinese loans.

According to Siamese and most of the Cantonese dialects, it is an area feature that p, t, and k in final position are presumably not released. It is also the case in Lakkja.

Also worth observing are the restrictions on the occurrences of final consonants and vowels. Only four Lakkja diphthongs ie, uə, uɿ, iɛ can take final consonants, while the others can’t. More specifically, uɿ may combine with final -n; iɛ may take final -ŋ as the coda; ie may take all the six final consonants -p, -t, -k, -m, -n, -ŋ; uə may only combine with final -t, -k, -n, -ŋ. As mentioned above, only ie and uə can take final -p, -t, -k.

In addition, no consonant clusters occur syllable finally in Lakkja.

Some examples of final consonants and vowels are given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vowels</th>
<th>Lakkja</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-i</td>
<td>kjai51</td>
<td>‘snow’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-e</td>
<td>mie231</td>
<td>‘hand’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-u</td>
<td>nau231</td>
<td>‘cow’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-m</td>
<td>jom231</td>
<td>‘cloud’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-n</td>
<td>ba:n24</td>
<td>‘village’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ŋ</td>
<td>lay231</td>
<td>‘mountain’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-p</td>
<td>tsep24</td>
<td>‘ten’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-t</td>
<td>mle:t24</td>
<td>‘bee’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-k</td>
<td>kwa:k24</td>
<td>‘hoe’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.5 Tonal system

A syllable usually has a tone. In general, the tones are described in terms of pitch levels and contours (Chao 1930). For practical purpose, five pitch levels are recognized and are designated by numerals: 5, high; 4, mid-high; 3, mid; 2, mid-low; and 1, low. It is to be observed that not all these pitch levels are used in any one language, nor are they necessarily phonemic even if used. The contours are designated by two or more numerals. A level contour may be designated by identical numerals, such as 55 for high-level, 33 for mid-level, 22 for mid-low level, etc. A rising tone may be represented by 35, from mid to high; 24, from mid-low to mid-high; etc. A rising-falling tone may be represented, for example, by 231, rising from mid-low to mid and then falling to low. A falling contour may be represented by 52, high to mid-low; 21, mid-low to low; etc.

There are two types of tones in Lakkja. In smooth syllables ending in vowels or final nasals, there are 6 contrasting tone classes in Lakkja, Tone 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. There are two tone classes, Tone 7 and Tone 8, for checked syllables ending with final -p, -t, and -k.

2.5.1 Tones for smooth syllables

For smooth syllables ending in vowels or final nasals, there are six tones listed as below:

1. High fall: 51 Falling from high to low
2. Low rise-fall: 231 Rising from mid-low to mid and then falling to low
3. Rise: 24 Rising from mid-low to mid high
4. Low level: 11 Low level pitch
5. High level: 55 High level pitch
6. Dipping: 214 Falling from mid-low to low and rising to mid-high

As shown above, in smooth syllables there are six tone classes including 51, 231, 24, 11, 55, and 214. Lakkja basically follows the principles that odd numbered tones are historically high, i.e. they occur with voiceless initials, while even-numbered tones are historically low, i.e. they occur with voiced initials.

According to Lan (2011) and Liu and Mo (2002), there is a newly-introduced tone recorded as Tone 33. It only occurs with Chinese loan words, exhibiting a trend to replace Tone 51 which is usually used in Chinese loans. During fieldwork, we examined plenty of Chinese loan words such as fie.y⁵¹ ma.u¹⁴ ‘facial features, appearance’, ‘the Big Dipper’ pak⁵¹ tau²⁴ fey⁵¹, and so on, and have found that Tone 33 is still pronounced as Tone 51 in Chinese loan
words by my consultants. In other words, though the pronunciations of these words are influenced by local Chinese dialects, they still keep pace with the Lakkja tonal system shown above. Thus, we tend to treat it as a variant of Tone 51 rather than a new tone, and not to include it into the tonal system.

Moreover, when words are read slowly, Tone 214 may sound like one syllable and a half, with the larynx tightened and a glottal stop -ʔ added at the turning from falling to rising. This phenomenon can be weakened by tone sandhi.

Here are examples of tones for smooth syllables:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tones</th>
<th>IPA</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>pa⁵¹</td>
<td>‘a handful of’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>pa²³¹</td>
<td>‘far’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>pa²⁴</td>
<td>‘mother’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>pa¹¹ ko²⁴</td>
<td>‘mynah’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>pa⁵⁵ tou¹¹</td>
<td>‘apron’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>pa²¹⁴</td>
<td>‘grandmother’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following table is a list of contrasting pairs of tones:

| Tone 1 – Tone 4 | Toy⁵¹     | ‘east’          | Toy¹¹     | ‘move, act’     |
| Tone 1 – Tone 2 | ηα⁵¹     | ‘rubbish’       | ηα²³¹    | ‘goose’         |
| Tone 5 – Tone 3 | pak⁵⁵   | ‘north’         | pak²⁴    | ‘radish’        |
| Tone 1 – Tone 5 | lōy⁵¹   | ‘many, much’    | lōy⁵⁵   | ‘wrong’         |
| Tone 2 – Tone 3 | tei²³¹  | ‘glutinous rice cake’ | tei²⁴ | ‘mouth’         |
| Tone 4 – Tone 5 | tei¹¹   | ‘Si (one of Earthly Branches)’ | tei⁵⁵ | ‘fetch’         |

2.5.2 Tones for checked syllables

Checked syllables are those ending with final -p, -t, and -k. This type of syllables only allow three tones: 55, 11, and 24.

Actually, the Tai dialect of Po-ai, which is the topic of my previous research, permits tones in checked syllables that are further restricted in their occurrence according to the length of their vowels. In fieldwork, we determined and confirmed that the four tones in Lakkja have similar distinctions in checked syllables, as listed below:
7. Rise: (long) 24 Rising from mid-low to mid high
7’. High level: (short) 55 High level
8. Low level: (long) 11 Low level
8’. Rise: (short) 24 Rising from mid-low to mid high

As we can see above, Tone 7 and Tone 8 occur complementarily with long and short vowels. The tone value of Tone 7’ (55, with short vowels) correspond to Tone 5. Tone 8 (11, with long vowels) correspond to Tone 4. And Tone 7 (24, with long vowels) and Tone 8’ (24, with short vowels) both correspond to Tone 3 in smooth syllables.

Here are examples of tones for checked syllables:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tones</th>
<th>IPA</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>pa:t^24</td>
<td>‘eight’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pak^55</td>
<td>‘north’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>hwε:n^51 pa:k^11</td>
<td>‘crazy’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pak^24</td>
<td>‘radish’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.5.3 The importance of tones in synchronic perspective

Synchronic phonology, also known as descriptive phonology, focuses on sounds at a single stage in the development of a language, aiming to discover the phonological patterns that are allowed to surface in a specific stage. In a language like Lakkja where each syllable has its own tone, the contrastive system of pitch patterns is of vital importance in synchronic studies.

Firstly, the tonal system plays an active role in forming new words. Lakkja words are distinguished from each other in the structural slots by the substitution of consonant and vowel phonemes as well as tones. The examples reproduced below can best illustrate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tone 1 - Tone 4</th>
<th>toy^51</th>
<th>‘east’</th>
<th>toy^11</th>
<th>‘move, act’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tone 1 - Tone 2</td>
<td>ηa^51</td>
<td>‘rubbish’</td>
<td>ηa^241</td>
<td>‘goose’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tone 5 - Tone 3</td>
<td>pak^55</td>
<td>‘north’</td>
<td>pak^24</td>
<td>‘radish’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tone 1 - Tone 5</td>
<td>toy^51</td>
<td>‘many, much’</td>
<td>toy^55</td>
<td>‘wrong’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tone 2 - Tone 3</td>
<td>tei^231</td>
<td>‘glutinous rice cake’</td>
<td>tei^24</td>
<td>‘mouth’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tone 4 - Tone 5</td>
<td>tei^11</td>
<td>‘Si (one of Earthly Branches)’</td>
<td>tei^55</td>
<td>‘fetch’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On top of that, tones are also an important device to differentiate meanings and functions among word groups. These words are semantically related but have slightly different meanings by alternating tones.

**Tone 6 – Tone 3**  \( pa^{214} \) ‘grandmother’  \( pa^{24} \) ‘mother’

This phenomenon is referred to as tonal alternation, which will be further discussed in §2.6 and §3.5.

Secondly, the tonal system also distinguishes vernacular variants from the standard Lakkja. The tones of some words among Lakkja-speaking areas are found to have recognizable differences, implying the speaker’s background to a great extent. This issue will be discussed further in §2.7.2. Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard Lakkja</th>
<th>Jintian vernacular</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( ma^{231} )</td>
<td>( ma^{214} )</td>
<td>‘you (2SG)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( pai^{51} )</td>
<td>( pai^{24} )</td>
<td>‘go’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Moreover, by observing tones, it is also possible to predict the effects of contact with other languages. As mentioned in §2.5.1, some tonal changes can be observed with Chinese loan words and a new tone is even introduced into the system by some scholars, though it is highly unstable.

Last but not the least, some patterns like tone sandhi (see §2.5.4 below) may also reflect the phonetic nature and universal tendencies of tones across languages.

### 2.5.4 Tone Sandhi

Some tones in Lakkja would change their tonal values when combined with other tones. The occurrence of tone sandhi is caused by the nature of the following tone in some cases but does not have causality with contour types of the following tones in other cases.

Unlike Mandarin Chinese where sandhi affects only the third tone followed by another third tone, and with other tones involving the words \( yi^{55} \) ‘one’ and \( bu^{51} \) ‘not’, Lakkja sandhi contours are more conditioned by the following tonal contours, specifically by the left edge of the following tone. Tone sandhi in Lakkja is not affected by the preceding tone. For the most part, tones seem to undergo a change from high register to lower register regardless of the following tones. No sandhi is found in the final syllable in my data.
Tone sandhi most commonly occurs to Tone 2 (231) in the first or second place, which normally changes to Tone 4 (11). The following table shows some examples of tone sandhi in this type:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tone 2 (231)</th>
<th>→ Tone 4 (11)</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>blau \textsuperscript{231} blau \textsuperscript{231}</td>
<td>blau\textsuperscript{11} blau \textsuperscript{231}</td>
<td>‘every night’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lay \textsuperscript{231} fa:η \textsuperscript{51}</td>
<td>lay\textsuperscript{11} fa:η \textsuperscript{51}</td>
<td>‘rocky hill’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kjøm \textsuperscript{231} kan \textsuperscript{51}</td>
<td>kjøm\textsuperscript{11} kan \textsuperscript{11}</td>
<td>‘hair root’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It also occurs with other tones such as Tone 6 (214), Tone 1 (51), and Tone 5 (55). Tone 6 typically changes into Tone 4, Tone 1 may shift to Tone 33 mentioned in §2.5.1, and Tone 5 may be replaced by Tone 3 (24). Some examples are given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tone 6 (214)</th>
<th>→ Tone 4 (11)</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tou \textsuperscript{214} na:m \textsuperscript{214}</td>
<td>tou\textsuperscript{11} na:m \textsuperscript{214}</td>
<td>‘peanut’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mom \textsuperscript{214} khũ \textsuperscript{51}</td>
<td>mom\textsuperscript{11} khũ \textsuperscript{51}</td>
<td>‘pork’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tone 1 (51)</th>
<th>→ Tone (33)</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kje:η \textsuperscript{51} pla \textsuperscript{51}</td>
<td>kje:η\textsuperscript{33} pla \textsuperscript{51}</td>
<td>‘eyebrow’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ban \textsuperscript{51} blau \textsuperscript{213}</td>
<td>ban\textsuperscript{33} blau \textsuperscript{213}</td>
<td>‘night’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tone 5 (55)</th>
<th>→ Tone 3 (24)</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tshõy \textsuperscript{55} lou \textsuperscript{11}</td>
<td>tshõy\textsuperscript{24} lou \textsuperscript{11}</td>
<td>‘cannon’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nam \textsuperscript{55} tsho:t \textsuperscript{24}</td>
<td>nam\textsuperscript{24} tsho:t \textsuperscript{24}</td>
<td>‘brush’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.5.5 The relationship between initials and tones

It is generally known in historical Chinese linguistics and Tai-Kadai linguistics that there is a close relationship between initials and tones. Lakkja is no exception. Following Gedney (1989, discussed in §1.7.3), the Lakkja tonal system can be represented as Table 2.21 from a historical-comparative perspective:
Table 2.21 Lakkja tonal splits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>DS</th>
<th>DL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Voiceless stops &amp;</strong></td>
<td>Tone 1</td>
<td>Tone 5</td>
<td>Tone 3</td>
<td>Tone 7'</td>
<td>Tone 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>fricatives</strong></td>
<td>(51)</td>
<td>(55)</td>
<td>(24)</td>
<td>(55)</td>
<td>(24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(ph, th, tsh, kh, f, s, h, η, η, η, ι)</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Voiceless</strong></td>
<td>Tone 1</td>
<td>Tone 5</td>
<td>Tone 3</td>
<td>Tone 8'</td>
<td>Tone 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>unaspirated</strong></td>
<td>(51)</td>
<td>(55)</td>
<td>(24)</td>
<td>(24)</td>
<td>(11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(p, t, ts, k)</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Glottal stops,</strong></td>
<td>Tone 1</td>
<td>Tone 5</td>
<td>Tone 3</td>
<td>Tone 8'</td>
<td>Tone 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>approximants</strong></td>
<td>(51)</td>
<td>(55)</td>
<td>(24)</td>
<td>(24)</td>
<td>(11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(ʔ, w, j)</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Voiced stops</strong></td>
<td>Tone 4</td>
<td>Tone 6</td>
<td>Tone 2</td>
<td>Tone 7'</td>
<td>Tone 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(m, n, η, b, l)</em></td>
<td>(11)</td>
<td>(214)</td>
<td>(231)</td>
<td>(55)</td>
<td>(24)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As illustrated, the voice quality of Lakkja initials plays an important role in tone selection. To be precise, voiceless consonants typically fall on high tones, while voiced consonants on low tones. For example, voiceless nasal η and η, and voiceless liquid ι only occur with Tone 1 (51), Tone 3 (24) and Tone 5 (55). Similarly, the bilabial b, historically belonging under voiceless category, also occurs with high tones Tone 7’ (55) and Tone 7 (24). The same is true of bl and ml. This provides evidences that Lakkja by and large in line with what is already known about the mechanism of tone split in Kam-Tai (Li 1965).

Furthermore, historically tones can be divided into four tonal categories, conveniently marked as Tone A, B, C for smooth syllables and Tone D for checked syllables. Each of these tone classes can be further divided into high and low series. As mentioned above, the historical voiceless and voiced distinction has been preserved in Lakkja quite nicely, with the historical high tones occurring in odd-numbered tones, and historical low tones in even-numbered tones. Moreover, in most Kam-Tai languages, the D tone typically coalesces with the B tone, with contrast for vowel length. It is also the case with Lakkja.

### 2.6 Phonological alternations

Phonological alternation (segmental morphologic alternation) refers the phenomenon where stem-internal initial, vowel, or tone may change to form semantically related word groups. Its
major function is to differentiate meanings or functions by phonological processes. A number of word groups in Lakkja are recognized as such.

**Alternating initials:**
- \(ni^{231}\) ‘this’
- \(ŋan^{231}\) ‘that’ (proximal)
- \(me^{231}\) ‘that’ (distal)
- \(ni^{231}\) ‘this’
- \(ŋan^{231}\) ‘that’
- \(k\) (initial is not included)
- \(ni^{231}\) ‘this’
- \(ŋan^{231}\) ‘that’
- \(ŋ̥an^{51}\) ‘in that way’
- \(la:n^{231}\) ‘there’ (proximal)
- \(lu^{231}\) ‘there’ (distal)
- \(ŋ̥an^{51}\) ‘in that way’

**Alternating vowels:**
- \(tuk^{24}\) ‘be (negative sentence)’
- \(ne^{14}\) ‘who’
- \(wak^{24}\) ‘wash (clothes)’
- \(kup^{55}\) ‘cover (over)’
- \(tok^{55}\) ‘be (positive sentence)’
- \(na^{24}\) ‘which’
- \(huk^{24}\) ‘wash (dishes, face)’
- \(kəp^{24}\) ‘cover’

**Alternating finals:**
- \(te:m^{214}\) ‘wear (shoes)’
- \(te:n^{24}\) ‘wear (clothes)’

**Alternating tones:**
- \(pa^{214}\) ‘grandmother’
- \(blau^{231}\) ‘night’
- \(pa^{24}\) ‘mother’
- \(blau^{51}\) ‘future’

Phonological alternation constitutes one of the most important word-formation processes in Lakkja. §3.5 will offer a further discussion from a morphological perspective.

**2.7 Sound change in progress**

**2.7.1 Free variants and lenition**

A number of sounds are found to undergo lenition in the speech of younger generations. It is a tendency that younger generations would simplify consonant clusters. To be specific, several
consonant clusters are being pronounced as simple consonant. Apart from \(bl\) which has been mentioned above, \(mlok^{55}\) ‘bird’ is sometimes pronounced as \(mok^{55}\). This tendency of sound change in Lakkja appears to be moving in the direction of local Chinese phonology. Besides, nasal initial \(ŋ\) are disappearing. For example, \(ŋa^{11} \ŋĩ:n^{231}\) ‘erhu (Chinese two-stringed violin)’ becomes \(a^{11} \ŋĩ:n^{231}\). Some stop coda also seems to have the tendency to undergo weakening, namely, the blocking of place of articulation has not reached the normal position. For example, \(ku:t^{11} pe^{51}\) ‘play cards’ is often pronounced as \(ku^{11} pe^{51}\) with the consonant \(t\) dropped.

Some examples of sound change are shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before (Liu 1999)</th>
<th>After (Fan, fieldnotes)</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(blau^{231})</td>
<td>(lau^{231})</td>
<td>‘night’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(mlok^{55})</td>
<td>(mok^{55})</td>
<td>‘bird’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ŋa^{11} \ŋĩ:n^{231})</td>
<td>(a^{11} \ŋĩ:n^{231})</td>
<td>‘erhu (Chinese violin)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(tu^{231} \ŋɛ)</td>
<td>(tu^{231} \ŋɛ)</td>
<td>‘eagle’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(thɛ:ŋ^{55} \ɛ^{55})</td>
<td>(thɛ:ŋ^{55} \ɛ^{55})</td>
<td>‘hear’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ku:t^{11} pe^{51})</td>
<td>(ku^{11} pe^{51})</td>
<td>‘play cards’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A number of sound changes in Chinese loan words can be observed in Lakkja as a result of close contact with local Chinese dialects. There are four traditional tone classes of Chinese words that correspond to the phonology of Middle Chinese, namely, even (or level), rising, departing (or going), and entering (or checked). Each of these is further divided into voiceless and voiced classes. Generally speaking, when a Chinese word is borrowed into Lakkja, voiceless even tones typically shift into Tone 1, voiced even tones to Tone 2, voiceless rising into Tone 3, voiced rising into Tone 4, voiceless departing into Tone 5, voiced departing into Tone 6, voiceless entering into Tone 7, and voiced entering into Tone 8. Here are some examples for the distribution of the tone classes (Liu and Mo 2002):
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Middle Chinese Tone class</th>
<th>Lakkja Tone</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>Vl.</td>
<td>1 (51)</td>
<td>ton(^{51})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vd.</td>
<td>2 (231)</td>
<td>ton(^{231})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rising</td>
<td>Vl.</td>
<td>3 (24)</td>
<td>tho(^{24})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vd.</td>
<td>4 (11)</td>
<td>ton(^{11})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departing</td>
<td>Vl.</td>
<td>5 (55)</td>
<td>ta:ja(^{55})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vd.</td>
<td>6 (214)</td>
<td>ton(^{214})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entering</td>
<td>Vl.</td>
<td>7 (24/55)</td>
<td>ko:k(^{24})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vd.</td>
<td>8 (11/24)</td>
<td>mak(^{24})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, such a distribution seems to undergo some changes of late, that is, voiceless level tones in Modern Chinese may change into Tone 3 instead of Tone 1 when borrowed into Lakkja, and voiced level tones may shift to Tone 4 instead of Tone 2. Examples are as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modern Chinese Tone class</th>
<th>Lakkja Tone</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>Vl.</td>
<td>3 (24)</td>
<td>kwa:n(^{24}) te:n(^{4})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vd.</td>
<td>4 (11)</td>
<td>min(^{11}) tsu(^{11})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.7.2 Vernacular areas and variations

As discussed in §1.3, Lakkja is considered as a language without dialect variation since the linguistic differences shown in various areas are too subtle to distinguish them as dialects. There are four vernacular areas recognised in Jinxiu Yao Autonomous County where Lakkja is spoken, namely, Jintian, Liuduan, Luomeng, and Lingzu. Compared to the standard Lakkja spoken in ‘The Four Villages’ (including Jinxiu, Baisha, Liula, Xidi in Jinxiu Town, see §1.3), each of the four vernacular areas have its specific phonological features that distinguish it from the other areas.

Jintian vernacular area includes Jin Village, She Village, Meng Village, Mei Village, Changdong, Rongdong, Dishui, among other villages. Generally speaking, Jintian vernacular sounds softer than standard Lakkja. The pronunciation, lexicon and grammar of Jintian vernacular are basically similar to standard Lakkja spoken in ‘The Four Villages’, but there are some differences in the tones of some words. That is, the vowels and consonants are basically the same, but the tones are sometimes different. The following examples may illustrate.
Standard Lakkja | Jintian vernacular | Gloss
---|---|---
\(ma^{231}\) | \(ma^{214}\) | ‘you (2SG)’
\(pai^{51}\) | \(pai^{24}\) | ‘go’
\(na^{214}\) | \(na^{51}\) | ‘where’
\(ma^{231} pai^{51} na^{214}\) | \(ma^{214} pai^{24} na^{51}\) | ‘Where are you going?’

Only one difference is recognised in consonants: the labial-dental fricative \(f\) in standard Lakkja is realised as alveolar fricative \(s\) in Jintian without exception. Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard Lakkja</th>
<th>Jintian vernacular</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
\(fe:m^{51}\) | \(se:m^{51}\) | ‘heart’
\(fa:e^{55}\) | \(sa:e^{55}\) | ‘smelly’
\(fa:m^{51}\) | \(sa:m^{51}\) | ‘three’
\(fei^{55}\) | \(se^{55}\) | ‘four’
\(fie^{24}\) | \(sie^{24}\) | ‘write’

Liuduan vernacular area normally refers to villages such as Liuduan, Liuding, Jiangjun, Sanpian, Yangliu, Zhaibao, Changer, and Changtan. The main difference between Liuduan vernacular and standard Lakkja is the disappearance of consonant clusters involving \(l\). There is a tendency in Liuduan vernacular where standard Lakkja clusters \(pl\), \(phl\), and \(ml\) are represented as \(pj\), \(phj\), and \(mj\). For example,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard Lakkja</th>
<th>Liuduan vernacular</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
\(pla^{51}\) | \(pja^{51}\) | ‘eye’
\(pla:y^{51}\) | \(pja:y^{51}\) | ‘fragrant’
\(phla^{51}\) | \(phja^{51}\) | ‘fish’
\(phlak^{55}\) | \(phjak^{55}\) | ‘pat’
\(mlok^{55}\) | \(mjok^{55}\) | ‘bird’

In addition, the pronunciations, especially the consonants and the tones, of some words are also found to be different from standard Lakkja.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard Lakkja</th>
<th>Liuduan vernacular</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tsaːŋ²⁴</td>
<td>kjaːŋ²⁴</td>
<td>‘speak’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kjou²⁴</td>
<td>kūːn⁵⁵</td>
<td>‘tumble’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wok²⁴</td>
<td>sok²⁴</td>
<td>‘vegetable’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>me³¹</td>
<td>mja²⁴</td>
<td>‘knife’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>li²³¹</td>
<td>si²³¹</td>
<td>‘here’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jay⁵¹</td>
<td>laj⁵¹</td>
<td>‘ring, make a sound’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>waŋ⁵¹</td>
<td>jay⁵¹</td>
<td>‘straight’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hā⁵⁵</td>
<td>hā²⁴</td>
<td>‘back’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Luomeng vernacular area refers to Luomeng village only. The difference between this vernacular and standard Lakkja is mainly reflected in the pronunciations of some words. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard Lakkja</th>
<th>Luomeng vernacular</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tsek⁵⁵</td>
<td>tsik⁵⁵</td>
<td>‘lean’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wa³¹</td>
<td>fa³¹</td>
<td>‘right’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ma³¹</td>
<td>mo³¹, tuaːi²⁴</td>
<td>‘you (2SG)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pok²⁴</td>
<td>puə¹¹</td>
<td>‘do’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>monj¹¹ fiːn⁵⁵</td>
<td>monj¹¹ wa³¹</td>
<td>‘loofah’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similar to Liuduan vernacular area, the consonant cluster ml in Luomeng has completely disappeared. The liquid l is either dropped or replaced by j. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard Lakkja</th>
<th>Luomeng vernacular</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mlok⁵⁵</td>
<td>mjok⁵⁵</td>
<td>‘bird’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mla⁵¹</td>
<td>ma⁵¹</td>
<td>‘tumble’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lingzu vernacular area includes villages such as Lingzu, Bale, Buquan, Dishui, and Banxian. Apart from the differences in pronunciation and lexicon, the most significant change is that the palatalized consonants kj and khj in standard Lakkja are represented with the consonant clusters kl and khl in Lingzu area. From a historical perspective, Lingzu vernacular preserves some old features. The following examples illustrate.
Furthermore, even though ‘The Four Villages’ where standard Lakkja is spoken are located end to end, several words are found to have different pronunciations. For example:

Based on these differences among Lakkja-speaking areas, it is easy to infer where the speaker is from when people get together. There are also some people from other Yao branches or from other ethnic groups who can speak Lakkja, but they often have an accent of their mother tongue and therefore it is easier to distinguish them from native Lakkja speakers.

2.8 Brief comparison between Lakkja and Tai-Kadai languages

Lakkja shares a number of cognates with other Tai-Kadai languages, providing remarkable evidence for their genetic relationships. Some examples are listed below for comparison.

Maonan (Lu 2008):
Zhuang (Li 1977):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Lakkja</th>
<th>Zhuang</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘bitter’</td>
<td>kɔm²</td>
<td>ham²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘swamp cabbage’</td>
<td>bɔlɔk⁵ bɔŋ⁴</td>
<td>plɔk⁵ bɔŋ⁵</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘rice cake’</td>
<td>kα:u³</td>
<td>kα:u³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘go’</td>
<td>pai¹</td>
<td>pai¹</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thai (Luo 2013):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Lakkja</th>
<th>Thai</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘day’</td>
<td>wan²</td>
<td>wan²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘kitchen smoke’</td>
<td>khwan³</td>
<td>khwan²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘village’</td>
<td>ba:n³</td>
<td>ba:n³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘we, us’</td>
<td>τau¹</td>
<td>rau²</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Zoulei (Li, Li and Luo 2014):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Lakkja</th>
<th>Zoulei</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘hot’</td>
<td>khja:n³</td>
<td>ʔlaŋ⁴</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘die’</td>
<td>plei¹</td>
<td>vlai⁴</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hlai (Luo 2013):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Lakkja</th>
<th>Hlai</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘hand’</td>
<td>mie²</td>
<td>meu¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘rain’</td>
<td>fen¹</td>
<td>fun¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘cloud’</td>
<td>fa³</td>
<td>fa³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘water’</td>
<td>num⁴</td>
<td>nom³</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Furthermore, Lakkja is found to exhibit some features that point to consonant clusters and vowel quality, as shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Lakkja</th>
<th>Kam</th>
<th>Sui</th>
<th>Maonan</th>
<th>Thai</th>
<th>Zhuang</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘eye’</td>
<td>pla¹</td>
<td>ta¹</td>
<td>nda¹</td>
<td>nda¹</td>
<td>ta¹</td>
<td>ta¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘bird’</td>
<td>mlo⁷</td>
<td>mok⁸</td>
<td>nok⁸</td>
<td>nok⁸</td>
<td>nok⁸</td>
<td>nuk⁸</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘forget’</td>
<td>phle⁷</td>
<td>la:m²</td>
<td>la:m²</td>
<td>la:m²</td>
<td>lum²</td>
<td>lum²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakkja</td>
<td>Biao</td>
<td>Kam</td>
<td>Sui</td>
<td>Maonan</td>
<td>Thai</td>
<td>Zhuang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘pig’</td>
<td>khū₁</td>
<td>ŋu³</td>
<td>ŋu³</td>
<td>mu³</td>
<td>mu₁</td>
<td>mu₁</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘urine’</td>
<td>kī:ũ</td>
<td>ŋu³</td>
<td>?nu³</td>
<td>?nu³</td>
<td>jiu³</td>
<td>jau³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘come back’</td>
<td>hā₁</td>
<td>ŋa¹</td>
<td>ma₁</td>
<td>ma¹</td>
<td>ma:²</td>
<td>ma²</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Likewise, a set of common words in Lakkja are found to take initial consonants that are otherwise represented in other Kam-Tai languages. For example, Lakkja has the initial f- and k- for cognates that would take initials s- and m- in related languages. Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lakkja</th>
<th>Biao</th>
<th>Kam</th>
<th>Maonan</th>
<th>Bouyei</th>
<th>N. Zhuang</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘pig’</td>
<td>khū₁</td>
<td>ŋu³</td>
<td>mu³</td>
<td>ma¹</td>
<td>mau¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘dog’</td>
<td>khu₃</td>
<td>ŋu³</td>
<td>kwa₁</td>
<td>ma₁</td>
<td>mau¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘channel, ditch’</td>
<td>kõ:ŋ¹</td>
<td>woŋ¹</td>
<td>kja:₁</td>
<td>ma:₁</td>
<td>ma¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘tall’</td>
<td>khja:ŋ³</td>
<td>ŋa₁</td>
<td>pha:ŋ²</td>
<td>voŋ¹</td>
<td>sa:ŋ¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘sour’</td>
<td>khjum²</td>
<td>ðam³</td>
<td>stam³</td>
<td>sa:m¹</td>
<td>sa:m¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘three’</td>
<td>fa:m¹</td>
<td>ðam³</td>
<td>sa:m¹</td>
<td>sa:m¹</td>
<td>ða:m¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘four’</td>
<td>fei⁵</td>
<td>ði⁵</td>
<td>st³</td>
<td>si³</td>
<td>ðai³</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These unique features may be of great value in the reconstruction of Proto Kam-Tai and the linguistic affiliation of Kam-Tai stock. Chapter 9 will give a further discussion on this topic.

2.9 Summary of chapter

Lakkja phonology displays many typological features that are shared by other Tai-Kadai languages. Like many other Kam-Tai languages, it has a symmetrical system of finals with vowel codas -i, -u, nasal codas -m, -n, -ŋ and stop codas -p, -t, -k. Its tonal system by and large follows the tonal split patterns conditioned by the voicing of the initial consonants, which is characteristic of Tai-Kadai languages and Chinese dialects. It is also significant to note that there are also many cognates between Lakkja and other Tai-Kadai languages. The phonological and lexical similarities may reveal the genetic relationship of Lakkja within the language family.

On the other hand, Lakkja sound system exhibits a number of characteristics of its own. Firstly, the consonant inventory of Lakkja is typologically quite rich with a fairly symmetrical set of 5 voiced nasals m, n, ŋ, ŋj, ŋw and their voiceless counterparts ð, η, ñ, ñj, ñw, and with another set of four bilabial simple consonants p, ph, b, m and their corresponding consonant clusters with the liquid l: pl, phl, bl, ml.
Secondly, Lakkja has one of the richest vowel systems within Tai-Kadai. Lakkja is quite unusual within the Tai-Kadai family in possessing a set of nasalized vowels: ɨ̃, ē̃, ē̃, ə̃, ɔ̃, ŭ̃, making the vowel system one of the more complex among Kam-Tai.

In the tonal system, the voice quality of Lakkja initials plays an important role in tone selection, which is by and large in line with what is already known about tone split. The historical voiceless and voiced distinction has been preserved in Lakkja to a great extent, with the historical high tones occurring in odd-numbered tones, and historical low tones in even-numbered tones. Tone sandhi is largely conditioned by the contour type of the tone that follows, a topic that merits further investigation.

Last but not the least, free variants and lenition are realized as a feature of initial consonants and vowels in Lakkja. The phonological system of Lakkja displays a tendency of being simplified, indicating that the sound system is becoming unstable and is in a process of undergoing radical change due to the increasing contact with surrounding languages.
Chapter 3
Word Formation and Morphological Processes in Lakkja

This chapter focuses on the internal structure of words in Lakkja. Emphasis will be laid on the four major morphological processes including affixation, reduplication (four-syllable elaborate expression as a special kind of reduplication), compounding and segmental morphologic alternation.

Lakkja is an isolating language which lacks morphological forms such as grammatical agreement and inflection. Lakkja morphological processes are by and large derivational. Therefore, morphology in Lakkja involves word formation rather than grammatical agreements and other grammatical processes such as gender, number, tense and case that are commonly found in inflectional languages. Lakkja is basically a monosyllabic language in the sense that an overwhelming number of words in the lexicon are monomorphemic, that is, one morpheme stands for one meaning. Disyllabic and polysyllabic words make up a relatively small number.

Lakkja words can be divided into two main types according to their internal structure: simple words and compound words. Simple words, which are mainly monosyllabic words, consist of one morpheme. Some disyllabic words can also be categorized under this type. According to my data, simple words rarely contain three or more syllables. Derivational morphology involves affixation and reduplication. Compound words, which consist of two or more morphemes, can be further divided into two types: coordination, and subordination. The majority of compounds in Lakkja are disyllabic.

Morphology in this chapter concerns both the internal structures of words and the processes of word formation in Lakkja. This chapter serves as background to Chapter 4, 5, and 6, where detailed analysis on nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs will be conducted.

The following word classes can be recognized, for Lakkja:

I. Nouns
II. Pronouns
III. Verbs
IV. Adjectives
V. Adverbs
VI. Co-Verbs or Prepositions

VII. Numerals

VIII. Classifiers

IX. Conjunctions

X. Modal Auxiliaries

XI. Tense-Aspect Markers

XII. Discourse Particles

XIII. Interjections or Onomatopoeia

In Lakkja, like many other Tai-Kadai and Sino-Tibetan languages, a number of words have overlapping membership: they can function as both nouns and verbs, or as full words or grammatical words.

As mentioned above, Lakkja is predominantly a monosyllabic language in the sense that a syllable usually stands for a meaning. However, there are a small number of monomorphemic words that are made up of two syllables. Examples below contain only one morpheme each. They cannot be further analysed.

(1)  
a. pei11 pa31 ‘loquat’

b. tsor24 kwa:i55 ‘mantis’

c. kai11 njit55 ‘cricket’

d. man11 lie:n214 ‘moon’

e. tin51 min231 ‘Qingming (festival)’

f. kan24 pu51 ‘pumpkin’

g. tam11 tu24 ‘dragonfly’

h. pa:n11 khjo51 ‘spider’

3.1 Affixation

Affixation is a morphological operation where bound morphemes are attached to the stems (Payne 1997:30). The criteria of distinguishing an affix and a free morpheme are twofold, that is, (a) lexical meaning or grammatical meaning, which is a semantic criterion, and (b) ability to occur in a sentence independently or function as a bound element of a word, which is a syntactic criterion. An affix is a functional bound morpheme rather than a free content word, which means that it carries grammatical meaning rather than lexical meaning and occurs only as a dependent of a word rather than a free morpheme in a clause or sentence. Therefore, it satisfies both the semantic and syntactic criteria (Lu 2008:119). But a bound morpheme is not necessarily an affix, for some content words are also ‘bound’, for example, the morpheme pi:n51 ‘side, edge’ in pi:n51 tsie51 ‘by the river’, sam24 pi:n51 ‘next to, beside’; tie:n24 in lan231 tie:n24 ‘mountaintop, the summit of a mountain’, hjie:n51 poy11 tie:n24 ‘on the
wall’, *pie:no*₂¹⁴ ‘surface, side’ in *pie:no*₂¹⁴ *tsi*ⁿ₅₅ ‘front’, *pie:no*₂¹⁴ *li*²³¹ ‘here, this side’, *lie:k*¹¹ *pie:no*₂¹⁴ *kje*²⁴ ‘in front of the house, at the front of the house’, etc., are bound morphemes which cannot occur freely in a syntactic context, but yet they carry lexical meaning.

Similarly, functional morphemes which carry only grammatical meaning are not necessarily affixes either, for example, the morpheme *lie:u*²⁴ in *hu*ⁿ₅¹ *ko:*ⁿ₅₅ *lie:u*²⁴ ‘The flowers have turned red’, *lak*²⁴ *pai*⁵¹ *lie:u*²⁴ ‘He has gone’, *tau*²⁴ *wan*²³¹ *uk*₅₅ *taŋ*²³¹ *lie:u*²⁴ ‘The sun has come out’, denotes the grammatical meaning ‘perfected action’, and the morpheme *le*¹¹ in *ma*²³¹ *e*²⁴ *le*¹¹? ‘Did you hear (that/me)?’, *ma*²³¹ *pai*⁵¹ *le*¹¹? ‘Did you go?’ is a grammatical marking for past interrogative. But we must also note that many affixes have resulted from the ‘grammaticalization of content morphemes’ (Packard 2000:70). In other words, some content words are losing their lexical meaning to become affixes. Therefore, in many cases, there is a continuum between an affix and a free morpheme (Lu 2008:119), which will be discussed in detail in following sections.

Lakkja affixation includes prefixation, suffixation and circumfixation. Prefixation and suffixation characterize Lakkja morphology, while circumfixation is rare. Only two circumfixes are found in Lakkja. In addition, the reflexive pronoun may have multiple functions and can be occasionally analysed as a suffix.

### 3.1.1 Prefixation

A significant number of Lakkja words are formed through prefixation, some of which can be grammatically regarded as nominalization. In other words, a prefix can combine with many word classes to form a nominative word. Words taking the same element but different prefixes could have different meanings. For example, the element *kje*ⁿ⁵¹ in (2) may occur with various prefixes to form new words:

(2)  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \text{lak}²⁴ - \text{kje}ⁿ⁵¹ \quad \text{PRE - male} \quad \text{‘man’} \\
\text{b. } & \text{nu}ⁿ¹¹ - \text{kje}ⁿ⁵¹ \quad \text{PRE - male} \quad \text{‘boy’} \\
\text{c. } & \text{lak}²⁴ - \text{bok}⁵⁵ - \text{kje}ⁿ⁵¹ \quad \text{PRE - male} \quad \text{‘elder brother’}
\end{align*}
\]

Prefixation is a very productive in Lakkja. The majority of prefixes derive from classifiers for human beings, animals, vegetables, general objects and abstract things, among others. Thus, Lakkja prefixes also function in taxonomy. This is an important feature of Lakkja prefixes. For example, the prefix *lak*²⁴ (PRE: person) forms a noun denoting a human being, for instance, *lak*²⁴ - *kje*²⁴ (PRE: person - mountain) ‘a savage’. The prefix *tu*²³¹ (PRE: animal)
forms a noun denoting an animal, for instance, \(tu^{231} - kja^{24}\) (PRE: animal - mountain) ‘beast, wild animal’. And the prefix \(wok^{24}\) (PRE: plant) forms nouns denoting plants, for instance, \(wok^{24} - je^{51}\) (PRE: plant - mountain) ‘wild herbs’.

### 3.1.1.1 Morphosyntactic features of prefixes

A Lakkja prefix can precede nearly any content word. Elements following prefixes can be various word classes, phrases or clauses, with the following structures:

\[
\text{PRE} + \text{N}; \text{PRE} + \text{NP}; \text{PRE} + \text{V}; \text{PRE} + \text{VP}; \text{PRE} + \text{ADJ}; \text{PRE} + \text{AP}
\]

Here are some examples:

(3)  
- a. \(lak^{24} ta:u^{214}\) \(\text{PRE} - \text{Taoism}\) ‘Taoist’ \(\text{PRE} + \text{N}\)
- b. \(tu^{231} nu:\text{i}^{11} \text{kJ}a:u^{24}\) \(\text{PRE} - \text{PRE} - \text{female}\) ‘daughter’ \(\text{PRE} + \text{NP}\)
- c. \(lak^{24} fak^{55}\) \(\text{PRE} - \text{insert}\) ‘plug’ \(\text{PRE} + \text{V}\)
- d. \(wan^{231} pok^{24} kong^{51}\) \(\text{PRE} - \text{do} - \text{work}\) ‘workday’ \(\text{PRE} + \text{VP}\)
- e. \(wok^{24} khjo^{24}\) \(\text{PRE} - \text{dry}\) ‘dried vegetables’ \(\text{PRE} + \text{ADJ}\)
- f. \(lak^{24} k\text{J}a:u^{24} ba:u^{51}\) \(\text{PRE} - \text{female} - \text{former}\) ‘ex-wife’ \(\text{PRE} + \text{AP}\)
- g. \(pi:n^{51} li^{231}\) \(\text{PRE} - \text{here}\) ‘here’ \(\text{PRE} + \text{DEM}\)
- h. \(lak^{24} tei^{24} wa:u^{55}\) \(\text{PRE} - \text{mouth} - \text{lack}\) ‘harelipped person’ \(\text{PRE} + \text{clause}\)

Moreover, the construction of ‘multi-prefix’ is also found in my data, for example:

(4)  
- a. \(kjeu^{51} lak^{24} khjuk^{55}\) \(\text{PRE} - \text{PRE} - \text{pierce}\) ‘hair clip’
- b. \(tse\text{i}^{55} lak^{24} f\text{u}^{51}\) \(\text{PRE} - \text{PRE} - \text{peach}\) ‘peach tree’
- c. \(tu^{231} nu:\text{i}^{11} \text{kJ}a:u^{24}\) \(\text{PRE} - \text{PRE} - \text{female}\) ‘daughter’

### 3.1.1.2 Special features of Lakkja prefixes

A number of Lakkja prefixes have not fully become bound morphemes and still take lexical meanings, which can be considered as a process of grammaticalization. They are actually still somewhere between a bound root and a prefix, the former functioning as head and the latter dependent. While some Lakkja prefixes are used exclusively as bound morphemes, others appear to overlap with free morphemes. There seems to be a continuum between bound morphemes and free morphemes (Lu 2008:121). For example, while the prefix \(tu^{231}\) as in \(tu^{231} - ka^{51}\) (PRE: animal - crow) ‘crow’, \(tu^{231} - kjak^{24}\) (PRE: animal - steal) ‘thief’, \(tu^{231} - kja^{24}\) (PRE: animal - mountain) ‘beast, wild animal’ only has grammatical meaning rather than semantic meaning, \(tu^{231}\) can also be used freely in a sentence, though its usage as a free morpheme seems to be limited as a class noun.
Lakkja prefixes sometimes seem to function as the head. For example, in the word *tu²³¹* *ka⁵¹* (PRE: animal - crow) ‘crow’, *tu²³¹* also can be analysed as a head with a semantic meaning of ‘animal’. It can also be treated as overlapping a prefix and a head, that is, [*tu²³¹* *ka⁵¹*] = [prefix - root] + [head - dependent], where *tu²³¹* is analysed as a root morpheme, and *ka⁵¹* as head. Taking the phrase *tu²³¹* *ka⁵¹* *ni:u⁵⁵* *ni²³¹* (PRE: animal - crow - little - this) ‘this little crow’ as an example, as shown in (5), the prefix *tu²³¹* is the element that cannot be left out while any of the three elements following it can without affecting the acceptability of the expression.

(5)  
\[
\begin{align*}
a. & \quad \text{tu}²³¹ \quad \text{ka}⁵¹ \quad \text{ni:u}⁵⁵ \quad \text{ni}²³¹ \\
& \quad \text{PRE: animal crow little this} \\
& \quad \text{‘this little crow’}
\end{align*}
\]
\[
\begin{align*}
b. & \quad \text{*ka}⁵¹ \quad \text{ni:u}⁵⁵ \quad \text{ni}²³¹ \\
& \quad \text{crow little this} \\
& \quad \text{‘this little crow’}
\end{align*}
\]

(5b) is unacceptable in Lakkja. The reason is that without the prefix *tu²³¹*, the morpheme *ka⁵¹* alone cannot precede the modifier *ni:u⁵⁵* ‘little’ and the demonstrative *ni²³¹* ‘this’ to form a compound. The morpheme *ka⁵¹* ‘crow’ is a bound root with lexical meaning. Indeed, *tu²³¹* *ka⁵¹* (PRE: animal - crow) can be analysed structurally as Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.2 below.

**Figure 3.1** Morpheme *tu²³¹* as prefix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NP</th>
<th>DEM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>ADJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRE: animal</td>
<td>STEM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>tu²³¹</em></td>
<td><em>ka⁵¹</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRE: animal</td>
<td>crow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘this little crow’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3.2** Morpheme *tu²³¹* as head

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NP</th>
<th>DEM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>ADJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEAD</td>
<td>DEP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>tu²³¹</em></td>
<td><em>ka⁵¹</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRE: animal</td>
<td>crow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘this little crow-like animal’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similarly, in *lak²⁴ pla⁵¹* *thie²⁴* *lou¹¹* *na²¹⁴* (person - eye - skew - old - that) ‘that old skew-eyed person’, the headless combinations *pla⁵¹* *thie²⁴* *na²¹⁴* (eye - skew - that), *pla⁵¹* *thie²⁴* *lou¹¹* (eye - skew - old), *pla⁵¹* *thie²⁴* *lou¹¹* *na²¹⁴* (eye - skew - old - that) are all unacceptable. So the
remarkable feature of such prefixes is that they can be modified by a demonstrative: \( tu^{231} ni^{231} \) (animal - this) ‘this animal’, \( lak^{24} na^{214} \) (person - that) ‘that person’, with \( tu^{231} \) and \( lak^{24} \) as the head.

However, unlike \( tu^{231} \) and \( lak^{24} \), the prefix \( nam^{55} \) (PRE: item) sometimes functions as the head but cannot take demonstratives alone as modifiers. For example, in \( nam^{55} tsen^{51} bop^{24} na^{214} \) (object - eat - rotten - that) ‘that rotten fruit’, \( nam^{55} \) is regarded as the head, whereas the headless combinations \( *tsen^{51} na^{214} \) (eat - that), \( *tsen^{51} bop^{24} \) (eat - rotten), \( *tsen^{51} bop^{24} na^{214} \) (eat - rotten - that) are not acceptable in Lakkja. And unlike \( lak^{24} \) and \( tu^{231} \), \( nam^{55} \) cannot be modified by a demonstrative. That is, \( nam^{55} ni^{231} \) (object - this) ‘this item’, and \( nam^{55} na^{214} \) (object - that) ‘that item’ are ungrammatical in Lakkja.

As illustrated above, we can safely conclude that some prefixes can also be analysed as the head of a word or a phrase, indicating a continuum between a prefix and a free morpheme.

### 3.1.1.3 The polyfunctionality of prefixes

A number of prefixes may have multiple functions, among which \( nam^{55} \) ‘classifier for objects’ and \( pok^{24} \) ‘do’ are the most representative.

#### A. The polyfunctionality of \( nam^{55} \) ‘classifier for objects’

The prefix \( nam^{55} \) is a particular item that merits special treatment. It is significant to discuss its multifunctionality at the beginning of this section as it is the only true affix found in my data.

To begin with, \( nam^{55} \) is a highly productive prefix for fruit, root crops, and melons. This item seems to be a genuine prefix in the real sense of the term as it does not derive from a lexeme. The objects described with \( nam^{55} \) are conceptualized as larger than those taking the prefix \( lak^{24} \) (see §3.1.1.6). Examples of the prefix \( nam^{55} \) for plants and vegetables are as follows:

#### i. Plants and vegetables:

\[
(6) \begin{align*}
\text{a. } nam^{55} & \text{ tsen}^{51} & \text{PRE - eat} & \text{‘fruit’} \\
\text{b. } nam^{55} & \text{ tie}^{214} & \text{PRE - eggplant} & \text{‘eggplant’} \\
\text{c. } nam^{55} & \text{ i}^{51} & \text{PRE - cucumber} & \text{‘cucumber’} \\
\text{d. } nam^{55} & \text{ sa}^{51} & \text{PRE - cedar} & \text{‘cedar fruit’}
\end{align*}
\]
e. nam$^{55}$ blat$^{51}$ kū:$i^{51}$ PRE - gallbladder - bear ‘fruit of ramuluset folium picrasmae’

Besides, nam$^{55}$ is the most commonly used prefix for things concrete or abstract, including materials, kitchenware, tools, buildings, fruits, etc. Note that when it is used as a prefix for food, it normally denotes a specific kind with ball-like shape, such as cakes, dumplings, and the like.

ii. Kitchenware:

(7)  a. nam$^{55}$ tsi:e:k$^{11}$ PRE - dipper ‘dipper’
    b. nam$^{55}$ lou$^{214}$ PRE - leak ‘funnel’
    c. nam$^{55}$ lo$^{231}$ PRE - stove ‘stove’
    d. nam$^{55}$ tsu:n$^{24}$ PRE - dustpan ‘basket’

iii. Tools:

(8)  a. nam$^{55}$ tji:j$^{31}$ PRE - awl ‘awl’
    b. nam$^{55}$ tsu:n$^{55}$ PRE - rotate ‘drill’
    c. nam$^{55}$ wa:n$^{11}$ PRE - hoop ‘necklace’
    d. nam$^{55}$ hep$^{55}$ PRE - sleep ‘cradle’

iv. Ball-like food and fruits:

(9)  a. nam$^{55}$ te:n$^{231}$ PRE - glutinous rice cake ‘glutinous rice cake’
    b. nam$^{55}$ tse:n$^{51}$ PRE - eat ‘fruit’
    c. nam$^{55}$ tā:n$^{214}$ PRE - ball ‘sweet dumplings made of glutinous rice flour (for the Lantern Festival)’
    d. nam$^{55}$ tsie$^{214}$ PRE - eggplant ‘eggplant’

v. Landmarks:

(10) a. nam$^{55}$ kum$^{231}$ PRE - valley ‘valley’
    b. nam$^{55}$ ba:n$^{24}$ PRE - village ‘village’

vi. Illness:

(11) a. nam$^{55}$ ja:n$^{214}$ PRE - prickly heat ‘prickly heat’
    b. nam$^{55}$ num$^{11}$ PRE - water ‘blister’
    c. nam$^{55}$ phlu:i$^{51}$ PRE - nevus ‘nevus’
d. nam\textsuperscript{55} \textsc{fay}\textsuperscript{51} \quad \textsc{PRE} - up \quad \text{‘lump’}

vii. Body parts:

(12)  
  a. nam\textsuperscript{55} \textsc{wei}\textsuperscript{51} \quad \textsc{PRE} - craw \quad \text{‘craw’}
  b. nam\textsuperscript{55} \textsc{sen}\textsuperscript{51} \quad \textsc{PRE} - body \quad \text{‘body’}
  c. nam\textsuperscript{55} \textsc{khja:u}\textsuperscript{24} \quad \textsc{PRE} - liquor \quad \text{‘dimple’}
  d. nam\textsuperscript{55} \textsc{k}\textsuperscript{õ}\textsuperscript{231} \quad \textsc{PRE} - laryngeal prominence \quad \text{‘laryngeal prominence’}

viii. Musical instruments and toys:

(13)  
  a. nam\textsuperscript{55} \textsc{na:u}\textsuperscript{231} \quad \textsc{PRE} - China cymbal \quad \text{‘China cymbal’}
  b. nam\textsuperscript{55} \textsc{tshu:i}\textsuperscript{51} \quad \textsc{PRE} - blow \quad \text{‘a reed-pipe wind instrument’}
  c. nam\textsuperscript{55} \textsc{pan}\textsuperscript{55} \quad \textsc{PRE} - rotate \quad \text{‘whipping top’}
  d. nam\textsuperscript{55} \textsc{kje:}\textsuperscript{η}\textsuperscript{51} \textsc{ka}\textsuperscript{55} \quad \textsc{PRE} - feather - chicken \quad \text{‘shuttlecock’}

B. The polyfunctionality of \textit{pok}\textsuperscript{24} ‘do’

\textit{pok}\textsuperscript{24} ‘do’ is also an interesting item which plays an important role in Lakkja morphology. It may function as a verbaliser, prefix for skills, reciprocal marker.

i. As verbaliser

Derived from the verb ‘do’, the prefixable morpheme \textit{pok}\textsuperscript{24} functions as a verbaliser. It can take nouns, verbs, adjectives or phrases. Words with this prefix often involve category change, as in (c–f).

In some cases, it can be analysed as a light verb, translatable as ‘do…’, ‘have/make a V’, as in (14c–e). When taking adjectives, it often carries the meaning ‘pretend to be; do sth. deliberately’, as in (15).

(14)  
  a. \textit{pok}\textsuperscript{24} \textsc{fiŋ}\textsuperscript{55} \quad \textsc{PRE} - enrage \quad \text{‘get angry’}
  b. \textit{pok}\textsuperscript{24} \textsc{phlem}\textsuperscript{51} \quad \textsc{PRE} - leave behind \quad \text{‘forget’}
  c. \textit{pok}\textsuperscript{24} \textsc{kou}\textsuperscript{24} \quad \textsc{PRE} - rice \quad \text{‘cook’}
  d. \textit{pok}\textsuperscript{24} \textsc{ja:n}\textsuperscript{51} \quad \textsc{PRE} - name \quad \text{‘name (sb.)’}
  e. \textit{pok}\textsuperscript{24} \textsc{wan}\textsuperscript{24} \textsc{hep}\textsuperscript{55} \quad \textsc{PRE} - day - sleep \quad \text{‘have a dream’}
  f. \textit{pok}\textsuperscript{24} \textsc{hua}\textsuperscript{24} \textsc{tsa:}\textsuperscript{η}\textsuperscript{55} \quad \textsc{PRE} - fire - bury (the dead) \quad \text{‘cremate’}

(15)  
  a. \textit{pok}\textsuperscript{24} \textsc{kje:}\textsuperscript{η}\textsuperscript{24} \quad \textsc{PRE} - strong \quad \text{‘flaunt one’s superiority’}
  b. \textit{pok}\textsuperscript{24} \textsc{bok}\textsuperscript{55} \quad \textsc{PRE} - big \quad \text{‘get above oneself’}
ii. As prefix for skills

It can also be used as a prefix for skills.

(16) a. pok\textsuperscript{24} fa:p\textsuperscript{24} PRE - magic arts ‘resort to magic arts’  
b. pok\textsuperscript{24} thik\textsuperscript{55} PRE - dive ‘dive’  
c. pok\textsuperscript{24} ta:u\textsuperscript{214} PRE - Taoism ‘recite prayers’  
d. pok\textsuperscript{24} lie:k\textsuperscript{11} PRE - house ‘build houses’

It is also notable that a number of skills formed with the prefix pok\textsuperscript{24} exhibit abundant folk customs in Lakkja daily production activities, notably various hunting methods mentioned in §1.2.3. It is an important ethnological feature.

(17) a. pok\textsuperscript{24} kju:t\textsuperscript{24} PRE - creek ‘making bird basin’  
b. pok\textsuperscript{24} ja:y\textsuperscript{214} PRE - alley ‘making alleys for fishing’

iii. As prefix for festivals

pok\textsuperscript{24} may be used as a prefix for festivals and celebrations. This function also exhibits interesting ethnological features.

(18) a. pok\textsuperscript{24} koŋ\textsuperscript{24} tak\textsuperscript{55} PRE - merit - virtue ‘the most solemn festival for worship and prayer’  
b. pok\textsuperscript{24} fa:m\textsuperscript{51} wan\textsuperscript{231} PRE - three - day ‘a ritual of ancestor worship’  
c. pok\textsuperscript{24} thiŋ\textsuperscript{24} miŋ\textsuperscript{231} PRE - Pure Brightness ‘Tomb-sweeping Day’  
   (the 5\textsuperscript{th} solar term)

iv. As reciprocal marker

This item also functions as a reciprocal marker and does not lead to category shift. The agents of the actions expressed by such verbs normally involve two or more than two people, as in (19).

(19) a. pok\textsuperscript{24} kjo\textsuperscript{51} PRE - hide ‘hide and seek’  
b. pok\textsuperscript{24} ho:ŋ\textsuperscript{231} PRE - wrangle ‘quarrel’  
c. pok\textsuperscript{24} ta\textsuperscript{11} PRE - bet ‘bet’  
d. pok\textsuperscript{24} kut\textsuperscript{55} PRE - hit ‘fight’
Another reciprocal marker is the circumfix *jak⁵⁵...jak⁵⁵..., which will be discussed in §3.1.3.

### 3.1.1.4 Prefixes for human beings

In Lakkja, human beings are categorized into different groups according to age, gender, profession, etc, by different prefixes.

**A. lak²⁴**

A typical prefixable morpheme for human beings in Lakkja is *lak²⁴*. As a lexeme, *lak²⁴* means ‘he/she’, ‘other people’, as well as a class noun for human beings, animals and plants. It can be analysed as a prefix in light of its morphosyntactic function. As a prefix for human beings in general and one of the most productive prefixes in Lakkja, *lak²⁴* functions somewhat like the English suffix *-er*. But there is a subtle difference between Lakkja *lak²⁴* and English *-er*. The former refers to human beings only, whereas the latter can denote a human being, an object or both, for example, ‘worker’, ‘banker’, ‘trader’, etc., refers to human beings only; whereas ‘dipper’, ‘heater’, ‘dryer’, etc., refers to appliance only; and ‘modifier’, ‘killer’, ‘whipper’, etc., to either a person or an object.

As a prefix for human beings, *lak²⁴* is often attached to a verb phrase or an adjective phrase (20c–f), functioning as a nominalizer.

(20)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. <em>lak²⁴ ta:u²¹⁴</em></td>
<td>‘Taoist’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. <em>lak²⁴ kjei⁵¹</em></td>
<td>‘man, husband’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. <em>lak²⁴ la¹¹ phla⁵¹</em></td>
<td>‘fisherman’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. <em>lak²⁴ toŋ⁵¹ pa:n²⁴</em></td>
<td>‘fellow villager’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. <em>lak²⁴ tei²⁴ tsʰɔ:i²⁴</em></td>
<td>‘wry-mouthed person’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. <em>lak²⁴ kjā:u²⁴ ba:ŋ⁵¹</em></td>
<td>‘ex-wife’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is noteworthy that *lak²⁴* is very productive as a prefix which can even form new words with Chinese loan words. For instance, in (20d) *lak²⁴ toŋ⁵¹ pa:n²⁴* ‘fellow villager’, *lak²⁴* functions as a prefix with *toŋ⁵¹ pa:n²⁴* which is a loan word meaning ‘peer, buddy’ in Chinese.

Furthermore, *lak²⁴* can function as a prefix for ‘craftsman’ in Lakkja, denoting various professions.
In some cases, words formed with this prefix do not necessarily denote a human being; rather, they designate various animate or inanimate objects that are regarded as ‘small’ in size, such as fruits, plants, and living things. This function probably derives from the meaning ‘offspring’.

However, when metaphorically denoting offspring of animals or certain human body parts, \textit{lak}^{24} functions as a suffix rather than a prefix, for example, \textit{ma}^{11} \textit{lak}^{24} \text{ (horse - SUF: offspring)} ‘colt’, \textit{wie}^{51} \textit{lak}^{24} \text{ (sheep - SUF: offspring)} ‘lamb’, \textit{puk}^{55} \textit{po}^{33}^{24} \textit{lak}^{24} \text{ (leg - belly - SUF: offspring)} ‘calf’. Discussions will be given in §3.1.2.1.

\textbf{B. \textit{njūn}^{231}}

Another common prefix for human beings in general is \textit{njūn}^{231}, which is believed to newly derive from Chinese word \textit{rén} ‘people’. Though it possesses the same function as \textit{lak}^{24} for human beings, \textit{njūn}^{231} is less productive and its position is less fixed. That is, \textit{njūn}^{231} functions as a suffix (see §3.1.2.1) more often than as a prefix, which is apparently influenced by the word order of Mandarin Chinese. But there is a general tendency that \textit{njūn}^{231} is substituting \textit{lak}^{24} in forming new words. To be more specific, young generations of Lakkja tend to use \textit{njūn}^{231}, while old generations tend to use \textit{lak}^{24}. For example:

\begin{equation}
\text{\textit{njūn}^{231} \textit{he}^{24}} \quad \text{PRE - guest} \quad \text{‘guest’}
\end{equation}

There are also some kinship prefixes that signal one’s position in the family hierarchy or indicate the changes of one’s status of a generation in a family, as discussed in §1.4.2. In addition, some of them are occasionally used as prefixes to denote a group of people rather than real social relationships. The following discussion may illustrate.
C. **koŋ**

**koŋ** is a prefix which derives from the morpheme ‘grandfather’, which can also be analysed as a gender marker. A noun formed with this prefix generally designates an elderly person. Thus, this prefix is restricted to a group of specific nouns and is not as productive as **lak** or **ŋjũn**. The same is true of **pa** below.

(24) a. **koŋ** **ta** PRE - maternal grandfather  ‘maternal grandfather’
    b. **koŋ** **to** **ti** PRE - earth  ‘The Earth God’
    c. **koŋ** **lou** PRE - old  ‘great grandfather, ancestor’
    d. **koŋ** **ta** **lou** PRE - maternal grandfather - old  ‘maternal great grandfather’

D. **pa** and **pa**

Two prefixable morphemes, **pa** and **pa**, are employed as gender markers to form human nouns denoting female. The former, **pa**, from the lexeme ‘grandmother’, is a prefix denoting an elderly woman or a female professional and the latter, **pa**, derived from the free morpheme ‘mother’, is to form a noun indicating a middle-aged female. Examples:

(25) a. **pa** **ti** PRE - maternal grandmother  ‘maternal grandmother’
    b. **pa** **ti** **lou** PRE - maternal mother - old  ‘maternal great grandmother’
    c. **pa** **lou** PRE - old  ‘great grandmother’
    d. **pa** **ja** PRE - cheat  ‘sorceress’

(26) a. **pa** **loŋ** PRE - father's elder brother  ‘wife of father's elder brother’
    b. **pa** **jen** PRE - sibling  ‘sisters’
    c. **pa** **la** PRE - later  ‘stepmother’

E. **nuŋ**

**nuŋ**, from the lexeme meaning ‘offspring’, designates younger generations. In most cases, words with this prefix are used when elders talk about younger generations.

(27) a. **nuŋ** **kjei** PRE - male  ‘son, young man’
    b. **nuŋ** **khja:n** PRE - grandson  ‘grandson’
    c. **nuŋ** **tsak** **ʔuk** PRE - side - out  ‘son of wife's sibling’
3.1.1.5 Prefixes for animals

A highly productive prefix for animals is tu\textsuperscript{231}. The majority of animal names take this prefix. For example:

\begin{itemize}
\item d. nuŋ\textsuperscript{11} lem\textsuperscript{11} nau\textsuperscript{11} \quad \text{PRE - look - cow} \quad \text{‘shepherd boy’}
\item e. nuŋ\textsuperscript{11} tsieŋ\textsuperscript{11} \quad \text{PRE - marry} \quad \text{‘bridegroom’}
\item f. nuŋ\textsuperscript{11} kjäːu\textsuperscript{24} lou\textsuperscript{11} \quad \text{PRE - female - old} \quad \text{‘spinster’}
\end{itemize}

tu\textsuperscript{231}, in addition, also functions as a prefix for humans with demeaning overtones, describing people that are least respected. For example:

\begin{itemize}
\item a. tu\textsuperscript{231} kjak\textsuperscript{24} \quad \text{PRE - steal} \quad \text{‘robber, thief’}
\item b. tu\textsuperscript{231} kjɛ\textsuperscript{1}u \quad \text{PRE - head} \quad \text{‘chieftain (of robbers, criminals, etc.)’}
\end{itemize}

The derogatory sense is absent when it is used to indicate a child or a junior person. For example:

\begin{itemize}
\item a. tu\textsuperscript{231} nuŋ\textsuperscript{11} kjäːu\textsuperscript{24} \quad \text{PRE - PRE - female} \quad \text{‘daughter’}
\item b. tu\textsuperscript{231} nuŋ\textsuperscript{11} kjei\textsuperscript{51} bok\textsuperscript{55} \quad \text{PRE - PRE - male - big} \quad \text{‘eldest son’}
\end{itemize}

phla\textsuperscript{51} is a class prefix for ‘fish’. For example:

\begin{itemize}
\item a. phla\textsuperscript{51} faːŋ\textsuperscript{55} \quad \text{PRE - carp} \quad \text{‘carp’}
\item b. phla\textsuperscript{51} tho\textsuperscript{24} \quad \text{PRE - crucian} \quad \text{‘crucian’}
\item c. phla\textsuperscript{51} tsem\textsuperscript{51} \quad \text{PRE - goldfish} \quad \text{‘goldfish’}
\item d. phla\textsuperscript{51} thɛ\textsuperscript{1}u \quad \text{PRE - loach} \quad \text{‘loach’}
\item e. phla\textsuperscript{51} khuɔ\textsuperscript{51} \quad \text{PRE - dog} \quad \text{‘giant salamander’}
\end{itemize}

The general class prefix for birds is mlok\textsuperscript{55}. For example:
Some birds, however, are categorized as a different class in Lakkja with the prefix \( tu^{231} \) rather than \( mlok^{55} \). For example:

| (33) | a. \( tu^{231} \) \( kjy^{51} \) | PRE - woodpecker | ‘woodpecker’ |
|      | (not * \( mlok^{55} \) \( kjy^{51} \)) | PRE - woodpecker | ‘* woodpecker’ |
| b. \( tu^{231} \) \( kji:u^{51} \) | PRE - thrush | ‘thrush’ |
| (not * \( mlok^{55} \) \( kji:u^{51} \)) | PRE - thrush | ‘thrush’ |

We can infer that the prefix \( mlok^{55} \) functions as the name of genera, that is, ‘undomesticated Aves’ in Lakkja folk taxonomy. For ‘domesticated Aves’, which often grow bigger from better nutrition, the general animal prefix \( tu^{231} \) is used.

\( khu^{51} \), derived from the free morpheme ‘dog’, is a prefix for the canine family. For example:

| (34) | a. \( khu^{51} \) \( m^{14} \) \( tu^{231} \) | PRE - chase - animal | ‘hunting dog’ |
| b. \( khu^{51} \) \( kja^{24} \) | PRE - mountain | ‘wolf, dingo’ |

### 3.1.1.6 Prefixes for plants

There are a number of prefixes for botanical categories. However, compared with other Tai-Kadai languages, Lakkja lacks a generic prefix for plants. For example, in Maonan, there is prefix \( z\o p^{231} \) for higher taxonomic hierarchy than the prefix for ‘tree’ in the biological systematics. But multiple prefixes are found to subdivide plants and vegetables in Lakkja, such as \( nam^{55} \) as well as the following items.

\( tse^{55} \), derived from the free morpheme ‘tree’, functions as a prefix denoting various kinds of arboreal or tall plants. For example:

| (35) | a. \( tse^{55} \) \( pe:k^{24} \) | PRE - cypress | ‘cypress’ |
| b. \( tse^{55} \) \( tse^{231} \) | PRE - tea | ‘tea tree’ |
| c. \( tse^{55} \) \( khj\a^{55} \) | PRE - iron | ‘sago cycas’ |
| d. \( tse^{55} \) \( lak^{24} \) \( kjam^{231} \) | PRE - PRE - hawthorn | ‘hawthorn tree’ |
e. tsei^{55} pi^{11} pa^{231} \quad \text{PRE- loquat} \quad \text{‘loquat tree’}

\textit{wok}^{24} \text{ is a prefix for edible vegetables. For example:}

\textbf{(36)} \quad \begin{align*}
\text{a. wok}^{24} & \text{ lo}^{11} \quad \text{PRE - mustard} \quad \text{‘mustard’} \\
\text{b. wok}^{24} & \text{ pie:}k^{11} \quad \text{PRE - white} \quad \text{‘Chinese cabbage’} \\
\text{c. wok}^{24} & \text{ khjo}^{24} \quad \text{PRE - dry} \quad \text{‘dried vegetables’} \\
\text{d. wok}^{24} & \text{ jum}^{231} \quad \text{PRE - amaranth} \quad \text{‘amaranth’} \\
\text{e. wok}^{24} & \text{ pa:}u^{51} \quad \text{PRE - wrap} \quad \text{‘cabbage’}
\end{align*}

\text{Note that both edible and inedible herbs use } \textit{wok}^{24} \text{ as their prefixes. For example:}

\textbf{(37)} \quad \begin{align*}
\text{a. wok}^{24} & \text{ fan}^{41} \quad \text{PRE - bamboo} \quad \text{‘oplismenus compositus’} \\
\text{b. wok}^{24} & \text{ wie:t}^{24} \quad \text{PRE - wormwood} \quad \text{‘wormwood’}
\end{align*}

\textit{lak}^{24}, \text{ from the meaning ‘offspring’, is a diminutive prefix for fruit and some root crops which are regarded as ‘small and round’, and is highly productive. For example:}

\textbf{(38)} \quad \begin{align*}
\text{a. lak}^{24} & \text{ tsen}^{231} \quad \text{PRE - water chestnut} \quad \text{‘water chestnut’} \\
\text{b. lak}^{24} & \text{ man}^{11} \quad \text{PRE - plum} \quad \text{‘plum’} \\
\text{c. lak}^{24} & \text{ pla:i}^{55} \quad \text{PRE - waxberry} \quad \text{‘waxberry’} \\
\text{d. lak}^{24} & \text{ ʔi:t}^{24} \quad \text{PRE - grape} \quad \text{‘grape’}
\end{align*}

\textit{kou}^{24} \text{ is a prefix for crops and grains. It is derived from the free morpheme ‘rice, grain’. Examples:}

\textbf{(39)} \quad \begin{align*}
\text{a. kou}^{24} & \text{ fei}^{55} \quad \text{PRE - thin} \quad \text{‘white rice’} \\
\text{b. kou}^{24} & \text{ kjāŋ}^{51} \quad \text{PRE - glutinous} \quad \text{‘glutinous rice’} \\
\text{c. kou}^{24} & \text{ phli:p}^{24} \quad \text{PRE - blight} \quad \text{‘blighted grain’} \\
\text{d. kou}^{24} & \text{ kjū}^{51} \quad \text{PRE - corn} \quad \text{‘corn’}
\end{align*}

\textbf{3.1.1.7 Prefixes for materials and abstract things}

\text{In addition to } \textit{nam}^{55} \text{ discussed in §3.1.1.3, the following prefixes are found for materials and abstract things. They can be grouped according to their shape, quality, utility, etc.}

\textit{mi}^{24}, \text{ deriving from the lexeme ‘stick’, often refers to long tools and the like, which can be either soft or hard. For example:}
(40) a. \( mi^{24} \) \( kjecu^{24} \) PRE - whip ‘whip’
b. \( mi^{24} \) \( tsi^{231} \) PRE - flag ‘flag’
c. \( mi^{24} \) \( kju^{11} \) PRE - stick ‘walking stick’
d. \( mi^{24} \) \( she:n^{24} \) PRE - shovel ‘shovel’

\( num^{11} \), from the lexeme ‘water’, often refers to liquid, especially ‘drops’ or the like:

(41) a. \( num^{11} \) \( mi^{55} \) PRE - vinegar ‘vinegar’
b. \( num^{11} \) \( pla^{51} \) PRE - eye ‘tear’
c. \( num^{11} \) \( pha:u^{55} \) PRE - bubble ‘wave’
d. \( num^{11} \) \( hi^{55} \) PRE - air ‘vapor’

tsi\(^{231} \), derived from the lexeme ‘form, knot’, is a very productive prefix. Words formed with it usually denote node-like disease and illness.

(42) a. \( tsi^{231} \) \( f\dot{e}n^{24} \) PRE - measles ‘measles’
b. \( tsi^{231} \) \( tsi^{55} \) PRE - lymph ‘lymph node’
c. \( tsi^{231} \) \( tsha^{51} \) PRE - sore ‘scabies’
d. \( tsi^{231} \) \( khj\dot{u}^{51} \) PRE - pus ‘suppuration’

3.1.1.8 Prefixes for abstract concepts

These include concepts of space and time.

A. Prefixes of time and related concepts

There are a number of prefixes in Lakkja for time and related concepts, such as the time of the day, weather, a period, festivals, and seasons.

\( b\dot{a}n^{51} \), from the free morpheme ‘sky’, may serve as a prefix denoting time of the day.

(43) a. \( b\dot{a}n^{51} \) \( w\ddot{e}n^{231} \) PRE - dusk ‘dusk’
b. \( b\dot{a}n^{51} \) \( w\dot{a}n^{231} \) PRE - daytime ‘daytime’
c. \( b\dot{a}n^{51} \) \( nj\dot{a}u^{51} \) PRE - dawn ‘dawn’
d. \( b\dot{a}n^{51} \) \( bl\dot{a}u^{231} \) PRE - night ‘night’

\( b\dot{a}n^{51} \) is also used to form concepts for weather, for example:

(44) a. \( b\dot{a}n^{51} \) \( \ddot{e}m^{51} \) PRE - shade ‘cloudy day’
b. \( b\dot{a}n^{51} \) \( fen^{51} \) PRE - rain ‘rainy day’
c. *bon⁵¹* *khja:n²⁴*  
PRE - hot  
‘hot day’

*wan²³¹*, from the lexeme ‘day, daytime’, is a prefixable morpheme for a longer period. Cross-linguistically, ‘day, daytime’, along with a number of other items discussed in this chapter, may be treated as a content word rather than an affix in some other Tai-Kadai languages, such as *wan³³* ‘day’ in Thai. Admittedly, as mentioned in the beginning of § 3.2, the continuum between an affix and a content word are often realized among the languages in this area, making it hard to set them apart from each other. However, in this study, forms like *wan²³¹* are analysed as affixes mainly in light of their impressive degree of productivity and grammaticalization.

(45)  
a. *wan²³¹* *ŋ̥a:i²⁴*  
PRE - today  
‘today’

b. *wan²³¹* *njert²⁴* *blau²³¹*  
PRE - tomorrow - night  
‘tomorrow night’

c. *wan²³¹* *nt²³¹*  
PRE - this  
‘usually’

d. *wan²³¹* *la²⁴*  
PRE - after  
‘later’

It can also be used to denote festivals or special days.

(46)  
a. *wan²³¹* *pok²⁴* *kong⁵¹*  
PRE - do - work  
‘workday’

b. *wan²³¹* *hjie:t²⁴*  
PRE - rest  
‘day off’

c. *wan²³¹* *ha:i⁵¹* *ja:u¹¹*  
PRE - open - shed  
‘Mountain-factory-opening Day’

d. *wan²³¹* *kjam⁵⁵* *tsert⁵⁵*  
PRE - cut - tree  
‘Firewood-cutting Day’

*to¹¹*, from the lexeme ‘period’, is a prefix for season. It may also be used to describe climates such as ‘wet (rainy) season’, ‘dry season’.

(47)  
a. *to¹¹* *tshua:n⁵¹*  
PRE: season - spring  
‘spring’

b. *to¹¹* *ja²¹⁴*  
PRE - summer  
‘summer’

c. *to¹¹* *theu⁵¹*  
PRE - autumn  
‘autumn’

d. *to¹¹* *ton⁵¹*  
PRE - winter  
‘winter’

e. *to¹¹* *fen⁵¹*  
PRE - rain  
‘raining season’

Besides, *kwei⁵⁵* is also recognized as a suffix for season in Lakkja, which will be discussed in §3.1.2.2.
B. Prefixes of space

Quite a number of prefixes are found in Lakkja for spatial concepts such as location, area, etc. Many of them are close synonyms with subtle differences in usage.

*pie:*ŋ₂¹⁴, from the meaning ‘surface, side’, denotes locations or areas.

(48) a. *pie:*ŋ₂¹⁴ pak₅⁵ PRE - north ‘north side’
b. *pie:*ŋ₂¹⁴ li₂³¹ PRE - here ‘here’
c. *pie:*ŋ₂¹⁴ tsie₅⁵ PRE - front ‘front’
d. *pie:*ŋ₂¹⁴ na₂¹⁴ PRE - which ‘where’

*pi:*n⁵¹, from the meaning ‘side’, serves a similar function to *pie:*ŋ₂¹⁴.

(49) a. *pi:*n⁵¹ tsie⁵¹ PRE - river ‘river side’
b. *pi:*n⁵¹ li₂³¹ PRE - here ‘here’
c. *pi:*n⁵¹ ton⁵⁵ PRE - east ‘east’
d. *pi:*n⁵¹ na₂¹⁴ PRE - which ‘where’

*kjeu⁵¹*, from the free morpheme ‘head’, serves as a prefix for location which is the entrance or the end of an area.

(50) a. *kjeu*⁵¹ ni²³¹ PRE - this ‘this end’
b. *kjeu*⁵¹ ba:n²⁴ PRE - village ‘the entrance of a village’
c. *kjeu*⁵¹ na₂¹⁴ PRE - which ‘where’

*tsak*⁵⁵, from the free morpheme ‘corner’, has two functions. When serving as a prefix, it has similar function as *pi:*n⁵¹. However, *tsak*⁵⁵ is less productive and semantically restricted. It only precedes four words: *ou*¹¹ ‘in’, *uk*⁵⁵ ‘out’, *hjie:*n⁵¹ ‘up’, *hãn*⁵¹ ‘down’. Thus, it is not felicitous to combine *tsak*⁵⁵ with *kjei*²⁴ ‘left’ or *wa*²³¹ ‘right’. To express these two special terms, *pie:*ŋ²¹⁴ and *pi:*n⁵¹ are normally used.

(51) a. *tsak*⁵⁵ ou¹¹ PRE - in ‘inside’
b. *tsak*⁵⁵ uk⁵⁵ PRE - out ‘outside’
c. *tsak*⁵⁵ hjie:*n⁵¹ PRE - up ‘upside’
c. *tsak*⁵⁵ hãn⁵¹ PRE - down ‘underneath’

The other function of *tsak*⁵⁵ is serving as a suffix for ‘corner’, which will be discussed in §3.1.2.2.


*huŋ*⁵¹, from the morpheme ‘direction’, may function as a prefix for directions. It is only used for absolute space like ‘east, west, north, south’. It is not found to be used for other spatial concepts in my data.

(52) a. *huŋ*⁵¹ toŋ⁵¹ PRE - east ‘east’
   b. *huŋ*⁵¹ toŋ⁵¹ pak⁵⁵ PRE - east - north ‘northeast’

3.1.1.9 Prefix of plurality

Plurality in Lakkja is expressed by two prefixes: *kjɔŋ⁵⁵* and *tei¹¹* (variant: *te¹¹*).

The plural marking device *kjɔŋ⁵⁵* is used for animate things. It may occur before nouns and noun phrases. For example:

(53) a. *kjɔŋ⁵⁵* liŋ²³¹ PRE - monkey ‘monkeys’
   b. *kjɔŋ⁵⁵* at⁵⁵ jen¹¹ PRE - relative ‘relatives’
   c. *kjɔŋ⁵⁵* kjak₂⁴ PRE - robber ‘robbers’
   d. *kjɔŋ⁵⁵* kja:u²⁴ tau²⁴ PRE - wine - nest ‘alcoholics’
   e. *kjɔŋ⁵⁵* nuŋ¹¹ lie²⁴ PRE - PRE - wife ‘sister-in-law’

Besides, we can see from (53e) that this prefix can also occur with another prefix to form double prefix constructions.

Furthermore, two affixal compounds, *toŋ¹¹ kjɔŋ⁵⁵* ‘everyone’ and *kjɔŋ⁵⁵ njũn²³¹* ‘people’, are found in my data which may combine with other elements such as verbs, verb phrases, and adjectives to designate plurality. They can either precede or follow other constituents, indicating contact-induced word order changes in Lakkja.

(54) a. *kjɔŋ⁵⁵* njũn²³¹ ka²⁴ mut⁵⁵ people - short - dwarf ‘dwarfs’
   b. *toŋ¹¹ kjɔŋ⁵⁵* niŋ⁵⁵ everyone - sit ‘people who are sitting’
   c. *kjam⁵⁵* tsel⁵⁵ *kjɔŋ⁵⁵* njũn²³¹ cut - tree - people ‘lumberjacks’

The plural marker for inanimate things is *tei¹¹* and its variant *te¹¹*. They are found to combine only with definite demonstrative pronouns *ni²³¹*, *ŋan²³¹* and *mu²³¹* to form plural definite demonstrative pronouns which precede the modified inanimate NPs. Example:

(55) a. *te¹¹* ni²³¹ ka²⁴ lai²¹⁴ i¹¹ kha:i²⁴ pən⁵¹ ma²³¹
    PRE this thing all give you

‘All these things are given to you.’
b. tei\textsuperscript{11}  \textit{nən\textsuperscript{231}}  \textit{lak\textsuperscript{24}}  \textit{pup\textsuperscript{24}}  \textit{nam\textsuperscript{55}}  \textit{bok\textsuperscript{55}}  \\
PRE  that  grapefruit  PRE  big  \\
‘Those grapefruits are big.’

But in most cases, the plurality for inanimate things are not marked by any devices. The plural meaning is conveyed by context. For example, the subject in (56b) can be analysed as either singular or plural.

(56) a. \textit{li\textsuperscript{231}}  \textit{nuy\textsuperscript{11}}  \textit{tsi\textsuperscript{51}}  \textit{i\textsuperscript{11}}  \textit{kha:i\textsuperscript{24}}  \textit{hji\\u00b4:u\textsuperscript{24}}  \textit{ŋə:i\textsuperscript{51}}  \\
here  Child  1SG  all  Know  \\
‘These children, I know them all.’

b. \textit{lak\textsuperscript{24}}  \textit{fan\textsuperscript{51}}  \textit{ni\textsuperscript{231}}  \textit{khjum\textsuperscript{24}}  \textit{luy\textsuperscript{51}}  \textit{luy\textsuperscript{51}}  \\
peach  this  sour  SUF  \\
‘These peaches are sour. / This peach is sour.’

3.1.1.10 Prefixes for ordinals

Two ordinal prefixes are recognized in Lakkja: one for general ordination and the other only used in naming the days in a month.

The prefix \textit{ta:i\textsuperscript{11}} serves similar function to the English ordinal suffix -th to signal general ordination. For example:

(57) a. \textit{ta:i\textsuperscript{11}}  \textit{et\textsuperscript{55}}  \\
PRE - one  ‘first’

b. \textit{ta:i\textsuperscript{11}}  \textit{ŋi\textsuperscript{214}}  \\
PRE - two  ‘second’

c. \textit{ta:i\textsuperscript{11}}  \textit{fa:m\textsuperscript{51}}  \\
PRE - three  ‘third’

d. \textit{ta:i\textsuperscript{11}}  \textit{tsep\textsuperscript{24}}  \textit{et\textsuperscript{55}}  \\
PRE - ten - first  ‘eleventh’

It is noteworthy that unlike other Kam-Sui languages, there are no ordinal compounds formed with an affix and the morphemes like ‘head’, ‘back’, or ‘end’. A similar form in Lakkja is \textit{lak\textsuperscript{24}} \textit{kjeu\textsuperscript{51}} but it signals a leader of an organization or in an activity rather than the ordination.

The prefix \textit{tsho\textsuperscript{51}}, probably a Chinese loan \textit{chū}, is used with the numerals 1 to 10 to express the 1st to the 10th days of the month of the lunar calendar. For example:

(58) a. \textit{tsho\textsuperscript{51}}  \textit{et\textsuperscript{55}}  \\
PRE - one  ‘the 1\textsuperscript{st} day of a month’

b. \textit{tsho\textsuperscript{51}}  \textit{ŋi\textsuperscript{214}}  \\
PRE - two  ‘the 2\textsuperscript{nd} day of a month’

c. \textit{tsho\textsuperscript{51}}  \textit{fa:m\textsuperscript{51}}  \\
PRE - three  ‘the 3\textsuperscript{rd} day of a month’

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When the number exceeds ten, the prefix \( tsho^{51} \) is not used. That is, for the 11\(^{th} \) to the end of the month, the cardinal numbers 11 to 30 are used. For example, it is infelicitous to say \( *tsho^{51} \ tsep^{24} \ yolo^{11} \) (PRE: ordination: date - ten - five) or \( *tsho^{51} \ fa^{51} \ lep^{24} \) (PRE: ordination: date - thirty); rather, one has to say \( tsep^{24} \ yolo^{11} \) (ten- five) and \( fa^{51} \ lep^{24} \) (thirty). This might be attributed to the semantic property of \( tsho^{51} \) which is borrowed from Chinese word \( chū \), meaning ‘initial, first’, implying that the first ten days of a Chinese lunar month are the upper section of a month.

It is also notable that the first day and the second day of the lunar month are expressed with the Chinese loan numerals \( et^{55} \) ‘one’ and \( ŋĩ^{214} \) ‘two’ rather than the native numerals \( ŋin^{24} \) ‘one’ and \( hou^{24} \) ‘two’, as in (58a) (58b).

### 3.1.1.11 Prefixable adjectival morphemes

Three prefixable adjectival morphemes, \( lai^{51} \), \( naːn^{231} \), and \( kho^{51} \), are recognized in Lakkja, whose function is to adjectivize verbs. In other words, they are prefixed to transitive verbs, making them intransitive. These items have a valency-decreasing function.

The prefix \( lai^{51} \), from the free morpheme meaning ‘good’, expresses the meaning ‘easy to’, ‘suitable for’, and ‘good for’. This prefix serves as a valence-decreasing device to turn transitive verbs into adjectives or adjectival verbs modifiable by degree adverbs like \( hou^{24} \) ‘very’. For example:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \text{lai}^{51} \text{ tsen}^{54} \quad \text{PRE - eat} \quad \text{‘delicious, good for eating’} \\
\text{b. } & \text{lai}^{51} \text{ lo:m}^{51} \quad \text{PRE - look} \quad \text{‘good-looking’} \\
\text{c. } & \text{lai}^{51} \text{ they}^{55} \quad \text{PRE - listen} \quad \text{‘pleasant to hear /to the ear’} \\
\text{d. } & \text{lai}^{51} \text{ ŋ̥jut}^{24} \quad \text{PRE - smell} \quad \text{‘fragrant’}
\end{align*}
\]

The prefix \( naːn^{231} \), derived from Chinese loan free morpheme ‘difficult, hard’, is also an adjectiviser and deverbaliser. It forms compounds contrasting in meaning with \( lai^{51} \) above.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \text{naːn}^{231} \text{ tsen}^{54} \quad \text{PRE - eat} \quad \text{‘tasteless’} \\
\text{b. } & \text{naːn}^{231} \text{ lo:m}^{51} \quad \text{PRE - look} \quad \text{‘ugly’} \\
\text{c. } & \text{naːn}^{231} \text{ they}^{55} \quad \text{PRE - listen} \quad \text{‘unpleasant to hear’} \\
\text{d. } & \text{naːn}^{231} \text{ ŋ̥jut}^{24} \quad \text{PRE - smell} \quad \text{‘unpleasant to smell’}
\end{align*}
\]

The prefix \( kho^{51} \), also derived from the Chinese, means ‘need’, ‘be worth (doing)’ as an adjectiviser and deverbaliser.
3.1.2 Suffixation

Suffixation in Lakkja is a very important morphological process for describing properties, actions and other complex ideas expressed by the roots to which they are bound. Some syllables still show the features half way between onomatopoeia and suffixation. This section mainly focuses on suffixes for human beings and animals, suffixes for time and space, and possessive suffixes.

3.1.2.1 Suffixes for human beings and animals

Lakkja also has several suffixes which show a different feature from traditional constituent order of Kam-Tai languages.

ŋjũn\textsuperscript{231} is a typical Lakkja suffix for human beings, which may also function as a prefix, as discussed in §3.1.1.4. Due to language contact with Chinese, ŋjũn\textsuperscript{231} is much more productive than the native affix lak\textsuperscript{24}. This is quite uncommon in Tai-Kadai languages. Examples are as follows:

(62)  
a. tsøy\textsuperscript{55} ja\textsuperscript{11} ŋjũn\textsuperscript{231} grow - field - SUF ‘farmer’
b. lak\textsuperscript{24} kjā:u\textsuperscript{24} ŋjũn\textsuperscript{231} PRE - female - SUF ‘woman’
c. taː\textsuperscript{55} sen\textsuperscript{51} ŋjũn\textsuperscript{231} take - body - SUF ‘pregnant woman’
d. puk\textsuperscript{55} mie\textsuperscript{231} ŋjũn\textsuperscript{231} foot - hand - SUF ‘craftsman’

lak\textsuperscript{24}, similarly, can also function as a suffix for human beings, which can be regarded as a special usage of this item. In this usage, lak\textsuperscript{24} is often attached to plural pronouns and numerals to form dual and paucal numbers, describing concepts like ‘you two’, ‘we three’, ‘the four of them’ and the like. Examples:

(63)  
a. liu\textsuperscript{24} hou\textsuperscript{24} lak\textsuperscript{24} you - two - SUF ‘you two’
b. tau\textsuperscript{51} faːm\textsuperscript{51} lak\textsuperscript{24} we - three - SUF ‘we three’

Furthermore, this item may serve as diminutive suffix as well, as discussed in §3.1.2.3.
3.1.2.2 Suffixes for time and space

It has been discussed in §3.1.1.8 that Lakkja has several prefixes for time and space. In addition, there are several suffixes for time and space in Lakkja.

\(kwe^i\) is a suffix for season. Similar to \(tto^j\) discussed in §3.1.1.8, \(kwe^i\) may also be used to describe climates such as ‘wet (rainy) season’, ‘dry season’, but the former is more commonly used when describing seasons and climates. However, only \(kwe^i\) is used to express the concept ‘the four seasons’, as in (64f), while \(tto^j\) is not found to occur in this phrase.

(64) a. \(tshua:n^j\ kwe^i\) spring - SUF ‘spring’
    b. \(ja^j\ kwe^i\) summer - SUF ‘summer’
    c. \(theu^j\ kwe^i\) autumn - SUF ‘autumn’
    d. \(toj^j\ kwe^i\) winter - SUF ‘winter’
    e. \(fen^j\ kwe^i\) rain - SUF ‘rainy season’
    f. \(fei^j\ kwe^i\) four - SUF ‘the four seasons’

\(hu\v^g\) functions as a suffix for direction. It is only used for absolute space like ‘east, west, north, south’. It is not found to be used for other spatial concepts like ‘left’, ‘right’, ‘up’ or ‘down’ in my data.

(65) a. \(toj\ hu\v\) east - SUF ‘east’
    b. \(na:m\) south - SUF ‘south’

\(tsak\), from the free morpheme ‘corner’ as mentioned in §3.1.1.8, functions as a suffix for location or area.

(66) a. \(pla^j\ tsak\) eye - SUF ‘canthus’
    b. \(toj\ na:m\ tsak\) east - south - SUF ‘southeast corner’

3.1.2.3 Diminutive suffix

In most cases, words with the suffix \(lak\) denote small objects, small body parts, and the offspring of animals.

(i) Small objects and body parts:

(67) a. \(m\v\ phlei\ lak\) knife - sharp - SUF ‘dagger’
    b. \(kja\v\ mie\ lsak\) finger - SUF ‘little finger’
(ii) Offspring of animals:

(68) a. ma\(^{11}\) lak\(^{24}\) horse - SUF ‘colt’
b. khū\(^{51}\) lak\(^{24}\) pig - SUF ‘piglet’
c. nau\(^{11}\)sa\(^{51}\) lak\(^{24}\) cattle - SUF ‘calf (cattle)’
d. wie\(^{51}\) lak\(^{24}\) sheep - SUF ‘lamb’

3.1.2.4 Possessive suffix

There is a structural particle, in\(^{24}\), which can be analyzed as a suffix for marking possession. It combines with a noun or a noun phrase to mark possession, or combine with a pronoun to form possessive pronouns. For example:

(69) a. tsi\(^{51}\) in\(^{24}\) 1SG - POSS ‘mine, my’
b. ma\(^{231}\) in\(^{24}\) 2SG - POSS ‘yours, your’
c. lak\(^{24}\) in\(^{24}\) 3SG - POSS ‘his, her, hers’
d. tu\(^{214}\) in\(^{24}\) 3PL - POSS ‘theirs, their’
e. lak\(^{24}\) bok\(^{55}\) in\(^{24}\) elder brother - POSS ‘elder brother’s’
f. ta\(^{231}\) pe\(^{55}\) in\(^{24}\) 1PL - father - POSS ‘our father’s’
g. lak\(^{24}\) kjai\(^{24}\) in\(^{24}\) na:ŋ\(^{231}\) younger brother - POSS clothes ‘younger brother’s clothes’

3.1.2.5 Descriptive suffixes

There is an abundant system of descriptive (or expressive) suffixes in Lakkja as well as many other Tai-Kadai languages. They may form new compounds with verbs and adjectives to depict manner or cause, or to convey emotive attitude of the speaker towards the event or situation in question. The majority of such suffixes are onomatopoeic and iconic, implying a perceived resemblance between form and meaning.

Descriptive suffixes are sometimes analysed as derivational. It may involve reduplication as well, as will be discussed in the following sections.

No descriptive prefixes are found in Lakkja in my data.

A. Descriptive suffixes for adjectives

Descriptive suffixes may form new compounds with monosyllabic adjectives. Such descriptive compound words can be either disyllabic or tri-syllabic, depending on whether the
suffix is duplicated or not. It is interesting to observe an areal feature that disyllabic words usually have a tri-syllabic counterpart formed from the same base adjective and reduplicated suffix, as illustrated in the (ii) and (iii) examples below.

(70)  

a. i. ko:ŋ55  
ii. ko:ŋ55 tuŋ11  
iii. ko:ŋ55 tuŋ11 tuŋ11

b. i. khja:ŋ51  
ii. khja:ŋ51 jo:n231  
iii. khja:ŋ51 jo:n231 jo:n231

c. i. ti:m51  
ii. ti:m51 tak55  
iii. ti:m51 tak55 tak55

d. i. kja55  
ii. kja55 ḥaŋ51  
iii. kja55 ḥaŋ51 ḥaŋ51

In general, the semantic effects of the new words are usually derived from the original meaning of the adjectives but getting more intense and vivid as the number of suffixes increases. In other words, the meaning of a tri-syllabic word is normally more intense and vivid than its disyllabic counterpart. For instance, in (70a) and (70d), reduplicated suffixes carry a meaning that is more intense than the base adjectives, and in (70b) and (70c), the meanings with reduplicated suffixes tend to be more vivid.

However, one exception has been found in my data. In (71), the disyllabic form seems to show an opposite semantic tendency to its tri-syllabic counterpart, though they are still centering on the head adjective pha:ŋ24 ‘blue’.

(71)  

a. i. pha:ŋ24  
ii. pha:ŋ24 phiy55  
iii. pha:ŋ24 phiy24 phiy55

It is worth observing that not all disyllabic adjectives with a descriptive suffix allow the descriptive suffix to be reduplicated. For example, mot24 njon11 (full - suffix) is an adjective meaning ‘very full’, but it is not felicitous to say *mot24 njon11 njon11. It appears to by and
large rely on language habit and no specific semantic or syntactic constraints are found on such disyllabic adjectives that do not allow reduplicated descriptive suffix. More investigation may be required on this issue.

Reduplication of descriptive suffixes typically take the form of alliteration, involving full or partial rhymes, and other similar phonological devices, as shown in (72).

(72) A. Alliteration:

a. mlo\textsuperscript{231} mlə:m\textsuperscript{214} mlə:m\textsuperscript{214} black (dirty) - SUF ‘very black (dirty)’
b. pje:k\textsuperscript{41} phəm\textsuperscript{51} phəm\textsuperscript{51} white - SUF ‘dazzling white’
c. kjai\textsuperscript{11} kjət\textsuperscript{24} kjət\textsuperscript{24} short (length) - SUF ‘very short’
d. ti:m\textsuperscript{51} tak\textsuperscript{55} tak\textsuperscript{55} pointed - SUF ‘very pointed’

B. Rhyme (full, partial):

e. ko:n\textsuperscript{55} tun\textsuperscript{11} tun\textsuperscript{11} red - SUF ‘glowing red’
f. lam\textsuperscript{51} maŋ\textsuperscript{214} maŋ\textsuperscript{214} black - SUF ‘very jet-black’
g. kjə\textsuperscript{55} ίŋ\textsuperscript{51} ίŋ\textsuperscript{51} spicy - SUF ‘very spicy’

C. Others:

h. ləp\textsuperscript{55} me:ŋ\textsuperscript{51} me:ŋ\textsuperscript{51} dark - SUF ‘black-shrouded’
i. jau\textsuperscript{231} ti:u\textsuperscript{231} ti:u\textsuperscript{231} green - SUF ‘glossy and green’
j. khja:ŋ\textsuperscript{51} jo:n\textsuperscript{231} jo:n\textsuperscript{231} tall - SUF ‘very tall’
k. ka\textsuperscript{24} ȵut\textsuperscript{55} ȵut\textsuperscript{55} short (height) - SUF ‘pudgy’
l. tsen\textsuperscript{11} let\textsuperscript{55} let\textsuperscript{55} near - SUF ‘very near’
m. kjie\textsuperscript{24} phak\textsuperscript{55} phak\textsuperscript{55} light - SUF ‘light as a feather’

Such constructions are generally used to describe visible features of objects like colour, shape, weight, distance, roughness, neatness, among others. Some words of this type may be used for describing senses, such as taste, smell and hunger.

Descriptive suffixes seldom co-occur with adjectives that describe human thoughts or emotions, for example, luə:k\textsuperscript{24} ‘happy’, tse:t\textsuperscript{24} ‘stingy’, lai\textsuperscript{51} ‘kind’. Adjectives for human thoughts and emotions tend to enhance their descriptive function through reduplication.

However, there are exceptions especially when it comes to adjectives referring to sense of taste, such as khwa:n\textsuperscript{51} ‘sweet’, kom\textsuperscript{231} ‘bitter’, khjum\textsuperscript{24} ‘sour’. Such words may take suffixes to describe feelings of human beings, conveying metaphoric meanings rather than their literal meanings. For example:
a. \( pa^{24} \ ou^{11} \ fe:m^{51} \ khwa:n^{51} \ lo:m^{24} \ lo:m^{24} \)

mother   inside   heart   sweet    SUF

‘Mother felt sweet at heart.’

\[ (73) \]

**B. Descriptive suffixes for verbs**

Generally, Lakkja verbs do not take as many affixes as adjectives do, but a number of verbs may take descriptive affixes to enhance the intensity of action. Such affixes are generally suffixes and mostly occur with verbs describing emotions such as ‘laugh’, ‘cry’.

\[ (74) \]

a. \( tu^{231} \ nuy^{11} \ kjā:u^{24} \ ni^{231} \ hē:m^{24} \ njum^{11} \ njum^{11} \)

CLF  girl         this       laugh   SUF

‘The girl smiles.’

b. \( lak^{24} \ ton^{11} \ wan^{231} \ hē:m^{24} \ ho^{24} \ ho^{51} \)

3SG  all day      laugh   SUF

‘He giggled all day long.’

c. \( tu^{231} \ nuy^{11} \ ji:e^{11} \ pīe^{51} \ yu^{24} \ yu^{11} \)

CLF  child      cry    SUF

‘The child whimpered.’

d. \( lak^{24} \ ka^{11} \ ni^{231} \ pīe^{51} \ fut^{55} \ fut^{55} \)

3SG  PART   cry    SUF

‘He is sobbing.’

e. \( lak^{24} \ sie:ŋ^{51} \ fem^{51} \ a:k^{24} \ pīe^{51} \ ŋak^{55} \ ŋak^{55} \)

3SG  hurt heart PART   cry    SUF

‘He is so heartbroken that he sobbed intermittently.’

f. \( tu^{231} \ khuò^{51} \ pu^{214} \ ŋau^{51} \ ŋau^{51} \)

CLF  dog   bark    SUF

‘The dog barks.’

In some instances, descriptive affixes can either occur as suffixes or prefixes without change in meaning. For example, in (75), ‘\( war^{24} \ war^{24} \ pī:u^{24} \)’ and ‘\( pī:u^{24} \ war^{24} \ war^{24} \)’ are both acceptable.
‘The red flag flutters.

3.1.3 Circumfixation

Lakkja has a pair of circumfixes, jak⁵⁵ ... jak⁵⁵ ... They are typically used to mark reciprocal action. No other items are found in Lakkja with this morphosyntactic function. This is typologically quite unusual not only in Tai-Kadai, but cross-linguistically.

(76)  a. tau⁵¹ jak⁵⁵ pa:η⁵¹ jak⁵⁵
     1SG CIR help CIR
     ‘We help each other.’

     b. jak⁵⁵ ei²⁴ ji:m²³¹ jak⁵⁵
        CIR NEG despise CIR
     ‘Don’t despise each other.’

To negate this frame, a negator should be inserted between the circumfixes, as in (76b).

3.1.4 The reflexive pronoun tie²³¹

The reflexive morpheme tie²³¹ may be analysed as a pronoun or an adverb. To be more specific, with the meaning ‘self’, tie²³¹ functions as an emphatic pronoun and occurs as the subject (77c). It may also occur in object position to mean ‘oneself’ (77a). When denoting the concept of ‘(sth. of) one’s own’, it can be recognized as a possessive reflexive pronoun (77c). Besides when signalling ‘by oneself’, it generally functions as a preverbal adverb (77d).

(77)  a. lak²⁴ tie²³¹ ku²⁴ tie²³¹ η¹⁴ ku²⁴ lak²⁴ heu⁵⁵
     3SG only care self NEG care other people
     ‘He only cares for himself and does not care for others.’

     b. lak²⁴ tie²³¹ hji:u²⁴ ηa:u¹¹ khja:u²⁴
     3SG self can steam wine
     ‘He can make wine by himself.’
c. \textit{tie}^231 \textit{njen}^214 \textit{tie}^231 \textit{ka}^4 \textit{lai}^214

\textit{self identify self stuff}

‘Claim one’s own belongs.’

d. \textit{ŋ̍}^4 \textit{len}^214 \textit{ke}^214 \textit{ma}^231 \textit{au}^51 \textit{tie}^231 \textit{pok}^24

\textit{regardless what 2SG should self do}

‘No matter what it is, you should do it by yourself.’

As shown in (77b), \textit{tie}^231 may follow other pronouns to form compound reflexive pronouns such as \textit{tsi}^51 \textit{tie}^231 ‘myself’, \textit{lak}^24 \textit{tie}^231 ‘himself, herself’, acting as a suffix. Below are paradigms of reflexive pronouns in Lakkja.

\begin{align*}
\text{(78) } & \text{a. } \textit{tsi}^51 \textit{tie}^231 \quad \text{‘myself’} \\
& \text{b. } \textit{ma}^231 \textit{tie}^231 \quad \text{‘yourself’} \\
& \text{c. } \textit{lak}^24 \textit{tie}^231 \quad \text{‘himself, herself’} \\
& \text{d. } \textit{ta}^231 \textit{tie}^231 \quad \text{‘ourselves’} \\
& \text{e. } \textit{tau}^51 \textit{tie}^231 \quad \text{‘ourselves’} \\
& \text{f. } \textit{li:u}^24 \textit{tie}^231 \quad \text{‘yourselves’} \\
& \text{g. } \textit{tu}^214 \textit{tie}^231 \quad \text{‘themselves’}
\end{align*}

When it functions as a possessive reflexive pronoun (79), \textit{tie}^231 is always syntactically bound to the right. That is, it always precedes the elements it modifies.

\begin{align*}
\text{(79) } & \text{a. } \textit{tie}^231 \textit{liek}^1 \quad \text{(self - family) ‘one’s own family’} \\
& \text{b. } \textit{tie}^231 \textit{seu}^4 \quad \text{(self - book) ‘one’s own book’}
\end{align*}

In a less common usage, \textit{tie}^231 may occur preverbally in the construction \{\textit{tie}^231 + verb\}, such as \textit{tie}^231 \textit{tseu}^55 (self - save) ‘self-rescue’.

Note that \textit{tie}^231 never occurs after a verb that it modifies. Since \textit{tie}^231 is bound to the right only and always occurs preverbally, it cannot occur at the end of a sentence or after a verb as in English ‘He thinks about it \textit{himself}’ where the reflexive pronoun functions as anaphor.

### 3.2 Reduplication

Reduplication is an important and productive grammatical operation in Tai-Kadai. It can be divided into two types: identical repetition of a root, stem or word, and partial repetition of
phonological defined words. The former does not involve any phonological modification, while the latter does.

In Lakkja, reduplication generally takes three forms. The first is the reduplication of classifiers or nouns of space or time to express universality, frequency, etc. The second is the reduplication of verbs to express the meaning of ‘doing something quickly’ or ‘doing something a little’. The third is the reduplication of adjectives to enhance descriptive effects. These are identical repetitions, which are the focus of this section.

### 3.2.1 Reduplication of classifiers or nouns

Like many other Tai-Kadai and Sino-Tibetan languages in this area, reduplication of classifiers or nouns in Lakkja express the meaning of ‘every’ or ‘all’. For example:

\[\text{(80) a. tu}^{231} \text{ tu}^{231} \text{ ko:n}^{24} \text{ pu:i}^{231}\]

- **CLF** - **CLF**
- together
- fat

‘Every one (e.g. livestock) is all fat.’

\[\text{b. lak}^{24} \text{ lak}^{24} \text{ ko:n}^{24} \text{ taŋ}^{231}\]

- **CLF** - **CLF**
- together
- come

‘Everyone came.’

\[\text{c. wan}^{231} \text{ wan}^{231} \text{ let}^{11} \text{ fen}^{51}\]

- day-day
- fall
- rain

‘It rains every day.’

Note that this kind of reduplicated classifiers typically occur before the verb in subject position. They never occur after the verb in object position.

Unlike many other Kam-Sui languages where reduplicated nouns are common, Lakkja has semantic-syntactic constraints on noun reduplication. Only nouns with classifier functions allow reduplication, such as **tu**\text{231} ‘animal; CLF’, **lak**\text{24} ‘person; CLF’, **wan**\text{231} ‘day; CLF’, **ʔũ:n**\text{24} ‘bowl; CLF’, **lie:k**\text{11} ‘house; CLF’, and so on. Lakkja reduplicated nouns therefore lack the function of enumeration. For example, it is perfectly acceptable to say (chicken - chicken - duck - duck) and (alcohol - alcohol - meat - meat) in other Tai-Kadai languages, Mandarin Chinese, and even some other Sino-Tibetan languages. (81) shows two examples from Mandarin Chinese and Zoulei, a member of the Geyang branch of the Tai-Kadai language family.
Zoulei (Li, Li, and Luo 2014):

(81)  
\[
\begin{array}{llll}
  a. & pɔ^{33} & pɔ^{33} & u^{55} & u^{55} \\
  \text{alcohol} & \text{alcohol} & \text{meat} & \text{meat} \\
  b. & qua^{31} & qua^{31} & ie^{13} & ie^{13} \\
  \text{chicken} & \text{chicken} & \text{duck} & \text{duck} \\
\end{array}
\]

‘alcohol and meat’

‘chickens and ducks’

Mandarin Chinese:

(82)  
\[
\begin{array}{llll}
  a. & jiǔ & jiǔ & ròu & ròu \\
  \text{alcohol} & \text{alcohol} & \text{meat} & \text{meat} \\
  b. & jī & jī & yā & yā \\
  \text{chicken} & \text{chicken} & \text{duck} & \text{duck} \\
\end{array}
\]

‘alcohol and meat’

‘chickens and ducks’

However, such expressions are ungrammatical in Lakkja.

Reduplication of classifiers or nouns will be further examined in §4.1.7.

3.2.2 Reduplication of verbs

Verbs can be reduplicated in Lakkja to indicate the short duration of time an action is performed, or denote an action is being done a little, at leisure, or in a relaxed manner.

Reduplicated verbs prototypically express the meaning of ‘doing something quickly’ or ‘doing something a little’. For example:

(83)  
\[
\begin{array}{llllllll}
  a. & ti^{231} & taŋ^{231} & pən^{51} & tsi^{51} & loːm^{51} & loːm^{51} \\
  \text{take} & \text{COMP} & \text{give} & 1SG & \text{look} & \text{look} \\
  & & & & & & 'Let me have a look.' \\
  b. & ma^{231} & nji^{11} & nji^{11} & loːm^{51} \\
  2SG & \text{think} & \text{think} & \text{look} & 'Think about it.' \\
  c. & tau^{51} & ?uk^{55} & pai^{51} & aːm^{11} & aːm^{11} \\
  1PL & \text{go out} & \text{COMP} & \text{walk} & \text{walk} & 'Let’s go out for a walk.' \\
  d. & tu^{214} & ?uk^{55} & ?uk^{55} & ou^{11} & ou^{11} & pok^{24} & lak^{55} & ke^{214} & ni^{55} \\
  3PL & \text{go out} & \text{go out} & \text{enter} & \text{enter} & \text{do} & \text{what} & \text{PART} \\
  & & & & & & 'What are they doing, going in and out (like that),'#
3.2.3 Reduplication of adjectives

Adjectives may be reduplicated to enhance descriptive effects or the degree of intensity of the quality or state depicted by the adjectives in question. Adjectives before reduplication can be either monosyllabic or disyllabic. Typically speaking, monosyllabic adjectives may be reduplicated into disyllabic words, while disyllabic adjectives into polysyllabic ones. For example:

(84)  
- a. $jeu^{231}$ → $jeu^{11}$ $jeu^{231}$ ‘very slow’
- b. $pa^{231}$ → $pa^{11}$ $pa^{231}$ ‘very far’
- c. $kip^{24}$ → $kip^{24}$ $kip^{24}$ ‘very urgent’
- d. $piŋ^{231}$ $put^{24}$ → $piŋ^{11}$ $piŋ^{231}$ $put^{24}$ $put^{24}$ ‘very neat and orderly’
- e. $fei^{55}$ $tsak^{24}$ → $fei^{55}$ $fei^{55}$ $tsak^{24}$ $tsak^{24}$ ‘totally square’
- f. $hu:rn^{51}$ $hi^{24}$ → $hu:rn^{51}$ $hu:rn^{51}$ $hi^{24}$ $hi^{24}$ ‘happy and joyful’
- g. $wən^{231}$ $tu:n^{214}$ → $wən^{11}$ $wən^{231}$ $tu:n^{214}$ $tu:n^{214}$ ‘dizzy and sleepy’

Phonological modification may occur in the process of reduplication adjectives. For example, the first $jeu^{231}$ changes into $jeu^{11}$ in (84a), and the first $pa^{231}$ into $pa^{11}$ in (84b).

Semantically, reduplicated adjectives carry a meaning in regard to a condition or a state which is referred to by the adjectives in question, such as people’s mood, shape of objects, etc.

(85)  
- a. $lak^{24}$ $kip^{24}$ $kip^{24}$ $ha^{55}$ $ten^{214}$ $la^{11}$ 3SG urgent urgent come back arrive PART  
  ‘He came back in a hurry.’
- b. $lak^{24}$ $pla^{51}$ $lai^{51}$, $lo:m^{51}$ $li^{231}$ $pa^{11}$ $pa^{231}$ $pai^{51}$ 3SG eye good look COMP far far go  
  ‘He has a good eyesight and can see very far.’
- c. $pie:η^{214}$ $kie^{24}$ $liek^{11}$ $mi^{231}$ $nin^{24}$ $kə:n^{51}$ $tseī^{55}$ $khja:η^{51}$ $khja:η^{51}$ $pai^{51}$ surface face house have one CLF tree tall tall go  
  ‘There is a very tall tree in front of the house.’
- d. $lak^{24}$ $tsa:i^{231}$ $khjei^{24}$ $piŋ^{11}$ $piŋ^{231}$ $put^{24}$ $put^{24}$ 3SG cut paper neat neat neat neat  
  ‘The paper he cut is very neat and orderly.’
I'm feeling dizzy and sleepy.

Unlike some other Tai-Kadai languages, Lakkja reduplicated adjectives do not require a structural particle when occurring in clauses or sentences as attributives, adverbials, complements or predicates. They function more like simple adjectives.

However, there are some exceptions, especially compounds formed with a pair of antonyms. Such compound words seem to accord with the above pattern but essentially belong to other word classes rather than adjectives. For example:

(86)  

a. poŋ²⁴ ʦei⁵⁵ ɯ⁵¹  ai²³¹  kjai¹¹  ko:n²⁴  mi²³¹

CLF  tree  this  long  short  all  have

‘There is a pile of matches in different length.’

b. ta²³¹  liek¹¹  lou¹¹  jei¹¹  lok²⁴  lak²⁴  njũn²³¹

1PL  house  old  young  six  CLF  person

‘Including all ages, there are six people in my family.’

ai²³¹ kjai¹¹ (long - short) in (86a) can be interpreted as ‘long items and short items’ or simply ‘length’, which actually function as a noun rather than an adjective. Its corresponding reduplicated form, ai¹¹ ai²³¹ kjai¹¹ kjai¹¹, may function like an adjective but mostly occur as a noun meaning ‘long items and short items’. Likewise, lou¹¹ jei¹¹ (old - young) in (86b) and its reduplicated form lou¹¹ lou¹¹ jei¹¹ jei¹¹ are generally used as a noun meaning ‘people, young and old’, rather than an adjective. These involve category change, that is, adjectives become nouns through reduplication.

3.3 Four-syllable elaborate expressions

Elaborate expressions are recognized as an areal tendency in Southeast Asia (Matisoff 1973; Solnit 1995). They are reduplicative or quasi-reduplicative, compound-like structures. They have all the features of compound words but carry more intensive meanings or more aesthetic effect than their simpler counterparts.

In Lakkja, four-syllable elaborate expressions mainly include four patterns: ABAC, AABB, A pai⁵¹ A ɯ⁵¹ / nj²⁴ A nj²⁴ B. They can also be analysed as a special kind of reduplication as they may include syntactic doubling where a single word or syntactic element occurs twice in a lexicalised construction, as discussed below.
3.3.1 ABAC pattern

It is worth noting that in my data there are several Lakkja polysyllabic adjectives with a specific construction of ABAC (specifically, adjective - suffix$_1$ - adjective - suffix$_2$), which can be analysed as combining two adjectives each of which contains a descriptive suffix to increase the euphony of an existing shorter phrase. According to Mary Haas (1964), such a four-syllable phrase is recognized as a form of elaborate expressions, an important feature in Tai-Kadai morphology as well as a subtype of reduplication with phonological alternations and allomorphs.

Examples of the ABAC pattern are given below.

(87)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(s)</th>
<th>(s)</th>
<th>(s)</th>
<th>(s)</th>
<th>(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>ja:u$^{231}$</td>
<td>la$^{51}$</td>
<td>ja:u$^{231}$</td>
<td>li:u$^{51}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>ko::y$^{55}$</td>
<td>ta$^{51}$</td>
<td>ko::y$^{55}$</td>
<td>tu::y$^{11}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>pje::k$^{11}$</td>
<td>pa$^{51}$</td>
<td>pje::k$^{11}$</td>
<td>ph::m$^{51}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>lam$^{51}$</td>
<td>la$^{51}$</td>
<td>lam$^{51}$</td>
<td>ma::n$^{214}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.</td>
<td>mlo$^{231}$</td>
<td>mla$^{51}$</td>
<td>mlo$^{231}$</td>
<td>mla::m$^{214}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>kã:u$^{24}$</td>
<td>kã$^{51}$</td>
<td>kã:u$^{24}$</td>
<td>kã::i$^{24}$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be observed from (87) that such four-syllable reduplicated expressions are derived from the bi- and tri-syllabic adjectives discussed above in §3.1.2.5, the suffix of which become suffix$_2$ in the complex four-syllable reduplicated adjectives under discussion here. In some cases, a slight change in initial consonant can be noted, as (87a), of which the tri-syllabic counterpart is ja:u$^{231}$ ti::u$^{11}$ ti::u$^{231}$, but which now becomes ja:u$^{231}$ la$^{51}$ ja:u$^{231}$ li:u$^{51}$, with the initial consonant of the suffix ti::u$^{11}$ changed to li:u$^{51}$ to allow aliteration with the initial consonant of suffix la$^{51}$.

As for the ‘suffix$_1$’ slot, it is an obvious rule that they all share the same vowel /a/ and the Tone 51. On top of that, as illustrated in (87c – f), the consonants in the ‘suffix$_1$’ slot seem to align with the preceding adjectives, indicating a function of syllable complement. Prosodically, suffix$_1$ serves as a filler for the elaborate expression, which involves
alliteration, the copying of the initial consonant from the base root, plus an invariant rhyme /a/.

Furthermore, as the above examples have shown, it appears that these suffixes typically occur in the patterns: /-a/- ~ /-u-/, /-a-/ ~ /-e-, -o-/ ~ /-a/-, /-o-/ ~ /-a-/ ~ /-a-/. Some form of vowel harmony is also noted, as in (87f) where the vowel /a/ gets nasal quality from the preceding base root kãu²⁴.

Reduplication involving phonological alternations of this kind appears to be widespread in Southeast Asia, and in Tibeto-Burman area. From my data, this type of reduplication typically occurs with words describing colour and shape. The use of reduplication in the ABAC pattern allows the meanings of these words to become more intense and vivid than the tri-syllabic adjectives of the ABB type.

3.3.2 AABB pattern

As a form of identical reduplication, the AABB pattern is by and large formed with adjectives, verbs, or onomatopoeias to convey higher degree of intensity. The elements in A and B slot are semantically related, generally synonyms or antonyms. Due to the semantic-syntactic constraints on noun reduplication (§3.2.1), the AABB pattern occurs with nouns less commonly.

A. Formed with adjectives:

This type usually involves descriptive suffixes. The four-syllable forms may function as adjectives or adverbs.

(88) a. huə:n⁵¹  huə:n⁵¹  hi²⁴  hi²⁴  ‘happy and joyful’
    joyous  joyous  delighted  delighted
b. ho⁵¹  ho⁵¹  ha:y²⁴  ha:y²⁴  ‘empty and deserted’
   empty  empty  SUF  SUF

Note that AABB expressions formed with antonymous adjectives are usually nominalized through reduplication. They are used as nouns rather than adjectives or adverbs, as discussed in §3.2.3.

(89) a. ai²³¹  ai²³¹  kjaI¹¹  kjaI¹¹  ‘long items and short items’
    long  long  short  short
b. lou
  lou       j-ei       j-ei  ‘the young and the old’
  old       old       young   young

B. Formed with verbs:

AABB patterns formed with verbs still function as verbs. The elements in this pattern are by
and large synonyms or antonyms.

(90)  a. par51  pai51  pən214  pən214  ‘go back and forth’
    come     come     go       go
b. tshie55  tshie55  kja:k11  kja:k11  ‘tug back and forth’
    slit      slit      pull    pull
c. lik55  lik55  luk55  luk55  ‘dodge and hide’
    dodge    dodge    hide    hide

C. Formed with onomatopoeias:

This type also constitutes a small part of the AABB pattern.

(91)  a. tik55  tik55  ta:k24  ta:k24  (the sound of clock, etc.)
    tic       tic       tac     tac
b. tik55  tik55  tok55  tok55  (snapping sound)
    tic       tic       toc     toc

D. Formed with nouns:

Elements in this type are limited to numerals and nouns with classifier functions.

(92)  a. fei55  fei55  tsa:k24  tsa:k24  ‘in the shape of a real square’
    four     four     corner   corner
b. the:n51  the:n51  wa:n214  wa:n214  ‘tens of thousands of’
    thousand thousand ten thousand ten thousand

3.3.3 A pai51 A pən214

Four-syllable expressions of this kind are used to describe a repeating action. They typically
take an action verb in the A slot, with the verbs par51 ‘go’ and pai51 ‘return’ grammaticalized
to function as verb complement to designate an act that is being repeated.

(93)  a. pok24  pai51  pok24  pən214  ‘do sth. over and over’
    do       go       do       return
b. tsun\textsuperscript{11} pai\textsuperscript{51} tsun\textsuperscript{11} pon\textsuperscript{214} ‘vacillate and stagger’
turn go turn return
c. lie:\textsuperscript{24} pai\textsuperscript{51} lie:\textsuperscript{24} pon\textsuperscript{214} ‘walk lamely back and forth’
walk lamely go walk lamely return

3.3.4 \textit{pa:n}\textsuperscript{55} A \textit{pa:n}\textsuperscript{55} B / \textit{ŋ}\textsuperscript{24} A \textit{ŋ}\textsuperscript{24} B

Two more expressions are found in Lakkja to form one type with the same function, namely, \textit{pa:n}\textsuperscript{55} A \textit{pa:n}\textsuperscript{55} B and \textit{ŋ}\textsuperscript{24} A \textit{ŋ}\textsuperscript{24} B. This type generally involves two antonymous adjectives in the A and B slot, describing the intermediate state depicted by the adjectives in question.

\begin{itemize}
  \item (94) a. \textit{pa:n}\textsuperscript{55} ple\textsuperscript{51} \textit{pa:n}\textsuperscript{55} jie\textsuperscript{214} ‘half dead’
    half dead half alive
  
  b. \textit{pa:n}\textsuperscript{55} wai\textsuperscript{214} \textit{pa:n}\textsuperscript{55} ka:u\textsuperscript{55} ‘half new, not quite old’
    half new half used, old, worn
\end{itemize}

\begin{itemize}
  \item (95) a. \textit{ŋ}\textsuperscript{24} bok\textsuperscript{55} \textit{ŋ}\textsuperscript{24} kja\textsuperscript{24} ‘neither too big nor too small’
    NEG big NEG small
  
  b. \textit{ŋ}\textsuperscript{24} lai\textsuperscript{51} \textit{ŋ}\textsuperscript{24} wa:i\textsuperscript{214} ‘neither good nor bad’
    NEG good NEG bad
\end{itemize}

3.4 Compounding

A compound is a ‘word’ made up of two or more free morphemes. The meaning of compounds is not necessarily accordant with the accumulative meaning of the components of the structure.

Compounds can be classified into Subordinate Compounds and Coordinate Compounds according to the syntactic criteria or the semantic relationships between the constituents.

3.4.1 Morphosyntax of compounding

Since word compounds are morpheme combinations formed according to syntactic rules, the relationships between the constituents of the compounds should conform to specific grammatical properties between the morphemes. The syntactic relationships between free morphemes include ‘subject-predicate’, ‘predicate-object’, ‘head-modifier’, ‘predicate-complement’ and ‘coordinate’, among others.

However, syntax and morphology are not always the mirror of one another because morphology acts sometimes like frozen syntax and is not completely productive in its rules.
This is typical of exocentric compounds, the components of which are often semantically and grammatically opaque. The components of a compound are often semantically and grammatically opaque (Packard 2000:217). The following tables are some examples of endocentric compounds (96) and exocentric compounds (97).

(96) a. kou⁴⁴ khū⁵¹ (rice - pig) ‘pig feed’
b. tsei⁵⁵ kja²⁴ (tree - mountain) ‘forest’

(97) a. ou¹¹ laŋ²³ (inside - mountain) ‘deceased parent(s)’
d. pla⁵¹ khja:n²⁴ (eye - hot) ‘be jealous’

It is also an important feature that compounding may have a function of valence-changing. For example, pok²⁴ ‘do’ and kut⁵⁵ ‘beat’ are transitive verbs. When they combine, the compound pok²⁴ kut⁵⁵ ‘fight’ becomes intransitive.

(98) a. pok⁴⁴ kut⁵⁵ (do_vt. - beat_vt.) ‘fight (vi.)’
b. o:p¹¹ fu:n⁵⁵ (suit_vt. - calculate_vt.) ‘value for money (vi.)’

3.4.1.1 Subject-predicate compounds

In compounds of this type, the first element syntactically functions as the subject of the second element, with the second element as predicate. Many of the subject-predicate compounds are adjectives or adjectival verbs. These are characteristic of compounds with right-headed structure. For example:

(99) a. tei²⁴ loŋ⁵¹ (mouth - many) ‘long-tongued’
b. num¹¹ bok⁵⁵ (water - big) ‘flood’
c. njie²³ lou¹¹ (snake - big) ‘python’
d. pla⁵¹ khja:n²⁴ (eye - hot) ‘be jealous’
e. bən⁵¹ kja:ŋ⁵¹ (sky - light) ‘daybreak, dawn’

The meaning of compounds of this kind is often idiosyncratic. For example, pla⁵¹ khja:n²⁴ (eye - hot) does not mean ‘the eye is hot’ but ‘jealous’. As a right-headed adjective, it can be modified by adverbs and no other elements can be inserted in between the compound, as shown in Figure 3.3, where pla⁵¹ ‘eye’ and khja:n²⁴ ‘hot’ co-occur as a lexicalized word and function as a gestalt adjective which has a definite form class identity (Edmondson 2008: 592; Packard 2000:18, 80).
3.4.1.2 Predicate-object compounds

Compounds of this kind abound in Lakkja. Being left-headed, they make up the majority of compound words. The meaning of such compounds is often idiomatic rather than transparent. Most of these are verbs, although some can also function as nouns. For example, pok\(^{24}\) kon\(^{51}\) leː\(\eta\)\(^{231}\) (do - job - odd) means ‘to do odd jobs (v.), a jobber (n.)’. Typical examples of such compound words are shown below:

(100)  a. jak\(^{11}\) siː\(u\)\(^{51}\) (study - book) ‘go to school’
       b. leː\(\eta\)\(^{24}\) yen\(^{51}\) (strap - neck) ‘scarf’
       c. pok\(^{24}\) kon\(^{24}\) pa\(^{24}\) (do - husband and wife) ‘to marry’
       d. tseː\(n\)\(^{51}\) naː\(\eta\)\(^{11}\) (bind - clothes) ‘waistband’

Some words appear to have more syntactical features. For example, in (100a), although the meaning of the compound is quite idiomatic as in tsi\(^{51}\) pai\(^{51}\) jak\(^{11}\) siː\(u\)\(^{51}\) (1SG-go-study-book) ‘I am going to school’, the utterance of tsi\(^{51}\) pai\(^{51}\) lak\(^{24}\) liek\(^{11}\) jak\(^{11}\) siː\(u\)\(^{51}\) (1SG-go-3SG-home-study-book) may also be treated as a verb phrase and translated as ‘I am going to his home to read books’, where the second element of the combination siː\(u\)\(^{51}\) ‘book’ is the direct object in such a case. Apparently, there is a continuum between a word compound and a syntactic phrase.

3.4.1.3 Subordinative compounds

This type of compounds is also very productive. Various grammatical relations can be observed between the constituents. Some compounds are found to have the dependents on the right, whereas others on the left. The subordinative part often gives further explanation or
restriction to the head. The head of such compounds can be none, classifier, pronoun, demonstrative, verb, adjective, etc. The word class of such compounds is usually determined by the head. Examples are listed below.

**N+N: (head + modifier)**

(101) a. kjâi\(^{51}\) num\(^{11}\) (snow - water)   ‘ice’

b. ma:n\(^{214}\) mi:e\(^{11}\) (socks - hand)   ‘glove’

c. tie:n\(^{231}\) fa:n\(^{51}\) (sugar - stone)   ‘rock candy’

d. tsu\(^{231}\) tsei\(^{55}\) (sweet potato - tree)   ‘cassava’

**N+ADJ: (head + modifier)**

(102) a. jøm\(^{231}\) lou\(^{11}\) (wind - old)   ‘fierce wind’

b. puk\(^{55}\) ŋ̄:m\(^{55}\) (foot - concave)   ‘soles of the feet’

c. mie\(^{231}\) kjei\(^{24}\) (hand - left)   ‘left hand’

d. ta:u\(^{55}\) lou\(^{11}\) (cooking stove - old)   ‘Kitchen God’

e. lak\(^{24}\) kjei\(^{51}\) (person - male)   ‘man’

**N+V: (head + modifier)**

(103) a. tsu\(^{231}\) tef\(^{55}\) (potato - prickle)   ‘Chinese yam’

b. ka\(^{24}\) lar\(^{214}\) jøn\(^{214}\) (thing - use)   ‘furniture’

c. taw\(^{24}\) blet\(^{55}\) pon\(^{55}\) (star - fly)   ‘meteor’

d. tou\(^{214}\) u\(^{214}\) sa:i\(^{55}\) (tofu - bask)   ‘dried beancurd’

e. muŋ\(^{11}\) la:i\(^{51}\) (offspring - despise)   ‘illegitimate child’

**CL+DEM: (head + modifier)**

(104) a. lak\(^{24}\) ni\(^{231}\) (CL - this)   ‘this one’

b. blau\(^{231}\) ya:i\(^{24}\) (night - this)   ‘tonight’

c. wan\(^{231}\) yan\(^{231}\) (day - that)   ‘that day’

**V+ADJ: (head + modifier)**

(105) a. pok\(^{24}\) bok\(^{55}\) (do - big)   ‘get above oneself’

b. lo:m\(^{51}\) kjai\(^{24}\) (look - small)   ‘despise’

c. tsu:n\(^{24}\) pla:u\(^{231}\) (tell - fake)   ‘boast’
LOCALIZER+N: (head + modifier)

(106)  a. *ou*¹¹ lie:*k*¹¹ (inside - home) ‘at home, inside of house’
       b. *ou*¹¹ *kai*⁵¹ (inside - street) ‘in town’
       c. *gai*⁵¹ *to*⁵¹ (back - door) ‘doorway’
       d. *pie:*ŋ²¹⁴ *tsiŋ*⁵⁵ (surface - front) ‘forehead’
       e. *pi:*n⁵¹ *tsiē*⁵¹ (side - river) ‘riverside’

ADV+V: (modifier + head)

(107)  a. *lai*⁵¹ a:*m*¹¹ (well - walk) ‘good-bye (said to the guest)’
       b. *si:*u²⁴ puə:*i³¹ (less - accompany) ‘good-bye (said to the guest)’

3.4.1.4 Coordinate compounds

In a coordinate compound, two bound roots are combined to form a compound word. The word class of such compounds is often determined by the first element. For example, [V-V]v, [N-N]N, [V-Adj]v, etc. As shown in the following words, the coordinated elements are in the same semantic fields, some are even synonyms, as in (108a) (108b) (108e). Moreover, as shown in (109), such morphological processes may include change of word classes.

V+V:

(108)  a. *lo:*m⁵¹ *wei*⁵⁵ (look - see) ‘see’
       b. *ta:*p²⁴ *ŋjen*²¹⁴ (answer - respond) ‘answer’
       c. *se:*n⁵¹ *kji*⁵¹ (select - lift) ‘elect’
       d. *fən⁵¹ *phu:*i⁵⁵ (distribute - match) ‘allot’
       e. *kwei*⁵¹ *wa:*n²³¹ (return - return) ‘return’

ADJ+ADJ:

(109)  a. *sem*⁵¹ *thi:*n²⁴ (deep - shallow) ‘sense of propriety’
       b. *kat*⁵⁵ *le:*r²¹⁴ (lucky - favourable) ‘luck’

N+N:

(110)  a. *paŋ*¹¹ *jau*²¹⁴ (friend - friend) ‘friend’
       b. *kong*²⁴ *pa*²¹⁴ (husband- wife) ‘couple’
       c. *kjeu*⁵¹ *kje*²⁴ (head - face) ‘towel’
       d. *kjeu*⁵¹ *kjie:*ŋ⁵¹ (head - end) ‘clue’
       e. *puk*⁵⁵ *mie*²³¹ (foot - hand) ‘workmanship’
3.4.2 Semantic analysis

Word compounds can also be analysed by the internal semantic relationships between their constituents. The semantic functions of elements in the compound can be divided into six types: PROPERTY, SIMILARITY, MANIPULATIVE, MATERIAL, CAUSATIVE, and TEMPORAL OR LOCATIVE, as illustrated below.

**PROPERTY:**
The second element describes the properties, such as colour, size, shape, of the first element.

(111)  
a. tou\textsuperscript{24} lam\textsuperscript{51} (bean - black) & ‘black soybean’  
b. mot\textsuperscript{24} pie:k\textsuperscript{11} (ant - white) & ‘termite’  
c. me\textsuperscript{11} phlei\textsuperscript{51} lak\textsuperscript{24} (knife - sharp - SUF: object: small) & ‘dagger’

**MANIPULATIVE:**
These words cover the meanings of utility, instrument, habitat, or container.

Utility:

(112)  
a. kou\textsuperscript{24} khũ\textsuperscript{51} (rice - pig) & ‘pig feed’  
b. me\textsuperscript{11} kju\textsuperscript{51} (knife - head) & ‘razor’  
c. lo:ŋ\textsuperscript{55} pu:i\textsuperscript{51} (tube - fire) & ‘blow tube’

Habit Container: The first element is a kind of container of the second part.

(113)  
a. pou\textsuperscript{51} khja:u\textsuperscript{24} (pot - liquor) & ‘flagon’  
b. ta:i\textsuperscript{214} si:u\textsuperscript{51} (bag - book) & ‘school bag’

**MATERIAL:**
Source or material: the second element indicates the source of the first element, or the material from which the first element is made from.

(114)  
a. jeu\textsuperscript{231} wok\textsuperscript{24} (oil - vegetable) & ‘rape oil’  
b. mom\textsuperscript{23} khũ\textsuperscript{51} (meat - pig) & ‘pork’  
c. ku:u:n\textsuperscript{55} khja:u:k\textsuperscript{24} (pan - iron) & ‘iron pan’  
d. hjua\textsuperscript{51} ku:i\textsuperscript{55} (shoe - cloth) & ‘cloth shoes’

Product: The first element represents something produced from the second element.

(115)  
a. num\textsuperscript{11} pla\textsuperscript{3} (water - eye) & ‘tears’  
b. tie:y\textsuperscript{23} mler\textsuperscript{24} (sugar - bee) & ‘honey’
SIMILARITY:
This kind of compounds represents metaphoric meanings rather than their literal meanings.

(116) a. ti:u²³ⁱ tsa:n⁵¹ lie:t¹¹ (thread - road - blood) ‘blood vessel’
b. wan²³¹ khuo⁵¹ (tooth - dog) ‘canine teeth’

CAUSATIVE:
Compounds of this type cover the meanings including the result of an action. The first element is usually a verb morpheme and the second element can be a verb, adjective, directional, etc. usually expressing the results of the action expressed by the first element.

(117) a. lie:m¹¹ lat⁵¹ (look - good) ‘take good care of’
b. tshwei⁵¹ kja:u²⁴ (blow - break) ‘blow off’
c. tsen⁵¹ tsie:n⁵⁵ (eat - full) ‘eat to one’s fill’

TEMPORAL or LOCATIVE:

TEMPORAL: The second element indicates the time or the frequency.
(118) a. pok²⁴ ti:n⁵⁵ (do - once) ‘suddenly’
b. kou²⁴ wan²³¹ (rice - day) ‘lunch’

LOCATIVE: The second element indicates the location of the first element.
(119) a. jen²³¹ ja²¹⁴ (ridge - field) ‘ridge between fields’
b. kja⁵¹ tser⁵⁵ (worm - tree) ‘insect that eats wood’
c. tsei⁵¹ kja²⁴ (tree - mountain) ‘forest’
d. lie:k¹¹ kjo:k²⁴ (home - side) ‘neighbour’

Also, in some compounds, the second element denotes the location, while the first element usually constitutes a part of the second. That is, there is a part-whole relationship between the two elements.

(120) a. tsei⁵¹ wa⁵¹ (tree - leaf) ‘tree leaves’
b. lai³¹ ma:y¹¹ (arm - clothes) ‘sleeve’
c. kje:n⁵¹ ma¹¹ (fur - horse) ‘mane’
d. pe:n²⁴ lie:n²³¹ (board - home) ‘rafter’
3.5 Segmental morphologic alternation

It is worth noting that in Lakkja, stem-internal initials, vowels or tones may alternate to form etymologically related word families. Such a device is referred to as segmental morphologic alternation (phonological alternation) which has been mentioned in §2.6. Though such a morphological process is not very common in Lakkja, it still forms a point of crucial importance which is perhaps an important trait of Proto Tai-Kadai morphology.

A typical set of examples is definite demonstrative pronouns in Lakkja, as follows.

(121) Deictic Locative

a. ni\(^{231}\) ‘this’ l\(^{231}\) ‘here’
b. yan\(^{231}\) ‘that’ (proximal) la:n\(^{231}\) ‘there’ (proximal)
c. nu\(^{231}\) ‘that’ (distal) lu\(^{231}\) ‘there’ (distal)

This system of demonstrative pronouns in Lakkja is reminiscent of a parallel tonally regulated paradigmatic set of deictic forms in Thai: nî ‘here’ ~ ni ‘this’; nân ‘there’ ~ nán ‘that’, nó:n ‘over there’ ~ nó:n ‘that (remote)’.

The pair of copula verbs tuk\(^{24}\) and tok\(^{55}\) also constitutes a good example. They are formed by copying the initial and the final but alternating the vowel and the tone. This process leads to different functions of them, with the former used in negative sentences and interrogatives and the latter in positive sentence.

(122) tuk\(^{24}\) ‘be (negative sentence)’ tok\(^{55}\) ‘be (positive sentence)’

More examples are found in Lakkja:

(123) a. pa\(^{214}\) ‘grandmother’ pa\(^{24}\) ‘mother’
b. blau\(^{231}\) ‘night’ blau\(^{51}\) ‘future’
c. ni\(^{231}\) ‘this’ n\(^{51}\) ‘in this way’
d. yan\(^{231}\) ‘that’ yan\(^{51}\) ‘in that way’
e. ne\(^{31}\) ‘who’ ka\(^{214}\) ‘what’
f. ne\(^{31}\) ‘who’ na\(^{214}\) ‘which’
g. hjie:n\(^{51}\) ‘top, above’ khj\(^{24}\) ‘back, behind’
h. wak\(^{24}\) ‘wash (clothes)’ huk\(^{24}\) ‘wash (dishes, face)’
i. te:m\(^{214}\) ‘wear (shoes)’ te:n\(^{24}\) ‘wear (clothes)’
j. the:t\(^{24}\) ‘cut’ fie:k\(^{24}\) ‘cut (chopsticks)’
k. kjak\textsuperscript{55} ‘chop (meat)’ 
\textit{kaːt}\textsuperscript{24} ‘cut (meat, grass)’

l. kjap\textsuperscript{55} ‘sew’ 
\textit{naːp}\textsuperscript{24} ‘mend’

m. theː\textsuperscript{u} ‘engrave’ 
\textit{pleu}\textsuperscript{31} ‘mould’

n. hā\textsuperscript{55} ‘come back’ 
\textit{phā}\textsuperscript{55} ‘go back’

o. niŋ\textsuperscript{55} ‘sit’ 
\textit{ŋ̥jɛːŋ}\textsuperscript{51} ‘lean on’

n. piː\textsuperscript{n} ‘side, edge’ 
\textit{pieːŋ}\textsuperscript{214} ‘surface, side’

3.6 Summary of chapter

As illustrated in the analysis of this chapter, Lakkja forms new words mainly through affixation, reduplication, segmental morphologic alternation and compounding. The morphological processes by and large adopt derivational strategies rather than morphological forms such as grammatical agreement and inflection. Some devices such as affixes, deictic verbs, particles and prepositions are found to be used as markers of grammatical forms and other grammatical processes like gender, number, tense and case.

Lakkja words include simple words and compound words. Though the majority of Lakkja words can be regarded as one syllable/morpheme per word, there exist a number of disyllabic morphemes in Lakkja that cannot be further analysed. Compounds of the genetic pattern are right branching and can be either exocentric or endocentric. Many compound words display complex syntactic relations and semantic features.

Like many other Tai-Kadai and Sino-Tibetan languages, the continuum between morphology and syntax in Lakkja word-formation obscure the distinction between nouns and classifiers, verbs and prepositions, adjectives and adverbs, full words and grammatical words, among others. Therefore, a broader view of morphology is adopted in this study to recognize more native patterns such as affixes, most of which show features of both a bound morpheme and a free root and do not strictly adhere to the definition of real affixes.

Lakkja possess a rich system of noun classifiers, some of which play a significant role in ethno-biological taxonomy imbedded in morphological system. When used as affixes, classifiers play an important role in expanding the referential function of the lexicon, reflecting the speakers’ conceptualisation of the natural environment around them. Productive prefixation can also be attributed to the overwhelming head-initial characteristics of Lakkja word-formation. Besides, a small number of prefixes syntactically function as nominalizers, showing SVO typology; some as verbalisers or adjectivers, exhibiting valence-decreasing features.
Another highly productive word-formation device is reduplication, which displays a wide range of semantic features. Some types of reduplication may involve phonological modification. Furthermore, as an areal tendency, four-syllable elaborate expressions are also found in Lakkja and can be recognized as a special kind of reduplication.

A notable morphological process in Lakkja is phonological alternations, where stem-internal initial, vowel, or tone alternate to form word groups that express related semantics. This is a distinctive feature attested not only in Tai-Kadai but also across Sino-Tibetan.

Contact-induced word order changes have been sighted in Lakkja and have largely contributed to the enrichment of the morphology. For example, in Kam-Tai, modifiers generally follow the modified (right-branching), while Lakkja does not always follow this principle. In many cases, it behaves like Chinese in having the modifiers coming before the modified (left-branching). Such morphological processes and some affixable morphemes illustrate the general tendency.
Chapter 4
The Noun Phrase

Lakkja words can be divided into two main types: lexical words and grammatical words or function words. Lexical words in Lakkja include nouns, pronouns, numerals, classifiers, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. Grammatical words include auxiliaries, conjunctions, prepositions, exclamatives and onomatopoeias. This chapter focuses on the noun phrase in Lakkja. Verbs, adjectives, and function words will be discussed in Chapter 5 to Chapter 8.

Lakkja noun phrase exhibits the feature of ethnosemantics, where there are multiple words for a concept which would otherwise be expressed by a single word. A typical pair of examples is $la:ŋ^{214}$ and $kja^{24}$, which both convey the meaning ‘mountain’. For instance, there is a phrase $ti:ŋ^{51} la:ŋ^{214} kja^{24} tsei^{35}$ (full - mountain - mountain - tree) ‘trees all over the mountain’ in Lakkja. But there is a semantic difference between them: the latter specifically denotes those mountains with trees or forests, while the former can denote mountains with only rocks, cliffs, etc. Therefore, Lakkja ($lak^{24} kja^{24}$), the subject of this study, denotes the language as well as Lakkja people living in the mountains with forests and, probably, abundant natural resources such as wild animals, fruits, herbs, and lands. As a matter of fact, Lakkja people indeed were living on hunting in forests in old times.

Considering the fact that Lakkja noun phrases are formed with head nouns and modifiers such as classifiers, adjectives, nouns, verbs, the following discussion will start with nouns functioning as head of the noun phrases and then move on to the construction of noun phrases.

4.1 Nouns

Lakkja nouns, which can be modified by numerals, classifiers, adjectives and nouns, may be classified into general nouns, proper nouns, and time words. Some directional words are also nouns.

4.1.1 General nouns

General nouns denote things or concepts in general, such as natural phenomena, geography, animals, plants, body parts, address terms, buildings and transports, clothing, food, customs, among others.
A. Natural phenomena, geography:

(1)  
  a. tau^24 wan^231  ‘sun’
  b. ton^11 pla^24  ‘thunder’
  c. kja^24  ‘mountain’
  d. nai^231  ‘soil’
  e. ja^214 num^11  ‘paddy field’

B. Animals and plants:

(2)  
  a. fan^51  ‘bamboo’
  b. khũ^51  ‘pig’
  c. khuə̃^51  ‘dog’
  d. lak^24 plaːi^55  ‘waxberry’
  e. a^214 ?eːk^11  ‘reed’

C. Crops:

(3)  
  a. kou^24  ‘rice’
  b. nam^55 i^51  ‘cucumber’
  c. tou^214 laːn^51  ‘pea’
  d. tiːu^51  ‘pepper’
  e. tsu^231 teŋ^55  ‘Chinese yam’

D. Body-part terms:

(4)  
  a. nam^55 sen^51  ‘body’
  b. pei^231  ‘skin’
  c. mie^231  ‘hand’
  d. jok^24  ‘lung’
  e. kjəːm^231  ‘hair’

E. Address terms, people:

(5)  
  a. pa^24  ‘mother’
  b. nuŋ^11 kjəːu^24  ‘daughter’
  c. lak^24 kjei^51  ‘husband’
  d. lak^24 plaː^214  ‘Shi Mater (Shi: a branch of Taoism)’
  e. lak^24 tap^24 khjãk^55  ‘iron smith’
F. Buildings and transport:

(6) a. lie:k\textsuperscript{11} ‘house’
b. hu\textsuperscript{51} ‘street’
c. ts\textit{h}ie\textsuperscript{51} ‘car’
d. kju\textit{u}:\textit{y}\textsuperscript{231} ‘building’
e. ts\textit{u}\textsuperscript{214} ‘bridge’

G. Clothing:

(7) a. khu\textit{a}\textsuperscript{24} ‘corset’
b. ti:\textit{u}\textsuperscript{231} ‘strap (to carry child on one’s back)’
c. na:\textit{\textit{y}}\textsuperscript{11} ‘clothes’
d. ku:\textit{i}\textsuperscript{55} ‘cloth’
e. kj\textit{e}\textit{w}\textsuperscript{24} kj\textit{\textit{a}}\textit{n}\textsuperscript{11} ‘kerchief’

H. Tools and utensil for daily use:

(8) a. me\textsuperscript{11} ‘knife’
b. pun\textsuperscript{231} kju\textit{u}:\textit{i}\textsuperscript{24} ‘bird basin (to catch birds)’
c. \textit{\textit{y}}w\textit{u}:\textit{n}\textsuperscript{24} ‘bowl’
d. ts\textit{h}\textit{o}\textit{n}\textsuperscript{55} ‘gun’
e. lai\textsuperscript{231} ‘plough’

I. Culture and customs:

(9) a. hjie:\textit{\textit{y}}\textsuperscript{24} lei\textsuperscript{11} ‘Xiang Li songs (local folk songs)’
b. wan\textsuperscript{231} ha:i\textsuperscript{51} ja:u\textsuperscript{11} ‘Mountain-factory-opening Day’
c. pla\textsuperscript{231} kju\textit{\textit{u}}:\textit{y}\textsuperscript{231} ‘climb buildings (a local dating custom)’
d. hur\textsuperscript{231} ‘symbol, sign’
e. fa:m\textsuperscript{51} kji\textsuperscript{234} ‘Three Chess’

J. Food:

(10) a. ts\textsuperscript{231} ‘tea’
b. lo:m\textsuperscript{214} kai\textsuperscript{55} ‘egg’
c. nam\textsuperscript{55} tei\textsuperscript{231} ‘glutinous rice cake’
d. mom\textsuperscript{214} ts\textsuperscript{24} ‘meat preserved in rice, salt and wine’
e. khja:u\textsuperscript{24} ‘liquor, wine’
4.1.2 Proper nouns

These include personal names, names for specific ethnic groups and place name.

A. Personal names: Personal names in Lakkja are mostly portmanteau words with local Chinese pronunciation.

(11) a. leu²³¹ ta:n²¹⁴ ni:n²³¹ ‘Liú Dàonián 刘道年’
    b. mau²³¹ tsə:k¹¹ toŋ⁵¹ ‘Máo Zédōng 毛泽东’
    c. ma⁵¹ xo²¹¹ sə²⁴ ‘Marx’

B. Group names:

(12) a. lak²⁴ kja²⁴ ‘Lakkja’
    b. lak²⁴ tsou¹¹ ‘Han Chinese ’
    c. ji:u²³¹ tsək²⁴ ‘Yao nationality’

C. Place names:

(13) a. lak²⁴ fu⁵ ‘Jinxiu (where Lakkja inhabits)’
    b. tsəu²³¹ tsə:ŋ⁵¹ ha:ŋ²¹⁴ ‘a place name in Lakkja folk stories, called Zhuzai Xiang in Chinese (lit. piglet-lane )’
    c. li¹¹ pu²⁴ ‘a place name in Guangxi, known as Lipu’

4.1.3 Time words

There are series of terms for time words in Lakkja. For example:

(14) a. bən²¹ wan²³¹ ‘daytime’
    b. bən⁵¹ blau²³¹ ‘night’
    c. wan²³¹ wan²³¹ ‘everyday’
    d. əm⁴⁵⁴ əm²⁴ ‘every midnight’
    e. blau²³¹ blau²³¹ ‘every night’
    f. ka¹¹ ni²³¹ ‘now’
    g. ɤjət²⁴ ‘later, afterwards’
    h. blau⁵¹ ‘future’
    i. in²⁴ ti:n⁵⁵ ‘a while’
    j. pei⁵¹ ɤːi²⁴ ‘this year’

Lakkja has specific expressions for ‘today’, ‘tomorrow’, ‘yesterday’, etc.
Lakkja also has specific terms for specific periods of the day:

(15) a. \( \text{wan}^{231} \text{ŋju}^{231} \text{ŋju}^{231} \) ‘three days ago’
    b. \( \text{wan}^{231} \text{ŋju}^{231} \) ‘the day before yesterday’
    c. \( \text{wan}^{231} \text{ŋjam}^{11} \) ‘yesterday’
    d. \( \text{wan}^{231} \text{ŋ\ae}^{24} \) ‘today’
    e. \( \text{wan}^{231} \text{ŋje}^{55} \) ‘tomorrow’
    f. \( \text{wan}^{231} \text{blau}^{51} \) ‘the day after tomorrow’
    g. \( \text{wan}^{231} \text{blau}^{51} \text{nu}^{231} \) ‘three days from today’
    h. \( \text{wan}^{231} \text{blau}^{51} \text{nu}^{231} \text{nu}^{231} \) ‘four days from today’

Lakkja also has specific terms for specific periods of the day:

(16) a. \( \text{bən}^{51} \text{i:n}^{24} \) ‘daybreak’
    b. \( \text{bən}^{51} \text{ŋjau}^{51} \text{ŋjau}^{51} \) ‘early morning’
    c. \( \text{pa:n}^{55} \text{wan}^{231} \text{ba:ŋ}^{51} \) ‘morning’
    d. \( \text{tsep}^{24} \text{wan}^{231} \) ‘noon’
    e. \( \text{pa:n}^{55} \text{wan}^{231} \text{la}^{24} \) ‘afternoon’
    f. \( \text{bən}^{51} \text{wəŋ}^{231} \) ‘dusk’
    g. \( \text{bən}^{51} \text{blau}^{231} \) ‘night’
    h. \( \text{pa:n}^{55} \text{nam}^{24} \) ‘midnight’

4.1.4 Location/direction words

Location/direction words in Lakkja are organized in different orientations, as shown below:

(17) a. \( \text{hjie:n}^{51} \) ‘top, above’
    b. \( \text{hən}^{51} \) ‘below, underneath’
    c. \( \text{kje}\text{u}^{51} \text{kje}^{24} \) ‘front, ahead’
    d. \( \text{khjən}^{24} \) ‘back, behind’

(18) a. \( \text{kjēj}^{24} \) ‘left’
    b. \( \text{wa}^{231} \) ‘right’
    a. \( \text{ou}^{11} \) ‘inside’
    b. \( \text{uk}^{55} \) ‘outside’
The concepts for ‘east’, ‘west’, ‘south’, and ‘north’ are all expressed by Chinese loan words. There are no native words in Lakkja for them. Concepts in Example (17) and (18) are more frequently used in daily usage than Example (19).

As mentioned in §3.1.1.8, location and direction words listed above may combine with prefixes such as pie:ŋ214 ‘surface’, pi:n51 ‘side’, kjeu51 ‘head’, and tsak55 ‘corner’ to express spatial concepts. For example:

(20) a. pie:ŋ214 tsin55 ‘place in front’
    b. pi:n51 toŋ55 ‘place in the east’
    c. tsak55 ou11 ‘inside’
    d. tsak55 hän51 ‘underneath’

They may form noun phrases with other nouns as well. The following examples illustrate.

(21) a. ou11 lie:k11 ‘in house’
    b. ou11 tsa:ŋ231 ‘middle, centre’
    c. hjie:n51 tsa:ŋ51 ‘on the road’
    d. hän51 ti214 ‘underground’

§4.1.8 offers further discussions of noun phrases.

### 4.1.5 Noun affixes

As discussed in §3.1.1 and §3.1.2, prefixation and suffixation characterize Lakkja morphology. In case of repetition, noun affixes will be briefly mentioned in this section.

#### 4.1.5.1 Noun prefixes

A significant number of Lakkja words are formed through prefixation, which can be grammatically regarded as nominalisation. Words taking the same element with different prefixes could have different meanings. The examples in §3.1.1 could be reproduced below for easy reference.
Lakkja has specific noun prefixes for human beings, animals, plants, materials, and abstract concepts. Thus, Lakkja prefixes also function in taxonomy, as discussed in §3.1.1.

Besides, some prefixes can also be analysed as the head of a word or a phrase, implying a continuum between a prefix and a free morpheme.

Detailed discussions of noun prefixes are presented in §3.1.1.

4.1.5.2 Noun suffixes

Suffixation in Lakkja is also a very important morphological process for describing properties, actions and other complex ideas expressed by the roots to which they are bound. Similar to noun prefixes, a number of suffixes exhibit the features half way between onomatopoeia and suffixation.

There are less noun suffixes than prefixes in Lakkja. §3.1.2 offers a further discussion.

4.1.6 Numbers

Though Lakkja morphology lacks inflection, plural nouns can be formed with a plural noun prefix \(kjoŋ^{55}\). It can be used for both human and non-human nouns. The following examples illustrate:

(23) a. \(kjoŋ^{55} \ nuŋ^{11} kjä:u^{24} \ ?at^{55} \ pi:n^{51} \ ba:n^{24} \ tshiêŋ^{55} \ ko^{51}\)

   PL      girl  PREP  side  village  sing  song

   ‘Girls are singing songs by the side of the village.’

b. \(kjoŋ^{55} \ nuŋ^{11} \ ni^{231} \ i^{11} kha:iri^{24} \ pai^{51} \ jak^{214} \ si:u^{51} \ la^{55}\)

   PL    child   this  all go  learn  book  ASP

   ‘The children have all gone to school.’

Nouns are often used together with numerals and classifiers to form ‘numeral + classifier + noun’ constructions, which will be discussed in §4.1.8.1 and §4.5.

4.1.7 Reduplication of nouns

As discussed in §3.2.1, Lakkja has a very limited number of noun reduplication. Reduplicated nouns usually possess the meaning ‘every, each’. For example:
(24) a. \(tu^{231} \ tu^{231} \ ko:n^{24} \ pu:i^{231}\)
   CL: animal - CL: animal together fat
   ‘Every one (e.g. livestock) is all fat.’

b. \(lak^{24} \ lak^{24} \ ko:n^{24} \ taj^{231}\)
   CL: person - CL: person together come
   ‘Everyone came.’

c. \(wan^{231} \ wan^{231} \ lei^{11} \ fen^{51}\)
   day-day fall rain
   ‘It rains every day.’

In Lakkja, only nouns with classifier functions allow reduplication. Lakkja reduplicated nouns lack a function of enumeration.

4.1.8 The noun phrase

Lakkja nouns can form noun phrases with modifiers generally following the head noun. Numerals, classifiers, adjectives, nouns, verbs can function as the modifier. When verbs, adjectives, and phrases modify nouns, they usually follow the head noun. When nouns, pronouns, numeral - classifier phrases modify nouns, they usually precede the head noun.

It is also noteworthy that word order changing is happening in Lakkja noun phrase, with some modifiers shifting to the left side of the head noun.

4.1.8.1 Numeral - classifier construction

A classifier usually modifies a noun together with a numeral to form a ‘numeral + classifier’ construction, where the classifier is generally used to quantify or classify objects. Numerals and classifiers in such constructions usually precede the head noun. For example:

(25) a. \(fa:m^{51} \ tu^{231} \ mlo^{55}\)
    three CLF bird
    ‘three birds’

b. \(hou^{24} \ tu^{231} \ kai^{55} \ mu:i^{11}\)
    two CLF chicken female
    ‘two hens’

c. \(nim^{24} \ wu:n^{24} \ kou^{24}\)
    one CLF rice
    ‘a bowl of rice’

4.1.8.2 Noun (head) - adjective (modifier)

The head noun can also be modified by adjectives. The modifiers usually follow the head. For
example:

(26) a. kou²⁴ wāi²¹⁴ ‘freshly cooked rice’
    rice new
b. ṣjūn²³¹ lai⁵¹ ‘good person’
    person good
c. tse⁵⁵ lou¹ ‘big tree’
    tree old

4.1.8.3 Noun (head) - noun (modifier)
The modifier noun follows the head noun when functioning as a modifier.

(27) a. ja²¹⁴ num¹ ‘paddy field’
    field water
b. ḷje:ŋ⁵¹ kai⁵⁵ ‘chicken feather’
    fur chicken
c. num¹ pla⁵¹ ‘tear’
    water eye

In rare instances, the modifier noun precedes the head noun:

(28) a. num¹ kō:ŋ¹ ‘gutter way’
    water ditch
b. huɔ⁵¹ pa:u⁵¹ ‘flower bud’
    flower bud

4.1.8.4 Locative noun (head) - noun
In locative constructions, the locative word, usually precedes the noun, functioning as the head.

(29) a. hjie:n⁵¹ bœn⁵¹ ‘in the sky’
    up sky
b. ou¹ lie:k¹ ‘in the house, at home’
    in house

Some locative words may also function as modifying elements and precede the head noun.
(30) a. əŋ huəŋ əŋ laŋ pi se huəŋ
      east direction mountain compare west direction
      laŋ khjaŋ
      mountain high

‘The mountain in the east is higher than the mountain in the west.’

4.1.8.5 Noun - verb

When modifying a head noun, the verb or verb phrase generally follows the head.

(31) a. lak pok lie:k ‘mason’
      person do house
b. loŋ kjieŋ ‘suitcase’
case lift
c. kan kjit ‘fishing rod’
      rod fish (v.)

In some cases, however, the verb or verb phrase may also precede the head noun.

(32) a. tsong jaŋunj ‘farmer’
      plant field person
b. puŋ kjɛ̃ ‘stairway’
      lean against face

4.1.9 Syntactic function of noun phrase

Nouns can function as subjects, objects, attributives, adverbials, and predicates in a sentence.

Subject: Nouns and noun phrases can function as subjects. They occur at the beginning of a sentence.

(33) a. lak pe tok tap kjakŋunj ‘father be hit iron person
      ‘Father is a blacksmith.’

b. hou kon pa hou əŋ pi ‘two husband wife very affectionate
      ‘The couple is very affectionate.’
Object: When functioning as objects, nouns generally follow the verb in a sentence. Immediate modifiers typically follow the nouns, but there are exceptions in particular when other nouns or pronouns occur as modifier.

\[(34)\]
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \text{lak}^{24} \hspace{1em} \text{ni}^{231} \hspace{1em} \text{tok}^{55} \hspace{1em} \text{tsi}^{51} \hspace{1em} \text{at}^{55} \hspace{1em} \text{jen}^{11} \hspace{1em} \text{kj}:k^{u}^{24} \hspace{1em} \text{bok}^{55} \\
& \text{CLF} \hspace{1em} \text{this} \hspace{1em} \text{be} \hspace{1em} \text{1SG} \hspace{1em} \text{elder sister} \\
& \text{‘This person is my elder sister.’}
\end{align*}
\]
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{b. } & \text{j}^{\text{om}}^{231} \hspace{1em} \text{lou}^{11} \hspace{1em} \text{tshwei}^{51} \hspace{1em} \text{kja}^{:}^{u}^{24} \hspace{1em} \text{tsei}^{55} \hspace{1em} \text{tsh}^{h}^{55} \\
& \text{wind} \hspace{1em} \text{old} \hspace{1em} \text{blow} \hspace{1em} \text{break} \hspace{1em} \text{tree} \hspace{1em} \text{branch} \\
& \text{‘The gale blew off the branch.’}
\end{align*}
\]
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{c. } & \text{lak}^{24} \hspace{1em} \text{hw}^{\text{ã}}^{51} \hspace{1em} \text{ni}^{\text{ŋ}}^{55} \hspace{1em} \text{tie}^{214} \hspace{1em} \text{fei}^{51} \hspace{1em} \text{kji}^{51} \\
& \text{3SG} \hspace{1em} \text{NEG} \hspace{1em} \text{sit} \hspace{1em} \text{ASP: ESP} \hspace{1em} \text{plane} \\
& \text{‘He has never been on a plane.’}
\end{align*}
\]

Attributive: Nouns can also function as attributives, and generally follow the head noun. Sometimes, however, they can also precede the head noun with or without a linking particle \(\text{ka}^{11}\) between them, that is, a construction of ‘attributive noun (+ PART) + head noun’ is grammatically acceptable in Lakkja, which is very much similar to Chinese grammar. For example:

\[(35)\]
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \text{lak}^{24} \hspace{1em} \text{liek}^{11} \hspace{1em} \text{hou}^{24} \hspace{1em} \text{tu}^{231} \hspace{1em} \text{nu}^{j}^{11} \hspace{1em} \text{ke}^{:}^{i}^{51} \hspace{1em} \text{ko}^{:}^{n}^{24} \hspace{1em} \text{at}^{55} \hspace{1em} \text{ku}^{w}^{\gamma}^{24} \hspace{1em} \text{to}^{j}^{51} \\
& \text{3SG} \hspace{1em} \text{house} \hspace{1em} \text{two} \hspace{1em} \text{CLF} \hspace{1em} \text{son} \hspace{1em} \text{together} \hspace{1em} \text{in} \hspace{1em} \text{Guangdong} \\
& \text{‘Two sons of his family are both in Guangdong.’}
\end{align*}
\]
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{b. } & \text{ta}^{231} \hspace{1em} \text{la}^{:}^{u}^{11} \text{se}^{51} \hspace{1em} \text{tok}^{55} \hspace{1em} \text{pak}^{55} \hspace{1em} \text{tsi}^{51} \hspace{1em} \text{nj}^{j}^{31}^{\text{n}} \hspace{1em}^{231} \\
& \text{1PL} \hspace{1em} \text{teacher} \hspace{1em} \text{be} \hspace{1em} \text{Beijing} \hspace{1em} \text{person} \\
& \text{‘Our teacher is a native of Beijing.’}
\end{align*}
\]
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{c. } & \text{ou}^{11} \hspace{1em} \text{tsi}^{51} \hspace{1em} \text{phla}^{51} \hspace{1em} \text{lai}^{51} \hspace{1em} \text{tsen}^{51} \\
& \text{inside} \hspace{1em} \text{river} \hspace{1em} \text{fish} \hspace{1em} \text{good} \hspace{1em} \text{eat} \\
& \text{‘Fish in the river is delicious.’}
\end{align*}
\]
d. $\text{ou}^{11} \text{ tsie}^{51} \text{ ka}^{11} \text{ phla}^{51} \text{ lai}^{51} \text{ tsen}^{51}$

inside river PART fish good eat

‘Fish in the river is delicious.’

**Adverbial**: Words for time and direction can serve as adverbials.

(36) a. $\text{wan}^{231} \eta:a^{24} \text{ lak}^{24} \ ?at^{55} \text{ li}^{231} \text{ njaj}\text{u}^{214}$

today 3SG PREP here stay

‘He lives here today.’

b. $\text{hjie:n}^{51} \text{ lay}^{231} \text{ mi}^{231} \text{ njin}^{24} \text{ khwa:y}^{55} \text{ toy}^{11} \text{ lei}^{231}$

up mountain have one CLF: plant pear

‘There are pear trees in the mountain.’

### 4.2 Pronouns

A section should be devoted to pronouns, a word class that often occurs in the noun phrases. There are three types of pronouns in Lakkja: personal pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, and interrogative pronouns.

#### 4.2.1 Personal pronouns

Lakkja personal pronouns can be classified into singular and plural forms, as shown in Table 4.1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>person</th>
<th>singular</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1\text{st} person</td>
<td>$\text{tsi}^{51}$</td>
<td>$\text{ta}^{231}$ (excl.), $\text{tau}^{51}$ (incl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2\text{nd} person</td>
<td>$\text{ma}^{231}$</td>
<td>$\text{li:u}^{24}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3\text{rd} person</td>
<td>$\text{lak}^{24}$</td>
<td>$\text{tu}^{214}$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is noteworthy that there are two plural pronouns for 1\text{st} person and they have different semantic functions. $\text{tau}^{51}$ generally include the listeners in a conversation, while $\text{ta}^{231}$ doesn’t. For example:

(37) a. $\text{ta}^{231} \eta^{24} \text{ pai}^{51} \text{ ma}^{231} \text{ te}^{214} \text{ pai}^{51}$

1PL NEG go 2SG self go

‘We don’t go, you go by yourself.’

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b. \( ta^{31} \) \( wan^{31} \) \( pa:i^{24} \) \( pai^{51} \) \( kjam^{55} \) \( tse^{55} \), \( li:u^{24} \)

1PL today go cut tree 2PL

\( pai^{51} \) \( tshok^{55} \) \( fet^{51} \), \( wan^{31} \) \( jet^{24} \) \( tau^{51} \) \( tai^{214} \) \( tai^{31} \)
go dig canal tomorrow 1PL together

\( pai^{51} \) \( ti^{231} \) \( tshōŋ^{55} \)
go carry rifle

‘Today we go to fell trees, and you go to dig canals. Tomorrow let’s go hunting together.’

However, when personal nouns take numeral classifiers after them, only \( tau^{51} \) is used for 1PL.

As shown below, (38b) is ungrammatical in Lakkja.

(38) a. \( tau^{51} \) \( hou^{24} \) \( lak^{24} \) \( lai^{231} \) \( ja^{214} \),

1PL two CLF plough field

li:u^{24} \( hou^{24} \) \( lak^{24} \) \( pa^{231} \) \( ja^{214} \)

2PL two CLF harrow field

‘We two plough. You two harrow.’

b. *\( ta^{31} \) \( hou^{24} \) \( lak^{24} \) \( lai^{231} \) \( ja^{214} \),

1PL two CLF plough field

li:u^{24} \( hou^{24} \) \( lai^{231} \) \( ja^{214} \)

2PL two CLF harrow field

‘We two plough. You two harrow.’

More examples for ‘pronoun + numeral + classifier’ construction:

(39) a. \( li:u^{24} \) \( hou^{24} \) \( lak^{24} \) ‘the two of you’

2PL two CLF

b. \( tu^{214} \) \( fa:m^{51} \) \( lak^{24} \) ‘the three of them’

3PL three CLF

Personal pronouns can also form a ‘pronoun + numeral + noun’ construction to form an appositional expression.

(40) a. \( tau^{51} \) \( hou^{24} \) \( ?at^{45} \) \( jen^{11} \) \( kjā:u^{24} \) ‘we, the two sisters’

1PL two sister
Furthermore, as discussed in §3.1.4, to form an emphatic pronoun, suffix $tie^{231}$ is applied, which generally follows the pronouns. For example:

$$(41) \begin{array}{lll}
\text{a.} & tsi^{51} & tie^{231} \\
& 1\text{SG} & \text{self} \\
& \text{b.} & tu^{214} & tie^{231} \\
& 3\text{PL} & \text{self}
\end{array}$$

‘I myself’

‘they themselves’

This morpheme may also stand alone as a noun, an adjective or an adverb. Please refer to §3.1.4 for more discussions and examples.

### 4.2.2 Possessive marker

In Lakkja, there is a suffixal possessive maker $ka^{11}$, which is generally attached to singular or plural pronouns, and can often be omitted. Its function is very similar to the Chinese possessive marker $de$ 的.

$$(42) \begin{array}{llllll}
\text{a.} & ma^{231} & (ka^{11}) & \text{seu}^{51} \\
& 2\text{SG} & \text{PART} & \text{book} \\
& \text{b.} & tsi^{51} & (ka^{11}) & \text{hou}^{24} & \text{pi}:\text{ŋ}^{214} & \text{mie}^{23} \\
& 1\text{SG} & \text{PART} & \text{two} & \text{CLF} & \text{hand} \\
& \text{c.} & tsi^{51} & (ka^{11}) & \text{na}^{11} & \text{liek}^{11} & (ka^{11}) & \text{nau}^{11} \\
& 1\text{SG} & \text{PART} & \text{uncle} & \text{house} & \text{PART} & \text{cow} \\
& \text{d.} & lak^{24} & (ka^{11}) & \text{liek}^{11} \\
& 3\text{SG} & \text{PART} & \text{house}
\end{array}$$

‘your book’

‘my two hands’

‘the cow in my uncle’s house’

‘his house’

In general, pronouns and other modifiers precede the noun phrases they modify and possessive marker $ka^{11}$ occurs between them, as shown in (42). Generally speaking, in complex noun phrases such as (42c) which has multiple modifiers, only the last possessive maker occurs in the construction while the rest are usually omitted due to language habits.

Furthermore, unlike Chinese where possessive marker $de$ 的 is required in alienable possession like ‘my dog’ and ‘his book’ while it can be omitted in phrases such as ‘my father’, ‘my hand’ and ‘his home’, Lakkja makes no distinctions in these constructions. That is, it is acceptable to say $ma^{231} \text{seu}^{51}$ ‘your book’, $tsi^{51} \text{hou}^{24} \text{pi}:\text{ŋ}^{214} \text{mie}^{23}$ ‘my two hands’, etc., in Lakkja.
4.2.3 Syntactic function of personal pronouns

Personal pronouns can serve as subject, object and attributive in a clause.

Subject:
(43) a. lak\(^{24}\) hji:u\(^{24}\) tsa:η\(^{24}\) lak\(^{24}\) tsou\(^{11}\)
   3SG can say Chinese
   ‘He can speak Chinese.’

Object:
(44) a. tsi\(^{51}\) pai\(^{51}\) la\(^{11}\) lak\(^{24}\)
   1SG go look for 3SG
   ‘I go to see him/her.’

Attributive:
(45) a. lak\(^{24}\) ni\(^{231}\) tok\(^{55}\) tsi\(^{51}\) at\(^{55}\) jen\(^{11}\) kjã:u\(^{24}\) bok\(^{55}\)
   3SG this be 1SG sister big
   ‘This person is my elder sister.’
   b. lak\(^{24}\) ni\(^{231}\) tok\(^{55}\) tsi\(^{51}\) ka\(^{11}\) at\(^{55}\) jen\(^{11}\) kjã:u\(^{24}\) bok\(^{55}\)
   3SG this be 1SG PART sister big
   ‘This person is my elder sister.’

4.2.4 Demonstrative pronouns

Lakkja demonstrative pronouns can be distinguished into two types: definite and indefinite.

4.2.4.1 Definite demonstrative pronouns

There are singular and plural forms of definite demonstrative pronouns in Lakkja. Plural forms are formed with a prefix tei\(^{11}\) (variant: te\(^{11}\)). Besides, demonstratives distinguish between proximal and yonder forms. Table 4.2 illustrates.
Table 4.2 Lakkja definite demonstrative pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ni₂³¹</td>
<td>‘this’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yan₂³¹</td>
<td>‘that’ (proximal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nu₂³¹</td>
<td>‘that’ (yonder)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>li₂³¹</td>
<td>‘here’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la:n₂³¹</td>
<td>‘there’ (proximal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lu₂³¹</td>
<td>‘there’ (yonder)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gi⁵¹</td>
<td>‘this way, in this manner’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yan⁵¹</td>
<td>‘that way, in that way’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the pronouns ni₂³¹, yan₂³¹, and nu₂³¹ modify nouns, a construction of ‘head noun + demonstrative pronouns’ is observed. Furthermore, if a measure word and other adjectives are necessary, the measure word generally precedes the head noun while adjectives occur between the head noun and the demonstrative pronoun, that is, ‘measure word + head noun + adjective + demonstrative pronoun’.

(46) a. lak¹¹ nu₂³¹ ‘that person’
   person that
b. tu¹¹ khũ⁵¹ ni₂³¹ ‘this pig’
   CLF pig this
c. kjo:n²⁴ tse⁵⁵ lou¹¹ ni₂³¹ ‘this big wood’
   CLF tree old this

By contrast, the other demonstrative pronouns generally precede the modified elements.
Example:

(47) a. te¹¹ ni₂³¹ khũ⁵¹ ‘these pigs’
    these pig
b. te¹¹ yan₂³¹ tse⁵⁵ ‘those trees’
    those tree
c. li²³¹ nuj¹¹ ‘this child /these child’
    here child

However, as mentioned in §3.1.1.9, the difference between plurality and singularity can be ambiguous in some cases. Thus, the singular demonstratives may express a plurality meaning.
in light of context. (48) is reproduced here for easy illustration.

(48) \( \text{lak}^{24} \text{ fan}^{51} \text{ ni}^{231} \text{ kjum}^{24} \text{ lu}^{51} \text{ lu}^{51} \)
 peach this sour SUF

‘These peaches are sour. / This peach is sour.’

It is worth discussing a pair of definite demonstratives, \( \text{ni}^{51} \) ‘this way, in this manner’ and \( \text{ŋ}^{51} \) ‘that way, in that way’. They can be employed as demonstrative pronouns.

(49) \( \text{hji:u}^{24} \text{ ni}^{51} \text{ tsî}^{51} \text{ tsî}^{11} \text{ hwā:i}^{51} \text{ tay}^{231} \text{ ka}^{24} \text{ le}^{11} \)
 know this way 1SG PART NEG come PART PART

‘I would not come if I knew it was like this.’

They can also be used as an emphatic marker to modify adjectives (50a) (50b), or as modifiers of verbs to describe the manner in which an action is carried out or the degree or state of affair whereby the action is undertaken (50c) (50d).

(50) a. \( \text{ŋ}^{51} \text{ lo}^{51} \text{ njum}^{231} \text{ at}^{55} \text{ lu}^{231} \text{ pok}^{24} \text{ ko}^{51} \)
 so many people in there do work

‘So many people work there.’

b. \( \text{ma}^{231} \text{ san}^{55} \text{ ni}^{51} \text{ khu:}^{24} \text{ ni}^{24} \)
 2SG how so thin PART

‘How come you are so skinny?’

c. \( \text{ni}^{51} \text{ pok}^{24} \text{ hwo}^{51} \)
 like this do PART

‘Let’s do it in this way.’

d. \( \text{ma}^{231} \text{ au}^{51} \text{ yan}^{51} \text{ pok}^{24} \text{ tsi}^{51} \text{ y}^{24} \text{ ton}^{11} \text{ i}^{55} \)
 2SG if like that do 1SG NEG agree

‘I will not agree if you do it in that way.’

Moreover, these two items may combine with \( \text{njie:u}^{214} \) or \( \text{jie:}^{214} \) ‘kind, type’ to form compound demonstratives which have similar functions to \( \text{ni}^{51} \) and \( \text{yan}^{51} \) standing alone.

(51) a. \( \text{ni}^{51} \text{ njie:u}^{214} \text{ pok}^{24} \text{ tsi}^{51} \text{ e}^{55} \text{ y}^{24} \text{ lai}^{51} \)
 this way do 1SG feel NEG good

‘I don’t think it is good to do it in this way.’
4.2.4.2 Indefinite pronouns
Table 4.3 shows Lakkja indefinite pronouns. Lakkja does not have native terms for ‘someone’, ‘somewhere’, or ‘sometimes’. *mou*ⁱ¹ *ŋjūn*²³¹, the expression for ‘someone’ listed below, is borrowed from Chinese.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>lak</em>²⁴ <em>heu</em>⁵⁵</td>
<td>others, other people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>tu</em>²¹⁴</td>
<td>others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>toŋ</em>¹¹ <em>kjoŋ</em>⁵⁵</td>
<td>everyone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>tai</em>¹¹ <em>tai</em>²³¹</td>
<td>everyone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>mou</em>¹¹ <em>ŋjūn</em>²³¹</td>
<td>someone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.5 Syntactic function of demonstrative pronouns
Demonstrative pronouns can serve as subject, object, and attributive in a clause.

Subject:

(52)  a. *toŋ*¹¹ *kjoŋ*⁵⁵ *hou*²⁴ *kja:ŋ*²³¹ *hwā:i*⁵¹ *tsen*⁵¹ *la*¹¹
    everyone     very      long (time)  NEG  eat  PART
    ‘It has been a long time since we ate (some kind of food).’

b. *tai*¹¹ *tai*²³¹ *tu*⁵⁵ *tan*²³¹ *la*⁵⁵
    everyone    all      come      PART
    ‘Everyone is here.’
Object:

(53) a. \( ma^{231} \) \( ei^{24} \) \( lon^{24} \) \( tu^{214} \)
you don’t tell others
‘Don’t tell others.’
b. \( mi^{231} \) \( lak^{55} \) \( ke^{214} \), \( pon^{51} \) \( lak^{55} \) \( ke^{214} \)
have what give what
‘Give them whatever you have.’

Attributive:

(54) a. \( to\u0151^{11} \) \( kjo\u0151^{55} \) \( ka^{11} \) \( ka^{24} \) \( lai^{214} \) \( joi^{214} \) \( lie:m^{11} \) \( lai^{51} \)
everyone PART thing should look good
‘Please watch your belongings.’
b. \( lak^{24} \) \( he\u0151^{55} \) \( ka^{11} \) \( ka^{24} \) \( lai^{214} \) \( hw\u0102:i^{51} \) \( li^{24} \) \( ti^{231} \)
others PART thing NEG PART take
‘Don’t take others’ belongings.’

4.3 Interrogative pronouns

Also, interrogative pronouns may comprise a part of the noun phrases. There are four items that can be analysed as interrogative pronouns, as listed in Table 4.4:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.4 Lakkja interrogative pronouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( ne^{11} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( na^{214} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( sah^{55} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( lak^{24} ) ( ke^{214} )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

They typically form interrogative phrases with other elements to mark interrogative clauses. For example:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.5 Lakkja interrogative phrases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quantity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interrogative pronouns can serve as subject, object, attributive or adverbial in a sentence.

**Subject:**

(55) ne\textsuperscript{11} khjō:k\textsuperscript{24} to\textsuperscript{51} a\textsuperscript{55}?  
who knock door PART  
‘Who is knocking the door?’

**Object:**

(56) ma\textsuperscript{231} la\textsuperscript{11} ne\textsuperscript{11}?  
2SG look for who  
‘Whom are you looking for?’

**Attributive:**

(57) wok\textsuperscript{24} pje:k\textsuperscript{11} saŋ\textsuperscript{55} loŋ\textsuperscript{51} ti:n\textsuperscript{231} ŋin\textsuperscript{24} tsen\textsuperscript{51}?  
Chinese cabbage how much money one jin (1/2 kg)  
‘How much are a half kilo of Chinese cabbages?’

**Adverbial:**

(58) lak\textsuperscript{24} wei\textsuperscript{11} lak\textsuperscript{24} ke\textsuperscript{214} ŋ\textsuperscript{24} tai\textsuperscript{231}?  
3SG why NEG come  
‘Why doesn’t he come?’
4.4 Numerals

The noun phrases may be formed with numerals. There are cardinal numerals and ordinal numerals in Lakkja.

4.4.1 Cardinals

Cardinals can morphologically be divided into two types: simple cardinals and compound cardinals.

4.4.1.1 Simple cardinals

Simple cardinals are monosyllabic words. They include the numbers from ‘zero’ to ‘ten’, and the units ‘hundred’, ‘thousand’, ‘ten thousand’, and ‘hundred million’, as shown in Table 4.6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lakkja simple cardinals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘zero’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘one’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘two’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘three’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘four’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘five’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘six’</td>
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<tr>
<td>‘seven’</td>
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<tr>
<td>‘eight’</td>
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<tr>
<td>‘nine’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘ten’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘hundred’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘thousand’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘ten thousand’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘hundred million’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that ‘one’, ‘two’, ‘three’, ‘ten’ all have two forms in Lakkja, with different grammatical functions in compound cardinals. As for ‘ten’, there is a cardinal form tsep²⁴ which is used for the numerals 11-19, as well as a unit form lep²⁴ which functions like peːk²⁴ ‘hundred’, theːn²¹ ‘thousand’, etc. This grammatical distinction largely influences the usage of other numerals in compound cardinal numbers, which will be further discussed below.
4.4.1.2 Compound cardinal numbers

Compound cardinals are disyllabic or multisyllabic. Some numbers have two forms.

As mentioned above, the cardinal \textit{tsep}^{24} ‘ten’ is used for the numerals 11-19, while the unit form \textit{lep}^{24} occurs in 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, …30, 40, 50, …110, 120, etc. The latter is not found to occur alone in my data.

(59) a. \textit{tsep}^{24} et^{55} \quad 11
b. \textit{tsep}^{24} \textit{ŋi}^{214} \quad 12
c. \textit{tsep}^{24} \textit{fa:m}^{51} \quad 13
d. \textit{tsep}^{24} \textit{fei}^{55} \quad 14
e. \textit{tsep}^{24} \textit{yo}^{11} \quad 15
f. \textit{tsep}^{24} \textit{lok}^{24} \quad 16
g. \textit{tsep}^{24} \textit{thet}^{55} \quad 17
h. \textit{tsep}^{24} \textit{pa:t}^{24} \quad 18
i. \textit{tsep}^{24} \textit{tseu}^{24} \quad 19

(60) a. \textit{ŋi}^{214} \textit{lep}^{24} \quad 20
b. \textit{ŋi}^{214} \textit{lep}^{24} et^{55} \quad 21
c. \textit{ŋi}^{214} \textit{lep}^{24} \textit{ŋi}^{214} \quad 22
d. \textit{ŋi}^{214} \textit{lep}^{24} \textit{fa:m}^{51} \quad 23
e. \textit{fa}^{51} \textit{lep}^{24} \quad 30
f. \textit{fei}^{55} \textit{lep}^{24} \quad 40
g. \textit{nin}^{24} \textit{pe:k}^{24} \textit{et}^{55} \textit{tsep}^{24} \text{ or } \textit{we:k}^{24} \textit{et}^{55} \quad 110
h. \textit{nin}^{24} \textit{pe:k}^{24} \textit{ŋo}^{11} \textit{tsep}^{24} \text{ or } \textit{we:k}^{24} \textit{ŋo}^{11} \quad 150

As for ‘one’ in compound cardinals, the form \textit{et}^{55} is mainly used for the numerals 11, 21, 31, … 101, 110, 1100, etc. But only \textit{nin}^{24} is used when preceding a classifier or a unit such as \textit{lep}^{24} ‘ten’, \textit{pe:k}^{24} ‘hundred’, etc. The following examples illustrate.

(61) a. \textit{tsep}^{24} \textit{et}^{55} \quad 11
b. \textit{ŋi}^{214} \textit{lep}^{24} \textit{et}^{55} \quad 21
c. \textit{nin}^{24} \textit{pe:k}^{24} \quad 100
d. \textit{nin}^{24} \textit{pe:k}^{24} \textit{le}^{231} \textit{et}^{55} \quad 101
e. \textit{nin}^{24} \textit{pe:k}^{24} \textit{et}^{55} \textit{tsep}^{24} \text{ or } \textit{we:k}^{24} \textit{et}^{55} \quad 110
As for ‘two’, things are a bit different. Only ŋĩ is used to form compound cardinal numbers, though it cannot combine with a classifier as hou does.

(62)  
| a. ŋĩ lep²⁴ | 20 |
| b. ŋĩ lep²⁴ et⁵⁵ | 21 |
| c. ŋĩ lep²⁴ ŋĩ²¹⁴ | 22 |
| d. ŋĩ²¹⁴ pe:k²⁴ | 200 |

There are also two forms for ‘three’: fa:m⁵¹ and fa³¹. fa³¹ is found only in fa³¹ lep²⁴ ‘thirty’ (60e).

Furthermore, as illustrated in Example (61d), a Chinese loan le:ŋ²³¹ ‘zero’ usually occurs in a three-digit number or above which involves a single digit. This is also true of higher compound numbers such as 1010, 1101, etc.

To express simple calculation, ka⁵¹ ‘plus’ and ka:m²⁴ ‘minus’ and li²⁴ ‘get, obtain’ is used for addition and subtraction. Nowadays Chinese loan tan²⁴ y¹¹ ‘equal’ can generally substitute li²⁴ ‘get, obtain’ to this effect.

(63)  
| a. ŋin²⁴ ka⁵¹ hou²⁴ li²⁴ fa:m⁵¹ |
| one plus two get three |
| ‘one plus two equals three.’ |
| b. ŋin²⁴ pe:k²⁴ le:ŋ²³¹ et⁵⁵ ka:m²⁴ ŋin²⁴ tan²⁴ y¹¹ ŋin²⁴ pe:k²⁴ |
| one hundred and one minus one equal one hundred |
| ‘One hundred and one minus one equals one hundred.’ |

### 4.4.2 Ordinal numbers

As mentioned in Chapter 3, ordinal numbers are formed with prefix ta:i¹¹ for general ordination.

(64)  
| a. ta:i¹¹ et⁵⁵ |
| ‘first’ |
| b. ta:i¹¹ ŋĩ²¹⁴ |
| ‘second’ |
| c. ta:i¹¹ fa:m⁵¹ |
| ‘third’ |
Ordinal numbers can combine with nouns in the construction ‘noun + ta:i11 + cardinal number’.

(65) a. lak24 ta:i11 et55 ‘the first person’
    person PRE one
b. lie:k11 ta:i11 fa:m51 ‘the third house’
    house PRE three

Numerals combine with prefix tsho51 to express the first ten days in a month of the Chinese lunar calendar. For the day from 11th to 30th, only cardinal numerals are used.

(66) a. tsho51 et55 1st day
    b. tsho51 ŋi214 ‘2nd day’
    c. tsho51 fa:m51 ‘3rd day’
    d. tsho51 tsep24 ‘10th day’
    e. tsep24 et55 ‘11th day’
    f. tsep24 ŋo711 ‘15th day’
    g. ŋi214 lep24 ‘20th day’
    h. fa51 lep24 ‘30th day’

A construction ‘cardinal number + ŋjot24’, where ŋjot24 ‘month’ is introduced from Chinese yuè 月, is used for months in a year. However, ‘January’ is an exception, using a Chinese loan tsin51 ‘beginning’ (from Chinese 正 zhēng) rather than et55.

(67) a. tsin51 ŋjot24 ‘January’
    b. ŋi214 ŋjot24 ‘February’
    c. fa:m51 ŋjot24 ‘March’
    d. tsep24 ŋjot24 ‘October’
    e. tsep24 et55 ŋjot24 ‘November’
    f. tsep24 ŋi214 ŋjot24 ‘December’

The followings are the days of important traditional festivals in Lakkja.
(68) a. fa:m²⁴ ŋjer²⁴
b. tsiŋ²¹ ŋjor²⁴ tsho⁵¹ er⁵⁵
c. pa:t²⁴ ŋjor²⁴ tsep²⁴ ŋo¹¹
d. ŋo¹¹ ŋjor²⁴ ŋo¹¹
e. thet⁵⁵ ŋjor²⁴ tsho⁵¹ thet⁵⁵
(free variant: thet⁵⁵ ŋjor²⁴ tsep²⁴ fer⁵⁵)
f. ŋi²¹⁴ ŋjor²⁴
(free variant: pa:r²⁴ ŋjor²⁴)
g. fei⁵⁵ ŋjor²⁴

‘New Year’s Eve’
‘New Year’s Day’
‘Mid-Autumn Festival’
‘Dragon Boat Festival’
‘See Ancestors Off’³
(Shè Eating)⁴
‘Rice Transplanting Festival’

4.4.3 Syntactic function of numerals

Numerals generally form ‘numeral - classifier’ constructions to modify nouns or verbs, while numerals alone can sometimes also modify nouns, functioning as attributive in a sentence.

(69) a. hou²⁴ ?at⁵⁵ jen¹¹ kjâ:u²⁴ ŋeu²¹⁴ hwa:i⁵⁵ ņeu²¹⁴ nay¹¹ ka:n⁵⁵.
   two sister and diligent and capable
   ‘The two sisters are diligent and capable.’
b. lak²⁴ liek¹¹ mi²³¹ hou²⁴ tu¹¹ nuy¹¹,
   3SG house have two CLF child
   ‘There are two children in his family: one son and one daughter.’
c. ŋin²⁴ tu²³¹ kjei⁵¹ ŋin²⁴ tu²³¹ kjâ:u²⁴.
   one CLF son one CLF daughter
   ‘Which dress/coat is mine?’

4.5 Classifiers

Classifiers are found to be a crucial word class in forming noun phrases. Like many other Sino-Tibetan languages, Lakkja has a significant number of classifiers. Lakkja classifiers do not occur alone in a sentence. Based on their semantic properties and syntactic function, Lakkja

---
³ foŋ⁵⁵ kon²⁴ lou¹¹ (see off - grandfather - old) ‘seeing ancestors off’, a Lakkja festival to worship the ancestors.
⁴ tsen⁵¹ tsie¹¹ (eat - Shè) ‘Shè eating’, a Lakkja festival to worship shè社, which denotes God that protects villages. Production rules will be issued during the festival.
classifiers can be divided into noun classifiers, verbal classifiers, pseudo classifiers and classifiers deriving from other word classes.

4.5.1 Noun classifiers

Noun classifiers are used to count the number of human beings or objects. They can be further classified into the following subtypes:

4.5.1.1 General classifiers

The following four classifiers are the most common, which are frequently and widely used in daily verbal communication:

(70) a. \( lāk^{24} \) classifier for people, offspring of animals or plants, small objects such as scar, trace, plug;

b. \( tu^{31} \) classifier for animals, children or a junior person, adults (with derogatory overtones);

c. \( nam^{55} \) classifier for concrete objects such as fruits, root crops, melons, kitchenware, tools, body parts, rooms, buildings, landmarks; for abstract concepts such as illness, skills.

d. \( mī^{24} \) classifier for long, thin objects such as shotgun, lock, pole, flag.

4.5.1.2 Special classifiers

Special classifiers have limited use and specific references, generally functioning as measure words for specific objects or concepts. For example:

(71) a. \( pīj^{55} \) classifier for hat;

b. \( ti:u^{31} \) classifier for road, river, story, pants, song, life;

c. \( fāk^{55} \) classifier for needle, pen;

d. \( tsīk^{55} \) classifier for table, chair;

e. \( sa:u^{55} \) classifier/measure for wind

f. \( pou^{51} \) classifier/measure for urine

4.5.1.3 Measure words for collective things

There are a number of measure words which take collective or plural concepts, including human beings and objects. They can be further classified into definite and indefinite measures.
Definite measures: These measure words carry the meaning of quantity. For example:

(72)  

a. *tuə:*\textsuperscript{51} ‘pair’ (measure for earrings, bracelets, etc.)

b. *so:*\textsuperscript{fj1} ‘pair’ (measure for chopsticks)

c. *lien*\textsuperscript{55} ‘pair’ (measure for shoes, socks, etc)

d. *thuə:*\textsuperscript{t24} ‘set’ (measure for dress)

e. *teu*\textsuperscript{55} measure for ancient coins

f. *ta:*\textsuperscript{u*1} ‘100 pieces of paper’ measure for paper

g. *fu*\textsuperscript{55} measure for playing cards

Indefinite measures: This subtype designates a group of people or objects without a definite quantity.

(73)  

a. *twei*\textsuperscript{51} ‘pile (of grass, sand, etc.)’

b. *njam*\textsuperscript{51} ‘handful (of rice, grass, vegetables, etc)’

c. *te:*\textsuperscript{y5} ‘portion’

d. *plok*\textsuperscript{24} ‘bundle (of wire, firewood, etc)’

e. *kjon*\textsuperscript{55} ‘group (of people)’

f. *niy*\textsuperscript{5} ‘a number of’

g. *a:*\textsuperscript{η23} ‘line (of trees, etc.)’

h. *ta:*\textsuperscript{i21} ‘bag (of rice, beans, etc.)’

i. *tshu:n*\textsuperscript{55} ‘bunch (of grapes, chili peppers, etc.)’

Measures for partitivity: This subtype is used for part of a whole.

(74)  

a. *tsik*\textsuperscript{55} ‘one of a pair’ (measure for a sock, a shoe, etc.)

b. *pa:n*\textsuperscript{55} ‘half of’

c. *tsin*\textsuperscript{23} ‘ten percent’

4.5.2 Measure words derived from nouns or verbs

This type of measures still contains the meaning of the nouns or verbs and can be divided into the following subtypes.

A. Container nouns as measures

A number of container nouns may be used as measure words. Their functions are similar to English ‘a bottle of’, ‘a pot of’, etc.
(75)  a. pou$^{51}$ ‘pot’
    b. piŋ$^{231}$ ‘bottle’
    c. thoŋ$^{24}$ ‘barrel’
    d. ?ū:n$^{24}$ ‘bowl’
    f. ta:i$^{214}$ ‘bag’
    g. o:p$^{11}$ ‘box’
    h. ka:ŋ$^{51}$ ‘vat’

The following are some example sentences.

(76)  a. lak$^{24}$ tie$^{231}$ tsen$^{51}$ li$^{24}$ in$^{24}$ pou$^{51}$ khja:u$^{24}$
      3SG self eat able one pot wine
      ‘He can drink a pot of wine by himself.’
    b. tsi$^{51}$ pat$^{51}$ wei$^{11}$ hou$^{24}$ piŋ$^{231}$ khja:u$^{24}$
      1SG go buy two bottle wine
      ‘I go to buy two bottles of wine.’

B. Corporal nouns as measures

Some corporal nouns may also function as measure words. They typically indicate the instruments or the tools of the act in question.

(77)  a. pla$^{51}$ ‘eye’
    b. kwi:n$^{231}$ ‘fist’
    c. puk$^{55}$ ‘foot’
    d. tei$^{24}$ ‘mouth’

Here are some examples for such corporal nouns.

(78)  a. tu$^{31}$ nuŋ$^{11}$ ni$^{231}$ kəm$^{231}$ in$^{24}$ tei$^{24}$ tie:ŋ$^{231}$
      CLF child this keep in mouth one mouth candy
      ‘This child had a mouthful of candies in his mouth.’
    b. tsi$^{51}$ pok$^{24}$ lik$^{55}$ lo:m$^{51}$ lak$^{24}$ in$^{24}$ pla$^{51}$
      1SG secretly look 3SG one eye
      ‘I took a glance at him secretly.’

Note that kwi:n$^{231}$ ‘fist’ and puk$^{55}$ ‘foot’ are not frequently used as measure words. The general
verbal classifier *ti:n* occurs more often in phrases such as English ‘give a kick’, ‘give a punch’. Please refer to §4.5.5 for further discussion.

C. Other nouns

It is interesting to note that some other nouns may occur as measure words.

(79)  
  a. *ta:i*\(^{231}\) ‘table’  
  b. *shohn*\(^{55}\) ‘gun’  
  c. *kja*\(^{24}\) ‘mountain’  
  d. *lai*\(^{231}\) ‘plough’  
  e. *tsu*\(^{55}\) ‘saw’  
  f. *ta:k*\(^{11}\) ‘chisel’  
  g. *tha:i*\(^{51}\) ‘fetus’  
  h. *tshie*\(^{51}\) ‘car’  
  i. *phie:u*\(^{24}\) ‘ticket’

The following sentences are illustrative.

(80)  
  a. *in*\(^{24}\) *ta:i*\(^{231}\) *fou*\(^{55}\) *kha:i*\(^{24}\) *tsen*\(^{51}\) *lie:u*\(^{24}\)  
      one  table  food  all  eat  PART  
      ‘The dishes on the table were all eaten up.’  
  b. *tsay*\(^{214}\) *lai*\(^{231}\) *hou*\(^{24}\) *lai*\(^{231}\) *tei*\(^{11}\) *lai*\(^{231}\) *lie:u*\(^{11}\) *lie:i*\(^{24}\)  
      again  plough  two  plough  PART  plough  ASP  PART  
      ‘Plough two more times and then it will be done’  
  c. *tu*\(^{213}\) *khu*\(^{51}\) *mu:i*\(^{11}\) *ni*\(^{231}\) *tsie:η*\(^{11}\) *tie*\(^{214}\) *fa:m*\(^{51}\) *tha:i*\(^{51}\)  
      CLF  pig  female  this  give birth to  ASP  three  fetus  
      *khù*\(^{51}\) *lak*\(^{24}\) *lie:u*\(^{24}\)  
      pig  SUF  PART  
      ‘This sow has produced piglets for three times.’

D. Verbs as measures

Some verbs can also function as measures. They usually indicate the instrument or manner of the act in question.

(81)  
  a. *kup*\(^{55}\) ‘a handful of’ (from ‘carry in both hands’)  
  b. *mie:η*\(^{24}\) ‘handspan’ (from ‘measure by handspans’)

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c. ƙjo:k²⁴ ‘round, scoop’ (from ‘scoop, surround’)

d. plo:k²⁴ ‘bundle’ (from ‘bundle up, tie’)

e. pa:i⁵⁵ ‘bow’ (from ‘make a courtesy call’)

f. khjɛ:p²⁴ ‘a pinch of (from ‘pick up with chopsticks, tongs, etc.’)

Below are some illustrative sentences.

(82) a. lak²⁴ ƙhjɛ:p²⁴ fa:m⁵¹ ƙhjɛ:p²⁴ foŋ⁵⁵ hap⁵⁵
3SG take (with chopsticks) three a pinch of food PART

tsen⁵¹ in²⁴ ma:k²⁴ kou²⁴
eat one CLF rice

‘He ate one mouthful of rice after taking three mouthfuls of vegetables and meat.’

b. ma²³¹ pai⁵¹ pa:i⁵⁵ lak²⁴ fa:m⁵¹ pa:i⁵⁵
2SG go bow him three bow

‘You go to make three bows to him.’

4.5.3 Unit nouns as measures

A rich number of unit nouns, mostly Chinese loan words, can function as measures. They can be divided into the following subtypes in terms of their semantic meanings.

A. Measure of length

(83) a. tshi:k²⁴ ‘one Chinese foot = 0.33m’ (from Chinese chǐ)

b. tsie:ŋ¹¹ ‘ten Chinese feet = 3.3m’ (from Chinese zhàng)

c. thən⁵⁵ ‘0.1 Chinese foot = 3.3cm’ (from Chinese cùn)

d. lei¹¹ ‘500 metres’ (from Chinese lǐ)

B. Measure of volume

(84) a. saŋ⁵¹ ‘measure of volume for alcohol’ (from Chinese shēng)

b. tau²⁴ ‘ten saŋ⁵¹, about 6kg’ (from Chinese dǒu)

C. Measure of weight

(85) a. tsɔn⁵¹ ‘500g’ (from Chinese jīn)

b. lie:ŋ²⁴ ‘0.1 tsɔn⁵¹’ (from Chinese liàng)

c. ti:n²³¹ ‘0.1 lie:ŋ²⁴’ (from Chinese qián)

d. saŋ⁵¹ ‘measure of weight for grains’ (from Chinese shēng)
D. Measure of area

(86) a. *mu*₁¹ ‘666m²’  (from Chinese *mù*)
b. *khwa:ŋ*₅₅ ‘patch’

E. Measure for currency

(87) a. *hwən*₅¹ ‘cent’  (from Chinese *fēn*)
b. *lej*²³¹ ‘0.1 *hwən*₅¹’  (from Chinese *lǐ*)
c. *teu*₅₅ ‘1000 ancient coins’  (from Chinese *diào*)
d. *man*₅¹ *ŋjɛn*²³¹ ‘silver dollar’
e. *ju:n*²³¹ ‘Chinese yuan’  (from Chinese *yuàn*)

4.5.4 Sortal classifiers

This type of classifiers is used to sort objects into varieties or shapes. The special classifiers in §4.5.1.2 can also be classified as sortal classifiers but their usages are rather limited.

A. Variety

(88) *jieŋ*²¹⁴ ‘kind, type’

B. Shape

(89) a. *ti:u*²³¹ ‘strings, threads’  (for long objects)
b. *khjən*₅₅ ‘slice (of leaf)’  (for thin objects)
c. *khwa:ŋ*₅₅ ‘piece (of land)’  (for square objects)
d. *nam*₅₅ ‘clouds, flowers, circle, tooth’  (for round or small objects)
e. *twei*²¹ ‘pile (of grass)’  (for things in heaps)
f. *tek*₅₅ ‘drop (of blood)’  (for tiny liquid)

4.5.5 Verbal classifiers

Classifiers of this type are used to describe the number or instances of an action. There are words specifically designated as verbal classifiers, as well as some corporal nouns used for acts involving foot, fist, mouth and eye, as discussed in §4.5.2. Examples:

(90) a. *ti:n*₅₅ (general verbal classifier)
b. *sa:u*₅₅ (classifier for acts of movement, travel)
c. *tsa:ŋ*²¹ ‘classifier for travel’
d. *to*²¹⁴ (classifier for river crossing)
e. \textit{ja:p}^{24}  \quad \text{(classifier for walking)}
f. \textit{tei}^{24}  \quad \text{(classifier for biting)}
g. \textit{pla}^{41}  \quad \text{(classifier for looking)}

Among them, \textit{ti:n}^{55} is a general verbal classifier and can substitute the rest of the classifiers. But \textit{ti:n}^{55} typically express that the action described by the verb is carried out briefly or ‘a little bit’, and often \textit{ŋin}^{24} \textit{ti:n}^{55} is just added to make the sentence sound more natural.

The construction of verbal classifiers follows the frame ‘verb + numeral + classifier’.

\begin{align*}
(91) \quad & \text{a. } \textit{phe:k}^{24} \quad \textit{hou}^{24} \quad \textit{ti:n}^{55} \quad \text{‘pat twice’} \\
& \text{pat} \quad \text{two} \quad \text{CLF} \\
& \text{b. } \textit{hep}^{55} \quad \textit{ŋin}^{24} \quad \textit{sa:u}^{55} \quad \text{‘take a nap’} \\
& \text{sleep} \quad \text{one} \quad \text{CLF} \\
& \text{c. } \textit{pat}^{51} \quad \textit{hou}^{24} \quad \textit{sa:u}^{55} \quad \text{‘go twice’} \\
& \text{go} \quad \text{two} \quad \text{CLF}
\end{align*}

Furthermore, a transitive object can be added into this construction either after the verb or after the classifier. That is, ‘verb + O + numeral + classifier’, and ‘verb + numeral + classifier + O’ are both grammatical in Lakkja. Both pronouns and nouns can fill in this slot. Following examples illustrate.

\begin{align*}
(92) \quad & \text{a. } \textit{lak}^{24} \quad \textit{phe:k}^{24} \quad \textit{ŋin}^{24} \quad \textit{ti:n}^{55} \quad \textit{mie}^{51} \quad \text{‘He clapped his hands once.’} \\
& \text{3SG} \quad \text{clap} \quad \text{one} \quad \text{CLF} \quad \text{hand} \\
& \text{b. } \textit{the:k}^{24} \quad \textit{lak}^{24} \quad \textit{ŋin}^{24} \quad \textit{ti:n}^{55} \quad \text{‘Give him a kick.’} \\
& \text{kick} \quad \text{3SG} \quad \text{one} \quad \text{CLF}
\end{align*}

\subsection*{4.5.6 Quantification}

There are a number of quantifiers which share some properties of classifiers. For example:

\begin{align*}
(93) \quad & \text{a. } \textit{tsiŋ}^{531} \quad \text{‘ten percent’} \\
& \text{b. } \textit{pa:n}^{55} \quad \text{‘half’} \\
& \text{c. } \textit{pa:n}^{55} \textit{bok}^{55} \quad \text{‘larger part’} \\
& \text{d. } \textit{pa:n}^{55} \textit{si:u}^{24} \quad \text{‘less than half’}
\end{align*}
e. *paːn⁵⁵ loŋ⁵¹* ‘more than half’

*tsin^23^i* ‘ten percent’ and *paːn⁵⁵* ‘half’, as listed above, do not appear in a sentence alone, but usually combine with numerals. *paːn⁵⁵ bok^5⁵* ‘larger part’, *paːn⁵⁵ siːu^2⁴* ‘less than half’ and *paːn⁵⁵ loŋ⁵¹* ‘more than half’ can occur either alone, or with numeral *ŋin^2⁴* ‘one’.

### 4.5.7 Multi-function classifiers

Some classifiers may have different functions. For example, in (94a) below, *tɔn⁵⁵* functions as a noun classifier, while in (94b) it functions as a verbal classifier.

(94)  a. *faːm⁵¹ tɔn⁵⁵ kou⁵⁴* ‘three meals’
      three CLF rice

b. *kuːt¹¹ ŋin⁵⁴ tɔn⁵⁵* ‘beat’
      hit one CLF

### 4.5.8 Morpho-syntactic functions of classifiers

#### 4.5.8.1 Affixable morpheme

Chapter 3 has discussed a number of prefixable and suffixable morphemes participating in Lakkja word formation, which reflects a significant function of classifiers in Lakkja. As demonstrated, some classifiers can serve as affixes to form compounds and can be highly productive. Such classifiers have very close relationships with the other element or elements of a compound, and sometimes even function as the head, as discussed in §3.1.1.2. In other words, none of the elements can be omitted in such compounds. This is a typical feature in Kam-Tai.

(95)  a. *lak⁵⁴ - kjei^5¹* (CLF - male) ‘man’

b. *tu^2⁴³ ka^5¹* (CLF - crow) ‘crow’

c. *ma¹¹ lak⁵⁴* (horse - CLF) ‘colt’

d. *nam⁵⁵ bən⁵¹* (CLF - eat) ‘fruit’

#### 4.5.8.2 Classificatory

Another significant function of Lakkja classifiers is to signify a specific entity. For example, *tu^2³¹* is used to designate animals only. Thus, *tu^2³¹ kja^2⁴* (classifier - mountain) ‘wild animal’ is sufficient to express the meaning of ‘an animal’. This function may contribute to the distinction of meanings in homophones. For example:
(96) a. tu²³ kja²⁴ (CLF - mountain) ‘wild animal’ kja²⁴ ‘mountain’
b. tu²³ ka⁵¹ (CLF - crow) ‘crow’ ka⁵¹ ‘crow’
c. lak²⁴ kjei⁵¹ (CLF - male) ‘man, husband’ kjei⁵¹ ‘male’
d. nam⁵⁵ tsen⁵¹ (CLF - eat) ‘fruit’ lak²⁴ tsen⁵¹ ‘food’

4.5.8.3 Modifiability

Lakkja classifiers can be modified by nouns, adjectives, numeral, pronouns, noun phrases and verb phrases. For example:

(97) a. toŋ¹¹ wan²³ [MEASURE + CLF] ‘a whole day’
whole CLF
b. loŋ⁵¹ nik⁵⁵ [ADJ + CLF] ‘a little/bit more’
more, much, many CLF
c. lak²⁴ pok²⁴ lie:k¹¹ [CLF + VP] ‘bricklayer’
CLF do house
d. fa:m⁵¹ lak¹¹ njūn²³ [NUM + CLF] ‘three people’
three CLF person
e. lak²⁴ pla⁵¹ pha:ŋ²⁴ [CLF + NP] ‘blind person’
CLF eye blind
f. ma²³¹ pon⁵¹ pøn²⁴ na²¹⁴ tu⁵⁵ li²⁴ [CLF + PRON]
2SG give CLF which all okay
‘Which ever (book) you give, it will be all right.’

4.5.8.4 Definiteness and indefiniteness

Though many Kam-Tai languages have a ‘classifier + noun’ construction which generally designates a definite entity, the situation seems somewhat complicated for Lakkja. Some Lakkja ‘classifier + noun’ constructions are used for a specific entity as shown in (98a), while others convey a concept of ‘general classification’ such as (98b).

(98) a. tsi⁵¹ tsen⁵¹ nam⁵⁵ ni:u⁵⁵, ma²³¹ tsen⁵¹ nam⁵⁵ bok⁵⁵
1SG eat CLF small 2SG eat CLF big
‘I eat the small one, you eat the big one.’
b. ma²³¹ i⁵⁵ tsen⁵¹ lak²⁴ man¹¹ a¹¹ tsi¹¹ lak²⁴ faŋ⁵¹?
2SG like eat CLF plum or CLF peach
‘Do you like eating plums or peaches?’
Furthermore, reduplication of classifiers is also used to convey the meaning of ‘all’, ‘every’, ‘each’, just like nouns as discussed in §3.2.1. Reduplicated classifiers can occur in a sentence as subject or attributive.

**Subject:**

(99) a. \(tu^{231}\) \(tu^{231}\) \(ko:n^{24}\) \(pu:i^{231}\)  
CLF CLF together fat

‘Each (sheep) is fat.’

b. \(lak^{11}\) \(lak^{11}\) \(tu^{55}\) \(tsa:\eta^{24}\) \(li^{231}\) \(ti^{24}\) \(hu:\eta^{51}\) \(lai^{51}\)
CLF CLF all say here place good

‘Everyone says this place is good.’

**Attributive:**

(100) a. \(ti:u^{231}\) \(ti:u^{231}\) \(kjei^{51}\) \(tony^{11}\) \(jie:ny^{214}\) \(a:i^{231}\)  
CLF CLF string same long

‘Every string is of equal length.’

b. \(tu^{231}\) \(tu^{231}\) \(nau^{11}\) \(tu^{55}\) \(hou^{24}\) \(pu:i^{231}\)  
CLF CLF cattle all very fat

‘Every cattle is fat.’

**4.5.9 Constituent order of classifiers**

Generally, Lakkja multiple modifiers follow the constituent order of ‘personal pronoun + numeral + classifier + noun + adjective + demonstrative’. For example:

(101) a. \(tu^{231}\) \(kh\u^{51}\) \(ni^{231}\)
CLF pig this

‘this pig’

b. \(kjo:n^{24}\) \(tsei^{55}\) \(lou^{11}\) \(ni^{231}\)
CLF tree old this

‘this big wood’

c. \(tsi^{51}\) \(hou^{24}\) \(pi:\eta^{214}\) \(mie^{231}\)
1SG two CLF hand

‘my two hands’

d. \(jin^{24}\) \(ti:u^{231}\) \(tsun^{231}\) \(ko:\eta^{55}\)
one CLF skirt red

‘a red skirt’

The construction ‘classifier + ordinal numbers’ is used to denote seniority, as illustrated in (102).
However, ‘the eldest’ and ‘the youngest’ are exceptions. These take the construction ‘classifier + noun + adjective’, in which the head noun *nuŋ*¹¹ ‘junior’, generally analysed as a prefixable morpheme, occurs between the classifier and the adjective(s). Examples:

(103) a. *tu*²³¹ *nuŋ*¹¹ *kJei*⁵¹ *bok*⁵⁵  
CLF  junior  male  old  
‘the eldest son’

b. *tu*²³¹ *nuŋ*¹¹ *kjãː*u²⁴ *bok*⁵⁵  
CLF  junior  male  old  
‘the eldest daughter’

c. *tu*²³¹ *nuŋ*¹¹ *kjei*⁵¹ *maː*n¹¹  
CLF  junior  male  reckless  
‘the youngest son’

(104) a. *lak*²⁴ *bok*⁵⁵ *kap*⁵⁵ *lak*²⁴ *taː*i¹¹ *ŋi*²¹⁴ *ŋin*²⁴ *ŋjaː*u²¹⁴  
CLF  big  and  CLF  PRE  two  one  manner  tall  
khjaː*ŋ*⁵¹  
‘The eldest is as tall as the second eldest.’

It is also noteworthy that the expression of *tu*²³¹ *nuŋ*¹¹ *kJei*⁵¹/kjãː*u²⁴ *maː*n¹¹ ‘the youngest son/daughter’, as shown in (103c), is only used when there are three or more children in a family. If a family has only two children, their given names or simply *tu*²³¹ *nuŋ*¹¹ *kJei*⁵¹/kjãː*u²⁴ ‘son/daughter’ are used to designate the younger child.

When numerals are used with verbs and numerals, an order of ‘verb + numeral + classifier’ is applied to denote the frequency or the duration of time. For example:

(105) a. *lak*²⁴ *tieː*²⁴ *taː*²⁵ *pe*²⁵ *pa*²⁴ *pai*⁵¹ *ŋin*²⁴  
3SG  want  take  father  mother  go  one  CLF  Beijing  
‘He wants to take his parents to Beijing for a visit.’

b. *wan*²³¹ *ŋaː*i²⁴ *lak*²⁴ *ʔat*³⁵ *li²³¹ *ŋjaː*u²¹⁴  
3SG  PREP  today  3SG  stay  one  CLF  
‘He stays here for a night today.’
c. lak\textsuperscript{24} phə:k\textsuperscript{24} hou\textsuperscript{24} ti:n\textsuperscript{55} mie\textsuperscript{231}

3SG clap two CLF hand

‘He clapped his hands (twice / several times).’

d. lak\textsuperscript{24} ŋā:i\textsuperscript{214} khu\textsuperscript{55} kat\textsuperscript{55} hou\textsuperscript{24} tie\textsuperscript{24}

3SG PASS dog bite two CLF

‘He was bitten by a dog (two bites / several bites).’

e. ku:1\textsuperscript{1} lak\textsuperscript{24} ŋin\textsuperscript{24} kwi:n\textsuperscript{231}, theːk\textsuperscript{24} lak\textsuperscript{24} ŋin\textsuperscript{24} puk\textsuperscript{55}

beat 3SG one CLF kick 3SG one CLF

‘Give him a punch, give him a kick.’

Furthermore, there is a ‘classifier - pa\textsuperscript{51}’ construction to express approximation, in which pa\textsuperscript{51} is borrowed from Chinese bǎ. This construction, for example, lak\textsuperscript{24} pa\textsuperscript{51}, generally carries the meaning of ‘one or two…’, ‘any’. It can precede nouns, functioning like a quantifier, while no numerals can occur with this construction.

4.5.10 Syntactic behaviour of classifiers

Lakkja classifiers never occur alone in a sentence. Instead, they occur in the constructions ‘numeral + classifier’, ‘numeral + classifier + noun’, ‘classifier + noun’, ‘classifier + demonstrative’, and ‘classifier + noun + demonstrative’, functioning as subject, object, attributive, adverbial. Personal pronouns generally precede the constructions listed above. For example:

Subject:

\begin{align*}
\text{(106) a. } &
tsi\textsuperscript{51} &
hou\textsuperscript{24} &
piːŋ\textsuperscript{214} &
mie\textsuperscript{231} &
kuː.n\textsuperscript{24} &
wɔ\textsuperscript{55} &
la\textsuperscript{11} \\
1SG &
two &
CLF &
hand &
all &
dirty &
PART
\end{align*}

‘Both of my hands are dirty.’

\begin{align*}
\text{(106) b. } &
ŋin\textsuperscript{24} &
kjoŋ\textsuperscript{55} &
mlok\textsuperscript{55} &
ʔat\textsuperscript{55} &
hjieːn\textsuperscript{51} &
hён\textsuperscript{51} &
pom\textsuperscript{55} &
pai\textsuperscript{51} &
pom\textsuperscript{55} &
pom\textsuperscript{214} \\
\text{one } &
\text{CLF } &
\text{bird } &
\text{PREP } &
\text{up } &
\text{sky } &
\text{fly } &
\text{go } &
\text{fly } &
\text{back }
\end{align*}

‘A flock of birds fly hither and tither in the sky.’

Object:

\begin{align*}
\text{(107) a. } &
tsi\textsuperscript{51} &
tsoŋ\textsuperscript{55} &
hou\textsuperscript{24} &
kaː.n\textsuperscript{51} &
tong\textsuperscript{11} &
lei\textsuperscript{231} \\
1SG &
\text{plant } &
two &
\text{CLF } &\text{pear }
\end{align*}

‘I planted two pear trees.’
b. *tsi*<sup>51</sup> *tsie:*<sup>11</sup> *mi*<sup>231</sup> *ŋin*<sup>24</sup> *kjoŋ*<sup>55</sup> *pet*<sup>55</sup>

1SG keep have one CLF duck

‘I keep a number of ducks.’

**Attributive:**

(108) a. *lak*<sup>24</sup> *mi*<sup>231</sup> *ŋin*<sup>24</sup> *ti:*<sup>u</sup><sup>231</sup> *hou*<sup>24</sup> *o:*<sup>55</sup> *ka*<sup>11</sup> *tsun*<sup>231</sup>

3SG have one CLF very beautiful PART skirt

‘She has a very beautiful skirt.’

b. *tsep*<sup>24</sup> *pa:*<sup>t</sup><sup>24</sup> *pe*<sup>51</sup> *nuŋ*<sup>11</sup> *kjâ:*<sup>u</sup><sup>24</sup> *ʔ*<sup>55</sup> *ta:*<sup>i</sup><sup>55</sup> *hu*<sup>51</sup>

ten eight year child female like wear flower

‘18-year-old girls like wearing flowers (in hair or on shirt).’

**Apposition:**

(109) a. *tau*<sup>51</sup> *fa:*<sup>m</sup><sup>51</sup> *lak*<sup>24</sup> *lak*<sup>24</sup> *tsei*<sup>24</sup> *khja:*<sup>24</sup>

1PL three CLF 3SG most tall

‘He is the tallest among the three of us.’

b. *tau*<sup>51</sup> *ŋ*<sup>0</sup><sup>11</sup> *lak*<sup>24</sup> *a*<sup>11</sup> *kha:*<sup>i</sup><sup>24</sup> *tok*<sup>55</sup> *min*<sup>11</sup> *piŋ*<sup>51</sup>

1PL five CLF together be civilian soldier

‘The five of us are all militias.’

**Adverbial:**

(110) *wan*<sup>231</sup> *ŋa:*<sup>i</sup><sup>24</sup> *lak*<sup>24</sup> *ʔat*<sup>55</sup> *li*<sup>231</sup> *ŋja:*<sup>u</sup><sup>214</sup> *ŋin*<sup>24</sup> *lau*<sup>231</sup>

today 3SG PREP here live one CLF

‘He is staying here for a night today.’

Unlike some other Tai-Kadai languages in this area where a classifier may stand alone to function as subject or object without taking a noun, Lakkja classifiers do not. Take Gelao as an example. The following sentence is grammatical in Gelao since the semantics is sufficiently clear (Li, Li and Luo 2014):

(111) *sow*<sup>31</sup> *khuai*<sup>33</sup> *zow*<sup>13</sup> *na*<sup>33</sup>, *khuai*<sup>33</sup> *tow*<sup>55</sup>, *khuai*<sup>33</sup> *vow*<sup>33</sup>

two CLF person this CLF short CLF tall

‘These two persons, one is short, the other tall.’

Such expression, however, is unacceptable in Lakkja. (112a) shows a similar structure of Lakkja, while (112b) is ungrammatical.
Though expressions such as \(tu^{231}\ ni^{231}\) ‘this one’, \(tu^{231}\ bok^{55}\) ‘the big one’ are acceptable in Lakkja, the unacceptability of (112b) indicates that \(tu^{231}\) here is recognized as a noun rather than a classifier.

4.6 Possessive phrase and descriptive phrase

Possessive phrases and descriptive phrases are among the most significant frames of the noun phrases.

4.6.1 Possessive phrase

In Lakkja possessive phrases, the possessor generally precedes the possessee. This differs from many other Kam-Tai languages. There are four constructions that designate a possessive phrase in Lakkja: (i) ‘possessor + possessee’; (ii) ‘possessor + ka^{11} + possessee’, where the structural particle \(ka^{11}\), functioning as a possessive marker, is applied to link the possessor and the possessee; (iii) ‘possessee + kwei^{51} + possessor’, where a Chinese loan verb \(kwei^{51}\) (from Chinese \(guī\)) ‘belong’ is used as a possessive verb; (iii) ‘possessor + mi^{231} + possessee’, where a native possessive verb \(mi^{231}\) ‘have’ is used to link the words. The following examples illustrate:

\[(113) \quad a. \ tsǐ^{51} \ at^{55} \ jen^{11} \ kjā:u^{24} \ bok^{55} \quad \text{‘my elder sister’}\]
\[1SG \quad \text{elder sister}\]
\[b. \ ta^{231} \ jū:i^{231} \ ma^{11} \quad \text{‘our uncle’s horse’}\]
\[1PL \quad \text{uncle} \quad \text{horse}\]
\[c. \ ma^{231} \ ka^{11} \ seu^{51} \quad \text{‘your book’}\]
\[2SG \quad \text{POSS} \quad \text{book}\]
\[d. \ tsǐ^{51} \ puk^{55} \ mie^{231} \quad \text{‘my feet and hands’}\]
\[1SG \quad \text{foot} \quad \text{hand}\]
Though there is a strong typological pattern that inalienable possession requires fewer morphological markers, it is worth noting that Lakkja seems to have no distinction between alienable and inalienable possession. They share the same morpho-syntactic features such as morphological markers and word order. In other words, it is felicitous to say $tsi^{51} seu^{51}$ and $tsi^{51} ka^{11} seu^{51}$ ‘my book’. However, it is found that elder generations often use expressions without the possessive marker $ka^{11}$ while younger generations and well-educated people tend to add $ka^{11}$ in possessive constructions as a result of contact with Chinese.

§7.8 will give a further discussion on possessive sentences.

### 4.6.2 Descriptive phrase

Lakkja descriptive phrases can be formed through three constructions. To start with, the construction ‘head noun + modifier’ is the prototypical native word order for descriptive phrases. In this frame, no elements are required to link them, and the modifier slot can be filled by simple adjectives, nouns, verbs and/or demonstratives. Complex elements, such as pronouns, verb phrases, noun phrases, are also allowed to occur in the modifier slot. Examples are as follows.

(114) a. $nuŋ^{11} kjei^{51} bok^{55}$ ‘eldest son’
    child   male  old
b. $kjo:n^{24} tsei^{55} lou^{11} ni^{231}$ ‘this grand forest’
    CLF   tree   big   this
c. $lak^{24} tu^{331} khũ^{51} lam^{51} ni^{231}$ ‘this black pig of his’
    3SG  CLF   pig   black   this
d. $kou^{24} tsaj^{51}$ ‘steamed rice’
    rice   steam
e. $tu^{331} mlok^{55} pon^{55}$ ‘flying bird(s)’
    CLF   bird   fly
It is worth noting that (114f) may have different interpretations in various contexts. It can be translated into a noun phrase ‘that very beautiful girl’, as shown above, while we can also regard it as a complete sentence ‘That girl is very beautiful’, where the copula verb ‘be’ is omitted. Therefore, to avoid semantic ambiguity, Lakkja tends to place the demonstrative at the end of a descriptive phrase, with all the other simple modifiers standing between the head noun and the demonstrative. Moreover, to avoid the modifier slot becoming too long or too complicated, it is also a tendency to place some of the modifiers before the head noun. As for (114), it is also grammatically acceptable to say han⁵¹ ?o:n⁵⁵ tu²³¹ nuŋ¹¹ kjäːu²⁴ yan²⁳¹ (very - beautiful - CLF - child - female - that ), as (115d).

Moreover, the ‘modifier + ka¹¹ + head noun’ construction is found to be more flexible and productive as a descriptive phrase. In this construction, the particle ka¹¹ functions as genitive enclitic to mark a premodifier. This frame allows various elements or phrases to fill the modifier slot such as nouns, noun phrases, adjectives, pronouns, verbs, verb phrases, prepositional/directional phrase, among others.

(115)  

a. tsi⁵¹  ka¹¹  siːu⁵¹  
1SG  PART  hand script

b. lak²⁴  tsaːj²⁴  ka¹¹  wo²¹⁴  
3SG  say  PART  words

c. ou¹¹  tsiːɛ⁵¹  ka¹¹  phla⁵¹  
inside  river  PART  fish

‘fish in the river’

d. ŋin²⁴  tiːu²³¹  hou²⁴  oːn⁵⁵  ka¹¹  tsun²³¹  koːj⁵⁵  
one  CLF  very  beautiful  PART  skirt  red

‘a very beautiful red skirt’

e. pɛk²⁴  poːm⁵¹  poːm⁵¹  ka¹¹  kou²⁴  
white  SUF  SUF  PART  rice

‘shining white rice’
In addition, *in* is also a descriptive phrase marker, as shown in (116a), but it is a lot less frequently used than *ka*. *in* may function as a nominaliser as well, as (116b). §4.7.1 will give a further discussion on nominalisation.

(116) a. *lak* *kjai* *in* *na:*ŋ ‘younger brother’s clothes’
   younger brother PART clothes
b. *tsi* *in* *lai* ‘Mine is good.’
   1SG PART good

Also, a simple construction of ‘modifier + head noun’ is grammatical in Lakkja, which can be analysed as a frame omitting the genitive enclitic *ka* in ‘modifier + *ka* + head noun’ construction. Furthermore, such frame is obviously influenced by Chinese grammar. For example, (117c) is a phrase borrowed from Chinese words *yī hòu* ‘future’ and *shēng huó* ‘life’.

(117) a. *taj* *huo:*ŋ *lay* ‘the mountain in the east’
   east direction mountain
b. *pie:*ŋ *ni* *lay* ‘the mountain over here’
   surface this mountain
c. *hau* *sən* *hu* ‘life in the future’
   future life
d. *ŋo* *pei* *nuŋ* *jiːe* ‘five-year-old child/children’
   five year child young

4.7 Nominalisation and relative clause

Nominalisation and relative clauses are of vital importance in generating noun phrases.

4.7.1 Nominalisation

Lakkja nominalisation is formed with two structural particles: *in* and *ka:i*, whose function is to nominalise verbs and phrases. Their function as nominalisers is somewhat similar to suffix, bringing word class changes or semantic transformation.

*in* is a native Lakkja nominalising possessive marker and is the most frequently used
nominaliser. It can occur in both positive and negative sentences. Examples are as follows.

(118) a. $tsi^{31}$ $in^{24}$ $lai^{51}$
    1SG PART good
    ‘Mine is good.’

b. $lak^{24}$ $bok^{55}$ $kjei^{51}$ $in^{24}$ $hwăi^{51}$ $lai^{51}$
    elder brother PART NEG good
    ‘Elder brother’s is not good.’

c. $nam^{55}$ $liek^{11}$ $ni^{231}$ $tok^{55}$ $ma^{231}$ $in^{24}$
    CLF house this be 2SG PART
    ‘This house is yours.’

d. $ti^{231}$ $tok^{55}$ $ma^{231}$ $in^{24}$, $la:n^{231}$ $tok^{55}$ $lak^{24}$ $in^{24}$
    here be 2SG PART there be 3SG PART
    ‘Yours is here, his/hers is there.’

$ka:i^{24}$ has similar function, but it only occurs in negative sentences.

(119) $pan^{24}$ $seu^{61}$ $ni^{231}$ $hwăi^{51}$ $tuk^{24}$ $tsi^{51}$ $ka:i^{24}$
    CLF book this NEG be 1SG PART
    ‘This book is not mine.’

Furthermore, it never leads to different interpretations though $in^{24}$ has both function as a nominaliser and as a genitive enclitic in descriptive phrase, as discussed in §4.6.2. Native people tend to use the traditional and widespread function of $in^{24}$ in everyday conversations. To be more specific, $in^{24}$ is generally regarded as a nominaliser, while $ka^{11}$ as a marker of descriptive phrase. Take (118a) for an instance. Since the adjective ‘good’ and the noun ‘kindness’ share the same form $lai^{51}$ in Lakkja, it is impossible to distinguish between ‘mine is good’ and ‘my kindness’ simply in terms of word classes. In this case, native speakers will conventionally use $ka^{11}$, that is, $tsi^{51}$ $ka^{11}$ $lai^{51}$, to convey the meaning ‘my kindness’, and $in^{24}$ for ‘mine is good’ as in (118a), while the nominaliser function of $in^{24}$ is not under consideration for such cases.

4.7.2 Relative clause

Lakkja relative clauses are usually formed with the descriptive marker $ka^{11}$ and the demonstrative pronoun $ṇa:n^{231}$ ‘that’. As shown in the following formula, the relativiser $ka^{11}$
occurs between the modifying clause and the modified noun phrase, while the marker \( \eta an^{231} \) follows the modified NP. The descriptive marker \( {\text{ka}}^{11} \) may be left out without affecting the grammaticality of the construction (120b).

\[
\text{modifying clause} \quad (+ {\text{ka}}^{11}) \quad + \text{NP} \quad + \eta an^{231}
\]

Premodifying relative clauses of this kind could be the result of language contact with Chinese.

(120) a. \( \text{wan}^{231} \eta jam^{11} \text{ ma}^{231} \text{ wei}^{55} \text{ ka}^{11} \text{ lak}^{24} \eta jùn^{231} \eta an^{231} \text{ pai}^{51} \text{ lie:u}^{24} \)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{yesterday} & \quad 2\text{SG} & \text{see} & \text{PART} & \text{CLF} & \text{person} & \text{that} & \text{go} & \text{PART} \\
\end{align*}
\]

‘That person you saw yesterday has left.’

b. \( \text{tsi}^{51} \ kjap^{24} \text{ wei}^{11} \text{ phã}^{55} \text{ tu}^{231} \text{ ma}^{11} \eta an^{231} \text{ plei}^{51} \text{ lie:u}^{24} \)

\[
\begin{align*}
1\text{SG} & \quad \text{just now} & \text{buy} & \text{back} & \text{CLF} & \text{horse} & \text{that} & \text{die} & \text{PART} \\
\end{align*}
\]

‘That horse which I bought back just now is dead.’

Relative clause may function as subject (121a) and object (121b) in a sentence. However, when occurring as the semantic object, it is often raised to the beginning of the sentence (121c).

(121) a. \( \text{lak}^{24} \text{ wan}^{231} \eta jam^{11} \text{ ji:p}^{24} \text{ kjɔm}^{214} \text{ khwã}^{55} \eta an^{231} \)

\[
\begin{align*}
3\text{SG} & \quad \text{yesterday} & \text{pickle} & \text{CLF} & \text{pickled vegetables} & \text{that} \\
\text{li:t}^{11} & \quad \text{lei}^{11} & \text{pai}^{51} & \text{lie:u}^{24} & \text{fall} & \text{descend} & \text{go} & \text{PART} \\
\end{align*}
\]

‘The pot of pickled vegetables that he made yesterday has been laid down.’

b. \( \text{tsi}^{51} \ hjiːu^{24} \eta nã:i^{51} \text{ ma}^{231} \text{ at}^{55} \text{ ou}^{11} \text{ kai}^{51} \text{ khjãŋ}^{51} \)

\[
\begin{align*}
1\text{SG} & \quad \text{know} & \text{2\text{SG} at} & \text{inside} & \text{town} & \text{meet} \\
\text{tu}^{231} & \quad \text{nuŋ}^{11} & \eta an^{231} & \text{CLF} & \text{child} & \text{that} \\
\end{align*}
\]

‘I know the child that you met in town.’

c. \( \text{tsi}^{51} \text{ kap}^{55} \text{ ma}^{231} \text{ tsuːːn}^{24} \text{ ka}^{11} \text{ wɔ}^{214} \eta an^{231} \text{ ma}^{231} \)

\[
\begin{align*}
1\text{SG} & \quad \text{and} & \text{2\text{SG say} PART word} & \text{that} & \text{2\text{SG} \text{NEG spread exit go} \text{PART} } \\
\text{ei}^{24} & \quad 	ext{tsuːːn}^{24} & \text{uk}^{55} & \text{pai}^{51} & \text{pɔ}^{24} & \text{NEG} & \text{spread} & \text{exit} & \text{go} & \text{PART} \\
\end{align*}
\]

‘Those words that I told you, don’t spread (them) around.’
Chapter 5
The Verb Phrase

The verb phrase may be composed of only a single verb or main and auxiliary verbs and optional modifiers. This chapter focuses on verbs as heads of verb phrases in Lakkja. As one of the most significant word classes, like many other Tai-Kadai languages, Lakkja verbs lack inflection and grammatical agreement of the type found in Indo-European languages, but there is a rich system of temporal-aspectual marking to designate temporal and aspectual meanings. Some verbs have dual or multiple membership. Verb concatenation or serialization exhibits various types of semantic relations when they occur in different syntactic positions. When the notion of head is considered, a number of common verbs display interesting syntactic features. Verbs of this type have a heavy function load in the verb phrase.

In the following sections, we will first discuss the criteria for verb-hood and verb subcategorization, and then move on to some verb classes and the syntactics in the verb phrase. These will be followed by detailed discussions on serial verb constructions and other syntactic constructions of verb phrases. Temporal-aspectual system will be discussed in the last section before a summary of this chapter.

5.1 Criteria for verb-hood and verb subcategorization

5.1.1 Criteria for verb-hood

In his Grammar of Lahu, Matisoff (1973:193) proposes a key criterion for verb-hood: the ability to take a negator and/or verb particles and to be modified by adverbs or adverbiaal expressions. This is also true of Lakkja. In the Lakkja case, all and only verbs may directly follow the negators ɲ̍ or hwã:i. Verbs may also be modified by adverbiaal expressions which often occur preverbally, and verb particles that occur post-verbally.

It is important to note that adjectives, also called adjectival verbs according to scholars like Matisoff and Chao, are often included in the class of verbs, forming a subclass of the verbs. This is a shared feature in many Sino-Tibetan and Tai-Kadai languages where adjectives distinguish from action verbs largely on semantics, while it is usually hard to spot their syntactic differences. They are generally translatable into English adjectives or past participles since they refer to states or qualities rather than actions.
Syntactically we can still list some differences between action verbs and adjectives in Lakkja. For one thing, action verbs occur freely with all verb particles, while adjectives do not combine with the reciprocal circumfix jak⁵⁵... jak⁵⁵... or the reciprocal prefix pok²⁴. For another, considering reduplication and intensification, adjectives behave somewhat differently in morphology as well as in semantic and syntactic functions.

Adjectives will be further discussed in Chapter 6.

5.1.2 Verb subcategorization

Lakkja verbs may be categorized in terms of different criteria, as follows:

5.1.2.1 By transitivity

Transitivity designates the number of core noun phrases, or arguments, that a verb may combine with in a clause. There are primarily three relations in use: S for intransitive subject, A for transitive subject, and O for transitive object.

Traditionally, transitivity is analysed as a syntactic feature of verbs. However, since Lakkja also recognizes grammatical passivity that is formed without a passive marker, both semantic and syntactic criteria will need to be considered in describing transitivity of Lakkja verbs. See more discussions in §8.6.

In terms of transitivity, Lakkja verbs can be basically categorized into transitive and intransitive verbs. On top of that, there are a number of ambitransitive verbs, that is, verbs that can be used both transitively and intransitively. Examples are as follows:

**Transitive:**

(1) a. \textit{lo:m}⁴¹ ‘look’
b. \textit{kut}⁵⁵ ‘beat’
c. \textit{fen}⁵⁵ ‘believe’
d. \textit{i}⁵⁵ ‘like’
e. \textit{ha}⁵¹ ‘bully’
f. \textit{tsie:ŋ}¹¹ ‘give birth (to a child)’
g. \textit{tay}²³ ‘come’
h. \textit{wei}¹¹ ‘buy’
i. \textit{kjep}⁵⁵ ‘clear up; pack’
j. \textit{fie:ŋ}³⁴ ‘think; want’
Intransitive:

(2)  
a. pu²⁺³  ‘float’  
b. kjou²⁺⁴  ‘fall (on the ground)’  
c. ṭём⁵¹  ‘vibrate, tremble’  
d. pon⁵⁵  ‘fly’  
e. ɲen⁵¹  ‘echo’  
f. tse:ᵣ²⁴  ‘ache, sore’  
g. plei⁵¹  ‘die’  
h. tshu:n⁵⁵  ‘cough’

Ambitransitive:

(3)  
a. pai⁵¹  ‘go’  
b. tsen⁵¹  ‘eat’  
c. hê:m²⁺⁴  ‘laugh’  
d. ha:i⁵¹  ‘open’  
e. ja:k¹¹  ‘study’  
f. fie²⁺⁴  ‘write’

Some illustrative sentences for ambitransitive verbs are given in (4). fie⁵¹  ‘write’ in (4a) is used intransitively, while it functions as a transitive verb in (4b). More examples will be given in the following sections.

(4)  
a. lak²⁺⁴  hjii:v²⁺⁴  fie⁵¹  hjii:v²⁺⁴  fuː:n⁵⁵  
3SG  can  write  can  calculate  
‘He can write and calculate.’  
b. lak²⁺⁴  hjii:v²⁺⁴  fie⁵¹  fei⁵¹  
3SG  can  write  poem  
‘He can write poems.’

The following paragraphs will give more discussions and examples on transitivity (including mono-transitivity and di-transitivity), intransitivity, and ambitransitivity.

A. Mono-transitivity and di-transitivity

Transitive verbs can be further divided into monotransitive and ditransitive. Monotransitive verbs require two participants: a transitive subject (A) and a single direct object (O), while
ditransitive verbs generally take three arguments: a transitive subject (A), a direct object (O1) and an indirect object (O2).

In Lakkja, the agent of a monotransitive clause usually occurs in the subject slot, and the patient in the object slot, typically following the SVO constituent order (AVO, according to Dixon). Examples are as follows:

(5)

a. tsi⁵¹ hji:u²⁴ tsi⁵¹ tie²³¹
   1SG  know  1SG  self
   ‘I know myself.’

b. lak²⁴ hji:u²⁴ tsa:ŋ²⁴ lak²⁴ tsou¹¹
   3SG  can  speak  Chinese
   ‘He can speak Chinese.’

c. lak²⁴ pai⁵¹ a:u⁵¹ lak²⁴ fan⁵¹
   3SG  go  pick  peach
   ‘He went to pick peaches.’

However, there are reversible verbs (namely verbs of the type the patient precedes the agent, as in English ‘The parliament passed the bill’ vs. ‘The bill passed the parliament’, and ‘A picture is hanging on the wall’ vs. ‘On the wall hangs a picture’. The sentence meaning is generally determined by the semantic relationship between the arguments. Take (6a) as an example. A patient (‘wall’) designating the container or locative occurs in the subject slot, while the agent (‘picture’) performing the act (‘hang’) occurs in the object slot.

(6)

a. pie:ŋ²¹⁴ tie:ŋ²³¹ hjie:n⁵¹ kwak⁵⁵ wuo²¹⁴
   surface  wall  upside  hang  picture
   ‘On the wall hangs a picture.’

b. wuo²¹⁴ kwak⁵⁵ at⁵⁵ pie:ŋ²¹⁴ tie:ŋ²³¹ hjie:n⁵¹
   picture  hang  at, on  surface  wall  upside
   ‘A picture is hanging on the wall.’

c. hjie:n⁵¹ ta:i²³¹ te:t⁵⁵ ŋi⁵¹ lоŋ⁵¹ ka²⁴ lai²¹⁴
   upside  table  put  so  many  thing
   ‘On the table lays many books.’

d. ʒi⁵¹ lоŋ⁵¹ ka²⁴ lai²¹⁴ te:t⁵⁵ ta:i²³¹ hjie:n⁵¹
   so  many  thing  put  table  upside
   ‘So many things were placed on table.’
Ditransitive verbs, also called double object construction, typically occur in the frame [subject + verb + indirect object + direct object].

(7)  
a. *ne*¹¹  *ple*⁵¹  *pən*⁵¹  *li:u*²⁴  *kou*²⁴  *kju*⁵¹  *tsou*²⁴?
  who     sell    give  2PL    corn    seed
  ‘Who sold you the corn seeds?’

b. *tsi*⁵¹  *pən*⁵¹  *lak*²⁴  *ŋin*²⁴  *pən*²⁴  *səu*⁵¹
  1SG    give  3SG    one    CLF    book
  ‘I gave him a book.’

c. *tsi*⁵¹  *la:m*¹¹  *pən*⁵¹  *lak*²⁴  *in*²⁴  *pe:k*²⁴  *man*⁵¹  *ŋjen*²³¹
  1SG    lend  give  3SG    one    hundred    silver    dollar
  ‘I lent one hundred silver dollars to him.’

B. Intransitivity

Intransitive verbs require only one argument functioning as subject.

(8)  
a. *lak*²⁴  *plei*⁵¹  *lo*⁵⁵
  3SG    die    PART
  ‘He died.’

b. *lak*²⁴  *pa*²¹⁴  *hɛ̃*²⁴  *ŋjοm*¹¹  *ŋjοm*¹¹
  grandma    smile    SUF
  ‘Grandma smiled.’

C. Ambitransitivity

Like many other Tai-Kadai languages, a Lakkja ambitransitive verb does not necessarily require a direct object. Such verbs can be used transitively or intransitively, as illustrated by the following examples.

(9)  
a. *ma*²³¹  *jeu*²¹⁴  *tsen*⁵¹  *ŋin*²⁴  *wū:n*²⁴  *kou*²⁴
  2SG    again    eat    one    CLF    rice
  ‘Have one more bowl of rice, will you?’

b. *tau*³¹  *tsen*³¹  *hwa:*³⁵  *niŋ*²⁴  *pa*¹¹
  1PL    eat    quick    some    PART
  ‘Let’s eat quickly.’
c. *ei*₂⁴ *pai*₅¹ *piː:n*₅¹ *tsiè*₅¹

\[ \text{NEG go side river} \]

‘Don’t go to the riverside.’

d. *ma*²³¹ *pai*₅¹ *hwāː*²⁵¹ *pai*₅¹

\[ \text{2SG go NEG go} \]

‘Will you go?’

### 5.1.2.2 By morphological types

Based on morphological structures, verbs can be categorized into monomorphemic verbs and compound verbs. Compound verbs can be further divided into coordinate verbs and subordinate verbs.

#### A. Monomorphemic verbs

Such verbs may be transitive, intransitive, or ambitransitive. They constitute the majority of Lakkja verbs. Examples are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. <em>fieːŋ</em>²⁴</td>
<td>‘think’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. <em>tok</em>⁵⁵</td>
<td>‘be (positive sentence)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. <em>ʔuk</em>²⁴</td>
<td>‘wash’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. <em>koːm</em>²⁴</td>
<td>‘dare’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. <em>plei</em>⁵¹</td>
<td>‘die’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. <em>tsau</em>²³¹</td>
<td>‘worry’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. <em>hēːm</em>²⁴</td>
<td>‘smile; laugh’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### B. Compound verbs

A large part of Lakkja compound verbs are Chinese loan words. Native compound verbs comprise a relatively smaller number. Intransitive verbs may be converted into transitive or causative verbs through compounding. Lakkja verb compounds are exclusively binomial, and the order of the elements, which may be either free or bound, may never be reversed. A compound verb may consist of verbs, nouns, and/or adjectives. For example:

**i. Verb + verb:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. <em>tsaːŋ</em>²⁴ <em>hēːm</em>²⁴</td>
<td>‘tease, joke, make fun of’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>say smile</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. <em>pok</em>²⁴ <em>kuː</em>⁵⁵</td>
<td>‘fight’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do beat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ii. Verb + adjective:

(12) a. fa:t²⁴\( \rightarrow \) khja:n²⁴
    generate hot
    ‘have a fever’

b. tsa:ŋ²⁴\( \rightarrow \) pla:u²³¹
    say frivolous
    ‘boast’

iii. Verb + noun:

(13) a. tsuŋ⁵¹\( \rightarrow \) sen⁵¹
    decorate body
    ‘dress up’

b. ma²⁴\( \rightarrow \) tei²⁴
    open mouth
    ‘yawn’

iv. Noun + adjective:

(14) a. pla⁵¹\( \rightarrow \) khja:n²⁴
    eye hot
    ‘envy’

b. tei²⁴\( \rightarrow \) log⁵¹
    mouth many
    ‘chatter’

The above examples show that the elements of a compound may not have equal effect on the whole meaning of the compound. Thus, Lakkja compound verbs can be further subcategorised into two subtypes: coordinate and subordinate.

v. Coordinate verbs:

(15) a. ey⁵¹\( \rightarrow \) ko:i⁵¹
    should ought to
    ‘should’

b. ta:p²⁴\( \rightarrow \) njen²¹⁴
    answer respond
    ‘answer’

c. se:n⁵¹\( \rightarrow \) kji⁵¹
    select lift
    ‘elect’

vi. Subordinate verbs:

(16) a. mi¹¹\( \rightarrow \) tan²³¹
    ascend come
    ‘come up’

b. tse:k²⁴\( \rightarrow \) ha:i⁵¹
    leave open
    ‘leave’
Sometimes, the meaning of a compound verb is not deducible from its elements. Such sequences may be referred to as ‘idiomatic’ (Matisoff 1973:210). Word classes participating in forming idioms include verbs, nouns, adjectives, among others.

(17) a. pla^1 khja:n^24 ‘envy’
    eye hot
b. pok^24 kony^24 pa^24 ‘marry, get married’
do father mother
c. tsa:n^24 pla:u^231 ‘boast’
speak frivolous
d. niŋ^55 blie:n^55 ‘be in confinement in childbirth’
sit month
e. o:p^11 fu:n^55 ‘value for money’
suit calculate

5.1.2.3 By semantic and syntactic functions

In terms of their meanings and functions, verbs can also be categorized into action verbs, psychological verbs, causative verbs, existential verbs, copula verbs, modal-auxiliary verbs and directional verbs. Examples are as follows:

i. Action verbs:
(18) a. tsen^51 ‘eat’
b. ka:m^231 ‘ask’
c. ʔuk^24 ‘wash’
d. phie^51 ‘feed’
e. sa:i^55 ‘to dry (in the sun)’
f. kou^214 ‘wait’
g. ou^11 ‘enter’
h. tse:k^24 ha:i^51 ‘leave’
i. kju^51 ‘wash (in a pan or basket)’
j. hē:m^24 ‘smile; laugh’
ii. Psychological verbs:

(19) a. ʔi\textsuperscript{55}  ‘love’

b. tsə:n\textsuperscript{55} hu:ɬ\textsuperscript{51}  ‘sorrow’

c. fie:\textsuperscript{24}  ‘think’

d. pok\textsuperscript{24} phlem\textsuperscript{51}  ‘forget’

e. he\textsuperscript{51}  ‘fear’

f. hji:u\textsuperscript{24}  ‘understand’

g. lu:ɬ\textsuperscript{55}  ‘regret’

h. fen\textsuperscript{55}  ‘believe’

i. tsau\textsuperscript{231}  ‘worry’

j. si:u\textsuperscript{24} fe:\textsuperscript{51}  ‘take care, be cautious’

iii. Causative verbs (lexical causatives):

(20) a. njie:ɬ\textsuperscript{214}  ‘let’ (loan from Chinese 让 ràng)

b. em\textsuperscript{231}  ‘let’

c. pan\textsuperscript{51}  ‘give, let, allow’

d. au\textsuperscript{51}  ‘require, want’

e. tei\textsuperscript{11}  ‘call’ (from noun ‘mouth’)

f. eu\textsuperscript{11}  ‘call’

g. le:\textsuperscript{214}  ‘call’

iv. Copula verbs:

(21) a. tuk\textsuperscript{24}  ‘be (used in negative sentence)’

b. tok\textsuperscript{55}  ‘be (used in positive sentence)’

c. fie:\textsuperscript{55}  ‘resemble, be like’

d. ka:m\textsuperscript{231}  ‘be named/called’

e. pok\textsuperscript{24}  ‘be, work as, serve as’ (native)

f. ta:ɬ\textsuperscript{51}  ‘be, work as, serve as’ (Chinese loan)

g. mi\textsuperscript{231}  ‘have, become, be’

v. Existential and possessive verb:

(22) mi\textsuperscript{231}  ‘there be, have, exist’
vi. Modal auxiliary verbs:

(23)  

a. ko:m²⁴  ‘dare (to)’

b. njū:n²¹⁴ (variant: nju:n²⁴)  ‘hope, wish; be willing’

c. njū:n²¹⁴ i³⁵  ‘be willing’

d. ñar²⁴  ‘be willing to; be ready to’

e. ey⁵¹ ko:i⁵¹  ‘should, must’

f. ta:ñ⁵¹  ‘should, ought to’

g. au⁵¹  ‘want/intend/desire to’

h. ha:i²⁴  ‘will, be going to’

i. hjī:u²⁴  ‘can, be able to; be likely to, be sure to’

vii. Directional verbs:

(24)  

a. tan⁰²³¹  ‘come’

b. pai⁵¹  ‘go’

c. ha:⁵⁵  ‘return, come back’

d. pha:⁵⁵  ‘return, go back’

e. ou¹¹  ‘enter’

f. uk⁵⁵  ‘go/come out; leave’

g. mi¹¹  ‘go up; get on; ascend’

h. lei¹¹  ‘go down; get off; descend’

The difference between ha:⁵⁵ and pha:⁵⁵ lies in their semantics: ha:⁵⁵ typically denotes a movement that is carried out towards the speaker, while pha:⁵⁵ signals one that is away from the speaker. Thus, ha:⁵⁵ ‘come back’ never co-occurs with pai⁵¹ ‘go’ as a verb complement. Likewise, pha:⁵⁵ ‘go back’ never co-occurs with tan⁰²³¹ ‘come’.

(25)  

a. pha:⁵⁵ pai⁵¹  ‘go back’

b. ou¹¹ tan⁰²³¹  ‘come in’

c. ha:⁵⁵ tan⁰²³¹  ‘come back’

Like many other Tai-Kadai languages, Lakkja has multiple words that distinguish different types of ‘carry’, ‘wear (clothes, ornament)’, ‘wash (hair, clothes, dishes)’, among others. These are represented by different verb forms, which reflects a common feature among Tai-Kadai speakers who divide each of these categories into subtypes. As such, what is regarded as one
type of action and presented by only one term in languages like English, may be viewed by
other speakers as different types of activity, manifested through different verbs. For example:

(26) a. me$^{55}$
    ‘carry sb./sth. on the back’

b. u:n$^{51}$
    ‘carry on shoulder’

c. kjie:$\eta$$^{55}$
    ‘carry by hand, lift’

d. kam$^{51}$
    ‘grasp, take hold of, hold in hand’

e. $\eta$$^{231}$
    ‘carry, take’

f. wu:t$^{24}$
    ‘carry in the arms’

g. ka:$\eta$$^{51}$
    ‘carry by two or more people’

h. te:md$^{14}$
    ‘wear (shoes)’

i. te:mn$^{24}$
    ‘wear (clothes)’

j. kœm$^{55}$
    ‘wear (a hat)’

k. ta:it$^{55}$
    ‘wear (a bracelet/necklace)’

l. tsie:$\eta$$^{11}$
    ‘(of human) give birth to (a child)’

m. lei$^{11}$
    ‘(of animal) give birth to (young)’

n. foŋ$^{55}$
    ‘lay (egg)’

o. tshâŋ$^{55}$
    ‘measure (volume, weight)’

p. so$^{51}$
    ‘measure (cloth, i.e. length)’

q. wak$^{24}$
    ‘wash (clothes, quilt)’

r. huk$^{24}$
    ‘wash (dishes, vegetables, table, face, body)’

Verbs may be modified by adjectives/adverbs, which can either precede or follow the verb.
Below is a sample of the adjectives and adverbs in this category.

(27) a. loŋ$^{51}$
    ‘more, much’

b. si:ur$^{24}$
    ‘few, less’

c. khjam$^{51}$
    ‘early’

d. tsi$^{231}$
    ‘late’

e. ba:$\eta$$^{51}$
    ‘before’
5.2 Verb classes in verb phrase

Among various verbs mentioned above, several classes are of vital importance in verb phrases. These may include copula verbs, existential and possessive verbs, modal auxiliary verbs and directional verbs.

5.2.1 Copula verbs

There are seven candidates that can be analysed as copula verbs in Lakkja. Each possesses its specific functions and selects different construction types.

(29)  a. tuk^{24}   ‘be’ (negative sentence)
b. tok^{55}   ‘be’ (positive sentence)
c. fieŋ^{55}   ‘resemble, be like’
d. ko^{24}   ‘remain’
e. ka:m^{23i}   ‘be named/called’
f. pok^{24}   ‘be, work as, serve as’ (native)
g. ta:ŋ^{5i}   ‘be, work as, serve as’ (Chinese loan)
h. $mi^{231}$ ‘have, become, be’

tok$^{55}$ is a copula verb for positive circumstances and $tuk^{24}$ for negative, though the distinction is getting lost.

(30)  
- a. $tsi^{51}$ $tok^{55}$ $nam^{55}$ $ba:n^{24}$ $mi^{231}$ $njũn^{231}$  
  1SG be CLF village this person  
  ‘I am from this village.’
- b. $wan^{231}$ $ŋa:i^{24}$ $tok^{55}$ $fa:m^{51}$ $ŋjor^{24}$ $tsep^{24}$ $yo^{11}$  
  today be three month ten five  
  ‘Today is March 15th.’
- c. $lak^{11}$ $nu^{231}$ $hwã:i^{51}$ $tuk^{24}$ $tsi^{51}$ $at^{55}$ $jen^{11}$ $kjã:u^{24}$ $bok^{55}$  
  3SG that NEG be 1SG sister big  
  ‘That person is not my elder sister.’

$fieŋ^{55}$ carries the meaning ‘be like, resemble’.

(31)  
- a. $ma^{231}$ $fieŋ^{55}$ $nam^{55}$ $huɔ^{51}$  
  2SG be like CLF flower  
  ‘You are like a flower!’
- b. $lak^{11}$ $fieŋ^{55}$ $lak^{24}$ $pe^{55}$  
  3SG be like 3SG father  
  ‘He resembles his father.’

$ko^{24}$ has the meaning ‘remain to be’.

(32)  
- a. $lak^{24}$ $kja^{24}$ $ko^{24}$ $lak^{24}$ $kja^{24}$ $et^{24}$ $pi:n^{55}$  
  Lakkja remain Lakkja NEG change  
  ‘Lakkja people remain the same and unchanged.’

$ka:m^{231}$ can function as a copula verb with the meaning ‘be named/called’. It may also function as a transitive verb of speaking meaning “to call, ask”.

(33)  
- $ma^{231}$ $ka:m^{231}$ $lak^{24}$ $ja:n^{51}$ $ke^{214}$  
  2SG call what name PART  
  ‘What’s your name?’
\textit{pok}^{24}, derived from the lexical verb 'do', can also be analysed as a copula verb carrying the meaning 'be, work as, serve as' (34a-b). In addition to \textit{pok}^{24}, the Chinese loan verb \textit{ta:ŋ}^{51} 'work as, serve as' also has a similar function as a copula verb (34c).

(34)  
\begin{align*} 
\text{a. } & t\text{u}^{231} \quad t\text{s}i^{51} \quad \textit{pok}^{24} \quad \text{lak}^{24} \text{ } n\text{a:ŋ}^{55} \\
& \text{take \ 1SG \ be \ fool} \\
& \text{‘Take me as a fool.’} \\
\text{b. } & \text{lak}^{24} \quad \textit{pok}^{24} \quad \text{tie}^{214} \quad \text{ta:i}^{24} \quad \text{pe:u}^{51} \\
& \text{1SG \ serve as \ \text{ASP} \ representative} \\
& \text{‘He has been a representative.’} \\
\text{c. } & \text{lak}^{24} \quad \text{ta:ŋ}^{51} \quad \text{kua:n}^{51} \quad \text{pai}^{51} \quad \text{lie:u}^{24} \\
& \text{1SG \ work as \ official \ go \ \text{PART}} \\
& \text{‘He went to work as an official.’} \\
\end{align*}

\textit{mi}^{231}, derived from the verb 'have', can also be used as a copula verb for illness and age. For example:

(35)  
\begin{align*} 
\text{a. } & \text{lak}^{24} \quad \text{joŋ}^{11} \quad \text{i}^{214} \quad \textit{mi}^{231} \quad \text{pi}^{24} \\
& \text{3SG \ easily \ become \ ill} \\
& \text{‘He is more likely to become ill.’} \\
\text{b. } & \text{lak}^{24} \quad \textit{mi}^{231} \quad \text{lok}^{24} \quad \text{pei}^{51} \quad \text{lie:u}^{24} \\
& \text{1SG \ be \ six \ age \ \text{PART}} \\
& \text{‘He is six years old.’} \\
\end{align*}

See §7.3 for further discussions on copula clauses.

5.2.2 Existential and possessive verbs

The canonical verb that expresses possessive meaning (36a) in Lakkja is the verb \textit{mi}^{231} which also conveys existential meaning (36b–d). Besides, it may convey relational meanings as well.

(36)  
\begin{align*} 
\text{a. } & t\text{u}^{11} \quad n\text{u}^{11} \quad \textit{mi}^{231} \quad \textit{mi}^{231} \quad n\text{i}^{24} \quad t\text{i:ŋ}^{231} \\
& \text{CLF \ child \ this \ have \ some \ money} \\
& \text{‘This child has some money.’} \\
\end{align*}
b. \(l^i231\) \(mi^{231}\) \(kh^u51\) \(la:i214\), \(hw^a:i51\) \(mi^{231}\) \(ei55\) \(kji55\)  
   here exist wild boar NEG exist muntjac  
   ‘There are wild boars. No muntjacs here.’

c. \(mi^{231}\) \(\eta^ju231\) \(ta^231\) \(la11\) \(ma^{231}\)  
   exist person come look for 2SG  
   ‘Someone is coming to see you.’

d. \(hjie:n51\) \(tsei55\) \(mi^{231}\) \(fa:m51\) \(tu^{231}\) \(mlok55\)  
   up tree exist three CLF bird  
   ‘There are three birds in the tree.’

e. \(ma^{231}\) \(mi^{231}\) \(at55\) \(jen11\) \(hw^a:i51\)  
   2SG exist brother NEG  
   ‘Do you have brothers?’

In a number of Tai languages, the verb ‘have’ can function as co-verb and occur with verbs like ‘grow’ and ‘keep (animals)’ to form compounds. However, Lakkja \(mi^{231}\) ‘have’ is not found to be used as such in my data.

Further discussion on existential and possessive constructions will be presented in §7.8.

5.2.3 Modal auxiliary verbs

Modal auxiliary verbs in Lakkja are not rich in amount, and some of them are borrowed from Chinese.

\(ko:m24\) ‘dare’ is a modal auxiliary verb indicating that the subject has the necessary courage or boldness to do something. Note that the constituent order of negator and \(ko:m24\) may affect the meaning of the sentence, as in (37c) and (37d).

(37)  
   a. \(tsi51\) \(\eta24\) \(ko:m24\) \(pai51\) \(la231\) \(ti231\) \(shojo55\)  
      1SG NEG dare go there take shotgun  
      ‘I don’t dare to go hunting there.’

   b. \(ma231\) \(ko:m24\) \(kap55\) \(tsi51\) \(pok24\) \(ta11\) \(hw^a:i51\)  
      2SG dare with 1SG do bet NEG  
      ‘Dare you make a bet with me?’

   c. \(lak24\) \(\eta24\) \(ko:m24\) \(pai51\)  
      3SG NEG dare go  
      ‘He does not [dare to go].’
(38)  

\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \text{tu}^{231} \text{ nun}^{11} \text{ ni}^{231} \text{ hji:u}^{24} \text{ kjai}^{231} \text{ lak}^{24} \text{ lou}^{11} \\
& \text{CLF child this can love dearly CLF old}
\end{align*}

‘The child is capable of taking good care of his parents.’

\begin{align*}
\text{b. } & \text{tsi}^{51} \text{ y}^{24} \text{ hji:u}^{24} \text{ tshien}^{55} \text{ ko}^{51} \\
& \text{1SG NEG can sing song}
\end{align*}

‘I can’t sing.’

\begin{align*}
\text{c. } & \text{lak}^{24} \text{ hji:u}^{24} \text{ tsuə:y}^{51} \text{ kha}^{51} \text{ la:i}^{214} \\
& \text{3SG can harness wild boar}
\end{align*}

‘He can harness wild boars.’

\begin{align*}
\text{d. } & \text{he}^{51} \text{ lak}^{24} \text{ hji:u}^{24} \text{ tan}^{231} \\
& \text{fear 3SG can come}
\end{align*}

‘I’m afraid that he will come.’

\begin{align*}
\text{e. } & \text{tsiŋ}^{231} \text{ tshai}^{51} \text{ hji:u}^{24} \text{ tie}^{214} \text{ njūn}^{231} \\
& \text{scabies will pass person}
\end{align*}

‘Scabies is contagious.’

Moreover, this item may occur with inanimate things as well (38e). While the subject is prototypically human or animate, non-human and/or inanimate subjects may also take this auxiliary verb.

\textit{nau}^{231} is also a Chinese loan modal verb for ability (39a) or possibility (39b). The negative use of this item refers to prohibition.

(39)  

\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \text{nau}^{11} \text{ naŋ}^{231} \text{ lai}^{231} \text{ ja}^{214} \\
& \text{ox can plough field}
\end{align*}

‘Oxen can plough.’
b. a₁²₁ ku:i⁵⁵ ni³²₁ nay²³¹ kjap⁵⁵ na:y¹¹
kind cloth this can cut (cloth, paper) clothes
‘This kind of cloth can be made into clothes.’

c. ma³²¹ ²⁴  nay²³¹ tseen⁵¹ kou²⁴ høy⁵⁵
2SG NEG can eat rice empty
‘You can’t take a free meal. (You can’t make a living without doing anything.)’

\(li²⁴\) is both a lexical verb and a modal verb which designates ability and possibility. As a lexical verb, it carries a meaning of ‘acquire, gain’. As a modal verb, it has similar semantic functions to \(nay²³¹\) but generally occurs after the main verb. Furthermore, \(li²⁴\) can combine with modal verb \(ko:m²⁴\) to form a \([ko:m²⁴ + \text{verb} + li²⁴]\) construction which has similar function to \(ko:m²⁴\) alone, as shown in (40d).

\[(40)\]

a. li²³¹ ²⁴ tsen⁵⁵ li²⁴ fom²⁴ ti:u⁵¹
here NEG cultivate can, able plantain
‘Plantains do not grow here.’

b. ma³²¹ pla¹¹ li²⁴ mi¹¹ hwà:i⁵¹
2SG climb can, able go up NEG
‘Can you climb up there?’

c. nau¹¹ lai³²¹ li²⁴ ja²¹⁴
ox plough can, able field
‘Oxen can plough.’

d. lak²⁴ tie³²¹ ko:m²⁴ pai⁵¹ li²⁴ ou¹¹ kja²⁴
3SG self dare go can, able enter mountain
‘He dares go into the mountains on his own.’

The verb \(au⁵¹\) has three meanings. As a lexeme, it means ‘want’, indicating that the subject wishes, needs, craves, demands, or desires for something (41a–b). Secondly, it can indicate an event which is about to happen (41c). Besides, \(au⁵¹\) can also indicate duty, propriety, expediency or deontic modality (41d). Cognate of this item is widely distributed across Tai-Kadai, suggesting that it is a pan-Kam-Tai etymon.

\[(41)\]

a. lak²⁴ ⁴⁵⁵ pai⁵¹
3SG want go
‘He wants to go.’
b. tsì⁵¹ au¹¹ ou¹¹, lak²⁴ ny²⁴ po:n⁵¹ tsì⁵¹ ou¹¹
1SG want enter 3SG NEG give 1SG enter
‘I want to go inside. He doesn’t allow me to go inside.’
c. bò:n⁵¹ au¹¹ lei¹¹ fen⁵¹ lie:u²⁴
sky be about to drop rain PART
‘It is going to rain.’
d. kji:n¹¹ lai²¹⁴ ni²³¹ ma²³¹ au¹¹ pa:n²¹⁴ lai¹¹ po²⁴
CLF matter this 2SG must handle good PART
‘You must handle this matter well.’

ŋju:n²⁴ (or ŋju:n²⁴ i⁵⁵) is a Chinese loan meaning “be willing to”, expressing volition.

(42) a. kji:n¹¹ lai²¹⁴ ni²³¹ ma²³¹ ŋju:n²⁴ pok²⁴ hwā:i⁵¹
CLF matter this 2SG be willing to do NEG
‘Would you like to do it?’
b. lak²⁴ ŋju:n²⁴ ne:m²³¹ tsì⁵¹ pai³¹
3SG be willing to follow 1SG go
‘He/she is willing to go with me.’

ŋay²⁴ has similar meaning to ŋju:n²⁴, conveying the idea of ‘disposed’ or ‘consenting’.

(43) a. lak²⁴ ny²⁴ ŋay²⁴ tan⁵³¹
3SG NEG be willing to come
‘He/she is not willing to come.’
b. lak²⁴ ŋay²⁴ tse⁵⁵ nuñ¹¹ kjā:u²⁴
3SG be willing to marry off daughter
‘He has agreed to marry off his daughter.’

ta:ŋ⁵¹ is an auxiliary verb translatable as ‘should, ought to’, expressing deontic modality.

(44) ta:ŋ⁵¹ tsa:ŋ²⁴ tei¹¹ tsa:ŋ²⁴, ny²⁴ ta:ŋ⁵¹ tsa:ŋ²⁴
should say PART say NEG should say
tei¹¹ ei²⁴ lu:ⁿ²¹⁴ tsa:ŋ²⁴
ADV NEG in a mess say
‘Say what you should say. Don’t talk carelessly about what you shouldn’t say.’
$ɛŋ^{51}$ ko:i$^{51}$, a loan from local Chinese dialect, also carries the deontic meaning ‘should, ought to’ (45a). It may also signal epistemic sense, conveying the speaker’s inference or assumption about the truthfulness of an event or situation (45b).

(45) a. ma$^{231}$ sen$^{51}$ lek$^{24}$ $ɛŋ^{51}$ ko:i$^{51}$ pai$^{51}$ ta:ŋ$^{51}$ piŋ$^{51}$

2SG body strength should go serve as soldier

‘You are strong, (so you) should join the army.’

b. lak$^{24}$ $ɛŋ^{51}$ ko:i$^{51}$ tok$^{55}$ lak$^{24}$ tsou$^{11}$

3SG should be Han Chinese

‘He should be a Han Chinese.’

5.2.4 Directional verbs

Lakkja has a rich system of verbs or verb phrases to designate locational and directional meanings. These can be divided into two subtypes: simple and compound.

Simple directional verbs include taŋ$^{231}$ ‘come’, pai$^{51}$ ‘go’, ha$^{55}$ ‘come back’, ou$^{11}$ ‘enter’, lei$^{11}$ ‘descend’, etc, as listed below. It is worth pointing out that directional verbs carry some deictic meanings, with the speaker as centre, designating that the entity being talked about is moving towards or away from the speaker or conceptually as such.

(46) a. taŋ$^{231}$ ‘come’

b. pai$^{51}$ ‘go’

c. ha$^{55}$ ‘return, come back’

d. pha$^{55}$ ‘return, go back’

e. ou$^{11}$ ‘enter’

f. uk$^{55}$ ‘go/come out; exit; appear’

g. mi$^{11}$ ‘go up; get on; ascend’

h. lei$^{11}$ ‘go down; get off; descend’

taŋ$^{231}$ ‘come’ and pai$^{51}$ ‘go’ may occur after other directional verbs to form compound directional verbs, for example:

(47) a. pha$^{55}$ pai$^{51}$ (come back - go) ‘go back’

b. ha$^{55}$ taŋ$^{231}$ (come back - come) ‘come back’

c. ou$^{11}$ pai$^{51}$ (enter - go) ‘go into’

d. ou$^{11}$ taŋ$^{231}$ (enter - come) ‘come into’
Simple and compound directional verbs often occur as verb complements, which generally indicate the direction, result of the act or event expressed by the verb in question.

When the main verb takes an object, simple directional verbs generally follow the object rather than occur immediately after the main verb, while compound directional complements either follow the object, or circumvent the object between the two elements of the compound. See §5.3 for more discussions.

5.3 Syntactic function of head verbs and verb phrases

Syntactically, Lakkja verb phrases and head verbs of them can function as subject (or head of the subject), predicate (or head of the predicate), object (or complement of another verb), verb complement, among others.
A. As subject or head of the subject

(50) a. \( \text{ŋ}^{51} \text{ pok}^{24} \text{ŋ}^{24} \text{lai}^{51} \)

   such   do   NEG   good

   ‘Doing it like this is not good. (It is no good to do things this way.)’

b. \( \text{ŋ}^{51} \text{ŋjaːu}^{214} \text{ pok}^{24} \text{pi}^{51} \text{jə}^{24} \text{lai}^{51} \)

   such   way   do   relatively   good

   ‘Doing things in this way is better.’

c. \( \text{tshieŋ}^{55} \text{ko}^{51} \text{p}^{\text{ə}} \text{n}^{51} \text{ŋjũn}^{231} \text{haːi}^{51} \text{fem}^{51} \)

   sing   song   make   people   happy

   ‘Singing songs makes people happy.’

B. As predicate or head of the predicate

(51) a. \( \text{ia}^{231} \text{kja}^{24} \text{tsen}^{51} \text{kou}^{24} \)

   1PL   ASP: PROG   eat   rice

   ‘We are eating. (We are having lunch/dinner.)’

b. \( \text{ma}^{231} \text{a}^{214} \text{baːŋ}^{51} \)

   2SG   walk   (time) before

   ‘You go first.’

c. \( \text{lak}^{24} \text{jeu}^{214} \text{wei}^{11} \text{ŋin}^{24} \text{tiː}^{51} \text{mo}^{55} \text{thuo}^{214} \text{tshie}^{51} \)

   3SG   again   buy   one   CLF   motorbike

   ‘He bought one more motorbike.’

d. \( \text{lak}^{24} \text{hjiːu}^{24} \text{tsaːŋ}^{24} \text{lak}^{24} \text{tsou}^{11} \)

   3SG   can   speak   Chinese

   ‘He can speak Chinese.’

e. \( \text{lak}^{24} \text{pe}^{55} \text{tok}^{55} \text{tap}^{24} \text{khjãk}^{55} \text{ŋjũn}^{231} \)

   father   be   strike   iron   people

   ‘Father is a blacksmith.’

C. As object

(52) a. \( \text{ma}^{231} \text{i}^{55} \text{tsen}^{51} \text{lak}^{24} \text{man}^{11} \)

   2SG   like   eat   plum

   ‘You like eating plums.’
b. ʦi\(^{51}\) ku:\(\text{t}^{24}\) pl\(\text{e}^{51}\) hou\(^{24}\) tu\(^{231}\) ʦh\(\text{o}^{55}\)
CLF   beat    die    two    CLF   tiger

‘I killed two tigers.’

b. jom\(^{231}\) lou\(^{11}\) tsh\(\text{wei}^{51}\) kj\(\text{a:u}^{24}\) tse\(\text{i}^{55}\) ts\(\text{h}^{55}\)
wind   old    blow  break tree  branch

‘The strong wind brought down tree branches.’

c. tau\(^{51}\) o\(^{11}\) pai\(^{51}\)
IPL   enter  COMP

‘Let’s get in.’

d. ts\(\text{h}\text{i}^{51}\) tie\(^{234}\) hw\(\text{a:i}^{51}\) pai\(^{51}\)
car     pass  NEG  COMP

‘Cars can’t get through.’

e. la\(k^{24}\) kj\(\text{i}^{24}\) pla\(^{231}\) mi\(^{11}\) tse\(\text{i}^{55}\)
younger brother  climb   go up tree

‘Younger brother climbed up a tree.’

f. a\(^{11}\) tshu:ni\(^{24}\) ni\(^{231}\) ts\(\text{e}^{51}\) hw\(\text{a:i}^{51}\) li\(^{24}\)
CLF  mushroom this eat  NEG  acquire

‘This kind of mushroom is not edible.’

The construction \([\text{main verb} + \text{object} + \text{complement}]\) is applied when the main verb takes an object and a verb complement which describes the direction. Though the complement modifies the main verb rather than the object, it must follow the object. It is grammatically unacceptable for the directional complement to occur between the main verb and the object. For example:
In (54a) and (54b), the verb complements *tan^231 ‘come’ and pai^51 ‘go’ must be separated from the main verbs ti^231 ‘take’ and ou^11 ‘enter’ and come after the object. This rule can still be applied when a compound forms the directional complement, such as (54c), where at least one element of the complement hã^55 tan^231 ‘come back’ follows the object. That is, both nuŋ^11 khja:n^51 ki^55 hã^55 te^231 wa^51 tan^231 and nuŋ^11 khja:n^51 ki^55 te^231 wa^51 hã^55 tan^231 are acceptable, while *nuŋ^11 khja:n^51 ki^55 hã^55 tan^231 te^231 wa^51 is not.

Cross-linguistically, directional verbs ‘go’ and ‘come’ at the end of the sentence respectively imply ‘away from the speaker’ and ‘toward the speaker’ in Tai-Kadai languages, and are more likely to be analysed as a part of serial verb construction as in §5.2.4. But considering sentences like (54c) where the verb hã^55 expresses more directional meaning, we tend to treat tan^231 as being kind of grammaticalized and function as verb complement.

However, when the main verb takes an object and a resultative complement, both [main verb + object + complement] and [main verb + complement + object] are acceptable. The main verb and the resultative complement may either form a compound together, or be set apart with the object between them, as illustrated in (55c) and (55d).

(55)  a. fo:m^231 lou^11 pa^51 te^55 tshwer^21 kja:u^24 la^55
    wind  old  COVERB  tree  blow  break  PART
    ‘The strong wind brought the tree down.’

    b. tu:r^24 sa:i^55 ja^214 phe:k^24 la^55
    light  bask  farmland  crack  PART
    ‘The farmland cracked in the sunshine.’
c. \(lak^{24}\) \(tsie^{214}\) \(plei^{51}\) \(hou^{24}\) \(tu^{231}\) \(ŋā:ŋ^{231}\)
3SG shoot die two CLF tiger

‘He shot dead two tigers.’

d. \(lak^{24}\) \(tsie^{214}\) \(hou^{24}\) \(tu^{231}\) \(ŋā:ŋ^{231}\) \(plei^{51}\) \(pat^{51}\) \(lo^{55}\)
3SG shoot two CLF tiger die COMP PART

‘He shot two tigers to death.’

Furthermore, the verb \(li^{24}\) ‘get, acquire’ may function as the complement to indicate possibility. The construction [verb + \(li^{24}\)] is used for positive and favourable circumstances, as shown in (56a). For undesirable circumstances, there are three options: [verb + NEG + \(li^{24}\)], [NEG + verb + \(li^{24}\)], and [NEG + \(li^{24}\) + verb] are all grammatical, as shown in (56b-e).

(56)
a. \(kjo:n^{24}\) \(tsei^{55}\) \(lou^{11}\) \(ni^{231}\), \(tie^{231}\) \(u:n^{51}\) \(li^{24}\) \(fan^{51}\)
CLF tree old this 1SG self carry acquire rise

‘I can carry this big piece of timber wood on my own.’
b. \(nam^{55}\) \(to^{51}\) \(ni^{231}\) \(ŋ̍^{24}\) \(ha:i^{51}\) \(li^{24}\)
CLF door this NEG open acquire

‘This door won’t open.’
c. \(tsog^{55}\) \(tshu:n^{24}\) \(ni^{231}\) \(ŋ^{24}\) \(li^{24}\) \(tsen^{51}\)
CLF mushroom this NEG acquire eat

‘This kind of mushroom is not edible.’
d. \(tsog^{55}\) \(tshu:n^{24}\) \(ni^{231}\) \(ŋ^{24}\) \(tsen^{51}\) \(li^{24}\)
CLF mushroom this NEG eat acquire

‘This kind of mushroom is not edible.’
e. \(tsog^{55}\) \(tshu:n^{24}\) \(ni^{231}\) \(tsen^{51}\) \(hwā:į^{51}\) \(li^{24}\)
CLF mushroom this eat NEG acquire

‘This kind of mushroom is not edible.’

Apart from verbs, adjectives can also function as complements. For example:

(57)
a. \(fen^{51}\) \(lou^{11}\) \(lim^{231}\) \(tst^{51}\) \(na:ŋ^{11}\) \(me:ž^{24}\) \(li:u^{11}\)
rain old drench 1SG clothes wet PART

‘My clothes got wet in the heavy rain.’

\(li^{24}\) ‘get, acquire’ may function as an infix to form verb complements with adjectives as modifiers of the main verb in the frame [main verb + \(li^{24}\) + adjective]. For example:
5.4 Serial verb constructions

Serial verb constructions (SVCs), also known as verb serialization or verb stacking, denote a syntactic phenomenon in which a sequence of verbs or verb phrases act together as a single predicate, without any overt marker of coordination, subordination or syntactic dependency of any other sort (Aikhenvald and Dixon 2006:1). SVCs generally allow multiple verbs of a sequence of consecutive events to occur in a single noncomplex sentence or clause with shared subject, and sometimes even with shared object. The actions described in a serial verb construction normally are closely connected to each other. They may take place simultaneously, or one may indicate the cause, purpose or result of the other. For example:

(59)  
\[
\begin{array}{llllllll}
\text{a. } & \text{tsi}^{51} & \eta^{24} & \etaju:n^{24} & \text{pai}^{51} & \text{hep}^{55} \\
& 1\text{SG} & \text{NEG} & \text{be willing to} & \text{go} & \text{sleep} \\
\end{array}
\]

‘I’m unwilling to go to bed.’

\[
\begin{array}{llllllllllllll}
\text{b. } & \text{ma}^{231} & \text{fi:n}^{51} & \text{kut}^{55} & \text{nam}^{55} & \text{te}:\eta^{214} & \omega^{214} & \text{ka}:m^{231} & \text{si}^{51} & \text{su}:\eta^{24} \\
& 2\text{SG} & \text{firstly} & \text{beat} & \text{CLF} & \text{telephone} & \text{ask} & \text{clear} \\
\end{array}
\]

‘Make a phone call to figure it out first.’

From a syntactic perspective, SVCs can be classified into two types: (i) consecutive verbs with nothing intervening, namely, verb concatenations; (ii) those with intervening elements between verbs. The first type is made up of a sequence of plain verbs that share the same subject and object, as in (59a), like English ‘come join us’, ‘go get it’. The second type normally involves a sequence of verb phrases that share the same subject, and the object of one of the verbs may intervene between the serialized verbs, as in (59b).

The following sections will give a detailed description on verb concatenations along with particular focus on the most versatile verbs in Lakkja ‘acquire’ and ‘give’, followed by some discussions on SVCs from a semantic perspective.
5.4.1 Verb concatenations

Verb concatenations are those verbal nuclei with more than a single verb (Matisoff 1973:199). One element in each concatenation is called verb head (Vh) or the main verb, while the others occur as some sort of subordinate element, either preceding or following the head.

Lakkja has ‘idiomatic’ concatenations (Matisoff 1973:210), of which the meanings are not readily deducible from any of its elements. For example:

(60) a. o:p¹¹ fu:n⁵⁵ ‘value for money’
suit calculate
b. tsa:ŋ²⁴ hê:m²⁴ ‘tease, joke, make fun of’
say smile

Another kind of verb concatenation is productive compound-formations. In this type of construction, the main verb, or verb head, may combine with verbs of various type to form new concatenations. Such sequences are most like lexical compounds in that the possible partners of the verb head are restricted to a narrow semantic range (Matisoff 1973:211). Take tsen⁵¹ ‘eat’ as an example:

(61) a. ts aŋ⁵¹ tsen⁵¹ ‘steam and eat, steam for eating’
steam eat
b. to²⁴ tsen⁵¹ ‘boil and eat, boil for eating’
boil eat

In Lakkja, concatenation of lexical verbs is as typical as many other Sino-Tibetan languages. Monosyllabic verbs take up the most part of Lakkja daily application. Even so, a number of pre-head (V, V) and post-head (V, V) concatenations have been spotted in my data, and a significant number of such constructions are Chinese loan words.

5.4.1.1 Pre-head concatenations

Pre-head concatenations refer to sequences of verbs in the frame [pre-head verb + main verb]. Most Lakkja pre-head concatenations are binary, with a single pre-head verb preceding the main verb, as in (62a–b). There are a few pre-head concatenations containing two verbs as the pre-head elements, as illustrated in (62c–d).

Below is a sample of commonly-used pre-head verbs in Lakkja and their meanings.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Meaning as a Vh</th>
<th>Meaning as a V</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. <em>li</em>&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>get, acquire, gain</td>
<td>have the chance to V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt;; get to V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td><em>li</em>&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt; <em>tsheu</em>&lt;sup&gt;51&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>li</em>&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt; <em>tseu</em>&lt;sup&gt;55&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. <em>ha:i</em>&lt;sup&gt;51&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>open; begin</td>
<td>set up to V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt;; begin to V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td><em>ha:i</em>&lt;sup&gt;51&lt;/sup&gt; <em>tsie</em>&lt;sup&gt;η&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;sup&gt;51&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>ha:i</em>&lt;sup&gt;51&lt;/sup&gt; <em>fa:</em>&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. <em>pok</em>&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt; <em>lik</em>&lt;sup&gt;55&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>do - dodge</td>
<td>V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt; sneakily or secretly</td>
<td><em>pok</em>&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt; <em>lik</em>&lt;sup&gt;55&lt;/sup&gt; <em>tsa:</em>&lt;sup&gt;η&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>pok</em>&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt; <em>lik</em>&lt;sup&gt;55&lt;/sup&gt; <em>lo:</em>&lt;sup&gt;m&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;sup&gt;51&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. <em>pok</em>&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt; <em>kjak</em>&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>do - steal</td>
<td>V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt; sneakily or secretly</td>
<td><em>pok</em>&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt; <em>kjak</em>&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt; <em>tsen</em>&lt;sup&gt;51&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>pok</em>&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt; <em>kjak</em>&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt; <em>the:</em>&lt;sup&gt;η&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;sup&gt;55&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. <em>pok</em>&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>to V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt;; V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt; mutually</td>
<td><em>pok</em>&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt; <em>tse:</em>&lt;sup&gt;η&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;sup&gt;51&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>pok</em>&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt; <em>kut</em>&lt;sup&gt;55&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. <em>pai</em>&lt;sup&gt;51&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>go</td>
<td>go and V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td><em>pai</em>&lt;sup&gt;51&lt;/sup&gt; <em>pok</em>&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt; <em>plo:</em>&lt;sup&gt;n&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;sup&gt;55&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>pai</em>&lt;sup&gt;51&lt;/sup&gt; <em>hep</em>&lt;sup&gt;55&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. <em>taŋ</em>&lt;sup&gt;231&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>come</td>
<td>come to V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td><em>taŋ</em>&lt;sup&gt;231&lt;/sup&gt; <em>lo:</em>&lt;sup&gt;m&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;sup&gt;51&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>taŋ</em>&lt;sup&gt;231&lt;/sup&gt; <em>tsen</em>&lt;sup&gt;51&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. <em>pa:</em>&lt;sup&gt;η&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;sup&gt;51&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>help</td>
<td>help to V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt;; V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt; with/instead of somebody</td>
<td><em>pa:</em>&lt;sup&gt;η&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;sup&gt;51&lt;/sup&gt; <em>ti</em>&lt;sup&gt;233&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>pa:</em>&lt;sup&gt;η&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;sup&gt;51&lt;/sup&gt; <em>tshieŋ</em>&lt;sup&gt;55&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As we can see from *pai*<sup>51</sup> *pok*<sup>24</sup> *plo:*<sup>n</sup><sup>55</sup> ‘go and have fun’ in (62f), it is possible for two or more pre-head verbs to co-occur in one concatenation. Sequences with more than one pre-head verbs are referred to as ‘multiversatile pre-head concatenations’ (Matisoff 1973:214), which is fairly common in Lakkja. For example:

(63) a. *ko:*<sup>m</sup><sup>24</sup> *pai*<sup>51</sup> *pok*<sup>24</sup> *lik*<sup>55</sup> *lo:*<sup>m</sup><sup>51</sup>  
\[\text{dare go do dodge look}\]  
\[\text{‘dare to go and pry’}\]
b. \( \eta^{24} \)  \( \eta ju:n^{24} \)  \( pai^{51} \)  \( hep^{55} \)  

NEG be willing to go sleep

‘unwilling to go to bed’

The ordering of pre-head verbs is striking. The syntactic order basically hinges on the semantic properties of these verbs: the more abstract, general, or ‘modal/aspectual’ pre-head verbs occur to the left of those with a more concrete, specific or ‘marked’ meaning (Matisoff 1973:216). Therefore, it is always the case that modal-aspectual markers occur the least near the main verbs, and directional verbs such as \( taj^{231} \) ‘come’ and \( pai^{51} \) ‘go’, when function as pre-head verbs, precede concrete verbs such as \( pok^{24} \) ‘do’ and \( pa:h^{51} \) ‘help’.

5.4.1.2 Post-head concatenations

Post-head verbs (\( V_v \)) comprise a much more numerous class than pre-head ones. Matisoff (1973:221) divides them into four subgroups according to distributional and semantic criteria: juxtacapitals, medials, caudals, and variables. He emphasizes that members of these subgroups may co-occur in multi-versatile post-head concatenations in the frame below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>( V_h )</th>
<th>Juxtacapitals</th>
<th>Medials</th>
<th>Caudals</th>
<th>Variables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A. Juxtacapitals:

Such post-head verbs generally follow the verb head directly. Normally they are directional verbs or those with concrete meanings related to modes of motion. The followings is a sample of the most commonly-used post-head verbs in Lakkja and their meanings:

(64)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Meaning as a ( V_h )</th>
<th>Meaning as a ( V_v )</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. ( ou^{11} )</td>
<td>enter</td>
<td>( V_h ) into</td>
<td>( lu:n^{55} ou^{11} ) ‘break into’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>( tsi^{224} ou^{11} ) ‘shine into’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. ( uk^{55} )</td>
<td>come out; appear</td>
<td>( V_h ) out</td>
<td>( tshen^{51} uk^{55} ) ‘stretch out’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>( au^{51} uk^{55} ) ‘draw out’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. ( pai^{51} )</td>
<td>go</td>
<td>( go ) and ( V_h ); ( V_h ) away from the centre of interest; ( V_h ) down</td>
<td>( ni^{231} pai^{51} ) ‘go off with’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>( uk^{55} pai^{51} ) ‘go out’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>( kjam^{55} pai^{51} ) ‘cut down’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. tan²³¹</td>
<td>come</td>
<td>come and V_h; come to V_h</td>
<td>h₅⁵ tan²³¹ tshwei³¹ tan²³¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. lei¹¹</td>
<td>descend</td>
<td>V_h down</td>
<td>tsem²³¹ lei¹¹ tse:²⁴ lei¹¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. mi¹¹</td>
<td>ascend</td>
<td>V_h up</td>
<td>pon⁵⁵ mi¹¹ pla²³¹ mi¹¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. h₅⁵</td>
<td>return, come back</td>
<td>V_h back (from a distance)</td>
<td>wei¹¹ h₅⁵ n²³¹ h₅⁵</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. ph₅⁵</td>
<td>return, go back</td>
<td>V_h back</td>
<td>ti²³¹ ph₅⁵ a:m¹¹ ph₅⁵</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. faŋ⁵¹</td>
<td>rise</td>
<td>V_h up; begin to V_h</td>
<td>ti²³¹ faŋ⁵¹ tshien⁵⁵ faŋ⁵¹</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### B. Medials:

The medial post-head verbs are an open and semantically specific group of verbs, sometimes with only one member occurring in a given concatenation. According to Matisoff (1973:225), members of this group are mostly adjectives such as tsi²³¹ ‘late’ and loŋ⁵¹ ‘much, many’, which will be discussed in Chapter 6.

Here we list the most important verbs of this group as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(65)</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Meaning as a V_h</th>
<th>Meaning as a V_v</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>plo:n⁵⁵</td>
<td>play</td>
<td>V_h for pleasure</td>
<td>a:m¹¹ plo:n⁵⁵</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>ta:u⁵¹</td>
<td>fall, topple</td>
<td>V_h down</td>
<td>ta⁵¹ ta:u⁵¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>pleu⁵⁵</td>
<td>break in two; snap in two</td>
<td>V_h in two</td>
<td>pha:k²⁴ pleu⁵⁵</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>fa:ŋ²⁴</td>
<td>release, set free</td>
<td>V_h up; V_h to set free</td>
<td>kha:i²⁴ fa:ŋ²⁴ ka:i¹¹ fa:ŋ²⁴</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
C. Caudals:
The caudals function as one of the important subgroups of post-head verbs, though they are quantitatively small. Caudals generally occur in the final position of a verb concatenation, with fairly abstract meanings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(66)</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Meaning as a V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt;</th>
<th>Meaning as a V&lt;sub&gt;v&lt;/sub&gt;</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. li&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>get, acquire, obtain</td>
<td>be able to V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt;; can V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt;; be allowed to V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>niŋ&lt;sup&gt;15&lt;/sup&gt; li&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>‘may sit; can travel by car/boat…’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt; successfully; managed to V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>kha:w&lt;sup&gt;51&lt;/sup&gt; li&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>‘succeeded in exams’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>be skillful at V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt;-ing; be good at V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt;-ing</td>
<td>tsen&lt;sup&gt;51&lt;/sup&gt; li&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>‘capable of eating (spicy food, etc.)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. ten&lt;sup&gt;214&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>reach, arrive at</td>
<td>managed to V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt;; V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt; until…; V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt; of</td>
<td>li&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt; ten&lt;sup&gt;214&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>‘get, acquire, obtain’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>tsa:ŋ&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt; ten&lt;sup&gt;214&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>‘speak of’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. khjaŋ&lt;sup&gt;51&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>meet, encounter</td>
<td>managed to V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt;; V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt; out</td>
<td>la&lt;sup&gt;11&lt;/sup&gt; khjaŋ&lt;sup&gt;51&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>‘seek out, find’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. tsig&lt;sup&gt;231&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>become; accomplish, succeed</td>
<td>V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt; into; V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt; successfully</td>
<td>hwe:n&lt;sup&gt;31&lt;/sup&gt; tsig&lt;sup&gt;231&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>‘translate into’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>pok&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt; tsig&lt;sup&gt;231&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>‘build, complete’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. tie&lt;sup&gt;214&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>pass; spend; go through; surpass</td>
<td>V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt; across; have done(V&lt;sub&gt;h&lt;/sub&gt;);</td>
<td>wei&lt;sup&gt;35&lt;/sup&gt; tie&lt;sup&gt;214&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>‘have seen’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>tshu&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt; tie&lt;sup&gt;214&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>‘raise over (head, etc’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among them, li<sup>24</sup> ‘get, acquire, obtain’ is the most abstract but the most commonly used post-head verb with various meanings. We will further examine the properties of this item in §5.4.2. tie<sup>214</sup> may also function as an aspectual marker, carrying an experimential meaning which will be further discussed in §5.6.1.

D. Variables:
The variable post-head verbs are fairly abstract, normally with aspectual meanings. The following are two of the most important variables in Lakkja:
5.4.2 *li*²⁴ ‘get, acquire’

*li*²⁴ ‘get, acquire, obtain’ is one of the most versatile verbs in Lakkja. According to Enfield (2002:1), words carrying the meaning ‘come to have, acquire’ in mainland Southeast Asian languages typically display a complex grammatical pattern. They may occur as the main verb, pre-head verb, and post-head verb, with various semantic and syntactic functions. As an areal feature, such a word can be used as a postverbal modal element, a marker introducing a postverbal adverbial phrase, and a preverbal aspectual marker of ‘attainment’. It is a feature of Lakkja as well.

**A. As main verb:**

When functioning as the main verb of a phrase, *li*²⁴ carries two different meanings as follows.

i. ‘get, acquire, obtain’:

(68) \[ \text{tsi}^{51} \quad \text{η}^{24} \quad \text{tu}^{24} \quad \text{mlrok}^{55} \quad \text{η}^{24} \quad \text{li}^{24} \]

1SG one CLF bird NEG acquire

‘I didn’t get any birds.’

ii. ‘okay, all right’:

(69) \[ \text{lak}^{24} \quad \text{η}^{24} \quad \text{li}^{24} \quad \text{lie:u}^{24} \]

3SG NEG okay PART

‘He’s going to die. (He is not well.)’

**B. As pre-head verb:**

When preceding the verb head, it generally has three meanings as follows.
iii. ‘must Vh; have to Vh; be allowed to Vh; ought to Vh; should Vh’:

(70) ŋ̍ li24 luə:n214 tsa:ŋ24
NEG must carelessly say
‘Don’t blather.’

iv. ‘managed to Vh’

(71) lak24 li24 tseu55 lie:u24
3SG managed rescue PART
‘He was rescued.’

v. ‘can Vh; be able to Vh’:

(72) khja:u55 fa:m51 sa:u55 ja214 hap55 li24 tshεu51 kou24
to weed three CLF field PART can reap rice
‘The rice can be harvested only after the field is weeded three times.’

C. As post-head verb:

It is the most important property of li24 as a post-head verb, with numerous semantic functions.

vi. ‘be able to Vh; can Vh; be allowed to Vh’:

(73) lak24 niŋ55 ŋ̍ li24 tshie51 he51 kjeu24 wun231
3SG sit NEG can car fear head faint
‘He can’t ride a car, fearing of carsickness.’

vii. ‘Vh successfully; managed to Vh’:

(74) lak24 kha:u51 li24 ta24 jo11 lie:u24
3SG test managed college PART
‘He was admitted to a university after he succeeded in examinations.’

viii. ‘be skilful at Vh-ing; be good at Vh-ing; be capable of Vh-ing’:

(75) hu11 na:m231 ŋjũn231 tsen51 li24 kja55
Hunan people eat be good at spicy
‘People from Hunan are capable of eating spicy food.’

As illustrated above, li24 may occur as a model verb with the meaning of ‘can’ or ‘must’ to express necessity or possibility, though it occasionally follows the main verb. For further analysis, please refer to §5.2.3.
Furthermore, *li*²⁴ may function as an infix to form verb complements with adjectives. See §5.5 for discussion.

5.4.3 *pən*⁵¹ ‘give’

The verb ‘give’ is one of the most active in Southeast Asian languages. The syntactic and semantic functions of ‘give’ can be far more complex. This is also true of Lakkja *pən*⁵¹ ‘give’, which is found to be used as action verb, causative verb, passive marker as well as marker for various cases.

When functioning as the main verb of a phrase, *pən*⁵¹ generally carries two meanings: the basic meaning ‘give’, and the causative meaning ‘let, allow’.

i. ‘Give’

(76)  

*tsi*⁵¹  *pən*⁵¹  *ma*²³¹  *nam*⁵⁵  *lo*¹¹  *khwa:*²⁴  *ni*²³¹  
1SG  give  2SG  CLF (bamboo or wicker) basket  this

‘I give you this (bamboo or wicker) basket.’

ii. ‘Make, let, allow’

(77)  

*tshieŋ*⁵⁵  *ko*⁵¹  *pən*⁵¹  *ŋjũn*²³¹  *ha:*⁵¹  *fem*⁵¹  
 sing  song  make  people  happy

‘Singing songs makes people happy.’

Causative constructions will be further analysed in §5.5.2 and §8.8. *pən*⁵¹ may also function as a preverbal auxiliary word used to reinforce the speaker’s expression.

iii. Auxiliary word

(78)  

*ma*²³¹  *lu*:⁵¹  *fie*²⁴  *tsi*⁵¹  *miŋ*²³¹  *tei*²¹⁴,  *pən*⁵¹  *tsi*⁵¹  
2SG  recklessly  write  1SG  name  PART  1SG

*tsho:*²⁴  *pat*⁵¹  
eliminate  go

‘You are scribbling my name. Eliminate it!’

In addition to its causative function, *pən*⁵¹ ‘give’ has also been grammaticalized to function as a passive marker.
iv. Passive marker

(79) \[ \text{pən}^{51} \text{mlet}^{14} \te:ny^{51} \text{in}^{24} \text{ti:u}^{55} \]
3SG PASS bee sting one CLF

‘He is stung by bees.’

§5.5.4, §7.9 and §8.4 will give further discussion on passive constructions from various perspectives.

Furthermore, \(\text{pən}^{51}\) may function as the marker for various cases such as dative, benefactive, malefactive, and allative. In sentences of this kind, \(\text{pən}^{51}\) very well be analysed as a preposition. It can occur either before the main verb, between the main verb and the object, or after the object.

vi. Dative marker

(80) \[ \text{tsi}^{51} \text{waŋ}^{231} \text{wei}^{231} \text{fen}^{55} \text{pən}^{51} \text{lak}^{24} \]
1SG NEG reply letter PREP 3SG

‘I have not written back to him.’

vii. Benefactive marker

(81) \[ \text{lak}^{24} \text{pən}^{51} \text{tsi}^{51} \text{wei}^{14} \te:ny^{231} \]
3SG PREP 1SG buy candy

‘He bought me candies.’

viii. Malefactive marker

(82) \[ \text{wu:n}^{24} \text{lak}^{24} \text{pən}^{51} \text{tsi}^{51} \text{pok}^{24} \text{wa:i}^{214} \text{lie:u}^{24} \]
bowl 3SG PREP 1SG do bad PART

‘He broke my bowl.’

ix. Allative marker

(83) \[ \text{ma}^{231} \text{pən}^{51} \text{tur}^{214} \text{pu:i}^{214} \text{kje}^{24} \]
2SG PREP 3PL apologize

‘You apologize to them.’

5.4.4 Semantic relations in SVCs

The semantic relations in SVCs can be far more complex. The following sections give a general description of the relations between arguments and serial verbs, and those between verbs phrases. The grammatical relations in SVCs will be further examined in §8.7.
5.4.4.1 Relations between arguments and serial verbs

Though Lakkja is a typical SVO language, the arguments in subject slot may be semantically either the subject or the object of the serial verbs in a clause. For instance, the argument tu\textsuperscript{214} ‘they’ in (84a) functions semantically as the subject of both verbs lei\textsuperscript{11} ‘go into’ and la\textsuperscript{11} ‘look for’, while in (84b), the argument lak\textsuperscript{55} mom\textsuperscript{214} ‘the meat’ occurs as the object of both verbs tek\textsuperscript{55} ‘keep out, put aside’ and ple\textsuperscript{51} ‘sell’. Furthermore, in (84c), the argument in the subject slot hou\textsuperscript{24} tu\textsuperscript{231}ŋã:ŋ\textsuperscript{231} ‘two tigers’ is the object of the first verb ku:r\textsuperscript{24} ‘beat, hit’ and the subject of the second verb ple\textsuperscript{51} ‘die’.

(84) a. tu\textsuperscript{214} lei\textsuperscript{11} tsi\textsuperscript{51} la\textsuperscript{11} phla\textsuperscript{51} lie:u\textsuperscript{24}

3PL go into river look for fish PART

‘They went into the river for fishing.’

b. lak\textsuperscript{55} mom\textsuperscript{214} tek\textsuperscript{55} ta:r\textsuperscript{55} kjaŋ\textsuperscript{24} lie:u\textsuperscript{24} y\textsuperscript{24} ple\textsuperscript{51}

CLF meat keep out too long PART NEG sell

‘The meat has been kept out too long, (thus) it’s not for sale.’

c. hou\textsuperscript{24} tu\textsuperscript{231}ŋã:ŋ\textsuperscript{231}ŋ\ã:i\textsuperscript{214} ku:r\textsuperscript{24} ple\textsuperscript{51} lie:u\textsuperscript{24}

two CLF tiger PASS beat die PART

‘Two tigers were killed.’

Similarly, arguments in the object slot may function semantically either as the object of serial verbs, or the agent/subject of certain verbs except the main verbs in a clause. For example, in (85a), the argument lak\textsuperscript{24} ‘she/he’ is the object of the main verb au\textsuperscript{51} ‘let, require’ and the subject of ji:u\textsuperscript{11} ‘fill’, while in (85b), the argument phla\textsuperscript{51} ‘fish’ occurs as the object of both verbs la\textsuperscript{11} ‘look for’ and tsen\textsuperscript{51} ‘eat’.

(85) a. lak\textsuperscript{24} pa\textsuperscript{24} au\textsuperscript{51} lak\textsuperscript{24} ji:u\textsuperscript{11} yin\textsuperscript{24} ?u:n\textsuperscript{24} kou\textsuperscript{24}

3SG mother let 3SG fill one CLF rice

‘His mother asked him to fill a bowl with rice.’

b. lak\textsuperscript{24} bok\textsuperscript{55} kjei\textsuperscript{51} tsie:y\textsuperscript{231} la\textsuperscript{11} phla\textsuperscript{51} tsen\textsuperscript{51}

elder brother often look for fish eat

‘Elder brother often catches fish to eat.’

5.4.4.2 Relations between verb phrases in SVCs

It is also significant to examine the relations between the serial verbs in SVCs. Though SVCs lack overt signs of syntactic dependency, semantic relations such as temporal sequence (86a),
concurrence (86b), locality (86c), purpose (86d), condition (86e), etc, can be observed between
the verb phrases. The following examples illustrate.

(86)  a. lak₂⁴ phā³⁵ tsen⁵¹ kou₂⁴ lie:u₂⁴
      3SG  go back  eat  rice  PART

   ‘He went back for meals.’

   b. tsi⁵¹ hep⁵⁵ lo:m⁵¹ seu⁵¹
      1SG  lie  look  book

   ‘I lay down, reading a book.’

   c. lak₂⁴ pai⁵¹ hu⁵¹ wei¹¹ ku:i⁵⁵
      3SG  go  street  buy  cloth

   ‘She went to the market to buy cloth.’

   d. tsi⁵¹ pa:ŋ⁵¹ tu²¹⁴ tsoŋ⁵⁵ wok²⁴
      1SG  help  3PL  grow  vegetable

   ‘I helped them grow vegetables.’

   e. ŋ²⁴ fen⁵⁵ tie²³¹ lo:m⁵¹
      NEG  believe  self  look

   ‘If you don’t believe it, have a look in person.’

See §8.7 for more discussions on grammatical relations.

5.5 Syntactic constructions of verb phrases

A number of morphemes may combine with verbs to form specific constructions of verb
phrases. We shall introduce them at word/phrase level in the following sections.

5.5.1 Reciprocity

In Lakkja, reciprocity can be expressed in three ways: circumfix jak⁵⁵ ... jak⁵⁵ ..., prefix pok²⁴,
and adverb saŋ⁵⁵.

Circumfix jak⁵⁵ ... jak⁵⁵ ..., as mentioned in §3.1.3, functions as a reciprocal maker in the
frame [jak⁵⁵ + verb + jak⁵⁵].

(87) tau⁵¹ jak⁵⁵ pa:ŋ⁵¹ jak⁵⁵
     1SG  CIR. reciprocal  help  CIR. reciprocal

   ‘We help each other.’
Verb prefix \( \text{pok}^{24} \), as discussed in §3.1.1.3, is a very productive bound morpheme. When it designates reciprocality, the action normally involves two or more than two people.

(88) \( \text{li:}u^{24} \text{ei}^{24} \text{pok}^{24} \text{kut}^{55} \)  
   2PL  NEG  RECP  hit  
   ‘Don’t fight.’

\( \text{say}^{55} \), which is believed to be borrowed from Chinese, carries the meaning of ‘mutually’. It is found only in \( \text{say}^{55} \text{lai}^{51} \) (mutually - good) ‘fall in love with each other’.

(89) \( \text{tu}^{23} \text{hou}^{24} \text{lak}^{24} \text{sa}^{55} \text{lai}^{51} \)  
   CLF  two  person  RECP  good  
   ‘They two are in love with each other.’

5.5.2 Causative verbs

According to Dixon (2000), only forms like ‘make’ (as in ‘he made her cry’) and ‘get’ (as in ‘get things done’) are true causative verbs in languages like English, but there are a lot of verbs in English with causative meaning, which are called lexical causatives, such as ‘worry’ (make…worried), and ‘break’ (cause… to be broken).

Lakkja lacks true causative verbs with the sense of ‘make’ and ‘get’ in English. However, there are a number of lexical causatives which may behave like operators with causative function and convey causative meanings, as listed in (90):

(90) | Verb | Meaning as a verb head |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. ( \text{ŋjie:}n^{214} )</td>
<td>‘let’ (Chinese loan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. ( \text{em}^{231} )</td>
<td>‘let’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. ( \text{pon}^{51} )</td>
<td>‘give, let, allow’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. ( \text{au}^{51} )</td>
<td>‘require, want’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. ( \text{tei}^{11} )</td>
<td>‘call’ (from noun ‘mouth’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. ( \text{eu}^{11} )</td>
<td>‘call’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. ( \text{le:}n^{314} )</td>
<td>‘let’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These verbs may function as assigning causative meaning in the construction \([\text{subject} + \text{VP}_1 + \text{object} + \text{VP}_2]\), where they occur in \(\text{VP}_1\) position in serial constructions taking an object (typically animate) that function as subject of the following \(\text{VP}\). The following examples illustrate.
The majority of these causative verbs are derived from lexical verbs and in the process of grammaticalization to full causative markers (91c–g). In causative constructions, their semantic functions are still related to the lexical meanings, indicating some kind of requests or requirements. For example, in (91e), the word *pən*\(^{51}\), derived from lexical ‘give’, is functioning as a true causative verb. It is similar to many Tai and Kam-Sui languages where one sense of ‘give’ has causative meaning, showing a full-fledge grammaticalization of lexical verb to causative marker.
It is worth noting that only $pən^{51}$ is recognized in my data to occur as causative marker in negative sentences like (91g). The other causative markers are not found to co-occur with negators such as $eɾ^{24}$ and $ŋ̍^{24}$.

§8.8 will give a further discussion on the grammatical relations of causative constructions.

### 5.5.3 The coverb $pa^{51}$

Similar to Chinese *bà* construction (Li and Thompson 1981:463), there is a Chinese loan co-verb $pa^{51}$ that is increasingly used in Lakkja. It generally conveys a disposal meaning in the frame [$pa^{51} + \text{object} + \text{verb} + \text{complement}$], where the object is raised before the verb with the introduction of $pa^{51}$. For example, $tsu^{231}$ ‘sweet potato’ in (92a) is the direct object of the verb $tsen^{51}$ ‘eat’, and it is raised by the co-verb $pa^{51}$.

\[(92)\]
\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
\text{a.} & \text{lak}^{24} & \text{pa}^{51} & \text{tsu}^{231} & \text{tsen}^{51} & \text{la}^{11} \\
& 3\text{SG} & \text{DISPO} & \text{sweet potato} & \text{eat} & \text{PART} \\
& & & & & \\
& \text{He ate the sweet potato.}' \\
\text{b.} & \text{lak}^{24} & \text{pa}^{51} & \text{ou}^{11} & \text{to:}m^{11} & \text{fa:}u^{55} & \text{li}^{24} & \text{tiŋ}^{214} & \text{lep}^{55} \\
& 3\text{SG} & \text{DISPO} & \text{inside} & \text{room} & \text{sweep} & \text{acquire} & \text{clean} \\
& & & & & & & & \\
& \text{He cleaned up the room.}'
\end{array}
\]

§7.10 and §8.9 will present comprehensive discussions on $pa^{51}$ construction at different level.

### 5.5.4 Passive markers

Three passive markers are found in Lakkja in my data: $pən^{51}$, $tuk^{24}$ and $ŋ̍:i^{214}$.

$pən^{51}$, derived from lexical verb ‘give’, is a native item expressing passive meaning. The agent following $pən^{51}$, such as $me:u^{11}$ ‘cat’ in (93a), can be left out in this construction. Also, both animate and inanimate nouns can function as agents in this construction type, as shown in the following examples.

\[(93)\]
\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
\text{a.} & \text{phla}^{51} & \text{pən}^{51} & \text{me:u}^{11} & \text{kom}^{24} & \text{pa}^{51} & \text{la}^{11} \\
& \text{fish} & \text{PASS} & \text{cat} & \text{hold in the mouth} & \text{ASP} & \text{PART} \\
& & & & & & \\
& \text{Fish is nabbed away by the cat (in its mouth).}' \\
\text{b.} & \text{tsi}^{51} & \text{pən}^{51} & \text{fa:}y^{51} & \text{ŋən}^{24} & \text{iŋ}^{24} & \text{ti:n}^{55} \\
& 1\text{SG} & \text{PASS} & \text{stone} & \text{(sth.) press against} & \text{one} & \text{CLF} \\
& & & & & & \\
& \text{I was pressed against by a stone.}'
\end{array}
\]

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As a passive marker, *tuk* is derived from the lexical verb ‘suffer, endure’. It generally occurs right before the main verb without introducing the agent.

(94) a. *tu* CLF child *nuni* this *tony* whole *wan* day *PASS* PASS *tuk* beat

‘This child is often beaten.’

b. *ei* NEG naughty *thi:* PASS *pei* CLF child *tuk* pass *te* scold

‘Don’t be naughty. Or you will be scolded.’

Likewise, *ŋâ:i* is also generally used in passive constructions without presenting the agents. It is a Chinese loan with the meaning ‘suffer, endure’.

(95) a. *lak* 3SG PASS *ŋâ:i* neutral negator; linking adverb *kut* beat *lie:* PART

‘He was beaten.’

§7.9 will present further discussions on passive constructions at sentence level.

### 5.5.5 Negation

Languages may vary considerably in how they treat negation (Dixon 2010). Many languages have a multiplicity of techniques to show negation, such as by using a separate word, a verbal affix or a clitic, or a negative verb. Lacking in verbal affixes and clitics, Lakkja shows clausal negation mainly by separate negators. There are four negators in Lakkja, each carrying a different temporal or aspectual meaning, as summed up in Table 5.1 below. Generally, negators can occur alone or come before adjectives or verbs to express total negation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>hwâ:i</em></td>
<td>neutral negator; linking adverb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ŋâ:i</em></td>
<td>general negator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ei</em></td>
<td>negative imperative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>wan</em></td>
<td>negative perfective (imperfective)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.1 Lakkja negators
\(hw\ddot{a}:i^{51}\) and \(\ddot{n}^{24}\) are general negators, the latter being more colloquial. They can form new compound negators and conjunctions with other elements, such as \(hw\ddot{a}:i^{51} jo\ddot{n}^{214}\) ‘need not’, \(\ddot{n}^{24} ta:yu^{55}\) ‘not very; less’, \(\ddot{n}^{24} ku\ddot{u}:n^{24}\) ‘regardless of’.

\[(96)\]

a. \(tsi^{51}\) \(hw\ddot{a}:i^{51}\) \(pai^{51}\)

1SG NEG go

‘I won’t go.’

b. \(hw\ddot{a}:i^{51}\) \(lai^{51}\)

NEG good

‘(It is) no good.’

c. \(tsou^{55}\) \(tshu:n^{24}\) \(ni^{231}\) \(\ddot{n}^{24}\) \(tsen^{51}\) \(li^{24}\)

CLF mushroom this NEG eat PART

‘This kind of mushroom is not edible.’

d. \(lak^{24}\) \(sen^{51}\) \(\ddot{n}^{24}\) \(ta:yu^{55}\) \(lek^{24}\)

3SG body NEG strength

‘He is not in very good condition.’

e. \(\ddot{n}^{24}\) \(jo\ddot{n}^{214}\) \(pai^{51}\) \(ni^{51}\) \(\ddot{n}^{24}\) \(lo\ddot{u}^{51}\) \(nj\ddot{u}n^{231}\)

NEG go like this many people

‘There’s no need for so many people to go together.’

Furthermore, \(hw\ddot{a}:i^{51}\) can also be used as a linking adverb, carrying the meaning ‘otherwise, or else’. This function will be discussed in §6.4.6.

\(ei^{24} au^{51}\) is a negator carrying imperative meaning. The second element \(au^{51}\) can be omitted.

\[(97)\]

a. \(ei^{24}\) \(ni^{51}\) \(pok^{24}\)

NEG like this do

‘Don’t do like this/this way.’

b. \(ei^{24}\) \(lo\ddot{n}^{24}\) \(lak^{24}\)

NEG tell 3SG

‘Don’t tell him/her.’

c. \(ei^{24}\) \(au^{51}\) \(lu\ddot{u}:n^{214}\) \(fie^{24}\)

NEG messy write

‘Don’t scrawl.’
The negator \textit{waŋ} \textsuperscript{231} carries an aspectual meaning, referring to an act that has not been performed, something that has not happened, or a situation that has not come about (Li 2014:146).

\begin{itemize}
\item[(98)]
\begin{itemize}
\item[a.] \textit{lak} \textsuperscript{24} \textit{waŋ} \textsuperscript{231} \textit{pai} \textsuperscript{51}
\begin{tabular}{l l l}
3SG & NEG & go
\end{tabular}
\hspace{5mm} ‘He hasn’t gone yet.’
\item[b.] \textit{tu} \textsuperscript{214} \textit{waŋ} \textsuperscript{231} \textit{hã} \textsuperscript{55}
\begin{tabular}{l l l}
3PL & NEG & come back
\end{tabular}
\hspace{5mm} ‘They haven’t come back yet.’
\item[c.] \textit{tsi} \textsuperscript{51} \textit{waŋ} \textsuperscript{231} \textit{phã} \textsuperscript{55}
\begin{tabular}{l l l}
2SG & NEG & go back
\end{tabular}
\hspace{5mm} ‘I haven’t gone back yet.’
\end{itemize}
\end{itemize}

Furthermore, the negators \textit{ŋ̍} \textsuperscript{24}, \textit{hwã:i} \textsuperscript{51} and \textit{waŋ} \textsuperscript{231} may occur at the end of a yes-no question which is marked by a rising intonation, while \textit{ei} \textsuperscript{24}, and \textit{ei} \textsuperscript{24} \textit{au} \textsuperscript{51} do not have such a function.

\begin{itemize}
\item[(99)]
\begin{itemize}
\item[a.] \textit{ma} \textsuperscript{231} \textit{pai} \textsuperscript{51} \textit{hwã:i} \textsuperscript{51}
\begin{tabular}{l l l}
2SG & go & NEG
\end{tabular}
\hspace{5mm} ‘Are you going (there)?’
\item[b.] \textit{ma} \textsuperscript{231} \textit{mi} \textsuperscript{231} \textit{ʔat} \textsuperscript{55} \textit{jen} \textsuperscript{11} \textit{kja} \textsuperscript{51} \textit{hwã:i} \textsuperscript{51}
\begin{tabular}{l l l l l}
2SG & have & brother & & NEG
\end{tabular}
\hspace{5mm} ‘Do you have brothers?’
\item[c.] \textit{ma} \textsuperscript{231} \textit{pai} \textsuperscript{51} \textit{ŋ̍} \textsuperscript{24}
\begin{tabular}{l l l}
2SG & go & NEG
\end{tabular}
\hspace{5mm} ‘Are you going?’
\item[d.] \textit{pu:i} \textsuperscript{51} \textit{tsiŋ} \textsuperscript{231} \textit{waŋ} \textsuperscript{231}
\begin{tabular}{l l l}
fire & burn & NEG
\end{tabular}
\hspace{5mm} ‘Has the fire started burning?’
\end{itemize}
\end{itemize}

Apart from the negators listed above, two compound negators, \textit{ŋ̍} \textsuperscript{24} \textit{mi} \textsuperscript{231} and \textit{hwã:i} \textsuperscript{51} \textit{mi} \textsuperscript{231} (NEG - have), are employed for negative possessive/existential. They occur before nouns and noun phrases.
There’s no meat at home.

There are no pear trees on the hill.

‘If you have nothing to do, don’t walk up and down here.’

Similar to English and many other languages, Lakkja also has a number of lexemes with inherent negative meaning like a negator, such as phlem51 ‘leave behind’ which expresses similar meaning to ‘not take’.

I left behind many things in the mountain. (I didn’t take/bring them with me.)

§7.13.2 will give a discussion on the scope of negation.

5.6 Temporal-aspectual system

Lakkja has an elaborate temporal-aspectual system which conveys aspectual meanings such as experimental, accomplishment, perfective, repetitive, inceptive, transient, among others. The majority of aspect markers in Lakkja follow the verbs, except those for durative aspect and immediate future. A number of sentence final particles may also function as a temporal-aspectual marker.

5.6.1 Experiential

tie214, derived from the lexical verb ‘pass, cross (a river)’, functions as the postverbal aspectualizer marking the experiential aspect. It typically denotes an act that occurred in the past, with some effect of relevance to the present.
‘I have heard her sing several times.’

‘He has never travelled by plane.’

‘He has been to Beijing.’

‘I haven’t met him yet.’

(102a) assumes that the speaker knows how ‘she’ sings. (102b) designates that the subject doesn’t know how to take a flight or what it is like travelling on a plane. (102c) states the fact that ‘he’ has the experience of visiting Beijing before and knows something about the city. (102d) describes that at the time of speaking, the meeting between the speaker and ‘him’ has not taken place.

5.6.2 Achievement

The achievement aspect generally indicates that an act has been or will be achieved. It does not specify the beginning or the end point of the act. In Lakkja, the achievement aspect is expressed by two markers: li24 and la11. Unlike li24 which can be used as a lexical verb meaning ‘acquire’, la11 is borrowed from Chinese aspect particle le 了 which is grammaticalized from the lexical verb liǎo 了, with phonological reduction and change of tone.

Typical achievement verbs are those that designate sudden change of state, such as English ‘kill’, ‘break’, ‘collapse’ that indicates a dynamic event of short duration. But some examples in Lakkja denoting a longer process may also be analysed as achievement rather than attainment or accomplishment because they semantically lay emphasis on the culminating event and the consequent phase.

‘Our family grew peanuts this year.’
Glutinous rice perfume ASP:ACHIEVE whole village
‘Glutinous rice infused the whole village with aroma.’

He ate the sweet potato.
‘He ate the sweet potato.’

If the aspectual markers in the above examples are left out, no meaning of achievement will be conveyed. Without the aspect marker li24, (103a) may denote ‘our family will grow peanuts this year’ without any meaning of achievement. (103b) stresses that the glutinous rice gave off fragrant smell and the village is filled with aroma, and (103c) stresses that the potato has been eaten, and nothing is left.

Though the verbs are durative, such sentences do not shed light on the preparatory phase of an act or an event and thus can be analysed as achievement.

5.6.3 Perfective
Perfective aspect indicates that an act or activity was completed in the past or will be completed in the future. The perfective aspect generally lays emphasis on the effect of the action to the present. English ‘finish’, ‘complete’ and the past tense use of verbs are examples of perfective meaning. In Lakkja, the perfective aspect is marked by the perfective marker lie:u11.

(104) a. lak24 ki55 tay23l seu3l tsi5l lie:m11 lie:u11 la11
3SG send COMP book 1SG look ASP:PERF ASP:ACHIEVE
‘I have finished reading the book he sent.’
b. si:m24 ni23l tsi5l fie24 lie:u11 lie:u24
page this 1SG write ASP:PERF ASP:ATTN
‘I have finished writing this page.’
c. lak24 tsen5l lie:u11 lie:u24
3SG eat ASP:PERF ASP:ATTN
‘He has finished eating.’
d. lak24 wak24 na:y11 lie:u11 têi11 hâ55 liek24
3SG wash clothes ASP:PERF then come back house
‘After she finishes washing, she will (then) go home.’
It is interesting to note the remarkably pair: *lie:*u\textsuperscript{11} and *lie:*u\textsuperscript{24}, as in (104b). Though they share the same consonant and vowels, these two aspect markers have different functions: the former is used for perfective aspect while the latter marks attainment/accomplishment, which will be discussed in the next subsection.

Besides, as in (104a–c), a sentence final particle, notably *lie:*u\textsuperscript{24} for attainment and *la:*u\textsuperscript{11} for achievement, often co-occur with the perfective marker *lie:*u\textsuperscript{11}. But a final particle is not required for sentences of this kind. For example, (104d) without any final particles implies future perfective, that is, the act will be completed in the future rather than has been achieved or accomplished.

### 5.6.4 Attainment/Accomplishment

This aspect is marked by the marker *lie:*u\textsuperscript{24}, denoting a situation that is attained at the time of speech. When occurring with stative verbs, it designates the change of state or situation.

\[(105) \quad \begin{aligned}
a. & \, \tau a u^{24} \, w a n^{23} \, k j a p^{24} \, i n^{24} \, \eta i n^{24} \, t i : n^{55} \, j e u^{214} \, \eta o m^{51} \, l i e : u^{24} \\
& \quad \text{sun} \quad \text{just} \quad \text{come out} \quad \text{one} \quad \text{CLF} \quad \text{again} \quad \text{cloudy} \quad \text{ASP:ATTN} \\
& \quad \text{‘The sun had barely come out when it turned cloudy again.’}
\end{aligned}
\]

\[(105) \quad b. \quad b o n^{51} \, k j a : \eta^{51} \, l i e : u^{24} \\
\quad \text{sky} \quad \text{bright} \quad \text{ASP:ATTN} \\
\quad \text{‘Day is breaking.’}
\]

\[(105) \quad c. \quad n u m^{11} \, t s i t^{24} \, k j i \tilde{a}^{51} \, l i e : u^{24} \\
\quad \text{water} \quad \text{coagulate} \quad \text{ice} \quad \text{ASP:ATTN} \\
\quad \text{‘Water turned to ice.’}
\]

\[(105) \quad d. \quad h u o^{51} \, a^{11} \, k h a : i^{24} \, l a : k^{24} \, l i e : u^{24} \\
\quad \text{flower} \quad \text{all} \quad \text{wither} \quad \text{ASP:ATTN} \\
\quad \text{‘All the flowers withered away.’}
\]

The main different between accomplishment and perfective is that the former lays stress on the preparatory phase, the culminating phase and the consequent phase of an event while the latter only concerns about the effect of the action or event to the present. For example, (105a) emphasises the whole process from a brief period of sunshine back to a cloudy weather. (105b) describes the change of state from night to daybreak, and at the time of speaking, daylight is breaking. (105c) designates that the change of state of water being liquid into a state of becoming ice occurred before the speech event when the result of water turning to ice still
exists. (105d) means that the flowers withered prior to the speech event, and that the state of the flowers becoming withered is still the case at the moment of speech.

5.6.5 Inchoative

The inchoative aspect is expressed through the inchoative marker $f_5^1 t_3^1$, as mentioned in §5.2.4, which emphasizes the beginning of an action or an event without demonstrating the end point. $f_5^1$ is derived from the lexical verb $f_5^1$ ‘rise’, and $t_3^1$ from the lexical verb $t_3^1$ ‘come’. Thus $f_5^1 t_3^1$, as aaspectual marker, is grammaticalized from a directional verb phrase meaning $f_5^1 t_3^1$ ‘rise up’.

(106)

a. $lak^{24} p_5^1 f_5^1 t_3^1$
3SG cry $f_5^1 t_3^1$ ASP:INCHO
‘He began to cry.’
b. $b_3^1 k_5^{55} f_5^1 t_3^1$
sky cold $f_5^1 t_3^1$ lie:u$^{24}$
PART
‘It is getting cold.’

When the verb takes an object, the constituent order is [verb + $f_5^1$ + object + $t_3^1$] with the aspect markers splitting and occurring on both side of the object.

(107) $lak^{24} t_5^{55} f_5^1 k_5^5 t_3^1$
3SG sing $f_5^1 t_3^1$ ASP:INCHO song ASP:INCHO
‘He began to sing.’

5.6.6 Durative aspect

There is no specific marking for progressive or continuous aspect in Lakkjia in my data of the type as expressed by the -ing form in English. In many cases, durative aspect in Lakkjia is generally not marked, as illustrated in (108a–b). The structure [$p_i n_5^1$ + VP + $p_i n_5^1$ + VP] ‘do something while doing…’ may be also used to mark durative aspect, as in (108d). In addition, the adverbs of time, $k_2^5 n_3^{231}$ ‘now’ and $t_s i^{55} t_a y^{55}$ ‘while’, may be occasionally used for durative aspect, as in (108e) (108f).

(108) a. $m_3^{231} t_2^{31} m_e:u^{11} a_t^{55} h_j_e:n^{51} t_s^{24} i^{24} p_l a^{231}$
there be CLF cat at upside chair lie on front
‘A cat was lying on the chair.’
b. lakpa214 hē:mnjom11njom11 ka11 nuj55 to11 lu231 lie:m11

grandma smile PART sit PART look

nuj11 khja:n211

grandson

‘Grandma sat down, looking at grandson and smiling.’

c. tu231 nuj11 ji:e11 m231 thok55 at55 hje:n51 taŋ55 hwăn55

CLF child this lie prostrate at upside bench asleep

lie:u24

PART

‘This child grovels on the bench, falling asleep.’

d. at55 jen11 kjai51 kjãu24 pin51 teh:n55 ko51 pin51 pok24 tsuo214 nei11

elder sister while listen song while do homework

‘Elder sister listens to music while doing homework.’

e. lak24 ka11 ni231 pĩě51 fut55 fut55

3SG now cry SUF

‘He is sobbing now.’

f. tsin55 ta:y55 ta231 tsen51 kou24, lak24 taŋ231 lie:u24

while 1PL eat rice 3SG come PART

‘He came while we were having lunch/dinner.’

5.6.7 Repetitive/iterative aspect

While durative aspect expresses a continuing activity, event or state, repetitive/iterative aspect describes a recurring activity, event or state that goes on continuously or repetitively. It has duration or repetition and may be carried out with interruption.

The repetitive/iterative aspect is marked by the aspecualizers pai51 and pon214 in the frame [verb + pai51 + verb + pon214] ‘verb - go - verb - turn back’. It designates an act that is conducted repetitively. Examples:

(109) a. tsin55 hwe:n51 pari51 hwe:n51 pon214 hep55

1SG turn over ASP:REPET turn over ASP:REPET sleep

η24 hwăn55

NEG COMP

‘I could not fall asleep, tossing and turning.’
b. lak$^{24}$ the:u$^{24}$ pai$^{51}$ the:u$^{24}$ pon$^{214}$
3SG jump ASP:REPET jump ASP:REPET
‘He kept jumping around.’

c. ei$^{24}$ pai$^{51}$ pai$^{51}$ pon$^{214}$ pon$^{214}$ a:m$^{11}$ ta$^{231}$ ti$^{214}$
NEG go ASP:REPET turn back ASP:REPET walk 1PL ground
‘Don’t walk back and forth on our field.’

d. pok$^{24}$ lak$^{24}$ ke$^{214}$ ei$^{24}$ pok$^{24}$ pai$^{51}$ pok$^{24}$ pon$^{214}$
do matter NEG do ASP:REPET do ASP:REPET
‘Don’t do one thing over and over again.’

5.6.8 Immediate future

Three preverbal aspect markers are found in my data denoting immediate future: au$^{51}$, fie:ŋ$^{24}$, and ha:i$^{24}$.

As discussed in §5.1.2.3, au$^{51}$ may function as an aspectual marker marking immediate future, as in (110a–c). It may also occur as a modal auxiliary verb, implying volition. For example, (110b) may also mean ‘he wants to go’ with the meaning ‘he desires/intends to go’. Besides, it may take inanimate subject as well (110c).

(110) a. tsi$^{51}$ au$^{11}$ pai$^{21}$ la$^{11}$ lak$^{24}$
1SG ASP: FUT go look for 3SG
‘I’m going to look for him. (I’m going to visit him)’

b. lak$^{24}$ au$^{51}$ pai$^{51}$
3SG ASP: FUT go
‘He is planning to go.’

c. ban$^{51}$ au$^{51}$ lei$^{11}$ fen$^{51}$ lie:u$^{24}$
sky ASP: FUT descend rain PART
‘It is going to rain.’

fie:ŋ$^{24}$ is derived from the lexical meaning ‘think, want’. As an aspect marker, this item only occurs with human subjects. It never occurs with inanimate subjects.

(111) a. tsi$^{51}$ fie:ŋ$^{24}$ pai$^{51}$ lo:m$^{51}$ ti:n$^{11}$ je:ŋ$^{51}$
1SG ASP: FUT go watch movie
‘I’m going to see a movie.’
b. *lak^24 fie:n^24 wei^11 kwa:k^24*

3SG AS: FUT buy hoe

‘He is going to buy a hoe.’

*ha:i^24*, from the lexical meaning ‘quickly, soon’, may serve to express immediate future. It may occur with both animate and inanimate subjects.

(112) a. *bən^51 ha:i^24 lap^55 lo^11*

sky AS: FUT dark PART

‘It’s getting dark.’

b. *tu^231 kai^31 ni^231 ha:i^24 plei^51 lie:u^24*

CLF chicken this AS: FUT die PART

‘This chicken is dying.’

c. *kju:ə^24 ha:i^24 tse^55 lie:u^11 lie:u^24*

birdbath AS: FUT set up AS:PERF PART

‘The birdbath is almost set up (to catch birds).’

d. *lak^24 piŋ^14 ha:i^24 lai^51 lie:u^24*

3SG illness AS: FUT good PART

‘He is recovering from illness soon.’

5.6.9 Directional verbs as aspectual markers

Some directional verbs, for example, *faŋ^51* ‘rise’, *faŋ^51 taj^231* ‘rise up’, *taŋ^231* ‘come’, and *uk^55 taj^231* ‘come out’, may function as aspectual markers, which can be analysed as cases of grammaticalization.

(113) a. *tu^231 nuj^11 kjã:u^24 ni^231 tsuŋ^51 sen^51 faŋ^51 taj^231 o:n^55 to:t^24*

CLF girl this dress up AS: beautiful SUF

‘This girl is so beautiful after dressing up.’

b. *tse^11 lei^24 loŋ^51 jin^24 kji:n^11 uk^55 taj^231?*

when more one CLF AS

‘When did there come out an extra piece (of clothing)?’

c. *hi^231 ti:n^231 tok^24 lak^24 lou^11 tse:m^24 lei^11 taj^231 lo^11*

this money be old people save AS: PART

‘The money is saved up by parents.’
5.7 **Summary of chapter**

As illustrated in this chapter, the verb is one of the most significant word classes in the grammar of Lakkja. The majority of native verbs are monosyllabic. Lakkja possesses a considerable number of Chinese loan verbs, which are basically disyllabic and trisyllabic. A significant number of verbs have dual or multiple membership of word class, showing a continuum between morphology and syntax in Lakkja grammar.

Verb serialization is a common feature of Lakkja. Semantic relations of serial verbs largely rely on the constituent order of the sentence. When the notion of head is taken into account, a number of common verbs exhibit an array of syntactic functions motivated by the semantics of the verbs they co-occur with.

Lakkja shows clausal negation mainly by separate negators rather than by verbal affixes or clitics. The scopes of negation are determined by intonation and word order.

Lakkja verbs lack inflection but there is an elaborate temporal-aspectual system. Several sentence final particles may also function as temporal-aspectual markers.

Causative, disposal, and passive constructions constitute some of the most interesting aspects of Lakkja grammar. Lakkja employs a number of lexical verbs which are grammaticalized to convey causative meanings.

Disposal construction shows a syntactic shift in Lakkja word order by introducing the object-raising device *pa* from Chinese. There is a close relationship between passive construction and disposal construction in Lakkja.
Chapter 6
Adjectives and Adverbs

To further present grammatical elements in noun phrases and verb phrases, this chapter will concentrate on Lakkja adjectives and adverbs as well as their applications at phrase level. Since affixation and reduplication have already been fully examined in §3.1 and §3.2, this chapter will lay emphasis on the characteristics of adjectives, the syntactic function, comparative constructions, and the semantic and syntactic functions of adverbs.

6.1 Characteristics of adjectives

The adjective class is one of the most significant word classes in Lakkja. It is of vital importance in forming noun phrases and is relatively large and open. As mentioned earlier, there might be no clear distinctions in this language area between word classes such as verbs and adjectives, and adjectives and adverbs. Adjectives are analysed by some scholars as adjectival verbs, a subcategory of verbs, and thus it has been said that there is no adjective class for a number of languages (Chao 1968; McCawley 1992). However, in this study we prefer to distinguish adjectives from verbs for the reasons that will become clearer later, as adjectives exhibit several characteristics that set them apart from verbs.

Adjectives are semantically those lexical words with descriptive meanings. There are two basic semantic tasks for adjectives to perform: make a statement that something has a certain property, or provide a specification that helps focus on the referent of the head noun in an noun phrase (Dixon 2010:113). The majority of adjectives are monosyllabic and disyllabic, but there are a number of tri-syllabic and even polysyllabic adjectives as well. A number of adjectives may be formed through unique morphological processes like reduplication and suffixation that separate themselves from verbs and adverbs, as discussed in §3.1 and §3.2.

Syntactically, Lakkja adjectives typically follow the head nouns or noun phrases to function as attributives. However, such a syntactic order is undergoing change in that occasionally some adjectives may precede modified nouns under the influence of Chinese.

Lakkja adjectives share similar characteristics with verbs in that an adjective can fill the predicate slot in a clause, just as an intransitive verb does. However, some criteria can still be observed to distinguish adjectives and verbs. For example, only adjectives may occur in a comparative construction, while verbs may not, except one verb *li24* ‘acquire’ as shown in (13c).
Besides, Lakkja adjectives do not take transitive objects the way verbs do in native constituent order.

Last but not the least, an important feature of adjectives is that a number of them may function as adverbial, preceding or following the verbs they modify. This may partly attribute to the regional characteristics that the distinction between adjectives and adverbs is not quite clear in some cases.

6.2 Syntactic function of adjectives

Lakkja adjectives may function as attributives and predicates. Some of them may also function as complements and adverbials. However, adjectives cannot take objects syntactically.

6.2.1 As attributive

When functioning as attributives, adjectives often follow the head nouns or noun phrases they modify. For example:

(1) a. lak⁴⁴ mi⁴⁴⁴ ŋin⁴⁴ ti:u⁴⁴⁴ tsun⁴⁴ ko:ŋ⁴⁵
   3SG have one CLF skirt red
   ‘She has a red skirt.’

b. kjo:n⁴⁴ tsei⁵⁵ lou¹¹ ni⁴⁴⁴ hou²⁴ tsak⁵⁵
   CLF tree old this very heavy
   ‘This big log is very heavy.’

c. lak⁵⁵ ku:⁴⁵⁵ ni⁴⁴⁴ pha:ŋ⁴⁴ phiŋ⁵⁵ lai⁵¹ lo:m⁵¹
   CLF cloth this light blue good look
   ‘This piece of light blue cloth is good-looking.’

d. lak⁴⁴ te:n¹¹ na:ŋ¹¹ wiê:ŋ⁴⁴ fiê:ŋ⁵¹
   3SG wear clothes ragged
   ‘He wears ragged clothes.’

However, some changes can be observed in Lakkja syntactic structure due to contact with Chinese. Occasionally, when functioning as modifiers, adjectives may precede the head noun or noun phrase just like in Chinese. A structural particle ka¹¹, which functions as a marker for modifiers, may be added between the preceding adjective and the head noun. For example:
(2) a. ŋin\textsuperscript{24} ti:u\textsuperscript{231} tsun\textsuperscript{231} ko:ŋ\textsuperscript{55} ‘a red skirt’
   one CLF skirt red
b. ŋin\textsuperscript{24} ti:u\textsuperscript{231} o:n\textsuperscript{55} ka\textsuperscript{11} tsun\textsuperscript{231} ko:ŋ\textsuperscript{55} ‘a beautiful red skirt’
   one CLF beautiful PART skirt red
c. pek\textsuperscript{24} po:m\textsuperscript{51} po:m\textsuperscript{51} ka\textsuperscript{11} kou\textsuperscript{24} ‘shining white rice’
   white SUF PART rice
d. pek\textsuperscript{24} po:m\textsuperscript{51} po:m\textsuperscript{51} ka\textsuperscript{11} kou\textsuperscript{24} wāi\textsuperscript{214} ‘shining white new rice’
   white SUF PART rice new

6.2.2 As predicates

Lakkja adjectives may also occur as predicates. For example:

(3) a. tu\textsuperscript{11} khũ\textsuperscript{51} ni\textsuperscript{231} hou\textsuperscript{24} pu:i\textsuperscript{231} ja\textsuperscript{11} CLF pig this very fat PART
   ‘This pig is so fat!’

b. at\textsuperscript{55} jen\textsuperscript{11} kjai\textsuperscript{51} bok\textsuperscript{55} khuː:n\textsuperscript{24}, at\textsuperscript{55} jen\textsuperscript{11} kjai\textsuperscript{51} kjai\textsuperscript{24} pu:i\textsuperscript{231} elder brother skinny younger brother fat
   ‘The elder brother is skinny, the younger brother is fat.’

c. a\textsuperscript{11} phla\textsuperscript{51} ni\textsuperscript{231} fiŋ\textsuperscript{51} a:k\textsuperscript{24} kind fish this rancid very
   ‘This kind of fish is very rancid.’

d. lak\textsuperscript{24} lou\textsuperscript{11} uk\textsuperscript{55} tsuːŋ\textsuperscript{55} lie:u\textsuperscript{24}, lie:k\textsuperscript{11} fep\textsuperscript{55} a:k\textsuperscript{24} old people bury (the dead) PART house deserted very
   ‘The old is buried. It is very cold and cheerless at home.’

There are several adverbs that often co-occur with adjective predicates to indicate degree, such as a:k\textsuperscript{24}, hou\textsuperscript{24}, and hon\textsuperscript{51}, especially with monosyllabic adjective predicates. hou\textsuperscript{24} and hon\textsuperscript{51} generally precede them, while a:k\textsuperscript{24} follows them, as exemplified in (3a), (3c), and (3d) for illustration.

Lakkja adjectives may form a sentence alone without a subject. Such sentences are often used to answer a question or express exclamation. For example:

(4) a. – tsi\textsuperscript{31} o:n\textsuperscript{55} ya\textsuperscript{11}? – o:n\textsuperscript{55}.
   1SG beautiful PART beautiful
   – ‘Am I beautiful?’ – ‘(Yes,) beautiful.’
b. *hou*\textsuperscript{24} *o:n*\textsuperscript{55}
very beautiful
‘So beautiful!’

Besides, discourse final particle *lie:*\textsubscript{24} is sometimes required to co-occur with monosyllabic and some disyllabic adjective predicates. For example:

(5) a. *pei*\textsuperscript{51} *bok*\textsuperscript{55} *lie:*\textsubscript{24} *ei*\textsuperscript{24} *pok*\textsuperscript{24} *ko:*\textsuperscript{51} *tsak*\textsuperscript{55}
age big PART NEG do work heavy
‘You get old. Don’t take hard jobs.’

b. *kja:*\textsuperscript{24} *sei*\textsuperscript{24} *lie:*\textsubscript{24}
stomach hungry PART
‘I’m hungry.’

6.2.3 As verbal complement

Adjective complements generally occur immediately after the verb (6a) or the complement marker *li*\textsubscript{24} (6b–d). For example:

(6) a. *lak*\textsuperscript{24} *tsie*\textsuperscript{214} *plei*\textsuperscript{51} *hou*\textsuperscript{24} *tu*\textsuperscript{231} *yâ:*\textsuperscript{231}
3SG shoot dead two CLF tiger
‘He killed two tigers.’

b. *ko:*\textsuperscript{24} *a:*\textsuperscript{m}\textsuperscript{214} *li*\textsuperscript{24} *hou*\textsuperscript{24} *tso*\textsuperscript{24}
grandfather walk COMP very slow
‘Grandfather walks very slowly.’

c. *ma*\textsuperscript{231} *ka*\textsuperscript{11} *ko*\textsuperscript{51} *tshieŋ*\textsuperscript{55} *li*\textsuperscript{24} *hou*\textsuperscript{24} *lai*\textsuperscript{51}
2SG PART song sing COMP very good
‘You sing very well.’

d. *lak*\textsuperscript{24} *ka*\textsuperscript{11} *si:*\textsuperscript{u}\textsuperscript{51} *fie*\textsuperscript{24} *li*\textsuperscript{24} *lai*\textsuperscript{51}
3SG PART handwriting write COMP good
‘He writes a good hand.’

6.2.4 As adverbial

A significant feature of adjectives is that some may function as adverbial, preceding or following verbs they modify. This may partly attribute to the regional characteristics that the
distinction between adjectives and adverbs is not quite clear in some cases, as shown in the following examples.

(7)  
\[a. \text{\textit{eu}}^{1} \text{\textit{lak}}^{24} \text{\textit{hwa:i}}^{55} \text{\textit{ninj}}^{24} \text{\textit{tanj}}^{231} \text{\textit{ha:i}}^{31} \text{\textit{wei}}^{55}\]  
\[\text{tell} \quad \text{3SG} \quad \text{quick} \quad \text{some} \quad \text{come} \quad \text{open} \quad \text{meeting}\]  
‘Tell him to come quickly for the meeting.’

b. \[\text{\textit{a:m}}^{214} \text{\textit{tsø}}^{24} \text{\textit{ninj}}^{24}\]  
\[\text{walk} \quad \text{slow} \quad \text{some}\]  
‘Slow down!’

c. \[\text{\textit{lak}}^{24} \text{\textit{ŋ̍}}^{24} \text{\textit{ʔat}}^{55} \text{\textit{lie:k}}^{11} \text{\textit{pek}}^{24} \text{\textit{pek}}^{24} \text{\textit{am}}^{214} \text{\textit{nin}}^{24} \text{\textit{tsa:j}}^{51}\]  
\[3\text{SG} \quad \text{NEG} \quad \text{in} \quad \text{house} \quad \text{vain} \quad \text{vain} \quad \text{walk} \quad \text{one} \quad \text{CLF}\]  
‘He’s not at home. We came in vain.’

d. \[\text{\textit{si:u}}^{24} \text{\textit{tsa:j}}^{24} \text{\textit{ko}}^{24} \text{\textit{ɬoŋ}}^{51} \text{\textit{pok}}^{24} \text{\textit{ko:j}}^{51}\]  
\[\text{few} \quad \text{say} \quad \text{story} \quad \text{much} \quad \text{do} \quad \text{work}\]  
‘Talk less, work more.’

6.2.5 As head of complement nouns

It is worth noting that unlike many Kam-Tai languages, Lakkja adjectives may occur before nouns. In such a construction, the adjective is the head, while the noun can be analysed as complement of the adjective, describing the subject or location of the state denoted by the adjective. Taking (8) as an example, the noun \textit{kja:i}^{24} ‘tharm, guts’ appears after the adjective \textit{se:i}^{24} ‘hungry’ as complement.

(8) \[\text{\textit{se:i}}^{24} \text{\textit{kja:i}}^{24}\]  
\[\text{hungry} \quad \text{tharm, guts}\]  
‘Feel hungry.’

6.3 Comparative constructions

According to Dixon (2010:177-179), a prototypical comparative construction includes three basic elements: the comparee, the standard of comparison, and the parameter of comparison. The comparee denotes the participant that is being compared; the standard signals what the comparee is being compared against, namely, the other participant being compared; the parameter, which is often an adjective, denotes the property in terms of which the two participants are compared.
In many languages, there are usually two more elements in a prototypical comparative construction: the index of comparison, such as English ‘more’ and ‘-er’, and the marker of each core and peripheral argument, such as English ‘than’ that marks the grammatical function of the standard.

Following these lines of argument, two main varieties of comparative construction can be recognized around the world: one is a language where the parameter (generally an adjective) may function as the head of an intransitive predicate and is modified by the index of comparison, such as Mandarin Chinese in (9); the other is a language where the parameter may function as the parameter (modified by the index) in the copula complement slot rather than as intransitive predicate, such as English in (10).

(9)  
\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & tā & bǐ & wǒ & gāo \\
& 3SG & CMP & 1SG & \text{tall}
\end{align*}

\begin{tabular}{llll}
COMPAREE & MARK & STANDARD & PARAMETER \\
\end{tabular}

‘He is taller than me.’

\begin{align*}
\text{b. } & tā & gèng & gāo \\
& 3SG & \text{more} & \text{tall}
\end{align*}

\begin{tabular}{lll}
COMPAREE & INDEX & PARAMETER \\
\end{tabular}

‘He is taller.’

(10)  
\begin{align*}
\text{He is } & \text{tall} & \text{-er} & \text{than} & \text{me} \\
\end{align*}

\begin{tabular}{lllll}
COMPAREE & PARAMETER & INDEX & MARK & STANDARD \\
\end{tabular}

‘He is taller than me.’

In addition to these two varieties, there are other types of comparative construction. For example, a verb like ‘surpass’ may function as index and co-occur with an adjective or a verb to form a serial verb construction, as illustrated in (14).

The following sections will give further discussions on Lakkja comparative constructions for equality, superiority and superlative.

6.3.1 Equality

There are several ways to convey the meaning of ‘equality’ in Lakkja. These include the use of \text{tøŋ}^{11} \text{jie}:\text{ŋ}^{214}, \text{ŋin}^{24} \text{ŋja}:\text{u}^{214}, \text{ŋin}^{24} \text{jie}:\text{ŋ}^{214}, \text{ŋi}^{51} \text{ŋja}:\text{u}^{214}, and \text{hå:n}^{51} \text{ŋja}:\text{u}^{214}. They function as the index of comparison, indicating that the two comparands have the same quality.
Normally, these words follow the participants being compared, and precede the adjectives and verbs that functioning as the parameter, that is, [COMPAREE and STANDARD + INDEX (toŋ \[COMPAREE\] jie:ŋ \[STANDARD\] \[INDEX\]) + PARAMETER (verb/adjective)], as shown in (11a) and (11b). Others may also combine with mark words such as o:p11, ta:ŋ55, and fieŋ55 ‘like, be like’ in the frame [COMPAREE + MARK (o:p11\ldots) + STANDARD + INDEX + PARAMETER]. In this frame, the parameter can occur either before the mark of the standard (11c) or after the index of comparison (11d) and (11e).

(11) a. ti:u231 ti:u231 kjei51 toŋ11 jie:ŋ214 fei55
   CLF CLF string CMP thin
   ‘Each string is equally thin.’

b. tu231 hou24 lak24 ŋin24 jie:ŋ214 khja:ŋ51
   they two CLF CMP tall
   ‘They two are of the same height.’

c. tu214 pai51 pai51 pon214 pon214 o:p11 ka:n24 hu51 ŋin24 ŋja:u214
   3PL go go turn turn like rush for street CMP
   ‘They come and go as if it is the market day.’

d. ma231 ta:ŋ55 tu11 me:u11 ŋin24 jie:ŋ214 toŋ11 wan231 mi24 pla51
   2SG like CLF cat CMP all day squint eye
   ‘You narrow your eyes all the time, just like a cat.’

e. lak24 jie24 kuŋ24 kā:ŋ24 o:p11 tu231 tson24 ŋi51 ŋja:u214
   3SG waist arch bend like CLF shrimp CMP
   ‘He stoops like a shrimp.’

o:p11, ta:ŋ55, and fieŋ55 ‘be similar, resemble’ may convey the meaning of equality alone. The following examples illustrate.

(12) a. ma231 fieŋ55 nam55 hu51
   2SG like CLF flower
   ‘You are like a flower!’

b. fieŋ55 tu231 khu51 ni231 ŋi51 bok55 ne11 toŋ24
   like CLF pig this like this big who ever
   ‘No one has ever seen a pig as big as this one.’
c. o:p⁵¹ lak⁴⁴ ni⁵¹ khja:ŋ⁵¹ ka¹¹ njũn²³¹ tsi⁵¹ waŋ²¹¹ wei⁵⁵ tie²¹⁴
like 3SG so tall PART people 1SG NEG see ASP
‘I’ve never seen a man as tall as him.’
d. ma²³¹ ta:ŋ⁵⁵ tu¹¹ me:u¹¹ njin²⁴ jie:ŋ²¹⁴ toŋ¹¹ wan²³¹
2SG like CLF cat CMP all day
mi²⁴ pla⁵¹
narrow (v.) eye
‘You squint all day like a cat.’

6.3.2 Superiority
There are several comparative markers in Lakkja to express superiority.

pi⁵¹ and pei²⁴ are both Chinese loans. They designate a meaning of ‘surpass’ and typically occur in the construction [COMPAREE + pi⁵¹ / pei²⁴ + STANDARD + PARAMETER (verb/adjective)]. This construction is widely used for comparison in Lakkja, indicating a strong influence of Chinese on Lakkja grammar.

(13) a. tsi⁵¹ pi⁵¹ ma²³¹ khja:ŋ⁵¹
1SG CMP 2SG tall
‘I’m taller than you.’
b. lak⁴⁴ bok⁵⁵ pi⁵¹ lak⁴⁴ kjai²⁴ bok⁵⁵ hou²⁴ pei⁵¹
elder brother CMP younger brother old two year
‘Elder brother is two years older than younger brother.’
c. tsi⁵¹ pei²⁴ nj⁴⁴ li²⁴ lak⁴⁴
1SG CMP NEG acquire 3SG
‘I’m no match for him.’

tie²¹⁴ is a native marker for the standard comparison. It normally occurs in the frame [COMPAREE + PARAMETER (verb/adjective) + tie²¹⁴ + STANDARD], which differs from pi⁵¹ and pei²⁴.

(14) a. ma²³¹ u:n⁵¹ tsei⁵⁵ ni²³¹ tsak⁵⁵ tie²¹⁴ tsi⁵¹ u:n⁵¹
2SG CLF tree this heavy CMP 1SG CLF
‘Your bundle of firewood is heavier than mine.’
In several instances, the standard comparison can be conveyed through adjectives indicating weight, height, age and so on, without using any comparative markers. For example:

(15)  

a. tsì5₁ wa:t₁¹¹ tsak5₅ ma₃₁₃ tsep₂⁴ tsə₅₁

1SG load heavy 2SG ten jin (unit of weight)

′My loan is heavier than you by ten jin.′

b. lak²⁴ bok₅₅ bok₅₅ hou²⁴ pei₅¹ lak²⁴ kjai²⁴

elder brother old two year younger brother

′Elder brother is two years older than younger brother.′

A small number of words are found in my data which express different degrees of comparison, such as niŋ₂₄ ‘a little, somewhat’ and jo:n²₃₁ ‘much more’.

(16)  

a. tsì₅₁ te:y₅₅ ni²³₁ loy₅¹ niŋ₂₄

1SG part this many somewhat

′My part is a bit more.′

b. nam₅₅ kja²⁴ ni²³₁ khja:y₅₁ jo:n²₃₁

CLF mountain this tall much

′This mountain is much taller.′

Several Chinese loan words such as ka:y₂₄ ‘more, further’, ta:i²¹⁴, and tha:t₅₅ ‘a lot more, too (much), excessively’ have entered the Lakkja lexicon. These items typically occur before adjectives and psychological verbs to indicate comparison. Quite often, they combine with the comparative markers pi₅₁ and pei²⁴, as in (17a).

(17)  

a. tsì₅₁ pi₅₁ ma₂³₁ khja:y₅₁, lak²⁴ pi₅₁ tsì₅₁ ta:i²¹⁴ khja:y₅₁

1SG CMP 2SG tall 3SG CMP 1SG further tall

′I’m taller than you. He’s even taller than me.′

b. jak₅₅ ne:m²³₁ pi:n₅¹ tsië₅₁ a:m²¹⁴, ka:y₂₄ njok²⁴ la₁¹

if along side river walk further roundabout PART

′It would be more roundabout to walk along the river.′
\(pi^51\ ja:u^24\), translatable as ‘relatively, somewhat’, is also a Chinese loan word indicating comparison.

(18) a. \(ni^51\ pok^24\ pi^51\ ja:u^24\ lai^51\)
in this way do relatively good
‘Doing like that is better.’
b. \(tsi^51\ te:hc^55\ ni^231\ pi^51\ ja:u^24\ log^51\)
1SG part this relatively many
‘My part is more.’

\(jut^24\ ‘more and more’ can also be used to indicate comparison in the frame \([jut^24\ …\ jut^24\ …]\). This construction is borrowed from Chinese ‘\(yuè…yuè…\)’. It may occur in a single clause to describe a single event, or in a conjoined sentence to describe multiple events.

(19) a. \(lak^24\ jut^24\ bok^55\ jut^24\ o:n^55\)
3SG more big more beautiful
‘The older she gets, the more beautiful she becomes.’
b. \(lak^24\ jut^24\ pai^51\ jut^24\ pa^231\)
3SG more go more far
‘He went farther and farther.’

Last but not the least, comparison can be also made through the verb \(ta:k^11\ ‘compare’\, though strictly speaking, it is not a standard comparative marker. This verb semantically indicates a process of ‘put things together to compare them’.

(20) \(ta:k^11\ hou^24\ mi^231\ fan^51\ ni^231\ lo:m^51\ mi^231\ na^214\ a:i^231\)
CMP two CLF bamboo this look CLF which long
‘Compare these two pieces of bamboo to see which one is longer.’

6.3.3 Superlative

The superlative degree can be formed with superlative markers \(tsi^55\) and \(tsai^24\). The two are both Chinese loan words. They occur before adjectives.

(21) a. \(lak^24\ tok^55\ tsi^51\ tsai^24\ lai^51\ ka^11\ pay^11\ jau^214\)
3SG be 1SG most good PART friend
‘He is my best friend.’
Occasionally, superlative meaning can be expressed without a superlative marker. When the range of comparison is specified in contexts, *fuəːn*[^1], a verb with the meaning of ‘calculate’, may occur before a noun to convey the meaning of superlative degree. For example:

(22)  
\[ \text{tau}^{51} \text{ faːm}^{51} \text{ lak}^{24} \text{ ni}^{231}, \text{ fuəːn}^{55} \text{ lak}^{24} \text{ khjaːŋ}^{51} \]  
\[ 1\text{PL three CLF this calculate 3SG tall} \]  
‘He is the tallest of us three.’

### 6.4 Syntactic properties and semantic features of adverbs

Adverbs generally modify verbs and adjectives to describe the degree, range, time, frequency, manner of the act or state, mood, modality, and the like. A number of Lakkja adverbs may function as adverbials in a clause, some may function as clause linkers. Lakkja adverbs never modify nouns.

Several native adverbs are recognised in my data, as well as quite a number of Chinese loan adverbs. Table 6.1 below is a list of the syntactic properties of all the adverbs discussed in the following sections. As illustrated, from a syntactic perspective, the majority of Lakkja adverbs are pre-modifying. Post-modifying adverbs are by and large native. Some adverbs may occur either before or after the modified items. Borrowed items generally precede the modified verbs or adjectives, following the constituent order of Chinese.

**Table 6.1 Semantic and syntactic functions of Lakkja adverbs**

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<td><em>tsiŋ</em>[^4]</td>
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<td>tsak\textsuperscript{55} tsu\textsuperscript{24}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>pok\textsuperscript{24}</td>
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<td>tsen\textsuperscript{11} na:i\textsuperscript{24}</td>
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<td></td>
<td>tsie\textsuperscript{231} tsie\textsuperscript{231}</td>
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<td>ko:n\textsuperscript{14}</td>
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<td>ma\textsuperscript{11} lie:ŋ\textsuperscript{214}</td>
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<td>kjap\textsuperscript{24}, hap\textsuperscript{55}</td>
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<td>tan\textsuperscript{231} la\textsuperscript{24}</td>
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<td>Time, duration, frequency</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>kjap\textsuperscript{24}, hap\textsuperscript{55}</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ma\textsuperscript{11} lie:ŋ\textsuperscript{214}</td>
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<td></td>
<td>ko:n\textsuperscript{14}</td>
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<td></td>
<td>tin\textsuperscript{24}</td>
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<td></td>
<td>tsaŋ\textsuperscript{214}, jɛ\textsuperscript{u}214</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ma\textsuperscript{11} lie:ŋ\textsuperscript{214}</td>
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<td>ko:n\textsuperscript{14}</td>
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<td>pin\textsuperscript{11} tsie:ŋ\textsuperscript{231}</td>
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<td>tsie:ŋ\textsuperscript{231} tsie:ŋ\textsuperscript{231}</td>
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<td>tsi\textsuperscript{55}, tsai\textsuperscript{24}</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tha:i\textsuperscript{55}</td>
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<td></td>
<td>sie:ŋ\textsuperscript{24} ta:ŋ\textsuperscript{24}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>tsi</strong> / <strong>tsi</strong></td>
<td>'indeed, truly, really'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>tsak</strong> / <strong>tsu</strong></td>
<td>'deliberately, purposively'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>fa:n</strong> / <strong>ta:u</strong></td>
<td>'on the contrary, instead'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ta:u</strong> / <strong>pan</strong></td>
<td>'on the contrary'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ju:n</strong> / <strong>pan</strong></td>
<td>'originally, meant to'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ta</strong> / <strong>pan</strong></td>
<td>'fortunately, thank God'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ko:n</strong></td>
<td>'still, also'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ufen</strong>, <strong>ufen ko</strong></td>
<td>'still, also'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>jeu</strong>, <strong>u</strong></td>
<td>'and, but, both… and…'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>tei</strong>, <strong>tsiu</strong></td>
<td>'then, thereupon'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>pok</strong> / <strong>lōn</strong></td>
<td>'probably, likely, maybe'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>he</strong></td>
<td>'for fear that'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Negation**

| **hwǎ:i**, **ŋwǎ:i** | neutral negator |
| **ŋ̥wã:i** | general negator |
| **en** / **er** / **au** | negative imperative |
| **en** / **mī** / **hwǎ:i**, **mī** | negative possessive/existential |
| **waŋ** | negative perfective (imperfective) |

**B. Post-modifying**

**Degree**

| **a:k** | 'very, extremely' |
| **plei** | 'very, extremely' (from lexeme ‘die’) |

**Time**

| **ba:n** | 'before' |
| **la** | 'after' |

**Manner**

| **tsen** | 'steadily, stably, firmly' |

**C. Both**

**Time**

| **khjam** | 'early' |
| **tsi** | 'late' |

**Manner**

| **hwā:i** | 'quickly' |
| **tso** | 'slowly' |
| **kjip** | 'hurriedly' |
The following subsections will describe these adverbs in detail with illustrative examples.

6.4.1 Adverb of degree

Several adverbs are found in my data which describe degree of a state. Some of them occur before the modified items, while others follow the modified items, as discussed below.

*a:k* is a native adverb meaning ‘very, extremely’. It can only occur after the verbs and adjectives it modifies. For example:

(23)  
\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
\text{a. } & \text{lak} & \text{pok} & \text{li} & \text{a:k} \\
3\text{SG} & \text{do} & \text{COMP} & \text{good} & \text{extremely}
\end{array}
\]

‘He did very well.’

b. *pei* *ŋ̥* *ã:i* *tsiŋ* *lai* *a:k*  
this year harvest good extremely

‘Very good harvest this year!’

*hou* and *h* are Chinese loan adverbs which also carry the meaning ‘very’. In contrast with *a:k*, *hou* and *h* occur before the modified items. In addition, as illustrated in (24a–d), all the samples share the same syntactic pattern, that is, *hou* and *h* occur after the complement marker *li*.

(24)  
\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
\text{a. } & \text{h} & \text{lai} & \text{hou} & \text{tsiŋ} \\
& \text{very} & \text{good} & \text{very} & \text{slow}
\end{array}
\]

‘Grandfather walks very slowly.’

c. *ma* *ka* *ko* *tshieŋ* *lai*  
2SG PART song sing COMP very good

‘You sing very well.’

d. *lak* *pok* *li* *h* *lai*  
3SG do COMP very good

‘He did very well.’

*tsiŋ* ‘really’ is also borrowed from Chinese to describe degree.
(25)  a. ma231 tsin55 lai51
2SG really good
‘It’s very kind of you.’

b. tur231 nunj11 jei11 ni231 tsin55 they55 wo214
CLF child young this really listen words
‘This little child is really tractable.’

The meaning of “very”, “extremely” and the like can also be expressed by plei51, which comes from the lexical word plei51 ‘die; dead’. Here it can be analysed as a post-modifying adverb indicating a very high degree of intensity of a state/situation described by the adjective in question.

(26)  a. tie:η231 kou24 pop55 khwa:n51 plei51
marshmallow sweet very
‘Marshmallow is very sweet.’

b. nam55 jie51 ju:n231 ni231 kom231 plei51
CLF pill this bitter very
‘This pill is very bitter.’

c. lak24 la:n11 plei51
3SG lazy very
‘He is very lazy.’

Two superlative degree markers, tsi55 and tsai24, are commonly used to convey the meaning of ‘most’. The two are both Chinese loan words and occur before the modified items.

(27)  a. lak24 tok55 tsi51 tsai24 lai51 ka11 pay11 jau214
3SG be 1SG most good PART friend
‘He is my best friend.’

b. kɔ:n54 wok24 ni231 tsai24 lai51 tsen51
CLF vegetable this most good eat
‘This vegetable tastes best.’

c. me:u11 tsi55 i55 pje:u231 iŋjũn231
cat most love lick people
‘Cats love licking people most.’
ka:ŋ⁴, ta:i²¹⁴, and tha:i⁵⁵ are Chinese loan adverbs carrying the meaning of ‘more, further, much more’. They are commonly used as markers for superiority degree, as discussed in §6.3.2. These are all pre-modifiers which invariably occur before the modified items.

(28)  a. lak²⁴ pi⁵¹ tsi⁵¹ a:m²¹⁴ li²⁴ ta:i²¹⁴ hwa:i⁵⁵
     3SG CMP 1SG walk COMP more quick
     ‘He walks quicker than me.’

b. jak⁵⁵ ne:m²³¹ pi:n⁵¹ tsi⁵¹ a:m²¹⁴, ka:ŋ⁴ njok²⁴ la¹¹
     if along side river walk further roundabout PART
     ‘It would be more roundabout to walk along the river.’

tha:i⁵⁵ may also carry the meaning of ‘too, excessively’, designating the intense degree of a state or a situation.

(29)  jin⁵¹ wei²¹⁴ ka:ŋ⁵¹ tha:i⁵⁵ jep¹¹ tshie⁵¹ tie²¹⁴ hwâ:i⁵¹ pai⁵¹
     because road too narrow car pass NEG go
     ‘Because the road is too narrow, the vehicle could not pass.’

sie:ŋ⁴ ta:ŋ⁴ is a Chinese loan adverb meaning ‘quite’. It also occurs before the modified items.

(30)  a. njji:n²⁴ na:ŋ¹¹ ni²³¹ sie:ŋ⁴ ta:ŋ²⁴ o:n⁵⁵
     CLF clothes this quite beautiful
     ‘This dress is pretty beautiful.’

b. lak²⁴ sie:ŋ²⁴ ta:ŋ²⁴ kwa:i³¹
     3SG quite smart
     ‘He is quite smart.’

6.4.2 Adverb of scope

Lakkja has a significant number of adverbs that describe the scope of a situation. Such adverbs may also function as emphatic markers.
Two Chinese loan words, *tong⁴⁴* and *thoŋ⁵¹*, convey a meaning of ‘all, entirely’. They both precede the modified items. Furthermore, they may also function as an emphatic marker, as well as a universal quantifier.

(31)  
(a) *tsi⁵¹* lak⁵⁵ *kè⁴⁴* *tong⁴⁴* nj⁴⁴ *au⁵¹*
1SG what all NEG want
‘I don’t want anything.’

(b) *ŋji:n⁷⁴* *na:ŋ¹¹* *nì⁴³¹* *lai⁵¹* *ma²³¹* *tong⁴⁴* nj⁴⁴ *au⁵¹*
CLF clothes this good 2SG all NEG want
‘Don’t you even want such a good dress?’

(c) *tu²⁴¹* *thoŋ⁵¹* uk⁵⁵ *ko:ŋ⁵¹* *lie:u²⁴*
3PL all go out work PART
‘They all went to work.’

*i¹¹ kha:i²⁴* ‘all, entirely, totally’ is a preverbal Chinese loan adverb.

(32)  
*tam¹¹* wok⁴ *ni²³¹* *i¹¹ kha:i²⁴* *pøn⁵¹* *ma²³¹*
CLF vegetable this all give 2SG
‘Give all of these vegetables to you.’

*ho¹¹* ‘only’ is a pre-modifying adverb. It often combines with verbs such as *mi²³¹* ‘have’, modifying the verb or verb phrase, or the whole clause or sentence.

(33)  
(a) *tsi⁵¹* *ho¹¹* *mi²³¹* hou⁴ *wan²³¹* *kja⁵¹*
1SG only have two day holiday
‘I only have two days off.’

(b) *ho¹¹* *au⁵¹* hou⁴ *lak⁴* *ŋjûn²³¹*
only need two CLF person
‘Only two people are needed.’

(c) *ou¹¹* lie:k¹¹ *ho¹¹* *mi²³¹* hou⁴ *lak⁴* *ŋjûn²³¹*
inside house only have two CLF person
‘There are only two people at home.’

(d) *ho¹¹* jin⁵¹ *wei²¹⁴* wan²³¹ *ŋjam¹¹* *lei¹¹* *fen⁵¹* *tsi⁵¹* *hap⁵⁵* nj⁴⁴ *pai⁵¹*
only because yesterday drop rain 1SG PART NEG go
‘Only because it was raining that I didn’t go (there).’

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It is worth noting that *ho* can also function as an adjective to modify numerals and pronouns. For example:

(34)  
- **a.** *ho* *ŋin* *lak* *ŋjũn* *pai*
  
  only one CLF person go
  
  ‘Only one person can go.’

- **b.** *ho* *tsi* *ŋin* *lak* *ŋjũn* *ŋa*
  
  only 1SG one CLF person PART
  
  ‘Just me! (I’m the only one!)’

*tsoŋ* is a pre-modifying Chinese loan adverb meaning ‘totally, altogether’. It also often combines with verbs such as *mi* ‘have’.

(35)  
- **a.** *ta:* *kou* *ni* *tsoŋ* *mi* *tsep*
  
  CLF rice this totally have ten jin (unit of weight)
  
  ‘This bag of rice weighs 10 jin in total.’

- **b.** *kjoŋ* *mlok* *ni* *tsoŋ* *mi* *ŋo* *lep* *tu*
  
  CLF bird this totally have five ten CLF
  
  ‘There are altogether 50 birds in this flock.’

*ta:* *tshu* and *fei* *tshu* are pre-verbal adverbs borrowed from Chinese, with the meaning of ‘everywhere, all over’.

(36)  
- **a.** *ka* *nt* *ta:* *tshu* *mi* *ka* *lai* *ple*
  
  now everywhere have thing sell
  
  ‘Things are sold everywhere nowadays.’

- **b.** *tsi* *ta:* *tshu* *la* *ŋ* *khjaj* *lak*
  
  1SG everywhere look for NEG meet 3SG
  
  ‘I couldn’t find him anywhere.’

- **c.** *fei* *tshu* *wan* *u* *mok* *mok*
  
  everywhere fog misty everywhere
  
  ‘It’s foggy and misty everywhere.’

*leŋ* is in addition, separately’, a pre-modifying adverb from Chinese, generally occurs before the verbs and adjectives it modifies.
‘If he won’t go, then ask someone else to go.’

6.4.3 Adverb of time

There are a number of Lakkja adverbs that describe the time, duration, or frequency of the act or state in question. Some of them are native, others are Chinese loan words. Typically, native adverbs of time occur after the modified items, which is a pan-Tai feature, while Chinese loans come before them.

Several native adverbs denote the sequence of time, such as ba:ŋ51 ‘before’, la24 ‘after’, ne:m231 khjɔn24 ‘whereafter’, khjam51 ‘early’, tsi231 ‘late’, etc.

ba:ŋ51 ‘before’ and la24 ‘after’ occur after the modified items. For example:

(38) a. ma231 pai51 ba:ŋ51, tsi51 tan5231 la24
   2SG go first 1SG come later
   ‘You go first. I’ll follow.’

b. lak24 waŋ231 tshieŋ55 ko51 tei11 khõ51 bɔ:ŋ51
   3SG NEG sing song EMPH clear (one’s throat) first
   ‘He cleared his throat before singing.’

ne:m231 khjɔn24 ‘whereafter’ occurs before the modified items.

(39) ma231 pai51 ba:ŋ51, tsi51 ne:m231 khjɔn24 tei11 tan5231
   2SG go first 1SG whereafter EMPH come
   ‘You go first. I am coming soon.’

khjam51 ‘early’ and tsi231 ‘late’ may occur either before or after the modified items. Note that khjam51 ‘early’ may be reduplicated to enhance its expressive meaning (40a), while tsi231 ‘late’ may not.

(40) a. lak24 kjã:u24 khjam51 khjam51 tei11 tan5231 fa:ŋ51 kou24
    woman very early then come pound rice
    ‘Women came to pound rice very early.’
b. uk⁵⁵ ko:ŋ⁵¹ khjam⁵¹ tsi²³¹ ŋ²⁴ ji:u²⁴ kan²⁴
go out work early late NEG important

‘It doesn’t matter to go to work sooner or later.’

c. ma²³¹ tan²³¹ ŋ²⁴ khjam⁵¹ ŋ²⁴ tsi²³¹
2SG come NEG early NEG late

‘You came neither too early nor too late.’

A number of native adverbs may modify the entire clause, such as heu⁵⁵ ‘formerly, once upon a time’, njam¹¹ ‘previously, before’, njen¹¹ la¹¹ ‘previously, before’, tag²³¹ la²⁴ ‘then, later, afterwards’. They may occur at the beginning of a clause (41a–d), or before the predicate of a clause (41e). For example:

(41) a. njam¹¹ tsi⁵¹ tan²³¹ tie²¹⁴ li:u²⁴ ba:n²⁴
before 1SG come ASP:EXP 2PL village

‘I have been to your village before.’

b. heu⁵⁵ tei¹¹ ni²³¹ ŋ²⁴ tuk²⁴ pi⁵¹ njia:u²¹⁴
before place this NEG be such appearance

‘This place was not like this in the past.’

c. njen¹¹ la¹¹ lak²⁴ tok⁵⁵ ka:n⁵¹ pu²⁴
previously 3SG be cadre

‘He used to be a cadre.’

d. man¹¹ la⁵¹ lak²⁴ ma:n¹¹ lai⁵¹, tag²³¹ la²⁴ ŋ²⁴ li²⁴ lie:u²⁴
from the start 3SG very good later NEG gain PART

‘He was good at the beginning, but wasn’t afterwards.’

e. lak²⁴ heu⁵⁵ pai⁵¹ tie²¹⁴ kuo:ŋ²⁴ toŋ⁵¹
3SG before go ASP:EXP Guangdong

‘He has been to Guangdong before.’

kjap²⁴ and hap⁵⁵ ‘just, just now’ are preverbal modifiers describing an act or a situation that happened in the recent past or just before a time referred to in the discourse.

(42) a. tsi⁵¹ kjap²⁴ au⁵¹ pai⁵¹ la¹¹, lak²⁴ tsiu²¹⁴ hā⁵⁵ ten²¹⁴ la¹¹
1SG just want go look for 3SG then come back arrive PART

‘He returned before I was about to go and look for him.’
As shown in (42d), \( kjap^{24} \) can be reduplicated to emphasize the short duration between the time when the act or the situation happened and the moment of speaking or the time mentioned in discourse.

Furthermore, \( kjap^{24} \) often combines with adjectives such as \( lai^{51} \) ‘good’, \( o:p^{11} \) ‘suitable’ to describe a proper extent.

(43)  a. \( ma^{231} \ tan^{331} \ \eta^{24} \ khjam^{51} \ \eta^{24} \ tsi^{231} \ kjap^{24} \ lai^{51} \)

2SG come NEG early NEG late exactly good

‘You came just at the right time, neither too early nor too late.’

b. \( nji:n^{24} \ na:y^{14} \ ni^{231} \ kjap^{24} \ o:p^{11} \ tem^{214} \)

CLF clothes this exactly suitable wear

‘This dress fits perfectly.’

\( ha:i^{24} \) ‘soon, before long’ is a preverbal adverb that describes an act or a situation that is about to happen.

(44)  a. \( lak^{24} \ piy^{214} \ ha:i^{24} \ lai^{51} \ lie:u^{24} \)

3SG illness soon good PART

‘He is recovering.’

b. \( khua:i^{24} \ ha:i^{24} \ te^{55} \ lie:u^{11} \ lie:u^{24} \)

birdbath soon complete ASP:PERF PART

‘Birdbath is finished soon.’

\( ma^{11} \ lie:η^{214} \) ‘immediately, at once’ is a preverbal modifier that depicts an act or a situation that happens immediately after the moment of speaking or after the reference moment mentioned in discourse.
(45) a. lak⁴⁴ piŋ⁴¹ lie:u⁴⁴, ma⁶¹ ma¹¹ lie:ŋ⁴¹ pai⁴⁵ la¹¹ i⁵¹ se:ŋ⁵¹
3SG ill PART 2SG immediately go look for doctor
‘He’s ill. You go to get a doctor now.’
b. tsi⁵¹ ma¹¹ lie:ŋ⁴¹ pai⁴⁵
1SG immediately go
‘I’ll go right now.’

ko:n⁴⁴ ‘always’ is an emphatic marker denoting the frequency an act or a situation happens. It generally occurs before the modified items.

(46) a. hou⁴⁴ lak⁴⁴ njũn⁶¹ ko:n⁴⁴ pi⁴⁵ ni⁴⁴ lak⁴⁴ njũn⁶¹ lek⁴⁴
two CLF person always CMP one CLF person strong
‘Two people are always better than one.’
b. lak⁴⁴ ko:n⁴⁴ tie⁶¹ ti⁶¹ kou⁴⁴ tan⁶¹ tse⁵¹
3SG always self take rice come eat
‘He always brings his meal here to eat.’

Besides, ko:n⁴⁴ may function as a marker for concession (see §6.4.5).

piŋ¹¹ tsie:ŋ⁶¹ ‘ordinarily, usually’ and tsie:ŋ⁶¹ tsie:ŋ⁶¹ ‘often’, both Chinese loans, also denote the frequency an act is performed or a situation is held.

(47) a. lak⁴⁴ piŋ¹¹ tsie:ŋ⁶¹ ŋ⁴⁴ tan⁶¹ ta⁶¹ li⁶¹
3SG ordinarily NEG come 1PL here
‘He doesn’t come to our place at ordinary times.’
b. lak⁴⁴ tsie:ŋ⁶¹ tsie:ŋ⁶¹ tan⁶¹ ta⁶¹ liek¹¹
3SG often come 1PL house
‘He often comes to my home.’
c. lak⁴⁴ kha:u⁵¹ se⁵¹ tsie:ŋ⁴¹ tsie:ŋ⁴¹ li⁴⁴ ni⁴⁴ pe:ki⁴⁴ hwan⁵¹
3SG take exams often get one hundred score
‘He often gets one hundred percent in exams.’

tse¹¹ le⁴¹⁴ ‘at any time’ is a preverbal modifier describing an act or a situation that may occur at any moment. It can also occur as an interrogative pronoun denoting ‘when, what time’. 
(48) \( \text{ts}^{11} \text{le}^{214} \text{tay}^{231} \text{ts}^{11} \text{le}^{214} \text{pai}^{51} \)

at any time come at any time go

‘Feel free to come and leave at any time.’

tsay\(^{214}\) and je\(^{214}\) ‘again, once more’ denotes an act or a situation occurring repeatedly or continuously. They occur before the modified items. For example:

(49) a. \( \text{ma}^{231} \text{tsay}^{214} \text{tsa}^{\eta}^{24} \text{tsi}^{51} \text{ksi}^{m}^{51} \text{ma}^{11} \)

2SG again say several CLF PART

‘Please talk a little bit more.’

b. \( \text{tsi}^{51} \text{tsay}^{214} \text{fe}^{\eta}^{24} \text{pai}^{51} \text{jin}^{24} \text{sa}^{u}^{55} \)

1SG again think go one CLF

‘I want to go again.’

c. \( \text{ma}^{231} \text{ko}^{51} \text{tshie}^{\eta}^{55} \text{li}^{24} \text{hou}^{24} \text{la}^{i}^{51}, \text{je}^{214} \text{tay}^{231} \text{jin}^{24} \text{ti}^{u}^{231} \)

2SG song sing COMP very good again come one CLF

‘You sang very well. One more song!’

d. \( \text{ma}^{231} \text{je}^{214} \text{tsen}^{51} \text{jin}^{24} \text{wu}^{n}^{24} \text{kou}^{24} \)

2SG again eat one CLF rice

‘Would you like to have one more bowl of rice.’

e. \( \text{tsi}^{51} \text{je}^{214} \text{tsen}^{51} \text{jin}^{24} \text{wu}^{n}^{24} \text{ba}^{\eta}^{51} \)

1SG again eat one CLF first

‘I’ll eat one more bowl (of food).’

In addition, je\(^{214}\) may function as a linking adverb in the frame [je\(^{214}\) … je\(^{214}\) …] to conjoin two or more parallel acts or situations, which will be discussed in §6.4.5.

tsai:\(^{214}\) fa:\(^{m}^{51}\) ‘repeatedly, again and again, time and again’ is semantically borrowed from Chinese but morphologically consists of a Chinese loan element tso:\(^{i}^{214}\) ‘again’ and a native word fa:\(^{m}^{51}\) ‘three’. It occurs before the modified items with a more intense meaning than tsay\(^{214}\) and je\(^{214}\).

(50) \( \text{lak}^{24} \text{tso}^{214} \text{fa}^{m}^{51} \text{kap}^{55} \text{tsi}^{51} \text{tsa}^{\eta}^{24} \text{lak}^{24} \text{lon}^{55} \text{lie}^{u}^{24} \)

3SG repeatedly and 1SG say 3SG wrong PART

‘He He kept saying to me that he was wrong.’

tay\(^{231}\) la\(^{24}\) ‘then, later, afterwards’ may be used to express the meaning ‘finally’.
6.4.4 Adverb of manner

Lakkja adverbs of manner also consist of native words and Chinese loan words.

The adverb *hwa:i*55 ‘quickly’, from Chinese *kuài*, may serve as pre-modifying or post-modifying adverb, and thus may occur before or after the modified items. Sometimes it is used in imperatives as shown in (51a). It often combines with *niŋ*24 ‘some, a little’.

(51)  
   a. *hwa:i*55 *niŋ*24 *ʦen*51  
        quickly some eat  
        ‘Eat quickly.’
        clothes dirty PART quickly some take go wash  
        ‘The clothes are dirty. Take them away and wash, hurry up!’
   c. *bon*51 *lei*11 *fen*51 *lie:u*24, *hwa:i*55 *niŋ*24 *tsh*ɛ* u*51 *kou*24  
        sky drop rain PART quickly some put away millet  
        ‘It is raining. Hurry up to put millet away.’
   d. *ma*231 *a:m*214 *hwa:i*55 *niŋ*24  
        2SG walk quick some  
        ‘Walk a bit faster, you!’

Similarly with *tso*24 ‘slowly’:

(52)  
   a. *a:m*214 *tso*24 *niŋ*24  
        walk slow some  
        ‘Slow down!’
   b. *tso*24 *tso*24 *a:m*214  
        slow slow walk  
        ‘Walk slowly.’

*tɔŋ*24 ‘also, as well’ is borrowed from local Chinese dialect and generally occurs in the second clause of a conjoined sentence. For example:

(53)  
   a. *tsi*51 *tok*55 *tok*24 *seu*51 *ŋjũn*231, *lak*24 *tɔŋ*24 *tok*55 *tok*24 *seu*51 *ŋjũn*231  
        1SG be student 3SG also be student  
        ‘I am a student. He is also a student.’
There is neither liquor nor meat.

I sat. He sat, too.

tai\textsuperscript{11} tai\textsuperscript{231} ‘together’ is a native preverbal adverb which generally occurs with action verbs. It may function as a noun meaning ‘everyone’. For example, tai\textsuperscript{11} tai\textsuperscript{231} in (54c) may be analysed as an adverb modifying the verb pai\textsuperscript{51} ‘go’ or a noun filling in the subject slot of the clause.

sa\textsuperscript{i1} pi:n\textsuperscript{214} ‘casually, at ease, make oneself at home’ is a Chinese loan adverb which occur preverbally.

ts\textsuperscript{en}\textsuperscript{51} ‘in passing’ is a preverbal adverb. It is used in the situation where the speaker mentions something briefly while he or she is talking or writing about something else, or where a person does something casually while he or she is doing something else.
(56) ma\textsuperscript{231} tse\textsuperscript{11} na:i\textsuperscript{24} pa:ŋ\textsuperscript{51} tsi\textsuperscript{51} wei\textsuperscript{11} niŋ\textsuperscript{24} kje\textsuperscript{51} 2SG incidentally help 1SG buy some salt

‘You help me buy some salt in passing.’ (request)

pok\textsuperscript{24} lik\textsuperscript{55} ‘quietly, secretly’ is a preverbal adverb. It is normally used to describe an action that is carried out without others knowing.

(57) a. lak\textsuperscript{24} pok\textsuperscript{24} lik\textsuperscript{55} pai\textsuperscript{51} lie:u\textsuperscript{24} 3SG secretly go PART

‘He left secretly.’

b. tsi\textsuperscript{51} pok\textsuperscript{24} lik\textsuperscript{55} lo:m\textsuperscript{51} lak\textsuperscript{24} in\textsuperscript{24} pla\textsuperscript{51} 1SG secretly look 3SG one CLF

‘I gave a glance at him quietly.’

tsak\textsuperscript{55} tsu\textsuperscript{24} ‘deliberately’ is a native adverb which normally occurs before verbs.

(58) lak\textsuperscript{24} tsak\textsuperscript{55} tsu\textsuperscript{24} niŋ\textsuperscript{24} pok\textsuperscript{24} 3SG deliberately in this way do

‘He did it like this deliberately.’

kjit\textsuperscript{24} ‘hurriedly’ is an adverb which may occur either before or after a verb. When following a verb, it is often preceded by a degree adverb such as ta:i\textsuperscript{55} ‘too’, hou\textsuperscript{24} ‘very’, etc., as illustrated in (59b). Besides, it can be reduplicated (59c) or followed by adverbs like ‘niŋ\textsuperscript{24}’ (59a) to indicate the degree.

(59) a. kjit\textsuperscript{24} niŋ\textsuperscript{24} uk\textsuperscript{55} pai\textsuperscript{51} 3SG hurriedly some exit go

‘Go out, quick!’

b. tsi\textsuperscript{51} tsen\textsuperscript{51} nə\textsuperscript{231} ta:i\textsuperscript{55} kjit\textsuperscript{24} tuk\textsuperscript{24} i:t\textsuperscript{24} lie:u\textsuperscript{24} 1SG eat tea too hurriedly choke PART

‘I was chocked as I drank tea too hurriedly.’

c. lak\textsuperscript{24} kjit\textsuperscript{24} kjit\textsuperscript{24} hə\textsuperscript{55} ten\textsuperscript{214} la\textsuperscript{11} 3SG hurriedly come back reach PART

‘He came back hurriedly.’
*tsen*<sup>24</sup> ‘steadily, stably, firmly’ is a postverbal adverb.

(60)  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{wind} & \quad \text{big} & \quad \text{stand} & \quad \text{stably} \\
\text{‘It is blustery. Stand firm.’}
\end{align*}
\]

b.  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{lay (bricks or stones)} & \quad \text{stably} & \quad \text{some} \\
\text{‘Lay (bricks or stones) stably.’}
\end{align*}
\]

*pok*<sup>24</sup> *tn*<sup>55</sup>, translatable as ‘suddenly, all of a sudden’ in English, is a preverbal adverb.

(61)  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{3SG} & \quad \text{suddenly} & \quad \text{crawl} & \quad \text{rise} & \quad \text{come} \\
\text{‘He suddenly picked himself up.’}
\end{align*}
\]

### 6.4.5 Linking adverbs

Linking adverbs typically function to modify sentence predicates, or to conjoin two or more parallel acts or situations.

*tei*<sup>11</sup> and *tsiu*<sup>24</sup> commonly serve as clause linkers meaning ‘then, thereupon’ (62a–b), and sometimes as an emphatic marker (62c–d). The former is native while the latter is borrowed from Chinese.

(62)  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{1SG} & \quad \text{just} & \quad \text{eat} & \quad \text{rice} & \quad \text{3SG} & \quad \text{then} & \quad \text{come} & \quad \text{PART} \\
\text{‘I was beginning to eat when he arrived.’}
\end{align*}
\]

b.  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{2SG} & \quad \text{go} & \quad \text{first} & \quad \text{1SG} & \quad \text{whereafter} & \quad \text{then} & \quad \text{come} \\
\text{‘You go first. I am coming soon.’}
\end{align*}
\]

c.  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{five} & \quad \text{o’clock} & \quad \text{two} & \quad \text{CLF} & \quad \text{tree} & \quad \text{EMPH} & \quad \text{transport} & \quad \text{arrive} & \quad \text{PART} \\
\text{‘Two pieces of wood arrived at five o’clock.’}
\end{align*}
\]

d.  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{woman} & \quad \text{very} & \quad \text{EMPH} & \quad \text{come} & \quad \text{pound} & \quad \text{rice} \\
\text{‘Women came to pound rice very early.’}
\end{align*}
\]

This pair of adverbs often combine with *tok*<sup>55</sup> ‘be’ and *au*<sup>51</sup> ‘want, must’. For example:
‘It was he who said it.’

‘(People) should wash dishes after eating.’

\(j'eu^{214}\), as discussed in §6.4.3, has four functions as a clause linker apart from its function as an adverb designating repetition.

Firstly, it may serve as a conjunction for identical linking, typically in the frame \([j'eu^{214}… j'eu^{214}…]\) ‘both…and…’.

‘Nowadays house construction is quality-assured and takes less time.’

‘These trees are tall and big.’

Secondly, forward linking:

‘This horse is pleasing to the eye, and moreover, runs fast.’

Thirdly, shift of meaning:

‘He had just arrived, but left shortly after.’

\(u^{231}\) shares similar linking functions with \(j'eu^{214}\), but \(u^{231}\) does not occur as circumfix like \(j'eu^{214}\) in \([j'eu^{214}… j'eu^{214}…]\). The following examples illustrate.

‘These trees are tall and big.’ (identical linking)
b. lak\(^{24}\) sen\(^{51}\) lek\(^{24}\) pei\(^{51}\) u\(^{231}\) jei\(^{11}\), en\(^{24}\) ko:i\(^{51}\) pai\(^{51}\) ta:ŋ\(^{51}\) piŋ\(^{51}\)

3SG body strong age again young should go be soldier

‘He is strong and young. He should join the army.’ (forward linking)

c. lak\(^{24}\) njũn\(^{231}\) nyan\(^{231}\) plei\(^{51}\) pai\(^{51}\) u\(^{231}\) jie:u\(^{214}\) pon\(^{214}\) lie:u\(^{24}\)

CLF person that die go again live turn PART

‘That person apparently died, but was revived.’ (shift of meaning)

\(\text{ŋjen}^{11}\) ‘still, also’ is commonly used to denote shift of meaning or as an emphatic marker.

(68) a. wok\(^{24}\) n̥\(^{51}\) jay\(^{55}\) lie:u\(^{24}\), lak\(^{24}\) \(\text{ŋjen}^{11}\) to\(^{24}\) kjie\(^{51}\)

vegetables so salty PART 3SG still put salt

‘The food was already very salty, and yet he still put more salt.’

b. lak\(^{24}\) \(\text{ŋjen}^{11}\) fie:ŋ\(^{24}\) pai\(^{51}\) tei\(^{11}\) na\(^{214}\)

3SG still think go where

‘Where else does he want to go?’

\(\text{ŋjen}^{11}\) often combines with \(\text{mi}^{231}\) ‘have’. For example:

(69) a. \(\text{ŋjen}^{11}\) mi\(^{231}\) hou\(^{24}\) wan\(^{231}\) tei\(^{11}\) tie\(^{214}\) tsho\(^{51}\) et\(^{55}\) lie:u\(^{24}\)

still have two day then spend New Year’s Day PART

‘There are only two days before New Year’s day.’

b. \(\text{ŋjen}^{11}\) mi\(^{231}\) hou\(^{24}\) lak\(^{24}\) njũn\(^{231}\) way\(^{231}\) tay\(^{231}\)

still have two CLF person NEG come

‘There are two more people who have not yet come.’

\(\text{ŋjen}^{11}\) may combine with \(\text{ko}^{24}\) to form a compound adverb \(\text{ŋjen}^{11}\) \(\text{ko}^{24}\) ‘still, also’, which indicates that an act or a situation remains the same, or continues to be as before.

(70) a. tsi\(^{51}\) \(\text{ŋjen}^{11}\) ko\(^{24}\) at\(^{55}\) la:n\(^{231}\) kou\(^{14}\) ma\(^{231}\)

1SG still at there wait 2SG

‘I’ll still wait for you there.’

b. ma\(^{231}\) \(\text{ŋjen}^{11}\) ko\(^{24}\) n̥\(^{51}\) o:n\(^{55}\)

2SG still so beautiful

‘You are still so beautiful.’

\(\text{ko}^{24}\) alone may function as a copula verb. See §5.2.1 for discussion.
Likewise, ko:n\textsuperscript{24} carries the meaning ‘still, also’ to signal shift of meaning.

(71) \begin{array}{lllllllll}
\text{lak} & \text{tsa} & \text{pa:} & \text{wan} & \text{toj} & \text{ko:} & \text{hwä} & \text{hji:} \\
\text{3SG} & \text{say} & \text{half} & \text{day} & \text{everyone} & \text{still} & \text{NEG} & \text{understand} \\
\end{array}

‘He talked so much, but everyone still could not understand.’

\text{ta} & \text{pay} \begin{array}{lllllllll}
\text{ta} & \text{pa} & \text{li} & \text{hwä} & \text{hji:} \\
\text{luckily} & \text{doctor} & \text{come} & \text{COMP} & \text{fast} \\
\end{array}

‘Fortunately the doctor arrived quickly.’

\text{ju:n} & \text{pən} \begin{array}{lllllllllllll}
\text{a.} & \text{lak} & \text{ju:n} & \text{pən} & \text{leu} & \text{ka} & \text{sin} & \text{fo} \\
\text{3SG} & \text{originally} & \text{surname} & \text{Liu} & \text{now} & \text{surname} & \text{Su} \\
\end{array}

‘His surname was Liu, now is Su.’

\text{b.} \begin{array}{lllllllllllll}
\text{tsi} & \text{ju:n} & \text{pən} & \text{tei} & \text{tok} & \text{ŋjũn} & \text{ma} \\
\text{1SG} & \text{originally} & \text{EMPH} & \text{be} & \text{here} & \text{person} & \text{PART} \\
\end{array}

‘I come from here originally.’

\text{ta:u} & \text{pən} \begin{array}{lllllllllllll}
\text{ta:u} & \text{le} & \text{sa} & \text{ta:u} & \text{fo} \\
\text{on the contrary} & \text{bad} & \text{why} & \text{on the contrary} & \text{blame} & \text{1SG} \\
\end{array}

‘He broke it. Why blaming me?’

\text{fa:n} & \text{ta:u} \begin{array}{lllllllllllll}
\text{fa:n} & \text{ta:u} & \text{fo} \\
\text{on the contrary, instead} & \text{on the contrary} & \text{blame} & \text{1SG} \\
\end{array}

‘on the contrary, instead’ is also borrowed from Chinese and occurs in the second clause of a sentence. It differs from \text{ta:u} & \text{pən} in that the latter depicts an event or situation which develops in such a way that leads to an unexpected and undesirable result or situation.
(75) \[ \text{lak}^{24} \, \text{ŋ̍}^{24} \, \text{at}^{55} \, \text{lie:}k^{11} \, \text{fa:n}^{51} \, \text{ta:u}^{55} \, \text{lai}^{51} \]
3SG NEG at house on the contrary good

‘On the contrary, it is better he is not at home.’

t\(\text{tsak}^{55} \, \text{tsu}^{24} \) ‘deliberately, purposively’, as a preverbal modal adverb, denotes an act that is conducted on purpose.

(76) a. \[ \text{tsi}^{51} \, \text{tsak}^{55} \, \text{tsu}^{24} \, \text{tan}^{231} \, \text{la}^{11} \, \text{ma}^{231} \, \text{tsa:}^{24} \text{wa}^{214} \]
1SG deliberately come look for 2SG say words

‘I deliberately come to chat with you.’

b. \[ \text{lak}^{24} \, \text{tsak}^{55} \, \text{tsu}^{24} \, \text{ni}^{51} \, \text{pok}^{24} \]
3SG deliberately in this way do

‘He did it like this deliberately.’

t\(\text{tsi}^{11} \, \text{tsi}^{214} \) ‘indeed, truly, really’ is used as an emphatic marker.

(77) a. \[ \text{tsi}^{51} \, \text{tsi}^{11} \, \text{tsi}^{214} \, \text{wei}^{55} \, \text{tu}^{231} \, \text{ŋji}^{231} \, \text{lou}^{11} \]
1SG indeed see CLF snake old

‘I saw a big snake indeed.’

b. \[ \text{lak}^{24} \, \text{tsi}^{11} \, \text{tsi}^{214} \, \text{wa}^{11} \, \text{ŋ̍}^{24} \, \text{li}^{24} \]
3SG indeed carry NEG can

‘She really cannot carry it (with a carrying pole).’

et\(\text{tiŋ}^{214} \) and \(\text{khaŋ}^{24} \, \text{tiŋ}^{214} \) ‘surely, definitely’ are Chinese loan modal adverbs for inference. They usually denote an act or a situation that the speaker believes is sure to happen.

(78) a. \[ \text{lak}^{24} \, \text{kou}^{24} \, \text{lai}^{51} \, \text{tsen}^{51} \, \text{khaŋ}^{24} \, \text{tiŋ}^{214} \, \text{kwei}^{55} \]
3SG rice good eat surely expensive

‘His rice is delicious. It must be expensive.’

b. \[ \text{tau}^{51} \, \text{mi}^{231} \, \text{lei}^{11} \, \text{et}^{55} \, \text{tiŋ}^{214} \, \text{ŋiŋ}^{231} \]
1PL have reason surely win

‘We are reasonable and will surely win. / Justice is on our side and we will surely win.’
"pok\textsuperscript{24} ton\textsuperscript{51}" ‘probably, likely, maybe’ is a native modal adverb for modality. It is used to indicate an act or a situation that is likely to happen. The degree of certainty expressed by this item is not as strong as "et\textsuperscript{15} tiy\textsuperscript{14}" or "khaŋ\textsuperscript{24} tiy\textsuperscript{14}" ‘surely, definitely’.

\begin{align*}
(79) & \quad \text{3SG} \quad \text{pok}\textsuperscript{24} \quad \text{ton}\textsuperscript{51} \quad \text{mi}\textsuperscript{231} \quad \text{tsan}\textsuperscript{55} \quad \text{tsu}:n\textsuperscript{24} \quad \text{ni}\textsuperscript{231} \\
& \quad \text{He probably has this kind of mushroom.}
\end{align*}

"he\textsuperscript{51}," derived from the lexeme ‘fear’, functions as a pre-modifying modal adverb with the meaning ‘for fear that’. It generally indicates the speaker is worried that an undesirable situation might happen. Sometimes, it may also be used for the inference of something positive (80b).

\begin{align*}
(80) & \quad \text{a.} \quad \text{t}u\textsuperscript{231} \quad \text{kai}\textsuperscript{55} \quad \text{ni}\textsuperscript{231} \quad \text{njum}\textsuperscript{24} \quad \text{njai}\textsuperscript{51} \quad \text{he}\textsuperscript{51} \quad \text{ha}:i\textsuperscript{24} \quad \text{plei}\textsuperscript{51} \quad \text{lie}:u\textsuperscript{24} \\
& \quad \text{CLF} \quad \text{chicken} \quad \text{this} \quad \text{weak} \quad \text{fear} \quad \text{soon} \quad \text{die} \quad \text{PART} \\
& \quad \text{This chicken is weak. I’m afraid it is dying.}
\end{align*}

\begin{align*}
& \quad \text{b.} \quad \text{he}\textsuperscript{51} \quad \text{pok}\textsuperscript{24} \quad \text{mi}\textsuperscript{231} \quad \text{ke}\textsuperscript{214} \quad \text{lai}\textsuperscript{51} \quad \text{lai}\textsuperscript{214} \quad \text{ton}\textsuperscript{11} \quad \text{wan}\textsuperscript{231} \quad \text{h}:m\textsuperscript{24} \quad \text{njum}\textsuperscript{11} \quad \text{njum}\textsuperscript{11} \\
& \quad \text{fear} \quad \text{3SG} \quad \text{have} \quad \text{what} \quad \text{good} \quad \text{thing} \quad \text{whole} \quad \text{day} \quad \text{smile} \\
& \quad \text{He probably has got some good news, smiling all day.}
\end{align*}

### 6.4.6 Adverb of negation

As discussed in Chapter 5, there are basically five negators (Table 6.2 below) in Lakkja which generally occur right before the negated items in a clause. Each of them possesses a different temporal or aspektual meaning, as illustrated in the chart below. In general, negators can occur alone, or come before adjectives, verbs and sometimes adverbs.

**Table 6.2 Lakkja negators**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(\eta\textsuperscript{24})</th>
<th>general negator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(hwâ:i\textsuperscript{51}) (variant: (\eta wâ:i\textsuperscript{51}))</td>
<td>neutral negator; linking adverb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ei\textsuperscript{24}, ei\textsuperscript{24} au\textsuperscript{51})</td>
<td>negative imperative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\eta\textsuperscript{24} \text{mi}\textsuperscript{231}, hwâ:i\textsuperscript{51} \text{mi}\textsuperscript{231})</td>
<td>negative possessive/existential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(wan\textsuperscript{231})</td>
<td>negative perfective (imperfective)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(\eta\textsuperscript{24}\) is the general negator. It may negate verbs, adjectives and adverbs.
(81)  a. tsoŋ55 tshu:n24 ni231 ŋ̍24 tsen51 li24
      CLF mushroom this NEG eat PART
      ‘This kind of mushroom is not edible.’

b. ma231 tan231 ŋ̍24 khjam51 ŋ̍24 tsi231
    2SG come NEG early NEG late
    ‘You came neither too early nor too late.’

hwã:i51 (ŋ̍wã:i51) is a neutral negator without any aspectual meaning. It often substitutes ŋ̍24, but the latter is more casual and commonly used in daily conversation.

(82)  a. tsi51 hwã:i51 pai51
      1SG NEG go
      ‘I won’t go.’

b. hwã:i51 lat51
    NEG good
    ‘No good.’

Furthermore, hwã:i51 can also function as a linking adverb, carrying the meaning ‘otherwise, or else’. It often occurs initially in a sentence to introduce circumstances that are different from those present or considered.

(83)  hwã:i51 tsi51 ŋ̍24 li11 lak24 po24
      otherwise 1SG NEG take notice of 3SG PART
      ‘Otherwise, I will take no notice of him.’

ei24 au51 conveys negative imperative. In this usage au51 can be omitted without change of meaning.

(84)  a. ei24 au51 ŋi51 pok24
      NEG like this do
      ‘Don’t do this way.’

b. ei24 lan24 lak24
    NEG tell 3SG
    ‘Don’t tell him/her.’
The negator ŋ̍ mi (or hwâ:i mi) is used to negate nouns. It can be analysed as a compound that consists of a negator and a verb, translatable as “not have”, “there is no…”.

(85)  ou liek mom hwâ:i mi la
      inside house meat NEG PART

‘There’s no meat at home.’

The negator waŋ carries an aspectual meaning, referring to an act that has not been performed, something that has not happened, or a situation that has not come about. It generally negates verbs.

(86) a. lak way pai
    3SG NEG go
    ‘He hasn’t gone yet.’

b. tu way hâ
    3PL NEG come back
    ‘They haven’t come back yet.’

Further discussions of the ranges and properties of negation will be offered in §7.13.
Chapter 7
Sentence Types and Other Syntactic Issues

This chapter presents a sketch of Lakkja sentence types and other syntactic issues from a functional typological perspective. Emphasis will be laid on common sentence types, clause/sentence linking devices, and other related construction types.

7.1 Simple sentence

By simple sentence we mean any sentence that has just one clause in it. Simple sentences in Lakkja may be syntactically divided into two types: clauses with a subject, and subject-less clauses.

7.1.1 Subject + predicate

In general, at least two parts are contained in a subject-predicate sentence, that is, a subject and a predicate. The predicate may be an adjective phrase (1a), a noun phrase (1b), or a verb phrase (1c).

(1)

a. tu¹¹ kʰu⁵¹ ni²³¹ hou²⁴ pu:i²³¹ ja¹¹
   CLF pig this very fat PART
   ‘This pig is so fat!’

b. ma²³¹ kuo:ŋ²⁴ se⁵¹ njūn²³¹
   2SG Guangxi person
   ‘You are from Guangxi.’

c. wan²³¹ njet⁵⁵ si:u²³¹ wuɔ:ŋ²³¹ tan²³¹
   tomorrow PREP Wang come
   ‘Wang will come tomorrow.’

The verb in the predicate slot can be either transitive or intransitive. For instance, the subject in (2a) takes a transitive verb and thus the predicate is assumed by a transitive verb and an object. While in (2b) and (2c), the subjects take an intransitive verb as their predicates and there are no objects in the sentences.
In addition, the predicate verb may take a directional verb (3b), stative verb (3c) or an adjective (3d) as its complement, which has been discussed earlier in §5.4.3 and §6.2.3. In this type of sentences, the verb can be either transitive or intransitive. Note that (3d) is more complex than (3c) in that “dead” in (3d) is related to the object “tiger”, while in (3c), “slow” describes the way the “grandfather” walks. Such grammatical relations have been discussed in Chapter 7.

Sentences with serial verbs as predicate, such as (4a) and (4b), are also considered as simple sentences. They have been discussed in §5.4.
b. lak\textsuperscript{24} bok\textsuperscript{55} kjei\textsuperscript{51} tsie:ŋ\textsuperscript{231} la\textsuperscript{11} phla\textsuperscript{51} tsen\textsuperscript{51}

elder brother often look for fish eat

‘Elder brother often searches fish to eat.’

a. ts\textsuperscript{51} hep\textsuperscript{55} lo:m\textsuperscript{51} sɛ\textsuperscript{51}

1SG lie look book

‘I lay around, reading a book.’

In addition to verbs and verb phrases, adjectives and adjective phrases may function as predicate as well, as discussed in §6.2.2.

(5) a. a\textsuperscript{11} phla\textsuperscript{51} ni\textsuperscript{231} fiŋ\textsuperscript{51} a:k\textsuperscript{24}

kind fish this rancid Very

‘This kind of fish is very rancid.’

b. ts\textsuperscript{51} o:n\textsuperscript{55} sɛ\textsuperscript{11}?

1SG beautiful PART

‘Am I beautiful?’

c. at\textsuperscript{55} jen\textsuperscript{11} kjai\textsuperscript{51} bok\textsuperscript{55} khu:\textsuperscript{24} n\textsuperscript{24}, at\textsuperscript{55} jen\textsuperscript{11} kjai\textsuperscript{51} kjai\textsuperscript{24} pu:i\textsuperscript{231}

ever elder brother thin younger brother fat

‘The elder brother is skinny, the younger brother is fat.’

Predicate may also be assumed by a noun or noun phrase, as discussed in §4.1.9.

(6) ma\textsuperscript{231} kuɔ:ŋ\textsuperscript{24} sɛ\textsuperscript{51} ŋjũn\textsuperscript{231}

2SG Guangxi person

‘You are from Guangxi.’

7.1.2 Subjectless sentence

Sentences without a subject are defined as subjectless sentences. Typically, declaratives, exclamatives, imperatives and questions may omit the subject while meanings can still be understood from the contexts. For example:

(7) a. ŋjiː ẹ\textsuperscript{231}

snake

‘Snake!’
b. \textit{uk}^{55} \textit{pai}^{51}

exit go

‘Get out!’

c. \textit{wan}^{231} \textit{wan}^{231} \textit{lei}^{11} \textit{fen}^{51}

day day drop rain

‘It rains every day.’

d. \textit{n̥i}^{51} \textit{bok}^{55} \textit{pai}^{51}

so big COMP

‘So big!’

e. \textit{saŋ}^{55} \textit{ɬoŋ}^{51} \textit{ti:n}^{231}

how much money

‘How much?’

\subsection*{7.1.3 Verbless sentence}

The verbless sentence, also known as equational sentence or nominal sentence, refers to a sentence without a finite verb functioning as predicate. According to Dixon (2010), a verbless sentence is similar to a copula sentence but with the predicate slot left blank. It consists of two noun phrases: verbless clause subject (VCS) argument and verbless clause complement (VCC) argument. These two NPs share similar properties with the subject and the complement in clauses with verb predicates. The verbless sentence normally indicates a relational meaning between VCS and VCC.

In Lakkja, verbless sentences are not unusual. They can be analysed as sentences in which the copula is omitted. NPs, adjectives, and prepositional phrases are commonly found to make up VCC argument.

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{tsi}^{51} \textit{ku}^{55} \textit{tsiu}^{51} \textit{ŋjũn}^{231}

ISG Guizhou person

‘I’m from Guizhou.’
\item \textit{wan}^{231} \textit{ŋjet}^{24} \textit{ŋo}^{11} \textit{ŋjot}^{24} \textit{ŋo}^{11}

tomorrow Dragon Boat Festival

‘Tomorrow is Dragon Boat Festival.’
\end{enumerate}
7.1.4 Simplex sentence

This type designates those sentences that are syntactically like other types of simple sentences but semantically similar to complex sentences. Adverbs such as tei¹¹, tsiu²⁴, hap⁵⁵, which have been discussed in §6.4, often occur in simplex sentences as clause-medial particles (9a–b). However, there can be no markers at all in a simplex sentence, as in (9c–d).

(9)  

a. lak²⁴ pla:u²¹⁴ faj⁵¹ tei¹¹ plɛ⁵⁵  
  3SG climb ascend PART run  
  ‘He picked himself up and ran.’

b. ma²³¹ au⁵¹ ja:k¹¹ hji:u²⁴ na:m¹¹ hi⁵⁵ hap⁵⁵ lai³¹  
  2SG should learn can control anger PART good  
  ‘It is good for you to learn how to control your anger.’

c. ət⁵¹ pok²⁴ ɭ¹⁴ li²⁴  
  in this way do NEG acquire  
  ‘Doing like this doesn’t work.’

d. tsiu¹⁵ lak²⁴ wa²¹⁴ pok²⁴ ɭ¹⁴ loy⁵⁵ ka:i²⁴  
  according to 3SG words do NEG wrong PART  
  ‘Doing what he said won’t go wrong.’

Syntactically speaking, a simplex sentence still contains only one subject and one predicate, but there may be a subject clause in the subject slot and/or two main verbs in the predicate slot. For example, the subject of (9b) is the clause ma²³¹ au⁵¹ ja:k¹¹ hji:u²⁴ na:m¹¹ hi⁵⁵ ‘you should learn how to endure your anger’, and (9a) has two main verbs pla:u²¹⁴ ‘climb’ and plɛ⁵⁵ ‘run’ as predicate. Thus, from a semantic perspective, a simplex sentence can generally be transferred into two or more simple clauses: (9a) into ‘he picked himself up’ and ‘he ran’, (9b) into ‘you should learn how to contain your anger’ and ‘it is good’.

7.2 Complex sentence

Complex sentences are sentences which contain at least two clauses. Clause linkers may be used to join the clauses with each other, though some complex sentences do not have such devices.

As mentioned in §6.4, semantically, complex sentences can be classified into coordinate, sequential, alternative, concession, conditional, cause-result, hypothetical, among others.
7.2.1 Coordinate compound sentence

In sentences of this kind, the clauses semantically hold the same status. Generally, clause linkers are not employed to express semantic paralleling or symmetry. For example:

(10) a. nau\textsuperscript{11} li\textsuperscript{24} lai\textsuperscript{231} ja\textsuperscript{214}, ma\textsuperscript{11} li\textsuperscript{24} kja:k\textsuperscript{214} tshi:e\textsuperscript{51}
    ox can plough field horse can pull cart
    ‘A cattle can plough, and a horse can pull a cart.’

b. ma\textsuperscript{231} ku:η\textsuperscript{24} se\textsuperscript{51} njũn\textsuperscript{231}, ts\textsuperscript{51} kui\textsuperscript{55} tsiu\textsuperscript{51} njũn\textsuperscript{231}
    2SG Guangxi person 1SG Guizhou person
    ‘You are from Guangxi, I am from Guizhou.’

c. khja:u\textsuperscript{24} hwã:i\textsuperscript{214} mi\textsuperscript{231}, mom\textsuperscript{214} tøŋ\textsuperscript{24} hwã:i\textsuperscript{214} mi\textsuperscript{231}
    liquor NEG have meat also NEG have
    ‘There is neither liquor nor meat.’

7.2.2 Sequential compound sentence

In this type, the events described in the clauses generally occur sequentially and thus the order of the clauses cannot be reversed. Some adverbs, such as ts\textsuperscript{i}\textsuperscript{214}/ tei\textsuperscript{11} ‘as soon as’, jε\textsuperscript{214} ‘again’ or aspect markers may be employed to indicate the sequence of events, though occasionally no linkers are required.

(11) a. ts\textsuperscript{i}\textsuperscript{51} puk\textsuperscript{55} te:m\textsuperscript{214} tse:k\textsuperscript{24}, ti\textsuperscript{231} tsei:η\textsuperscript{51} me\textsuperscript{11} kau\textsuperscript{51}
    1SG foot wear straw sandals take CLF knife firewood
    pai\textsuperscript{51} ou\textsuperscript{11} kja\textsuperscript{24} pai\textsuperscript{51} la\textsuperscript{55}
    go inside mountain go PART
    ‘I went to the mountains with straw sandals and a wood chopper.’

b. lak\textsuperscript{24} kjap\textsuperscript{24} kjap\textsuperscript{24} tøŋ\textsuperscript{231}, jε\textsuperscript{214} pai\textsuperscript{51} la\textsuperscript{11}
    3SG just come again go PART
    ‘He left shortly after he came.’

c. ma\textsuperscript{231} a:m\textsuperscript{214} ba:η\textsuperscript{51}, ts\textsuperscript{i}\textsuperscript{51} ts\textsuperscript{i}:u\textsuperscript{214} tøŋ\textsuperscript{231}
    2SG walk first 1SG as soon as come
    ‘You go first, and I will come in a minute.’

d. tsen\textsuperscript{51} kou\textsuperscript{24} bla:u\textsuperscript{231} tse:η\textsuperscript{55}, ts\textsuperscript{i}\textsuperscript{51} pai\textsuperscript{51} ma\textsuperscript{231} lie:k\textsuperscript{11} a:m\textsuperscript{214}
    eat dinner after 1SG go 2SG house walk
    ‘I will go to your home after dinner.’

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7.2.3 Alternative compound sentence

Sentences of this kind are generally conjoined by the clause linkers a11 ts11 ‘or’, a11 sa1 ‘or’ or hwä:i51/ŋ̍24 ... tei11 ‘either…or…’. For example:

(12) a. phla51 tuk24 sa1 tsen51 a11 ts11 to24 tsen51?
    fish be steam eat or boil eat
    ‘Would you like steamed fish or boiled fish?’

b. ma231 pai51 a11 sa1 ts151 pai51
    2SG go or 1SG go
    ‘Are you going there or am I? / Who is going there, you or I?’

c. lak24 tsen231 a:k24, ŋ̍24 pai51 tso151 ti214 tei11 pai51
    3SG hardworking very either go plant field or go
tshak24 ja24
    insert seedling
    ‘He is very hardworking. He is either preparing the field or planting rice seedlings.’

7.2.4 Forward-linking sentence

In a forward-linking sentence (§6.4.5), the second clause normally has a more intense semantic content than the first one. Pauses, aspect markers, and adverbs such as njen11 ‘still, further’ and jou214 ‘again’, may be used to link them up. For example:

(13) a. lak55 kjai11 lai51, lak55 a:i231 ta:i214 lai51
    CLF short good CLF long more good
    ‘The short one is good, and the long one is better.’

b. lak24 pai51 tie214 pak24 ts151, njen11 pai51 tie214 tsha:ŋ11 tshin11
    3SG go ASP Beijing further go ASP the Great Wall
    ‘He has been to Beijing, and also to the Great Wall.’

c. lak24 pok24 li24 hwa:i51, jou214 pok24 li24 lai51
    3SG do COMP fast again do COMP good
    ‘He did it fast and did a good job.’
7.2.5 Compound sentences linked by disjunctives

In compound sentences of this kind, disjunctives, such as ta:n24 sɿ24 ‘but’, tsi:u214 tsi11 ‘though’, hwã:i51 ‘otherwise, or else’, ta:u11 pən214 ‘instead’, tau11 si11 ‘deliberately’, is typically used to denote adversative relations between clauses. Besides, a pause and/or a discourse particle can also function as a marker to indicate such relations.

(14)

| a. miŋ231 miŋ231 tok55 lak24 pok24 wa:i214, saŋ55 ta:u51 pən214 |
| apparently be 3SG do bad why instead |
| la:i214 tsi51 |
| blame 1SG |
| ‘Apparently it was damaged by him, why am I to blame?’ |

| b. ma231 au51 tsi51 pat51, tsi51 tau11 si11 η24 pat51 |
| 2SG ask 1SG go 1SG deliberately NEG go |
| ‘You asked me to go, but I am not going.’ |

| c. ma231 hwa:i55 miŋ24 kwe11 tiŋ24, hwã:i51 tsi51 pat51 le24 po24 |
| 2SG fast some decide otherwise 1SG go PART PART |
| ‘Make up your mind quickly, otherwise I will leave.’ |

| d. lak24 plak55 tsjf55 njiu55, ta:n24 sɿ24 lek24 hou24 bok55 |
| 3SG height really short but strength very big |
| ‘Though he is short, he is strong.’ |

| e. bon51 hwã:i51 khja:n24, tsiu11 tsi11 hou24 put24 |
| sky NEG hot though very humid |
| ‘Though it is not hot, it is very humid.’ |

| f. tsen51 khja:u24 tsjf55 li24, η24 li24 plɛ214 khja:u24 |
| eat liquor become COMP NEG acquire talk nonsense while drunk |
| ‘Drinking is okay, but don’t talk nonsense after getting drunk.’ |

7.2.6 Conditional sentence

Conditional sentences are generally marked by tsi51 ja:u24... tei11 ‘as long as, so long as’ and wa214 nɿ231... tsɿ11/hap55 ‘only if’. Occasionally, conditional sentences may be marked by only hap55, tsi11 or tei11. For example:
as long as 2SG exert strength study then understand PART

‘You will understand it as long as you study hard.’

only if so 2SG then study COMP good

‘Only this way can you do well in your studies.’

1PL same heart then have strength

‘We will be strong only if we stand together.’

In addition to general forms discussed above, exhaustive conditional sentences also feature in Lakkja grammar. Sentences of this type are normally marked by ŋ̍24 lɛn214, ŋ̍24 kuə:n24, which is translatable into English as ‘whenever, whatever, whoever…’ or ‘regardless of’.

regardless what work 1SG then do

‘Whatever the job is, I will do it.’

regardless day which go then obtain

‘It is fine to go any day.’

regardless do what then all right

‘It’s OK whatever you do.’

Furthermore, Lakkja negator hwã:i51 may function as an conjunction that carries a conditional meaning. It may be translated into English as ‘or, otherwise’, and may replace ‘if not…’ in some conditional sentences. It generally occurs between two clauses: the preceding one expresses the condition, and the following one states the result if the condition is not met. For example:

‘Make your decision quickly, otherwise I will leave.’
7.2.7 Hypothetical sentence

Hypothetical sentences are a kind of conditional sentences and may be marked by \textit{jak}^{55} `if`, \textit{au}^{51} `on condition that`, and/or \textit{tei}^{11} `then`. However, unlike exhaustive conditional sentence of which the second clause semantically designates a corollary, the first clause of hypothetical type presents a hypothetical scenario while the second one describes a possible result.

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{ma}^{231} \textit{jak}^{55} \textit{ŋ̍}^{24} \textit{pa}^{51}, \textit{lak}^{24} \textit{tei}^{11} \textit{tan}^{231} \text{ 2SG if \textit{NEG go 3SG then come}}
\end{enumerate}

\begin{enumerate*}[\textit{ma}^{231} \textit{au}^{51} \textit{ŋ̥an}^{231} \textit{pok}^{24}, \textit{tsi}^{54} \textit{tei}^{11} \textit{tan}^{231} \text{ 2SG if \textit{in that way do 1SG then come}}]
\item \textit{ma}^{231} \textit{wan}^{231} \textit{ŋ̥a:i}^{24} \textit{li}^{24} \textit{hoŋ}^{55} \textit{hwã:i}^{51}? \textit{jak}^{55} \textit{li}^{24} \text{ 2SG today obtain spare time \textit{NEG if obtain}}
\end{enumerate*}
\begin{enumerate*}[\textit{hoŋ}^{55}, \textit{tau}^{11} \textit{tai}^{231} \textit{pai}^{51} \textit{ou}^{11} \textit{kja}^{24} \text{ spare time 1SG together go inside mountain}]
\item \textit{ma}^{231} \textit{jak}^{55} \textit{ŋ̍}^{24} \textit{i}^{55} \textit{ka:i}^{24} \textit{tei}^{11} \textit{ne:n}^{231} \textit{lak}^{24} \textit{pa}^{51} \text{ 2SG if \textit{be willing PART then follow 3SG go}}
\end{enumerate*}

\begin{enumerate*}[\textit{ma}^{231} \textit{au}^{51} \textit{ŋ̥an}^{231} \textit{pok}^{24}, \textit{tsi}^{54} \textit{tei}^{11} \textit{tan}^{231} \text{ 2SG if \textit{in that way do 1SG then come}}]
\item \textit{ma}^{231} \textit{wan}^{231} \textit{ŋ̥a:i}^{24} \textit{li}^{24} \textit{hoŋ}^{55} \textit{hwã:i}^{51}? \textit{jak}^{55} \textit{li}^{24} \text{ 2SG today obtain spare time \textit{NEG if obtain}}
\end{enumerate*}
\begin{enumerate*}[\textit{hoŋ}^{55}, \textit{tau}^{11} \textit{tai}^{231} \textit{pai}^{51} \textit{ou}^{11} \textit{kja}^{24} \text{ spare time 1SG together go inside mountain}]
\item \textit{ma}^{231} \textit{jak}^{55} \textit{ŋ̥j̧n}^{214} \textit{i}^{55} \textit{ka:i}^{24} \textit{tei}^{11} \textit{ne:n}^{231} \textit{lak}^{24} \textit{pa}^{51} \text{ 2SG if \textit{be willing PART then follow 3SG go}}
\end{enumerate*}

7.2.8 Cause-result sentence

In compound sentences of this type, the first clause signals the cause or the reason and the second clause designates the result. Chinese loanwords \textit{jin}^{51} \textit{wei}^{214} `because’ and \textit{so}^{51} \textit{i}^{51} `so’ are usually used to link them up, though occasionally no conjunctions or clause linkers are required in a cause-result sentence.

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{jin}^{51} \textit{wei}^{214} \textit{tsa:n}^{51} \textit{tha:i}^{55} \textit{jep}^{11}, \textit{tsi}^{51} \textit{so}^{51} \textit{i}^{51} \textit{tie}^{214} \textit{hwã:i}^{51} \textit{pa}^{51} \text{ because road too narrow car so pass \textit{NEG go}}
\end{enumerate}
\begin{enumerate*}[\textit{tsa:n}^{51} \textit{tha:i}^{55} \textit{jep}^{11}, \textit{tsi}^{51} \textit{so}^{51} \textit{i}^{51} \textit{tie}^{214} \textit{hwã:i}^{51} \textit{pa}^{51} \text{ because road too narrow car so pass \textit{NEG go}}]
\item \textit{li}^{231} \textit{bon}^{51} \textit{tha:i}^{55} \textit{ki}^{55} \textit{a:k}^{24}, \textit{ŋ̍}^{24} \textit{ts}^{55} \textit{li}^{24} \textit{fom}^{24} \textit{ti}^{51} \text{ here sky too cold very \textit{NEG plant COMP plantain}}
\end{enumerate*}
\begin{enumerate*}[\textit{li}^{231} \textit{bon}^{51} \textit{tha:i}^{55} \textit{ki}^{55} \textit{a:k}^{24}, \textit{ŋ̍}^{24} \textit{ts}^{55} \textit{li}^{24} \textit{fom}^{24} \textit{ti}^{51} \text{ here sky too cold very \textit{NEG plant COMP plantain}}]
\item \textit{ma}^{231} \textit{jak}^{55} \textit{ŋ̍}^{24} \textit{pa}^{51} \text{ 2SG if \textit{NEG go}}
\end{enumerate*}
7.3 Copula clause

A simple copula sentence typically contains a referential subject noun phrase linked to a nonreferential none phrase by the copula verb. As discussed in §5.2.1, there are two canonical copula verbs in Lakkja for copula clause: tok\(^{55}\) ‘be’ for positive sentence and tuk\(^{24}\) ‘be’ for negative sentence and questions, though the distinction is becoming blurred. The nonreferential noun phrase occurring after the copula verb is used to denote the status or properties of the referential subject. Examples are as follows.

(20)  a. tsi\(^{51}\) tok\(^{55}\) tok\(^{24}\) seu\(^{51}\) njũn\(^{231}\)  
  1SG  be     read     book     person  
  ‘I am a student.’

b. lak\(^{24}\) hjìːu\(^{24}\) tsaːŋ\(^{24}\) lak\(^{24}\) tsou\(^{11}\), yìng\(^{51}\) kwāi\(^{51}\) tok\(^{55}\) lak\(^{24}\) tsou\(^{11}\)  
  3SG  know  speak  Chinese  should  be  Chinese  
  ‘He can speak Chinese, (so) he must be Chinese.’

c. ka\(^{11}\) ni\(^{231}\) tok\(^{55}\) fei\(^{55}\) njɔt\(^{24}\)  
  now  be     April   
  ‘It is April now.’

d. pən\(^{24}\) seu\(^{51}\) ni\(^{231}\) hwāi\(^{51}\) tuk\(^{24}\) tsi\(^{51}\) kaːi\(^{24}\)  
  CLF  book  this  NEG  be  1SG  PART  
  ‘This book is not mine.’

Moreover, copula verbs may also be used as an emphatic marker or an intensifier, forming cleft sentences translatable as ‘It is… that/who…’. Various types of elements can be emphasized, such as subject NPs (21a), object NPs (21b), and even adverbials (21c) can also be marked this way. In addition, like other types of verbs, copula verbs can occur alone to answer questions (21d).

(21)  a. tuk\(^{24}\) ma\(^{231}\) pa\(^{51}\) naːŋ\(^{11}\) huk\(^{24}\) le\(^{51}\)  
  be  2SG  COVERB  clothes  wash  PART  
  ‘Is it you who washed the clothes?’
As shown in (21d), like other types of verbs, copula verbs can occur alone to answer questions.

In addition, as mentioned in §5.2.1, several verbs other than tok^{55} and tut^{24} are found in my data that can be analysed as copula verbs, including fieŋ^{55} ‘resemble, be like’, ka:m^{231} ‘be named/called’, ko^{24} ‘remain to be’, pok^{24}, mi^{231} ‘become, be’, among others. For more examples, please refer to §5.2.1.

(22) a. ma^{231} fieŋ^{55} nam^{55} huo^{51}
    2SG be like CLF flower
    ‘You are like a flower!’

b. ma^{231} ka:m^{231} lak^{24} ja:n^{51} ke^{214}
    2SG call what name PART
    ‘What’s your name?’

c. lak^{24} kja^{24} ko^{24} lak^{24} kja^{24} ei^{24} pi:n^{55}
    Lakkja remain Lakkja NEG change
    ‘Lakkja people remain the same and have not changed.’

d. ma^{231} pei^{51} ŋā:i^{24} mi^{231} lok^{24} pei^{51} lie:u^{24}
    2SG year this be six age PART
    ‘You are six years old this year.’

7.4 Declarative sentence

Declarative sentences in Lakkja, including affirmatives and negatives, are typically marked by a flat intonation with a slight fall at the end of the sentence.
Although no marker is obligatory for affirmative declaratives, sentences of this kind often take sentence final particles such as \textit{ka:i}^{24}, \textit{lo}^{11}, \textit{la}^{11}, \textit{a}^{11}, \textit{lie:u}^{24}, among others.

\begin{enumerate}
\item[a.] \textit{tsi}^{51} \textit{tok}^{55} \textit{nam}^{55} \textit{ba:n}^{24} \textit{ni}^{231} \textit{ŋjũn}^{231}
\textit{1SG} \textit{be} \textit{CLF} \textit{village} \textit{this} \textit{person}

\textit{‘I am from this village.’}

\item[b.] \textit{ta}^{231} \textit{loŋ}^{214} \textit{lie:k}^{11} \textit{ʔ}^{55} \textit{pok}^{24} \textit{la}^{51} \textit{lo}^{11}
\textit{1PL} \textit{uncle} \textit{house} \textit{already} \textit{do} \textit{good} \textit{PART}

\textit{‘Construction of our uncle’s house is completed.’}

\item[c.] \textit{pən}^{24} \textit{seu}^{51} \textit{ni}^{231} \textit{tok}^{55} \textit{tsi}^{51} \textit{ka:i}^{24}
\textit{CLF} \textit{book} \textit{this} \textit{be} \textit{1SG} \textit{PART}

\textit{‘This book is mine.’}

\item[d.] \textit{huo}^{51} \textit{ko:ŋ}^{55} \textit{lie:u}^{24}
\textit{flower} \textit{red} \textit{PART}

\textit{‘Flowers have turned red.’}
\end{enumerate}

Negative declaratives are generally marked by negators \textit{hwã:i}^{51}, \textit{ŋ̍}^{24}, and \textit{waŋ}^{231}, as will be listed in §7.13. The use of a sentence final particle is optional with sentences of this kind. For example, the final particle \textit{ka:i}^{24} in (24c) can be left out without affecting the meaning.

\begin{enumerate}
\item[a.] \textit{tsi}^{51} \textit{lak}^{55} \textit{e}^{214} \textit{toy}^{231} \textit{lem}^{11} \textit{ŋ}^{24} \textit{wei}^{55}
\textit{1SG} \textit{what} \textit{also} \textit{look} \textit{NEG} \textit{see}

\textit{‘I cannot see anything.’}

\item[b.] \textit{pok}^{24} \textit{la}^{214} \textit{hwã:i}^{51} \textit{li}^{24} \textit{ŋ}^{51} \textit{kaŋ}^{24}
\textit{do} \textit{thing} \textit{NEG} \textit{can} \textit{in this way} \textit{rigid}

\textit{‘We should not do thing in such a rigid way.’}

\item[c.] \textit{tsi}^{51} \textit{way}^{231} \textit{fie}^{ŋ}^{24} \textit{tsen}^{51} \textit{kou}^{24} \textit{ka:i}^{24}
\textit{1SG} \textit{NEG} \textit{want} \textit{eat} \textit{rice} \textit{PART}

\textit{‘I don’t feel hungry yet.’}

\item[d.] \textit{lak}^{24} \textit{ŋ}^{24} \textit{jon}^{214} \textit{tei}^{11} \textit{fuo:n}^{55} \textit{lie:u}^{24}
\textit{3SG} \textit{NEG} \textit{use} \textit{then} \textit{count} \textit{PART}

\textit{‘If he doesn’t need it, just leave it.’}
\end{enumerate}
7.5 Interrogative sentence

Lakkja interrogative sentences can be syntactically or phonetically recognized, normally generated by some interrogative devices, such as interrogative intonations, interrogative pronouns, interrogative particles. There are four types of interrogative sentences in Lakkja: general questions, special questions, polar questions, and A-not-A questions.

7.5.1 General questions

General questions denote any questions that require an affirmative or negative reply. However, unlike English general questions which expect a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answer, Lakkja general questions are more often replied to with a direct affirmation or negation of the predicate in question. For instance, if the question is *ma231 tsen51 ŋa11?* [2SG - eat - PART] ‘Do you eat? /Would you like some?’, the answer would normally be either *tsen51* ‘(Yes, I’d like to) eat’ or *ŋ̍24 tsen51* ‘(No, I don’t) eat’, rather than simply ‘yes’ or ‘no’.

What signals the interrogative nature of this type of questions is the use of interrogative intonations such as a rising tone at the end of the sentence, and/or the presence of a sentence final particle such as *le11, a11, ŋa11, ma231*.

(25) a. *tuk24 ma231 pa51 na:y11 huk24 le51*
   be 2SG COVERB clothes wash PART
   ‘Is it you who washed the clothes?’

b. *ma231 e55 le51*
   2SG hear PART
   ‘Did you hear?’

c. *ma231 tsen51 kou24 yya11*
   2SG eat rice PART
   ‘Would you like to eat?’

d. *ma231 toŋ231 pai51 a11*
   2SG also go PART
   ‘Are you also going (there)?’

Sentence final particles are not often employed to express interrogative nature. Thus, the distinction between a statement and a question largely depends on the tone at the end of the sentence. Take (26a) as an example. If the last syllable *ko51* keeps its original falling tone 51, the sentence will be recognized as a negative sentence. By contrast, if it takes a rising tone,
then it must be an interrogative sentence which expects an answer from the hearer. When the tone of the last lexical item is originally a rising one, for instance, *tseu*₂⁴ in (26b), then the interrogative intonation will be raised more sharply to distinguish a question from an affirmative sentence.

(26)  
\[ \text{a. } ma^{331} \quad \eta^{24} \quad hji:u^{24} \quad tshieŋ^{55} \quad ko^{51} \]
2SG      NEG    can      sing       song

‘Can’t you sing?’

\[ \text{b. } wan^{331} \quad \etaa:i^{24} \quad lok^{24} \quad \etajo^{24} \quad tsho^{51} \quad tseu^{24} \]
Today     six      month     PREF     nine

‘Is today June ninth?’

As indicated above, some sentence final particles may also function as a temporal-aspectual marker. More specifically, *le*₁¹ may typically occur as a marker for inquiry about a past event or a current relevant state, while *a*₁¹ and *ŋa*₁¹ are employed only for present and future tense.

Besides, sentences like (27a) may be analysed as a rhetorical question, which does not require an answer and does not expect an answer. Such a question is typically raised to express a definite attitude of the speaker.

(27)  
\[ \text{na:n}^{331} \quad ta:u^{14} \quad ma^{331} \quad kjec:ə^{24} \quad tie^{214} \quad khjâ:k^{55} \quad ma^{24} \]
ADV      2SG     hard     over     iron     PART

‘Are you even harder than iron?’ (Your temper is not tougher than iron.)

Furthermore, it is noteworthy that negators *ŋ*²⁴, *hwã:i*⁵¹ and *way*²³¹ may occur at the end of a question to signal the interrogative nature of a sentence, as will be seen in §7.13. In such cases, all of other elements such as object and verb complement must precede the negator, and occasionally, objects may occur before the verb for special focus, as in (28b).

(28)  
\[ \text{a. } tsı^{51} \quad fuo:n^{55} \quad ti:u^{231} \quad so^{55} \quad tuə:ı^{55} \quad hwã:i^{51} \]
1SG     calculate CLF  number     right     NEG

‘Is the figure I’ve calculated right?’

\[ \text{b. } kji:ı^{11} \quad lai^{214} \quad ni^{231} \quad ma^{231} \quad njũn^{214} \quad pok^{24} \quad hwã:i^{51} \]
CLF  matter     this  2SG  wish     do     NEG

‘Would you like to do it?’
7.5.2 Special questions

Special questions, also called information questions, are the type of questions that always seek specific new information (Quirk, Greekbaum et al. 1985:817). They are similar to wh-questions in English, and typically generated by interrogative pronouns which denote an unknown noun phrase or verb phrase under inquiry. Interrogative pronouns may stand for various categories including person, thing, time, place, manner, quantity, among others, which have been discussed in §4.3.

The following is a list of the most frequently used interrogative pronouns and pronominal phrases in Lakkja.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People</th>
<th>nɛ̃11</th>
<th>‘who’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thing</td>
<td>lag55 ka214</td>
<td>‘what’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lag24 na214</td>
<td>‘which one’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>we:t11 na214</td>
<td>‘When’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wan231 na214</td>
<td>‘which/what day’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>li231 na214</td>
<td>‘what time’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tsi24</td>
<td>‘what (time/month)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>place</td>
<td>tei11 na214</td>
<td>‘where’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quantity</td>
<td>say55 loŋ31</td>
<td>‘how many/much’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tsi24</td>
<td>‘how many (small quantity)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reason</td>
<td>we11 ka214</td>
<td>‘why’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manner</td>
<td>say55</td>
<td>‘how’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>say55 njɛ:u214</td>
<td>‘how’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interrogative pronouns and pronominal phrases may serve as subject (29c), object (29a–b), attributive (29e–f) or adverbial (29g–h) in a sentence.

(29)

a. ma\(^{231}\) pok\(^{24}\) lak\(^{55}\) ke\(^{214}\)

2SG do what

‘What are you doing?’

b. lak\(^{24}\) pai\(^{51}\) tei\(^{11}\) na\(^{214}\) kjam\(^{55}\) tsei\(^{55}\)

3SG go where cut tree

‘Where is he going to fell trees?’

c. lak\(^{24}\) na\(^{214}\) lai\(^{51}\)

CLF which good

‘Which one is good?’

d. ma\(^{231}\) tu\(^{24}\) pei\(^{51}\) na\(^{214}\) tsie:ŋ\(^{11}\)

2SG be year which born

‘Which year were you born in?’

e. li:u\(^{24}\) tan\(^{231}\) tsi\(^{24}\) lak\(^{24}\) njũn\(^{231}\)

2PL come how many CLF person

‘How many of you came?’

f. ma\(^{231}\) mi\(^{24}\) saŋ\(^{55}\) loŋ\(^{51}\) ti:n\(^{231}\)

2SG have how much money

‘How much money do you have?’

g. ma\(^{231}\) weit\(^{11}\) ke\(^{214}\) ŋ\(^{24}\) pok\(^{24}\) le\(^{24}\) ni\(^{24}\)

2SG why NEG do PART PART

‘Why don’t you do it anymore?’

h. saŋ\(^{55}\) njɛ:u\(^{214}\) pok\(^{24}\) seŋ\(^{24}\) hi\(^{55}\)

how do business

‘How to do business?’

As illustrated above, unlike English wh-questions, Lakkja interrogative constructions do not involve syntactic movements such as wh-fronting, or any antecedent-trace relation within the clausal level. Take (29b) as an example. It may be derived from an affirmative sentence like lak\(^{24}\) pai\(^{51}\) ou\(^{11}\) kja\(^{24}\) kjam\(^{55}\) tsei\(^{55}\) [3SG - go - inside - mountain - cut - tree] ‘He went to the mountains to cut tree’. When the adverbial of place ou\(^{11}\) kja\(^{24}\) becomes unknown under inquiry,
the interrogative pronoun phrase *tei11 na214 ‘where’ occupies this position directly without any movement and thus there is no position for a trace here.

It is also worth noting that intonations and sentence final particles may or may not be employed in sentences of this kind. The most frequently used sentence final particle is *ni24 (30a–b), which may occur either with or without an interrogative pronoun. When an interrogative pronoun is not used, it can be retrieved from the contexts (30c).

(30)  a. *wei11 ke214 yj24 pok24 le24 ni24
   ‘Why not doing it anymore?’
   b. *ma231 saŋ55 ni51 khwâng24 ni24
   ‘Why are you so skinny?’
   c. *lak24 pha55 lie:u24, *lak24 pe55 ka:m231, ‘‘*lak24 kjâ24 kjei51 m24 ‘‘
   ‘He/She came back. Father asked: Where is your brother?’

Note that some questions with interrogative pronouns can be a rhetorical question and do not invite a reply. In Lakkja, rhetorical questions typically take the same forms as certain types of special questions, such as (29g) and (30b).

7.5.3 Alternative questions

Alternative questions typically denote the questions that present two options under inquiry and often expect selection from them. Alternative questions in Lakkja are formed by conjunctives *a11 tsi11 ‘or’ or *a11 saŋ55 ‘or’ followed by a negative form of the predicate, a content word, a phrase or a clause, as mentioned in §7.2.3.

As illustrated below, the elements linked by *a11 tsi11 and *a11 saŋ55 may be an adjective phrase (31a–b), a verb phrase (31c–f), a noun phrase (32), or a clause (33).

When the conjunction links two verb phrases or adjective phrases, the question seeks a selection from the situations described by one of the verb phrases or adjective phrases. For example, the answer to (31b) would be either *jaŋ55 ‘(It is) salty’ or *ta:m11 ‘(It is) light’.

(31)  a. *ma231 au41 bok55 *a11 saŋ55 au51 ni:u55
   ‘Do you want the big one or the small one?’
b. ʦɛ:n²⁴ ʃon⁵⁵ ni³¹ ʃaj⁵⁵ a¹¹ ʃaj⁵⁵ ta:m¹¹
   CLF course this salty or light
   ‘Is this course salty or light?’

c. ma²³¹ ʃai⁵¹ a¹¹ ʃaj⁵⁵ ʃaj²⁴ ʃai⁵¹
   2SG go or NEG go
   ‘Will you go or not?’

d. ʃoʃa⁵¹ ʃuk²⁴ ʃaj⁵¹ ʃiʃa⁵¹ a¹¹ ʃiʃa¹¹ to²⁴ ʃiʃa⁵¹?
   fish be steam eat or boil eat
   ‘Would you like steamed fish or boiled fish?’

e. ma²³¹ ʃuk²⁴ ʃa:ʃaj⁵⁵ a¹¹ ʃaj⁵⁵ ja²³¹ ʃi⁵¹
   2SG be take seriously or cheat 1SG
   ‘Do you really mean it or just fool me?’

f. ʃai⁵¹ ˈpət⁵⁵ ʃwe:n⁵¹ a¹¹ ʃaj⁵⁵ ʃai⁵¹ ˈtei²⁴ ʃwe:n⁵¹
   want pen translate or want mouth translate
   ‘(Do you) need translation or interpretation?’

Furthermore, with the meaning ‘are you going?’, the answer to question (32) would be either ʃai⁵¹ ‘(Yes, I will) go’ or ʃaj²⁴ ʃai⁵¹ ‘(No, I will) not go’. In this regard, it is similar to general questions. Therefore, sentences with the identical verb ʃai⁵¹ may very well be analysed as a subtype of A-not-A question rather than alternative questions.

(32) ma²³¹ ʃai⁵¹ a¹¹ ʃaj⁵⁵ ʃaj²⁴ ʃai⁵¹
   2SG go or NEG go
   ‘Will you go or not?’

When the conjunction links two noun phrases, the question expects a confirmation from one of the arguments. For example, the answer to question (33a) would be either ʃa:j⁵¹ ʃai⁵¹ ‘headache’ or ʃai:j²⁴ ʃai:ʃai²⁴ ‘stomach-ache’, and the answer to question (33b) would be ʃu²³¹ ˈpəli⁵¹ ‘a dead one’ or ʃu²³¹ ˈŋjɛ:u²¹⁴ ‘an alive one’. However, due to the morphological process in which the adjectives ˈpəli⁵¹ and ˈŋjɛ:u²¹⁴ are nominalized with the prefix ʃu²³¹, it is grammatically acceptable for sentences like (33b) to reply with one of the adjectives alone, i.e. either ˈpəli⁵¹ or ˈŋjɛ:u²¹⁴.
When an alternative question is formed with the conjunction in between two clauses, it normally expects a selection from the non-duplicated part in the clauses. For example, the answer to question (34) would be 

(34) ma\textsuperscript{231} sut\textsuperscript{55} tsem\textsuperscript{51}/ŋjen\textsuperscript{231} tsik\textsuperscript{24} ti:n\textsuperscript{231} [1SG - say - gold/silver - be worth - money] ‘I think gold/silver is more valuable’, or tsem\textsuperscript{51}/ŋjen\textsuperscript{231} tsik\textsuperscript{24} ti:n\textsuperscript{231} ‘gold/silver is more valuable’, or simply tsem\textsuperscript{51}/ŋjen\textsuperscript{231} ‘gold/silver’.

7.5.4 A-not-A question

7.5.4.1 General type of A-not-A construction

Similar to Chinese ‘A-not-A’ question, Lakkja adopts a construction of [verb + hwā:i\textsuperscript{51}/ŋ\textsuperscript{24} + verb] for a special type of polar question. It could be analysed as inserting a negator hwā:i\textsuperscript{51} or ŋ\textsuperscript{24} between two identical verbs, or as combining an affirmative form with a negative form of the same predicate verb to mark an interrogative sentence. For example:

(35) a. tuk\textsuperscript{24} hwā:i\textsuperscript{51} tuk\textsuperscript{24} ŋ\textsuperscript{24} pok\textsuperscript{24}
be NEG be so do
‘Is it the right way to do it?’

b. ma\textsuperscript{231} paw\textsuperscript{11} ŋ\textsuperscript{24} paw\textsuperscript{11} wa:t\textsuperscript{11} num\textsuperscript{11}
2SG go NEG go fetch water
‘Will you go to fetch water or not?’

The affirmative answer to an A-not-A question is the predicate verb or the verb phrase, and the negative answer to it is the negator and the predicate verb or the verb phrase. That is, when serial verbs occur in a A-not-a question, it is grammatically acceptable to reply with the serial verbs or simply the predicate verb. For example, the answer to the question in (35b) would be
paɪ^51 waː’^11 nu^11 ‘(Yes, I will) go to carry water’ or ŋ̍^24 paɪ^51 waː’^11 nu^11 ‘(No, I will) not go to carry water’, or simply paɪ^51 ‘(Yes, I will) go’ or ŋ̍^24 paɪ^51 ‘(No, I will) not go’.

Moreover, the predicate verb may be either transitive or intransitive. An object may occur between the affirmative form and the negative form, or after the A-not-A frame. For example:

$$
\begin{array}{llllll}
\text{a.} & \text{ma}^2 & \text{i}^5 & \text{hwāː}^5 & \text{i}^5 & \text{lak}^2 \\
\text{2SG} & \text{love} & \text{NEG} & \text{love} & \text{3SG} \\
\end{array}
$$

‘Do you love him?’

$$
\begin{array}{llllll}
\text{b.} & \text{ma}^2 & \text{i}^5 & \text{lak}^2 & \text{hwāː}^5 & \text{i}^5 \\
\text{2SG} & \text{love} & \text{3SG} & \text{NEG} & \text{love} \\
\end{array}
$$

‘Do you love him?’

### 7.5.4.2 A-not-A construction with prefixable adjectival morphemes

According to my data, a special type of A-not-A construction has been recognized, typically forming with Lakkja prefixable adjectival morphemes laɪ^51 and naːn^231 (mentioned in §3.1.1.11). It occurs in a frame of [laɪ^51/naːn^231 + ŋ̍^24 / hwāː:i^51 + (laɪ^51/naːn^231) + verb], where the prefixable adjective may deverbalize a transitive or adjectival verb to form an adjective. That is, if the verb cannot be prefixed by laɪ^51 or naːn^231, then it is unacceptable to occur in this construction.

In this frame, laɪ^51/naːn^231 between the negator and the verb can be left out without changing the meaning. Thus, (37a) is grammatical in Lakkja.

$$
\begin{array}{llllll}
\text{a.} & \text{tsieːŋ}^5 & \text{me}^1 & \text{ni}^2 & \text{laɪ}^5 & \text{ŋ̍}^2 & \text{joŋ}^2 \\
\text{CLF} & \text{knife} & \text{this} & \text{good} & \text{NEG} & \text{use} \\
\end{array}
$$

‘Is this knife easy to use?’

$$
\begin{array}{llllll}
\text{b.} & \text{nam}^5 & \text{huə}^5 & \text{ni}^2 & \text{laɪ}^5 & \text{ŋ̍}^2 & \text{laɪ}^5 & \text{loːm}^5 \\
\text{CLF} & \text{flower} & \text{this} & \text{good} & \text{NEG} & \text{good} & \text{look} \\
\end{array}
$$

‘Is this flower good-looking?’

This type of A-not-A question generally expects a reply with the derived adjective formed by the prefix and the verb. For example, the answer to (37b) would be either laɪ^51 loːm^5 ‘good-looking’ or ŋ̍^24 laɪ^51 loːm^5 ‘Not good-looking’. It is infelicitous to answer simply laɪ^51 or ŋ̍^24 laɪ^51.

Though there are various views, the difference between a general question and an A-not-A question essentially lies in the scope of interrogation. In a general question the inquiry could
be any element of the sentence such as the arguments, the predicate, the adverbial, or even the adjuncts. What to be expected in the answer is largely depending on the stress and tones used by the speaker. This can be illustrated in (38).

(38)  

(a) ma²³¹ kou²⁴ lau²³¹ tsen⁵¹ mom²¹⁴?  
2SG dinner eat meat  
‘Are you going to eat meet for dinner?’

(b) ma²³¹ kou²⁴ lau²³¹ tsen⁵¹ ṇ̃²⁴ tsen⁵¹ mom²¹⁴?  
2SG dinner eat NEG eat meat  
‘Are you going to eat meet for dinner?’

Based on different contexts or stress used by the speaker, different answers may apply to (38a) for various focuses. For example, when the subject ma²³¹ ‘you’ receives the stress, then the question will expect an answer like (39a); when it focuses on the adverbial kou²⁴ lau²³¹ ‘dinner’, it will invite a reply like (39b); and when the emphasis is laid on the object mom²¹⁴ ‘meat’, the answer would be like (39c). By contrast, an A-not-A question only places interrogation to the elements linked by the negator hwâ:i⁵¹ or ṇ̃²⁴. For (39b), the answer would be either tsen⁵¹ ‘(Yes, I’m going to) eat’ or ṇ̃²⁴ tsen⁵¹ ‘(No, I’m) not going to eat’, strictly limited within the scope of A-not-A construction.

(39)  

(a) tsî⁵¹ ṇ̃²⁴ tsen⁵¹ mom²¹⁴, lak²⁴ tsen⁵¹  
1SG NEG eat meat 3SG eat  
‘No, I don’t eat meat. He is going to eat (meat).’

(b) kou²⁴ lau²³¹ ṇ̃²⁴ tsen⁵¹, wan³¹ ñjet²⁴ tsen⁵¹  
dinner NEG eat tomorrow eat  
‘No, not for dinner tonight, but for tomorrow.’

(c) ṇ̃²⁴ tsen⁵¹ mom²¹⁴, tsen⁵¹ phla⁵¹  
NEG eat meat eat fish  
‘No, not meat. (I’m going to) eat fish.’

7.5.5 Tag questions

Tag questions are normally used to seek consultation, confirmation, or discussion, occurring after a statement (generally a suggestion, judgment or expectation). In English, it is common that the verb and the subject of a tag question must be grammatically bound by the preceding
statement, as in ‘She is your girlfriend, isn’t she?’ But it is not the case with Lakkja. Instead of such grammatical agreement, only two verbs and one adjective are frequently used to form tag questions in a frame like A-not-A, as follows. It is worth noting that only the negator hwâ:i is used in tag questions; the other negator ŋ̍ is not to be used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>consultation</th>
<th>lai  hwâ:i  li</th>
<th>good  NEG  good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>consultation</td>
<td>li  hwâ:i  li</td>
<td>obtain  NEG  obtain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>confirmation</td>
<td>tuk  hwâ:i  tuk</td>
<td>be  NEG  be</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples are as follows:

(40) a. tei  lak  tie  pai  li  hwâ:i  li
    ask  3SG  self  go  obtain  NEG  obtain

    ‘Let him go alone, OK?’

b. ŋ̍  pok  tuk  hwâ:i  tuk
    in this way  do  be  NEG  be

    ‘Do it like this, right?’

c. tsi  lo:m  ma  ka  seu  lai  hwâ:i  lai
    1SG  look  look  2SG  PART  book  good  NEG  good

    ‘May I have a look at your book?’

Replies to such a question is normally the affirmative or negative form of the verb /adjective in the tag question. For example, the answer to (40a) would be either li  or hwâ:i  li, and the answer to (40c) would be either lai  or hwâ:i  lai.

7.6 Imperative and command sentence

The grammatical term ‘imperative’ normally refers to sentences that make requests or give commands. In Lakkja, the distinction between commands and non-commands is not very clear, partly depending on the usage of sentence final particles such as ma, la, hwâ, ŋ̍, and the Chinese loan imperative marker thîŋ. Non-commands tend to employ a sentence final particle or the imperative marker to express politeness, while commands do not.

Structurally, imperatives may be divided into two types: affirmative imperatives which express a request or command, as illustrated in (41a–d), and negative imperatives which issue a prohibition or persuasion, as shown in (41e–f). The subject in an imperative is usually the second person pronouns, which are more often omitted.
Modal verbs and discourse particles may also convey the meanings of imperative and command, as illustrated in (41b–e).

Apart from these, imperative and command may cover invitation (42a), suggestion (42b), urge, threat, demand, and so on.
7.7 Exclamative sentences

Exclamative sentences are generally used to express strong feelings, strong emphasis or various emotions such as happiness, sadness, surprise and disbelief. Lakkja exclamative sentences may be formed with adjectives, verbs or verb phrases, nouns or noun phrases, as well as clauses. They are typically achieved by exclamatives and vocatives, and may include interjections, intonations, and certain clause final particles.

(43) a. yi:51 bok:55 pai:51
    so big go
    ‘So big!’

b. tse:r 24 plei:51 lo 11
    Ache die PART
    ‘It hurts! (It’s killing me!)’

c. ja 55! nam 55 hua 55 ni:231 tsiy:55 o:n 55
    VOC CLF flower this really beautiful
    ‘Wow! The flower is really beautiful!’

Lakkja has a significant number of exclamatives and vocatives to express various emotions. Here is a list of the most common ones:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ho:51</th>
<th>happiness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ha:21 ha:51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hi:51 hi:51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ja 55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u:24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ar 24 ja 24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ai 24 jo 51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ei 51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a:i:231</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y:24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a:24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o:24 ho:24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hei 51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>awareness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


astonishment

Here are some examples according to their semantics:

**Happiness:**

(44)  a. ho₅¹! pei₅¹ ŋ̥ã:i₂⁴ kou₂⁴ jie:m₅¹ e²⁴
    VOC       this year     rice    tremendous    PART
    ‘Ho! Rice (grows) so good this year!’

  b. ha₅¹ ha$_{51}$ ma₂³¹ tsha:i₅¹ tuω:i₅⁵ lie:u²⁴
    VOC        2SG         guess   right    PART
    ‘Aha! You’ve guessed it right!’

  c. hi₅¹ hi$_{51}$! ma₂³¹ tsa:ŋ²⁴ lak²⁴ tok₅⁵ ne₁₁
    VOC        2SG         say     2SG   be  who
    ‘Hee hee! You tell me who he is!’

**Surprise:**

(45)  a. ja₅⁵! nam₅⁵ huω₅¹ ni₂³¹ tsiŋ₅⁵ o:n₅⁵
    VOC   CLF     flower  this    really   beautiful
    ‘Wow! This flower is really beautiful!’

  b. u²⁴! ma₂³¹ at₅⁵ li₂³¹ a¹¹
    VOC    2SG   at       CLF PART
    ‘Oh! You are here!’

  c. at²⁴ ja²⁴! ta:i₅⁵ o:n₅⁵ a:k²⁴ lie:u²⁴
    VOC  too    beautiful     very PART
    ‘Wow! So beautiful!’

**Endorsement:**

(46)  ei₅¹! nam₅⁵ pan¹¹ fa:t²⁴ ni₂³¹ lai₅¹
    VOC  CLF   method  this  good
    ‘Hey! That is a good idea!’
Regret:

(47) \[ a:i^{2311} \ hji:u^{24} \ \eta^{51} \ tsi^{51} \ tsi^{11} \ \eta^{24} \ pa^{51} \ ka^{24} \ le^{11} \]

\[
\text{VOC} \quad \text{know} \quad \text{this way} \quad 1SG \quad \text{PART} \quad \text{NEG} \quad \text{go} \quad \text{PART}
\]

‘Well, if I had known it, I would not have gone there!’

Query:

(48) \[ \eta^{24}! \ \ tuk^{24} \ \eta^{51} \ \etaje:u^{214} \ a^{11} \]

\[
\text{VOC} \quad \text{be} \quad \text{this way} \quad \text{PART}
\]

‘Humph! Is that so?’

Distress:

(49) \[ ai^{24} \ jo^{51}! \ tse:i^{24} \ a:k^{24} \ \alpha^{24} \]

\[
\text{VOC} \quad \text{ache} \quad \text{very} \quad \text{PART}
\]

‘Ouch! It hurts so much!’

Disillusion:

(50) \[ \alpha^{24}, \ tsi^{51} \ \wat^{55} \ \lie:u^{24} \]

\[
\text{VOC} \quad 1SG \quad \text{remember} \quad \text{PART}
\]

‘Oh, I’ll remember that!’

Astonishment:

(51) a. \[ \etaa^{214}, \ ma^{231} \ ton^{24} \ pa^{51} \]

\[
\text{VOC} \quad 2SG \quad \text{together} \quad \text{go}
\]

‘Eh, you are also going (there)?’

b. \[ i^{24}, \ bo^{51} \ kjit^{55} \ a:k^{24} \ \alpha^{24} \]

\[
\text{VOC} \quad \text{sky} \quad \text{cold} \quad \text{very} \quad \text{PART}
\]

‘Eh, it’s very cold!’

Awareness:

(52) a. \[ hei^{51}, \ bo^{51} \ lei^{11} \ fen^{51} \ \lie:u^{24} \]

\[
\text{VOC} \quad \text{sky} \quad \text{drop} \quad \text{rain} \quad \text{PART}
\]

‘Hey, it’s raining!’
As shown above, exclamative sentences are often formed with clause-final particles. However, exclamation may be also marked by the use of high falling intonation at the end of the sentence, without any discourse particles or vocatives employed.

### 7.8 Possessive/presentative sentence

First of all, possessive relationships can be expressed in the frame `[possessee + tok\textsuperscript{55} + possessor + classifier/ in\textsuperscript{24}]`, where `tok\textsuperscript{55}` is a copula verb and `in\textsuperscript{24}` is a possessor marker (mentioned in §4.7.1). Note that the classifier after possessor must be consistent with the classifier used in the possessee slot.

(53)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a.</th>
<th>khwaːŋ\textsuperscript{55} ti\textsuperscript{214} ni\textsuperscript{231} tok\textsuperscript{55} tsi\textsuperscript{51} khwaːŋ\textsuperscript{55}</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CLF land this be 1SG CLF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘This land belongs to me.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>khwaːŋ\textsuperscript{55} ti\textsuperscript{214} ŋan\textsuperscript{231} tok\textsuperscript{55} lak\textsuperscript{24} in\textsuperscript{24}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CLF land this be 3SG PART</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘That land belongs to him.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, the canonical existential verb `mi\textsuperscript{231}` ‘have, possess, exist’ is used to designate a possessive relationship between the possessor and a possessee, or the existence of an entity in a particular location. Regardless of animate or inanimate subjects, they prototypically occur initially in a sentence before the verb `mi\textsuperscript{231}` to signal the possessor or the location, and the possessee/presented NP follows the verb. For example:

(54)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a.</th>
<th>lak\textsuperscript{24} mi\textsuperscript{231} ŋin\textsuperscript{24} tiːu\textsuperscript{231} tsun\textsuperscript{231} koːŋ\textsuperscript{55} (possessive)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3SG have one CLF skirt red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘She has a red skirt.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>lak\textsuperscript{24} liek\textsuperscript{11} mi\textsuperscript{231} hou\textsuperscript{24} tu\textsuperscript{11} nuŋ\textsuperscript{11}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3SG family have two CLF child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘There are two children in his family.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Furthermore, there are a number of verbs that may combine with \textit{mi}^{231} or which may substitute \textit{mi}^{231} in a possessive or presentative sentence, as illustrated in (55). Unlike Chinese and some Tai-Kadai languages, in Lakkja, no durative aspect marker is used with the verb. For sentences like (55a), in Chinese, an aspect marker \textit{zhe} 着 is typically employed after the verb \textit{kwak}^{55} ‘hang’ to indicate durative aspect; Gelao, a Tai-Kadai language, also has similar frame [\textit{locus} + verb + aspect marker + presented NP]. Since Lakkja lacks such grammatical devices, \textit{mi}^{231}, from the lexical verb ‘have’, may be analysed as a case of grammaticalization marking presentative meaning.

(55) a. pie:ŋ^{214} tie:ŋ^{231} hjie:n^{51} kwak^{55} įn^{24} fu^{214} wuə^{214}  
    surface wall top hang one CLF picture  
    ‘A picture is hanging on the wall.’

b. pie:ŋ^{214} tie:ŋ^{231} hjie:n^{51} kwak^{55} mi^{231} įn^{24} fu^{214} wuə^{214}  
    surface wall top hang have one CLF picture  
    ‘There hangs a picture on the wall.’

As discussed in §4.6.1, possessive sentences can also be marked by a Chinese loan verb \textit{kwei}^{51} ‘belong’.

(56) tam^{11} ti:n^{231} ni^{231} i^{11} kha:i^{24} kwei^{51} ma^{231} la^{24}  
    some money this all belong 2SG PART  
    ‘All the money belongs to you.’

7.9 Passive construction

In addition to §5.5.4, passivity is also worth examining at sentence level in the aim to reveal the complexity of passive constructions.

Passive constructions describe an event in which an entity or person is dealt with, handled or manipulated in some way. In this construction type, as discussed in §5.5.4, two
What is more complex is the construction where the passive marker can be left out and there is a whole-part relationship between the arguments. For example, both \textit{pei}^{231} ‘skin’ and \textit{wak}^{24} ‘wax gourd’ in (59) are semantic object, with the former being part of the latter. No agent is mentioned in this sentence.
In addition, passive constructions may express disposal in the same manner as Lakkja disposal constructions, the topic of the next section.

§8.5 will further discuss passivity from a grammatical perspective.

7.10 The so-called disposal form

Any syntactic account of Lakkja would be incomplete without mentioning the so-called disposal form that is operated by Chinese loan co-verb pa₅¹. We have discussed the properties of this device in §5.5.3 at phrase level. In this chapter, it will be examined at a broader level to further clarify its semantic and syntactic functions.

The typical constituent order of disposal form is [A + pa₅¹ + O + V], where the object is typically placed before the main verb and the agent may be omitted in some cases.

(60)  jom₂³¹ lou¹ pa₅¹ tseï₅⁵ tshei₅¹ kja:u²⁴ la₅⁵
  wind   old   DISPO tree   blow   break   PART
  ‘Strong wind blew the trees off.’

The main function of disposal form is object-raising in the aim to brought an entity into focal attention. According to Wang (1947), disposal form lays emphasis on how a person is handled, manipulated, or dealt with; how something is disposed of; or how an affair is conducted. The syntactic shift to SOV typically indicates that what happens to the object is the focus in this construction. Moreover, this construction type is not tied to any particular tense or aspect, namely it can be used for events in the past, present, or the future, or even for making a request.

Note that the form must be followed by a final particle or a resultative or purposive complement. For instance, since (60) does not contain resultative or purposive complement, the verb must be followed by a sentence final particle such as la₅⁵.

The increasing usage of object marker pa₅¹ shows a syntactic shift in Lakkja word order, which can be recognized as one of the most significant influence of contact with Chinese. However, Lakkja people tend to use clauses without disposal verbs. For example, the following

\[(59)\]
\[
\begin{array}{l}
a.\ wak²⁴ \ pa₅¹ \ the:₁²⁴ \ pei²³¹ \ lie:u²⁴ \\
wax gourd   PASS    pare    skin    PARTICIPLE
\end{array}
\]

‘The wax gourd has been peeled.’

b.\ wak²⁴ \ the:₁²⁴ \ pei²³¹ \ lie:u²⁴
wax gourd   pare    skin    PART

‘The wax gourd has been peeled.’
Lakkja sentences in (61), when translated into Chinese, may very well be expressed through the \textit{bà} construction: \textit{shuí bā huā zhé duàn le?} (who - DISPO - flower - bend - break - PART) for (61a) in Chinese, and \textit{bā téng tiáo kān duàn} (DISPO - vine - hack - break) for (61b). But in Lakkja, it is not the common way to convey such meanings with the disposal form with \textit{pa}.

\begin{align*}
(61) \quad & a. \textit{ne}^{11} \quad \textit{ɛ:u}^{24} \quad \textit{kja:u}^{24} \quad \textit{kan}^{51} \quad \textit{huo}^{51} \quad \textit{ni}^{231} \\
& \quad \text{who} \quad \text{bend} \quad \text{break} \quad \text{CLF} \quad \text{flower} \quad \text{this} \\
& \quad \text{‘Who broke off this flower?’} \\
& b. \textit{pha:k}^{24} \quad \textit{ti:u}^{231} \quad \textit{plau}^{51} \quad \textit{pleu}^{55} \quad \textit{pai}^{51} \\
& \quad \text{hack} \quad \text{CLF} \quad \text{vine} \quad \text{break} \quad \text{COMP} \\
& \quad \text{‘Hack the vine into pieces.’}
\end{align*}

Moreover, there is a close relationship between passive constructions and disposal constructions. In most cases, the two can transform into one another without significant change in meaning, namely, the mutual convertibility of passive constructions and disposal constructions. For example, the sentences in (62) carry the same truth conditions.

\begin{align*}
(62) \quad & a. \textit{lak}^{24} \quad \textit{pa}^{51} \quad \textit{tsu}^{231} \quad \textit{tsen}^{51} \quad \textit{la}^{11} \\
& \quad 3\text{SG} \quad \text{DISPO} \quad \text{sweet potato} \quad \text{eat} \quad \text{PART} \\
& \quad \text{‘He ate the sweet potato.’} \\
& b. \textit{tsu}^{231} \quad \textit{pən}^{41} \quad \textit{lak}^{24} \quad \textit{tsen}^{51} \quad \textit{la}^{11} \\
& \quad \text{sweet potato} \quad \text{PASS} \quad 3\text{SG} \quad \text{eat} \quad \text{PART} \\
& \quad \text{‘The sweet potato was eaten by him.’}
\end{align*}

§8.9 will return to the \textit{pa} construction and explore the grammatical relations of this form.

### 7.11 Double object construction

As discussed in §5.1.2.1, ditransitive clause, also called double object construction, typically occurs in the frame \([A + \text{verb} + \text{indirect object} + \text{direct object}].\) In most cases the direct object is a thing and the indirect object is a person. For example, \textit{pən} \text{‘give’} in (63a) is a canonical ditransitive verb and takes double objects. Other verbs such as \textit{foŋ} \text{‘send’} and \textit{pli} \text{‘teach’} may also take double objects without a dative marker.

Moreover, in Lakkja ditransitive clauses, the indirect object is often introduced by the dative marker \textit{pən} \text{‘give’} to further clarify the direction of transfer or the result of action. As illustrated in (63b) and (63c), the indirect object with the co-verb or preposition \textit{pən} \text{‘give’}
may either precede or follow the direct object. It is the same case with ditransitive verbs such as \textit{wei} ‘buy’, \textit{fon} ‘send’, \textit{jo} ‘pass’, among others.

(63) a. \tsi\, \pə\, \lak\, \n̄\i\, \pə\, \s\, ‘I gave him a book.’

b. \n\, \p\, \l\, \s\, \k\, \t\, ‘Who sold you the corn seeds?’

c. \n\, \p\, \k\, \t\, ‘Who sold the corn seeds to you?’

In some double object constructions, the preposition \p\ may be left out, resulting in a shift between the agent and the indirect object. Take (64a) as an example. Though the first \m\ ‘you’ in this sentence fills the indirect object slot, it semantically functions as the owner of the direct object \s\ ‘book’ and it is clear from the sentence that the borrower is the unstated ‘I’ rather than ‘you’. If the final \m\ in (64a) is left out, the meaning would not be so clear. To show the difference, (64b) is a contrasting sentence with \p\.

(64) a. \l\, \m\, \h\, \p\, \s\, \t\, \w\, \w\, ‘Can I borrow two books from you and return them to you in a couple of days?’

b. \l\, \p\, \m\, \h\, \p\, \s\, \t\, \w\, ‘(I will) lend you two books. Please return them to me in a couple of days.’

We will further examine the double object construction at grammatical level in §8.6.2.

7.12 Locative applicative construction

Lakkja locative construction is formed with the locative verb \a\ ‘be, at, in, on’ marking locus. A simple locative sentence generally follows the frame [S + locative verb + noun phrase].
Locative applicative construction may occur in multiple frames. The first is [S + verb + at<sup>55</sup> + NP] for static situations, as shown in (66). at<sup>55</sup> functions as a locative marker in this construction.

(66)  

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a. } tsì^{51} & \text{ at}^{55} \text{ li}^{231} \\
& 1\text{SG} \text{ at} \text{ here} \\
& \text{‘I’m here.’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{b. } tsì^{51} & \text{ ka}^{24} \text{ lai}^{214} \text{ at}^{55} \text{ hjie:n}^{51} \text{ ti}^{214} \\
& 1\text{SG} \text{ thing} \text{ at} \text{ top} \text{ land/ground} \\
& \text{‘My belongings are on the ground.’}
\end{align*}
\]

Another canonical frame of locative applicative is [A + verb + O + at<sup>55</sup> + location phrase], as in (67). The verb is normally transitive. This form can be used for either static or dynamic states, depending on the context.

(67)  

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a. } lak^{24} & \text{ tshe:p}^{24} \text{ them}^{51} \text{ at}^{55} \text{ hjie:n}^{51} \text{ ku:i}^{51} \\
& 3\text{SG} \text{ insert} \text{ needle} \text{ at} \text{ top} \text{ cloth} \\
& \text{‘She pinned a needle in the cloth.’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{b. } tsì^{51} & \text{ tek}^{55} \text{ ka}^{24} \text{ lai}^{214} \text{ at}^{55} \text{ hjie:n}^{51} \text{ ti}^{214} \\
& 1\text{SG} \text{ put} \text{ thing} \text{ at} \text{ top} \text{ ground} \\
& \text{‘I put things on the ground.’}
\end{align*}
\]

Dynamic states may also be expressed by [A + verb + O + location phrase + pai<sup>51</sup>], as in (68a), and [A + verb + O + locative verb + location phrase (+ pai<sup>51</sup>)], as in (38b–c). Locative verbs are normally taj<sup>231</sup> ‘come’, pai<sup>51</sup> ‘go’, ou<sup>11</sup> ‘enter’, and the like.

(68)  

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a. } lak^{24} & \text{ luk}^{55} \text{ mie}^{231} \text{ ou}^{11} \text{ tsheu}^{24} \text{ lai}^{214} \text{ pai}^{51} \\
& 3\text{SG} \text{ reach (for), extend} \text{ hand} \text{ inside} \text{ pocket} \text{ go} \\
& \text{‘He put his hands into his pockets.’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{b. } tau^{51} & \text{ fak}^{55} \text{ num}^{11} \text{ ou}^{11} \text{ ou}^{11} \text{ ja}^{214} \\
& 1\text{PL} \text{ fill in} \text{ water} \text{ enter} \text{ inside} \text{ farmland} \\
& \text{‘We fill water into the fields.’}
\end{align*}
\]
c. \( ti^{231} lak^{24} pai^{51} ou^{11} kja^{24} ta;\eta^{214} pai^{51} \)  
\hspace{1em} take 3SG go enter mountain bury go  
‘Bury him in the mountains.’ (abusive expression)

### 7.13 Negation

§5.5.5 and §6.4.6 have examined negation at word and phrase level. This section will further reveal its semantic and syntactic features at sentence level, with special focus on the scope of negation.

#### 7.13.1 Negators in clause

As discussed in §5.5.5, Lakkja negation may be classified into the following four types, reproduced below for convenience.

- \( \eta^{24} \) general negator
- \( hwâ:i^{51} \) (variant: \( \eta;\eta;\eta^{i:51} \)) neutral negator; linking adverb
- \( ei^{24}, ei^{24} au^{51} \) negative imperative
- \( waŋ^{231} \) negative perfective (imperfective)

Like many other Tai-Kadai languages, Lakkja negators can occur alone, or before adjectives or verbs.

As mentioned in §5.5.5, \( \eta^{24} \) is the general negator; \( hwâ:i^{51} \) (\( \eta;\eta;\eta^{i:51} \)) is a neutral negator; \( ei^{24} \) (\( au^{51} \)) carries imperative meaning; \( waŋ^{231} \) is a negator with aspectual meaning. Examples are as follows:

(69)  
a. \( ou^{11} \) liek\(^{11} \) mom\(^{214} \) hwâ:i\(^{51} \) mi\(^{231} \) la\(^{11} \)  
\hspace{1em} inside house meat NEG have PART  
‘There’s no meat at home.’

b. \( tsí^{51} tei^{11} waŋ^{231} wei^{231} fen^{55} pon^{51} tu^{214} \)  
\hspace{1em} 1SG still NEG reply letter give 3PL  
‘I haven’t written back to them.’

c. \( tsoŋ^{55} tshu:ni^{24} mi^{231} \eta^{24} tsen^{51} li^{24} \)  
\hspace{1em} CLF mushroom this NEG eat acquire  
‘This kind of mushroom is not edible.’
d. ei\textsuperscript{24} lən\textsuperscript{24} lak\textsuperscript{24}
NEG tell 3SG
‘Don’t tell him/her.’
e. ma\textsuperscript{231} lieːŋ fəm\textsuperscript{51} hwāː\textsuperscript{51} lat\textsuperscript{51} koːn\textsuperscript{24} mi\textsuperscript{231} m\textsuperscript{3} wan\textsuperscript{231}
2SG conscience NEG good always have one day
pon\textsuperscript{51} plə\textsuperscript{24} phaːk\textsuperscript{24}
PASS thunder Hit
‘Your conscience is not good. You will be hit by lightning one day.’

In some cases, the negators can co-occur in a sentence. The constituent order and the possibility of co-occurrence by and large hinge on their semantics.

(70) a. ma\textsuperscript{231} y\textsuperscript{24} ton\textsuperscript{13} i\textsuperscript{55} tei\textsuperscript{11} ei\textsuperscript{24} pok\textsuperscript{24}
2SG NEG agree PART NEG do
‘Don’t do it if you don’t agree.’

b. y\textsuperscript{24} puːi\textsuperscript{214} hjaːu\textsuperscript{24} ŋəːt\textsuperscript{11} y\textsuperscript{24} jet\textsuperscript{11}
NEG bake dry grind NEG crushed
‘It can’t be crushed unless it is dried off.’

(71) a. ma\textsuperscript{231} y\textsuperscript{24} pai\textsuperscript{51} y\textsuperscript{24} li\textsuperscript{24}
2SG NEG go NEG acquire
‘You must go.’ (lit. it won’t work if you are not going.)

b. y\textsuperscript{24} tsaːy\textsuperscript{24} y\textsuperscript{24} hjiːu\textsuperscript{24}
NEG say NEG know
“(sb. would) not know (if sb.) had not told.’

y\textsuperscript{24} may also occur in the frame \([y\textsuperscript{24} + A + y\textsuperscript{24} + B]\), expressing the meaning ‘neither…nor…’.

The elements following y\textsuperscript{24} can be verbs or adjectives. When adjectives fill the slots, they are normally antonyms.
7.13.2 The scope of negation

There are two types of negation in Lakkja: partial negation and total negation. In partial negation, negators including hwã:i 51 (ŋ̥wã:i51), ŋ̍ 24, and ei 24 (au51) typically occur before adverbs of time, scope, and frequency, such as toŋ 24 ‘all, both’, i11 kha:i24 ‘all, both’, ko:n24 ‘always’, tsie:ŋ 231 ‘often’.

Total negation may be expressed through universal quantifiers such as “all, entirely”, and “always” which precede the negator to command the scope of negation. The placement of the quantifiers determines the scope of negation. When the quantifiers precede the negator, a reading of total negation is achieved. When the quantifiers follow the negator, partial negation is conveyed. For example, (73a) is partial negation, with the negator ŋ̍ 24 precedes the adverb i11 kha:i24 ‘all, both’, while (73b) is total negation, with ŋ̍ 24 follows i11 kha:i24 ‘all, both’.

(73)  a. tai11 tai231 ŋ̍ 24 i11 kha:i24 pai51
    everyone    NEG all go
    ‘Not everyone goes.’

b. tai11 tai231 i11 kha:i24 ŋ̍ 24 pai51
    everyone    all NEG go
    ‘No one goes.’

7.13.2.1 Total negation

According to Dixon (2000:137), the scope of negation may be laid over the whole sentence, main clause, various types of subordinate clause, predicate, and also argument. The different scopes of negation are mainly indicated by intonation and the word order. Examples of the scopes of negation in Lakkja are offered in the following discussion.

A. Negation with scope over sentence

As shown in (74a), the first negator ŋ̍ 24 (before in51 wei214) is employed to negate the whole sentence, that is, [tst51 ŋ̍ 24 in51 wei214 lak24 ŋ̍ 24 tan231 a:m11 tsâ:ŋ51 ton51 ka:i24]NEG. Therefore, this
sentence implies a meaning ‘I did not make mistakes because he did not come, but I possibly will make mistakes for some other reason’. And the contrasting meaning is ‘I made mistakes because he came’, as shown in (74b). Similarly, the negator ŋ̍ in (74c) negates the whole sentence [tsi⁵¹ ŋ̍⁴⁴ wei⁵⁵ lak⁴⁴ hə₅₅ liek¹¹]NEG, implying a meaning ‘I did not see him going back home, but perhaps he has already gone back’. By contrast, (74d) shows an example with the scope of negation over one of the clauses rather than the whole sentence.

(74)  

| a. tsï⁵¹ ŋ⁴⁴ in⁵¹ wei²¹⁴ lak⁴⁴ ŋ⁴⁴ tan⁴³¹ a:m¹¹  
|  | 1SG  | NEG  | because | 3SG  | NEG  | come  | walk  |
| b. tsï⁵¹ in⁵¹ wei²¹⁴ lak⁴⁴ tan⁴³¹ hap⁵⁵ a:m¹¹ tsæ:ŋ⁵¹ ɬoŋ⁵¹  
|  | 1SG  | because | 3SG  | come  | PART  | walk  | trouble  |
|‘I did not make mistakes because he did not come.’ |
| c. tsï⁵¹ ŋ⁴⁴ wei⁵⁵ lak⁴⁴ phã⁵⁵ liek¹¹  
|  | 1SG  | NEG  | see  | 3SG  | go back  | home  |
|‘I didn’t see him going back home.’ |
| d. tsï⁵¹ hã⁵⁵ liek¹¹ ŋ⁴⁴ wei⁵⁵ lak⁴⁴  
|  | 1SG  | come back  | home  | NEG  | see  | 3SG  |
|‘I came back home and did not see him.’ |

B. Negation with scope over main clause

The negator ŋ⁴⁴ in (75a) only negates the main clause, that is, [tsï⁵¹ ŋ⁴⁴ a:m¹¹ tsæ:ŋ⁵¹ ɬoŋ⁵¹ ka:i²⁴]NEG, implying that ‘I will not make mistakes, and the reason I won’t is that he will go together (and supervise me)’. (75b) shows an example in the same vein.

(75)  

| a. tsï⁵¹ ŋ⁴⁴ a:m¹¹ tsæ:ŋ⁵¹ ɬoŋ⁵¹ ka:i²⁴ in⁵¹ wei²¹⁴ lak⁴⁴  
|  | 1SG  | NEG  | walk  | trouble  | PART  | because  | 3SG  |
| also  | go  |
|‘I will not make mistakes, because he also goes.’ |
| b. jək⁵⁵ lak⁴⁴ ŋ⁴⁴ pat⁴¹, tsï⁵¹ hji:u²⁴ a:m¹¹ tsæ:ŋ⁵¹ ɬoŋ⁵¹  
|  | if  | 3SG  | NEG  | go  | 1SG  | will  | walk  | trouble  |
|‘If he didn’t go, I would make mistakes.'
As can be seen, the different scopes of negation between (74a) and (75a) are mainly indicated by word order.

C. Negation with scope over subordinate clause
The scope of negation can also be laid over subordinate clause. For example:

(76) \[ \text{ŋ̍ lei}^{11} \text{fen}^{51} \text{tsi}^{51} \text{tei}^{11} \text{pai}^{51} \]
\[ \text{NEG rain ISG PART go} \]
‘I shall go there if it does not rain.’

D. Negation with scope over predicate
A negator may be used to negate only the predicate. For example, \( \text{ŋ̍} \) in (77a) negates the predicate \( \text{tshieŋ}^{55} \) ‘sing’, that is, \([\text{tshieŋ}^{55}]_{\text{NEG}}\), indicating that ‘I am not a singer, but a songwriter, an actor, or something else’.

(77) a. \( \text{tsi}^{51} \text{ŋ̍ tshieŋ}^{55} \text{ko}^{51} \]
\( 1SG \) NEG sing song
‘I do not sing.’

b. \( \text{lak}^{24} \text{wan}^{231} \text{pai}^{51} \]
\( 3SG \) NEG go
‘He has not left yet.’

Note that such a sentence may express various meanings when different intonation patterns are used along with different scopes of negation. For instance, if \( \text{ŋ̍} \) in (47a) is employed to negate the object \( \text{ko}^{51} \) ‘song’ ([\( \text{ko}^{51} \]_{\text{NEG}}) and the stress is on the object, the sentence may indicate that ‘I do not sing songs, but I can sing a poem, prayer, etc.’. And it may also convey the meaning ‘I am not a singer, but an actor’ when the stress is laid on \( \text{tshieŋ}^{55} \text{ko}^{51} \), that is, \( \text{ŋ̍} \) negate both the predicate and the object ([\( \text{tshieŋ}^{55} \text{ko}^{51} \]_{\text{NEG}}).

E. Negation with scope over argument
As mentioned above, there is also the possibility of negating an argument by intonation (78b) or the compound negators \( \text{ŋ̍ mi}^{231} \) and \( \text{hwā:i}^{51} \text{mi}^{231} \) (78a). Examples:

(78) a. \( \text{ŋ̍ mi}^{231} \text{lak}^{24} \text{kja}^{24} \text{at}^{55} \text{li}^{231} \]
\( \text{NEG Lakkja people live here} \)
‘No Lakkja people live here.’
b. tsi\(^{51}\) \(\eta^{24}\) tshie\(\tilde{\eta}\)^{55} ko\(^{51}\)  
1SG NEG sing song  
‘I do not sing songs.’

7.13.2.2 Partial negation

The scope of negation is usually conveyed by adverbs of time, scope, and frequency, such as to\(\tilde{y}\){\(^{24}\) ‘all, both’, ko:n\(^{24}\) ‘always’, tsie:η\(^{231}\) ‘often’. The negators hwâ:i\(^{51}\) (gwâ:i\(^{51}\)), \(\eta^{24}\), and ei\(^{24}\) (au\(^{51}\)) typically precede the elements that are negated. For example, (79a) indicates it is not often the case that the person comes over to our home, while (79b) is a total negation meaning that it is usually the case that the person does not come over to our home.

(79)  
a. lak\(^{24}\) \(\eta^{24}\) tsei:η\(^{231}\) tan\(^{231}\) ta\(^{231}\) lie:k\(^{11}\) pok\(^{24}\) plo:n\(^{55}\)  
3SG NEG usually come 1PL house do play  
‘He does not usually come over to our home.’

b. lak\(^{24}\) piŋ\(^{11}\) tsei:η\(^{231}\) \(\eta^{24}\) tan\(^{231}\) ta\(^{231}\) lie:k\(^{11}\) pok\(^{24}\) plo:n\(^{55}\)  
3SG usually NEG come 1PL house do play  
‘He usually does not come over to our home.’

The negator waŋ\(^{231}\) is not found to occur with partial negation.
Chapter 8
Grammatical Relations

Grammatical relations, also called syntactic functions or grammatical roles, are processes of neutralization of semantic macro roles. As there are not morphological forms such as grammatical agreement in Lakkja, this chapter may extend the ranges of grammatical relations from morpho-syntactic criteria to a broader semantic sense, and identify the relations between a verb and its dependents, such as ‘subject of’, ‘direct/indirect object of’, and various others. More specifically, this chapter will focus on the constituent order between subject and object in various clause types, and examine interrelation between subject and topics, passivity, transitivity, serial verb construction, causative construction, and object-raising construction, among others.

8.1 Unrestricted neutralization of semantic roles

Dixon (1994) syntactically distinguishes A and S in transitive clauses and intransitive clauses. Throughout the world, nominative-accusative languages such as English tend to treat A and S in the same way and treat O differently, while ergative-absolutive languages treat S and O alike and treat A differently (Dixon 1994:154–155; Farrell 2005:45). To describe the feature of the morphosyntactic alignment of a language, Dixon introduces the term pivot for a syntactic element which can be related to verbs in a given sentence. Typically, in nominative-accusative languages, the syntactic pivot is the so-called A and S, while in ergative-absolutive languages, the syntactic pivot may be the argument in the S and O slot (but not always so).

Lakkja, like other some Tai-Kadai languages, is analysed to be pivotless, treating A, S and O the same way syntactically. However, as will be discussed in the following sections, Lakkja exhibits special features in treating the semantic, syntactic and thematic relations between subject, object and their roles in different clause types.

8.2 Nominative-accusative pivotless

In Lakkja, S and A are often put on equal footing syntactically and semantically, while O does not always follow the usual constituent order when displaying certain semantic features. This phenomenon draws some parallels with nominative-accusative languages such as English,
where the subjects of transitive and intransitive verbs are distinguished from objects of transitive verbs by word order, case-marking, etc.

For example, there are some restrictions on the occurrence of reduplicated classifiers. When a classifier doublet functions as S or A, it generally precedes the verb, following the usual constituent order for the semantic role of ACTOR. For example:

(1)  
  a. tu\textsuperscript{231} tu\textsuperscript{231} [S]  
       ko:n\textsuperscript{24}   pu:i\textsuperscript{231}  
  CL: animal - CL: animal together fat  
  ‘Each and every one of them (cattle, chickens, etc.) is fat.’
  b. lak\textsuperscript{24} lak\textsuperscript{24} [S]  
       ko:n\textsuperscript{24}   tay\textsuperscript{231}  
  CL: person - CL: person together come  
  ‘Everyone came.’
  c. lak\textsuperscript{24} lak\textsuperscript{24} [A]  
       ko:n\textsuperscript{24}   i\textsuperscript{55}   lak\textsuperscript{24}  
  CL: person - CL: person together like 3SG  
  ‘Everyone likes her/him.’

However, when a classifier doublet functions as O in a clause, it can only occur before the main verb rather than after it. This is distinguished from the usual constituent order for the semantic role of UNDERGOER in Lakkja. For instance, (2) illustrates the case for classifier reduplicates as O in Lakkja, with (2a) and (2b) being variants of the sentence meaning “he likes each and every one of them”. It is not felicitous for the reduplicated classifiers nam\textsuperscript{55} nam\textsuperscript{55} to occur in the usual object position, as illustrated in (2c).

(2)  
  a. nam\textsuperscript{55} nam\textsuperscript{55} [O]  
       lak\textsuperscript{24}  ko:n\textsuperscript{24}   i\textsuperscript{55}  
  CL: object - CL: object 3SG together like  
  ‘He likes each and every one of them.’
  b. lak\textsuperscript{24}   nam\textsuperscript{55} nam\textsuperscript{55} [O]  
       ko:n\textsuperscript{24}   i\textsuperscript{55}  
  3SG   CL: object - CL: object together like  
  (As above)
  c. *lak\textsuperscript{24}  ko:n\textsuperscript{24}   i\textsuperscript{55}   nam\textsuperscript{55}   nam\textsuperscript{55} [O]  
       3SG together like CL: object - CL: object  
  (As above)
8.3 Subject and object

In Lakkja, like many other Tai-Kadai languages, constituent order is the most important syntactic role-identifying mechanism. The grammatical relations of subject and object are often apparent through constituent order, since S in intransitive clauses and A in transitive clauses generally occur before verbs, while O in transitive clauses generally occurs after the verbs, showing some similarity with the nominative-accusative pivot. The following examples illustrate.

(3) a. ma\textsuperscript{231} [S] a:m\textsuperscript{214} ba:ŋ\textsuperscript{51}
   2SG walk before
   ‘You go first.’

   b. ma\textsuperscript{231} [A] si\textsuperscript{55} ŋin\textsuperscript{24} si\textsuperscript{55} nam\textsuperscript{55} wok\textsuperscript{24} [O] qi\textsuperscript{51}
   2SG try one try CLF vegetable this
   ‘You try this dish.’

   c. jə\textsuperscript{11} lou\textsuperscript{11} [A] tshwei\textsuperscript{51} kja:u\textsuperscript{24} tsei\textsuperscript{55} tshe\textsuperscript{55} [O]
   strong wind blow break tree branch
   ‘The strong wind brought down tree branches.’

However, Lakkja differs from nominative-accusative languages and ergative-absolutive languages in some cases. In Lakkja, O and A can be omitted when they function as an inter-clausal anaphor to S, as illustrated in (4a) and (4b), where lak\textsuperscript{24} ‘him, her’ and nam\textsuperscript{55} ‘fruit’ in the O slot are omitted as an inter-clausal anaphor to S. Sentences of this kind are ungrammatical in a nominative-accusative language. In Example (4c), tsi\textsuperscript{51} ‘I’ in the A slot is omitted as an inter-clausal anaphor to S, which would be unacceptable in an ergative-absolutive language. In Lakkja, sentences of this kind are grammatically adequate.

(4) a. lak\textsuperscript{24} pai\textsuperscript{51} pok\textsuperscript{24} kon\textsuperscript{51} lie:u\textsuperscript{24}, tsi\textsuperscript{51} wei\textsuperscript{55} ∅ lie:u\textsuperscript{24}
   3SG go do work PART 1SG see PART
   ‘He went to work, (and) I saw (him).’

   b. nam\textsuperscript{55} tsok\textsuperscript{24} lie:u\textsuperscript{24}, lak\textsuperscript{24} tse\textsuperscript{51} ∅ tie\textsuperscript{214}
   fruit ripe PART 3SG eat PART
   ‘The fruit is ripe, (and) he has eaten (it).’
As mentioned in §7.11, Lakkja has a number of typical ditransitive verbs like \( pən^{51} \) ‘give’, \( jo^{55} \) ‘pass’, \( fon^{55} \) ‘give (as a present)’, among others. When the verb takes two objects, the general word order is \([A + V + IO + DO]\), as shown in Example (5a). But when the coverb \( pən^{51} \) ‘give’ introduces the indirect object, it yields two syntactic alternations: \([A + V + DO + pən^{51} + IO]\) or \([A + V + pən^{51} + IO + DO]\), as (5b) and (5c) illustrate. Furthermore, there are more complex cases like \( la:m^{51} \) ‘lend /borrow’ in (5d), as the use of a co-verb or preposition is crucial to disambiguate the direction of ownership. We will further examine ditransitive clauses in §8.6.2.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{(5) a.} & \quad tsi^{51} \quad ple^{51} \quad lak^{24} [IO] \quad ejn^{24} \quad pən^{24} \quad seu^{51} [DO] \\
& \quad 1SG \quad sell \quad 3SG \quad one \quad CLF \quad book \\
& \quad 'I sold a book to him.' \\
\text{b.} & \quad tsi^{51} \quad ple^{51} \quad ejn^{24} \quad pən^{24} \quad seu^{51} [DO] \quad pən^{51} \quad lak^{24} [IO] \\
& \quad 1SG \quad sell \quad one \quad CLF \quad book \quad give \quad 3SG \\
& \quad 'I sold a book to him.' \\
\text{c.} & \quad tsi^{51} \quad ple^{51} \quad pən^{51} \quad lak^{24} [IO] \quad ejn^{24} \quad pən^{24} \quad seu^{51} [DO] \\
& \quad 1SG \quad sell \quad give \quad 3SG \quad one \quad CLF \quad book \\
& \quad 'I sold a book to him.' \\
\text{d.} & \quad tsi^{51} \quad la:m^{51} \quad pən^{51} \quad lak^{24} [IO] \quad ejn^{24} \quad pən^{24} \quad seu^{51} [DO] \\
& \quad 1SG \quad lend/borrow \quad give \quad 3SG \quad one \quad CLF \quad book \\
& \quad 'I lent him a book.'
\end{align*}
\]

\( pa^{51} \), the Chinese loan object marker, has been briefly discussed in §5.5.3 and §7.10. It may form an object raising construction, but raises the direct object rather than the indirect object forward to a preverbal position, carrying the meaning of manipulation. In that case, the direct object usually follows the preposition or coverb \( pa^{51} \) and occurs before the predicate verb. For instance, by introducing a \( pa^{51} \) construction, (6a) and (6b) can be paraphrases of (5d) and (5b)/(5c).

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{(6) a.} & \quad tsi^{51} \quad pa^{51} \quad ejn^{24} \quad pən^{24} \quad seu^{51} [DO] \quad la:m^{51} \quad pən^{51} \quad lak^{24} [IO] \\
& \quad 1SG \quad DISP \quad one \quad CLF \quad book \quad lent \quad to \quad 3SG \\
& \quad 'I lent a book to him.'
\end{align*}
\]
b. tsis\textsuperscript{51} pa\textsuperscript{51} ěn\textsuperscript{24} pən\textsuperscript{24} seu\textsuperscript{51} [DO] ple\textsuperscript{51} lak\textsuperscript{24} [IO]

1SG DISP one CLF book sell 3SG

‘I sold a book to him.’

8.4 Subject and topic

Though subject and topic are often mutually exclusive, the two terms can be regarded as distinct syntactic elements in many languages such as Chinese and many Tai-Kadai languages as well as Lakkja. While subject denotes an argument of a topic or a verb which traditionally represents someone or something, topic may be whatever a conversation, text, etc. is about. It might be a specific syntactic element, a part of a sentence, or even not be identified explicitly. To be more specific, a subject can be an argument with the function of a topic or of a pivot, whereas a topic is syntactically free and does not necessarily coincide with subject or any grammatical elements in discourse. In Lakkja, non-subject topics are as common as subject topics.

As illustrated in (7), the topic in (7a) is ji:ŋ\textsuperscript{231} wok\textsuperscript{24} ni\textsuperscript{231} ‘this kind of vegetable’ while the subject is toŋ\textsuperscript{11} kjoŋ\textsuperscript{55} ‘everybody’. Thus ji:ŋ\textsuperscript{231} wok\textsuperscript{24} ni\textsuperscript{231} ‘this kind of vegetable’ is a non-subject topic. By contrast, in (7b), a\textsuperscript{11} tshu:n\textsuperscript{24} ni\textsuperscript{231} ‘this kind of mushroom’ functions as the syntactic subject as well as the topic, thus analyzed as a subject topic.

\begin{math}
\begin{aligned}
(7) \quad & a. \ ji:ŋ\textsuperscript{231} wok\textsuperscript{24} ni\textsuperscript{51} toŋ\textsuperscript{11} kjoŋ\textsuperscript{55} hou\textsuperscript{24} kja:ŋ\textsuperscript{231} hwâ:i\textsuperscript{51} tsen\textsuperscript{51} la\textsuperscript{11} \\
& \text{CLF vegetable this everybody long time NEG eat PART}
\end{aligned}
\end{math}

‘It has been a long time since we ate this kind of vegetable.’

\begin{math}
\begin{aligned}
(7) \quad & b. \ a\textsuperscript{11} tshu:n\textsuperscript{24} ni\textsuperscript{51} tsen\textsuperscript{51} hwâ:i\textsuperscript{51} li\textsuperscript{24}.
& \text{CLF mushroom this eat NEG acquire}
\end{aligned}
\end{math}

‘This kind of mushroom is inedible.’

8.4.1 Interrelationship between subject and topic

Since Lakkja lacks grammatical markers like は (wa) in Japanese for topics, Lakkja signals topics by raising the topicalized elements to the beginning of the sentence. Compare the following examples. In (8a), lak\textsuperscript{24} ‘he, she’ might be a subject topic, while in (8b), the topic becomes the sentence initial constituents ji:ŋ\textsuperscript{231} wok\textsuperscript{24} ni\textsuperscript{231} ‘this kind of vegetable’.

Furthermore, while Lakkja topics always occur at the beginning of a sentence, subjects may not occur sentence initially. For example, in sentences like (8b) and (8c), the subjects lak\textsuperscript{24} ‘he, she’ and tsis\textsuperscript{51} ‘I’ (the second one in (8c)) follow the topics which are also the objects in the sentences.
It is worth noting that a syntactic subject in Lakkja may also function as the semantic object of the sentence, which we mark as So. The subjects of the sentences in Example (8) are all analysed as actor of the action described by the predicate verbs, and the topics may be distinct from the subjects in discourse. By contrast, in Example (9), when a So is recognized in a sentence where the subject exhibits the semantic role of patient, the topic would pragmatically coincide with the subject.

From a semantic perspective, moreover, a topic may take more semantic roles in a sentence than a subject. The following are examples of topics that function as patient, agent, instrument, locative, time, material, scope, possession, etc., though some of them are not treated as syntactic subjects in some other Tai-Kadai languages.

**Patient:**

(9) a. **tu**<sup>231</sup> **khū**<sup>51</sup> **ŋan**<sup>231</sup> **ŋji:m**<sup>51</sup> **ŋ**<sup>24</sup> **pi:n**<sup>55</sup>
   CLF pig that castrate NEG change
   ‘Castration of the pig failed.’

b. **tu**<sup>231</sup> **kat**<sup>55</sup> **ŋi**<sup>51</sup> **a**<sup>11</sup> **waŋ**<sup>231</sup> **tuə:n**<sup>11</sup> **hi**<sup>55</sup>
   CLF chicken this kill NEG stop breath
   ‘The chicken is being slaughtered but it hasn’t stopped breathing.’

**Agent:**

(10) **lak**<sup>24</sup> **hji:u**<sup>24</sup> **tsa:ŋ**<sup>24</sup> **lak**<sup>24</sup> **tsou**<sup>11</sup>
   3SG can speak Chinese
   ‘He can speak Chinese.’
Instrument:

(11)  a. $me^{14}$ $ei^{214}$ $kjam^{55}$ $tsei^{55}$  
sword sharp cut tree  
‘Cut a tree with a sharp sword.’

b. $pu:i^{51}$ $kjai^{24}$ $to^{24}$ $kou^{24}$  
fire small cook rice  
‘Cook rice over a slow fire.’

Locative:

(12) a. $hjie:n^{51}$ $laej^{231}$ $mi^{231}$ $ŋin^{24}$ $khwa:ŋ^{55}$ $toy^{11}$ $lei^{231}$.  
upside mountain have one CLF pear  
‘There is an orchard of pear trees up in the mountain.’

b. $hjie:n^{51}$ $tsei^{55}$ $mi^{231}$ $fa:m^{51}$ $tu^{231}$ $mlok^{55}$  
upside tree have three CLF bird  
‘There are three birds in the tree.’

Time:

(13) a. $wan^{231}$ $ŋjam^{11}$ $hjie:n^{51}$ $tsa:ŋ^{51}$ $kjep^{55}$ $li^{24}$ $ti:n^{231}$  
yesterday upside road collect acquire money  
‘Yesterday (I) found some money on the road.’

b. $wan^{231}$ $ŋa:i^{24}$ $taej^{231}$ $fa:m^{51}$ $lak^{24}$ $toy^{11}$ $pa:ŋ^{214}$  
today come three CLF friend  
‘Today three friends came.’

c. $wan^{231}$ $wan^{231}$ $lei^{11}$ $fen^{51}$  
day day drop rain  
‘It rains everyday.’

Material:

(14) a $^{11}$ $ku:i^{55}$ $ŋi^{51}$ $kjap^{55}$ $ŋ^{24}$ $li^{24}$ $na:ŋ^{11}$  
CLF cloth this sew NEG acquire clothes  
‘This kind of cloth is not for making clothes.’
Scope:

(15) a. tie:m⁵¹ tset⁵⁵ no:ŋ²⁴ no:ŋ²⁴
all over tree (fruit) countless
‘The whole tree is fruitful.’

b. tie:m⁵¹ laŋ²³¹ ha:i⁵¹ huə⁵¹
all over mountain bloom flower
‘Flowers bloom all over the mountain.’

Possessor:

(16) a. lak²⁴ mi²³¹ ŋin²⁴ ti:u²³¹ tsun²³¹ ko:ŋ⁵⁵
3SG have one CLF dress red
‘She has a red dress.’

b. ma²³¹ mi²³¹ saŋ⁵⁵ lɔŋ⁵¹ ti:n²³¹
2SG have how many/much money
‘How much money do you have?’

Strictly speaking, when grammatical topic marker is absent in a language, criteria may vary from person to person and language to language whether to treat an element as syntactic subject. It might largely lie on whether the syntactic subjects can be understood as omitted according to context.

8.4.2 Interrelationship between topicalization and topic

Topicalization is a pragmatic process that forms a derived construction in which one element becomes a topic. In a topic-comment construction, the syntactic element of the sentence other than the topic is normally called comment, which is equivalent of the predicate in a subject-predicate construction.

Since Lakkja lacks grammatical topic markers (often particles in languages such as Thai and Japanese) that separate the topic and the following comment, topicalization in Lakkja mainly manifests itself in three structures: the topicalized topic structure, the left-dislocation, and the canonical topic structure.

To start with, the topicalized topic structure typically denotes the sentences of which the topicalized arguments are raised to the beginning of the sentence. Therefore, an empty category can be realized in the sentence, and the sentence would still be grammatical if the dislocated element is moved back to the NP-trace slot. For example, the topic ji:ŋ²³¹ wok²⁴ mì²³¹ ‘this kind
of vegetable’ in (17b) can be moved back to the normal position between *tsen*⁵¹ ‘eat’ and the sentence final particle *la*¹¹, and the sentence would have the same truth condition as (8a).

(17)  

a. *fon*⁵¹ *fen*⁵⁵ *ni*⁵¹ *tsi⁵¹ fie²⁴ [t] *ka*¹¹  

CLF letter this 1SG write PART  

‘I wrote this letter.’

b. *jiːŋ*²³¹ *wok*²⁴ *ni*⁵¹ *lak*²⁴ hou²⁴ *kjaː*⁷²³¹ hwāː*i*⁵¹ *tsen*⁵¹ [t] *la*¹¹  

CLF vegetable this 3SG long time NEG eat PART  

‘It has been a long time since he ate this kind of vegetable last time.’

Unlike the topicalized topic structure formed with simply fronting, left-dislocation introduces a pronoun or other anaphoric element as the co-referent in the normal position of the dislocated argument. Therefore, no NP-trace can be realized in the construction of left-dislocation, and the sentence would be ungrammatical if the dislocated element is moved back to the original position with the referent still in that position.

(18)  

a. *nam*⁵⁵ *kum*²³¹ *ŋan*²³¹ *tsi⁵¹ *ŋ*²⁴ *koːm*²⁴ *pal*⁵¹ *lu*²³¹ *ti²³¹ *tʃoː*⁷⁵⁵  

CLF valley that 1SG NEG dare go there hunt  

‘That valley, I dare not go hunting there.’

c. *tu*²³¹ *kɔŋ*²⁴ *ŋan*²³¹ *ton*¹¹ *kjoŋ*⁵⁵ *i*⁵⁵ *lak*²⁴  

CLF old man that everybody like 3SG  

‘That old man, everybody likes him.’

Compared with the two constructions above, canonical topic structure typically provides external information outside the clause and thus it does not involve dislocation or anaphor in sentence. For example, the topics of the following sentences denote various contexts such as locations, reasons, time, etc., which are not co-referential with the elements of the sentences.

(19)  

a. *lak*²⁴ *kja*²⁴ *uk*⁵⁵ *to*⁵¹ *tei¹¹ aːm¹¹ tsəː*⁷⁵¹  

Lakkja exit door PART walk road  

‘Talking about Lakkja area, walking on foot is the common way to travel around.’

b. *lak*²⁴ *tei²⁴ *tiːm*⁵¹  

3SG mouth tapering  

‘He is sharp-tongued.’
Though there are not co-referents in these sentences, the logical relations between the topic and comment can be recognized. For example, in (19b), there is a part-whole relation between “mouth” and “he”, with the topic “he” being whole and “mouth” being part. Similarly, in (19d), “he” in the comment is a member of the topic “the three of us”.

Furthermore, Lakkja has two devices to separate the topic and the following comment: one is the $\text{ni}^{231}\ldots\text{tsa:}^{24}$ construction, which is translatable into English as ‘regarding, as to, take...as an example’; the other is the preposition $\text{tuə}$ ‘as to, regarding, as for’. They both appear to be Chinese loan words which occur sentence initially with the topic and are followed by comment. For example:

\begin{verbatim}
(20) a. $\text{ti}^{231}\text{ji:}^{231}\text{wok}^{24}\text{ni}^{51}\text{tsa:}^{24}\text{ton}^{11}\text{kjoŋ}^{55}\text{hou}^{24}\text{kja:}^{231}$
    take CLF vegetable this say everybody long time
    $\text{hwā:}^{i51}\text{tsen}^{41}\text{la}^{11}$. NEG eat PART

    ‘As to this kind vegetable, it has been a long time since we ate it last time.’

b. $\text{tuə:i}^{55}\text{a}^{11}\text{lar}^{214}\text{ni}^{51}\text{lak}^{24}\text{ŋjũ}^{24}\text{kuə:n}^{24}$
    as to CLF thing this 3SG NEG manage

    ‘As to such things, he does not care.’
\end{verbatim}

When combining with these two devices, a topic may take semantic roles such as patient, agent, time, locative, material, possession, etc.

However, these two devices are not regarded as grammatical topic markers like Japanese $\text{wa}$ (wa) since their functions are largely limited by context or semantics when marking topic.
8.5 Passivity

8.5.1 Passive meaning without a passive marker

Since Lakkja lacks inflectional contrasts of active and passive constructions, such as the counterparts *take* versus *be taken* in English, grammatical passivity in Lakkja may be realized by a semantic change of the subject, as mentioned in §7.9. This is in line with an observation about a typological universal that passive meanings can often be conveyed by *So* (SUBJECT marked like OBJECT) (cf. Dixon 1994:71), with transitive action verbs.

For example, the subject *tshu:n24* ‘mushroom’ in (21a) semantically functions in the same way as the object *kou24* ‘rice’ in (21b). That is, in Example (21a), the subject exhibits the semantic role of patient, indicating a continuum between agent and patient in the semantic macrorole of the subject in syntax (Diller 1997:60-61). Such a grammatical pattern is quite similar to ergative-absolutive languages in which S and O are treated alike, though there are no ergative markers or absolutive markers in Lakkja.

(21)  
a. a11 tshu:n24 ni23l [So]  tsen51  hwai51  li24  
that kind of mushroom  eat  NEG  acquire  
‘That kind of mushroom is not edible.’  
b. ma23l [SA]  jeu214  tsen51  yin24  wu:n24  kou24  
1SG  again  eat  one  CLF  rice  
‘I ate one more bowl of rice.’

Like many other Kam-Tai languages as well as Chinese, in Lakkja, construction types discussed above often involve valence change in that the semantic valence and the syntactic valence of the main verb generally are different. For example, the semantic valence of *tsen51* ‘eat’ in (21a) is bivalent while the syntactic valence is monovalent. Such phenomena are very common in Lakkja.

Furthermore, in a sentence like (21a), the transitive verb can be analysed as de-transitivized. In (21a), the verb *tsen51* ‘eat’ follows the subject which is semantically its patient.

8.5.2 Passive markers

As discussed in §5.5.4 and §7.9, two passive markers can be recognized in Lakkja: *pɔn51*, and *ŋã:i214*. Both of them are derived from lexical verbs: *pɔn51* from lexical verb ‘give’, and *ŋã:i214* from the lexical verb ‘suffer’. Of the two, *pɔn51* is used more extensively than *ŋã:i214*. Examples are as follows:
(22) a. lak¹⁴ pən⁵¹ kur¹⁴ lie:u²⁴
   3SG PASS beat PART
   ‘He was beaten.’
b. lak¹⁴ ŋā:i²¹⁴ kut¹⁴ lie:u²⁴
   3SG PASS beat PART
   ‘He was bitten.’
c. lak¹⁴ pən⁵¹ tok²⁴ plei⁵¹ lie:u²⁴
   3SG PASS poison dead PART
   ‘He was poisoned to death.’

These two passive markers may both introduce the agent of the passive construction. The agent generally occurs before the predicate verb. The following examples illustrate:

(23) a. phla⁵¹ pən⁵¹ me:u¹¹ [A] kom²⁴ [V] pai⁵¹ la¹¹
   fish PASS cat hold in the mouth ASP PART
   ‘Fish is nabbed away by the cat (in its mouth).’
b. mie⁵⁵ pən⁵¹ fa:ŋ⁵¹ [A] nep⁵⁵[V] lie:u²⁴
   hand PASS stone press PART
   ‘The hand is trapped under a stone.’
c. lak²⁴ mie⁵⁵ pən⁵¹ num¹¹ ploy²¹⁴ [A] luk²⁴ [V] lie:u²⁴
   3SG hand PASS boiling water scald PART
   ‘His hand was scalded by boiling water.’
d. kan⁵¹ tsei⁵⁵ ŋan²³¹ pən³¹ ton³¹ pla²⁴ [A] phi⁵¹[V] tsin²³¹ pa:n⁵⁵
   CLF tree that PASS thunder strike become half
   ‘That tree was struck in half by lightning.’

8.6 Transitivity

All languages distinguish between clauses that involve a verb and one core noun phrase (intransitive clauses) and those that involve a verb and two or more core noun phrases (transitive clauses, including ditransitive as a subtype) (Dixon 1994:6), and thus transitivity is often closely related to passivity and the valence of a verb. As mentioned in §7.9 and §8.5, since Lakkja also recognizes grammatical passivity that is formed without a passive marker, the semantic valence and the syntactic valence of a verb may be distinguished from each other.
Therefore, both semantic and syntactic criteria should be considered to describe transitivity of Lakkja verbs.

From a semantic point of view, a transitive verb typically denotes an activity that is transferred from an agent to a patient. For instance, the following examples are recognized as transitive verbs in Lakkja:

(24)  
a. lo:m^51 ‘look’
b. kur^55 ‘beat’
c. fen^55 ‘believe’
d. i^55 ‘like’
e. la:m^51 ‘lend/borrow’
f. tsie:ŋ^11 ‘give birth (to a child)’
g. tan^231 ‘come’
h. wei^11 ‘buy’
i. kjep^55 ‘clear up; pack’
j. fie:ŋ^24 ‘think; want’

However, a Lakkja transitive verb does not always syntactically combine with an object in discourse. For example, just like (21a), the semantic bivalent transitive verb tsen^51 ‘eat’ is used intransitively in (25a), without taking a syntactic object. The agent of the activity described by the main verb is missing in this grammatically passive sentence, while the patient of the activity is expressed in the subject slot rather than in the object slot.

(25)  
\[\text{nam}^55 [\text{S}_o] \quad \text{tsi:p}^24 \quad \text{a:k}^24, \quad \text{tsen}^51 [\text{V}] \quad \eta^24 \quad \text{li}^24\]
\[\text{fruit} \quad \text{puckery} \quad \text{very} \quad \text{eat} \quad \text{NEG} \quad \text{acquire}\]
\[\text{‘The fruit is too puckery to eat.’}\]

### 8.6.1 Mono-transitive clause

As mentioned in §5.1.2.1, a mono-transitive clause generally requires two arguments: a subject (A) and a single direct object (O). In Lakkja, the agent of a mono-transitive clause usually occurs in the subject slot, and the patient in the object slot, typically following the constituent order of SVO (AVO in Dixon’s terminology). Examples are as follows:
Occasionally, the patient and the agent can be syntactically reversed, that is, the patient may precede the agent. Such constructions often include monovalent verbs like *niŋ* \(^{55}\) ‘sit’, *hep* \(^{55}\) ‘sleep’ and *ŋ̥je:n* \(^{51}\) ‘lie’ and the patient usually denotes container or locative. In this case, the meaning of the sentence is determined by the semantic interrelationship between augments instead of the word order. Examples are as follows.

(27)  \(\text{in}^{24} \quad \text{tsik}^{55} \quad \text{tay}^{55} \quad \text{niŋ}^{55} \quad \text{ta}^{231} \quad \text{hou}^{24} \quad \text{lak}^{24}\)  
\begin{array}{l}
\text{one} \\
\text{CLF} \\
\text{chair} \\
\text{sit} \\
\text{1PL} \\
\text{two} \\
\text{CLF} \\
\end{array}

‘One chair sits you and me.’

It is also true that several bivalent verbs like *tsen* \(^{51}\) ‘eat’ may be also included in such constructions. They usually combine with the verbs *to* \(^{24}\) ‘suffice’ or *li* \(^{24}\) ‘acquire’. For example:

(28)  \(\text{in}^{24} \quad \text{sai}^{51} \quad \text{kou}^{24} \quad \text{to}^{24} \quad \text{tsen}^{51} \quad \text{tsep}^{24} \quad \text{lak}^{24} \quad \text{ŋjũn}^{231}\)  
\begin{array}{l}
\text{one} \\
\text{CLF} \\
\text{rice} \\
\text{suffice} \\
\text{eat} \\
\text{ten} \\
\text{CLF} \\
\text{people} \\
\end{array}

‘A steamer of rice can feed ten people.’

\begin{array}{l}
\text{in}^{24} \\
\text{CLF} \\
\text{rice} \\
\text{eat} \\
\text{acquire} \\
\text{ten} \\
\text{CLF} \\
\text{people} \\
\end{array}

‘A steamer of rice can feed ten people.’

### 8.6.2 Di-transitive clause

A ditransitive clause, which is also called a three-place clause or double-object construction, generally takes three arguments: a subject (A), a direct object (DO) and an indirect object (IO).

As discussed in §7.11 and §8.3, the direct object and indirect object usually follow the main verb in Lakkja ditransitive clauses. In such case, the direct object may either occur after
the indirect object or occur before the indirect object which is generally introduced by a coverb $pən^{51}$ ‘give’.

It is worth noting that the meaning of a sentence may be further specified with the use of the coverb $pən^{51}$ ‘give’. For example, the ownership of the direct object $seu^{51}$ ‘book’ in (29c) is ambiguous since the Lakkja verb $la:m^{51}$ is a bi-directional verb and can be interpreted either as ‘lend’ or as ‘borrow’, leading to an inexplicit direction of ownership transference. By introducing the coverb $pən^{51}$ ‘give’ in (29a), the coverb $pən^{51}$ ‘give’ implies the direction of possession transference or displacement. Therefore, in a di-transitive clause, when the main verb is bi-directional, the coverb $pən^{51}$ ‘give’ serves to disambiguate the direction of transference.

Apart from $[A + V + DO + pən^{51} + IO]$ and $[A + V + pən^{51} + IO + DO]$ that has been mentioned, the construction $[A + pən^{51} + O_1 + V + O_2]$ has also been found in my data (29f). However, it is not a variant of (29e) where the co-verb $pən^{51}$ signifies the indirect object and the direction of transfer of ownership. In fact, (29f) means ‘I allowed/let/requested him to sell the book’, and there is no specific reference to transfer of ownership between ‘me’ and ‘him’ in this sentence other than him serving as an agent for the sale.

(29)  

(a) $tsi^{51}$ $ple^{51}$ $pən^{51}$ $lak^{24}$ $ŋin^{24}$ $pən^{24}$ $seu^{51}$ $[DO]$ 
1SG sell give 3SG one CLF book  
‘I sold a book to him.’

(b) $tsi^{51}$ $ple^{51}$ $lak^{24}$ $ŋin^{24}$ $pən^{24}$ $seu^{51}$ $[DO]$ 
1SG sell 3SG one CLF book  
‘I sold a book to him.’

(c) $tsi^{51}$ $la:m^{51}$ $lak^{24}$ $ŋin^{24}$ $pən^{24}$ $seu^{51}$ $[DO]$ 
1SG lend/borrow 3SG one CLF book  
‘I borrowed a book from him. / I lent a book to him.’

(d) $tsi^{51}$ $la:m^{51}$ $pən^{51}$ $lak^{24}$ $ŋin^{24}$ $pən^{24}$ $seu^{51}$ $[DO]$ 
1SG lend give 3SG one CLF book  
‘I lent a book to him.’

(e) $tsi^{51}$ $ple^{51}$ $ŋin^{24}$ $pən^{24}$ $seu^{51}$ $[DO]$ $pən^{51}$ $lak^{24}$ $[IO]$ 
1SG sell one CLF book give 3SG  
‘I sold a book to him.’
Also, as mentioned in §8.3, the direct object may be raised by a coverb/preposition *pa$^{51}$* to precede the main verb. In this construction, however, the indirect object cannot serve as the noun phrase introduced by *pa$^{51}$*.

(30)  

\[
\begin{array}{llllllll}
1SG & \text{DISP} & 3SG & \text{CLF} & \text{car} & \text{lend} & \text{to} & 3SG \\

tsi & \text{give} & \text{sell} & \text{one} & \text{book} \\
\end{array}
\]

\begin{itemize}
    \item ‘I allowed/let/requested him to sell the book.’
\end{itemize}

8.6.3 Intransitive clause

Intransitive clause, also called one-place argument clause, syntactically requires only one argument which functions as subject. As discussed in §5.1.2.1, the following are some prototypical monovalent verbs that may form intransitive clauses. The list is reproduced below for easy reference.

(31)  

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
1SG & \text{DISP} \\

tsi & \text{give} \\
\end{array}
\]

\begin{itemize}
    \item ‘float’
\end{itemize}

Examples are given in (32):

(32)  

\[
\begin{array}{llll}
3SG & \text{fall} & \text{PART} \\
lak & \text{fall} \\
\end{array}
\]

\begin{itemize}
    \item ‘He fell off.’
\end{itemize}
b. mlok₂⁵⁵ pon₂⁵⁵ pai₂⁵¹ ou₁¹ kja₂⁴
bird fly go in mountain

‘The birds flew into the mountain.’

c. ts'i₂⁵¹ pa:i¹¹ ni²³¹ tshũ:n₂⁵⁵ tok₂⁴ ho₂⁴ a:k₂⁴
1SG recently cough painstaking very

‘I’ve been having a severe cough lately.’

However, some semantically bivalent verbs may also form intransitive clauses in Lakkja. For example:

\[(33)\] ka:n²⁴ si¹¹ ka:n²⁵¹ tau²⁵¹ tsen²⁵¹ hwa:i²⁵⁵ niŋ²⁴ pa¹¹.
catch up with time 1PL eat fast some PART

‘Hurry up. Let’s eat faster.’

Furthermore, no special intransitive clauses formed with zero-valent verbs are recognized in my data. In some languages, a zero-place argument intransitive clause without any arguments can be grammatically acceptable. For example, in Italian, *piovere* ‘to rain’ is a zero-valent verb and *Piove* (lit. ‘rains’) means ‘It is raining’. In this construction type, the verb takes neither a subject nor an object. Similar constructions can be found in some Kam-Sui languages such as Maonan (Lu 2008:244), especially when referring to meteorological phenomena. However, Lakkja does not accept such a zero-place intransitive clause.

### 8.7 Serial verb constructions

§5.4 has examined serial verb constructions (SVCs) mainly in semantic aspects. In this chapter, we shall move on to discuss about the relations among the elements of SVCs.

SVCs, as in §5.4, normally denote clauses where a ‘sequence of verbs acts together as a single predicate, without any overt marker of coordination, subordination or syntactic dependency of any other sort’ (Aikhenvald and Dixon 2006:1). In other words, SVCs typically contain two or more successive verbs that are joined together with no connecting particle, clitic, etc. It is very common across Tai-Kadai languages as well as in Lakkja.

In a serial verb construction, the predicate verbs normally describe one event and share the same arguments and modality. In (34), the activities described by the predicate verbs *pla¹¹ ‘climb’ and a:u²⁵¹ ‘pick’ are initiated by a shared subject *lak²⁴ ‘she, he’ and they belong to a single event. By contrast, the verbs in (34b) do not share an argument and belong to two separate events, and thus this sentence is not recognized as an SVC.
In SVCs, the grammatical relations of arguments and verbs can be very volatile, requiring in-depth examination. In the following sections, we will label the verbs of a serial verb construction in sequential order as V1, V2, V3, etc., and the noun phrases as N1, N2, N3, etc. Constructions with two verbs and at least two arguments will be examined since such SVCs are typical and the most common in Lakkja.

8.7.1 Relation between N1 and V1 / V2

Though Lakkja is a typical SVO language, the arguments in subject slot may be semantically either the subject or the object of the serial verbs in a clause. The grammatical relations between N1 and V1 / V2 can be analyzed as the following types.

A. N1 is the subject of V1 and V2

Though V2 immediately follows N2, the subject of V2 is N1 rather than N2. In other words, there is an empty subject right before V2, which is co-referential with N1. For example:

(35) a. \( \text{tu}^{214} [\text{N}_1] \quad \text{lei}^{11} [\text{V}_1] \quad \text{tsi}^{55} [\text{N}_2] \quad [\text{pro}] \quad \text{la}^{11} [\text{V}_2] \quad \text{phla}^{51} [\text{N}_3] \quad \text{lie}:\text{u}^{24} \)

3PL go into river look for fish

‘They went to the river for fishing.’

b. \( \text{lak}^{24} [\text{N}_1] \quad \text{the}:\text{n}^{55} [\text{V}_1] \quad \text{ko}^{51} [\text{N}_2] \quad [\text{pro}] \quad \text{pok}^{24} [\text{V}_2] \quad \text{tsuo}^{214} \quad \text{nei}^{11} [\text{N}_3] \)

3SG listen song do homework

‘He does his homework while listening to music.’

B. N1 is the object of V1 and V2

As mentioned above, in Lakkja, the agent of a sentence sometimes may be absent, and the subject may exhibit the semantic role of patient. In that case, N1 may function as the object of V1 and V2 which are both transitive verbs, and NP-traces can be realized after V1 and V2. The following examples illustrate.
C. *N*₁ is the object of *V₁* and the subject of *V₂*

In this type, an object trace as well as an empty subject can be realized between *V₁* and *V₂*. For example:

(37) a. *hou*₂⁴ *tu*₂¹¹ *ŋã:*ŋ₂³¹ *ku:*⁵¹ *ku:*⁵¹ *plë*⁵¹ *lie:*⁵¹
    two CLF tiger both beat die PART
    ‘The two tigers were both killed.’

b. *lak*⁵⁵ *mom*²¹⁴ *tek*⁵⁵ *kjaj*²⁴ *lie:*⁵¹ *ŋ̍*⁵¹ *fi:*⁵¹
    CLF meat keep out long PART NEG fresh
    ‘The meat has been left outside for too long and thus is not fresh.’

D. *N*₁ is the subject of *V₁* and the object of *V₂*

Since there are often no clear distinctions between verbs and adjectives in Tai-Kadai languages, adjectives are analysed by some scholars as a subcategory of verbs (see discussion in §6.1), and thus a type of SVCs in which *N*₁ is the subject of *V₁* and the object of *V₁* is recognized in Lakkja. An empty subject, which is usually ambiguous, can be realized between *V₁* and *V₁* and an object trace, which is controlled by *N*₁, can be realized after *V₂*.

(38) *wok*²⁴ *fep*⁵⁵ *lie:*⁵¹ *khja:*⁵¹ *in*²⁴ *ti:*⁵⁵
    dishes cool PART heat one CLF
    ‘The dishes get cold. Warm it up.’

8.7.2 Relation between *N*₂ and *V₁ / V₂

Similar to §8.7.1, arguments in object slot may function semantically either as the object of serial verbs, or the agent/subject of certain verbs except the main verbs in a clause, as discussed below.
A. **N₂ is object of V₁ and V₂**

In this type, N₂ functions as the object of V₁ and has an anaphoric relation with the object trace that follows V₂. Compared with §8.7.1 B (36) where the semantic object functions as the syntactic subject, in the following examples, an agent is introduced in the subject slot and the sentences follow the prototypical AVO word order.

\[(39)\]

a. \(\text{lak}^{24} \text{ bok}^{55} \text{kjei}^{24} [N_1] \text{ tsie:}^{231} \text{ la}^{11} [V_1] \text{ phla}^{51} [N_2] \text{ tsen}^{51} [V_2] \) [tᵢ]

 elder brother often look for fish eat

‘Elder brother often catches fish to eat.’

b. \(\text{tsi}^{51} [N_1] \text{ wei}^{11} [V_1] \text{ tie:}^{231} [N_2] \text{ tsen}^{51} [V_2] \) [tᵢ]

1SG buy candy eat

‘I buy some candies to eat.’

B. **N₂ is object of V₁ and subject of V₂**

This type is also quite common in Lakkja SVCs. N₂ in such a construction is typically the object of V₁ and the subject of V₂, indicating a switch function (Dixon 2006:341).

\[(40)\]

a. \(\text{tsi}^{51} [N_1] \text{ thin}^{24} [V_1] \text{ he:}^{24} [N_2] \text{ pro} \text{ tsen}^{51} [V_2] \text{ kou}^{24} [N_3] \)

1SG invite guest eat rice

‘I invite guests to dinner.’

b. \(\text{lak}^{24} [N_1] \text{ pha:i}^{24} [V_1] \text{ piy}^{51} [N_2] \text{ pro} \text{ kut}^{55} \text{ tshie:}^{55} \)

3SG dispatch soldier fight

‘He dispatches troops to fight.’

8.7.3 Relation between the VPs in serial verb construction

The grammatical relations between the serial verbs in SVCs are also worth investigating. Though SVCs lack overt signs of syntactic dependency, semantic relations, such as temporal sequence, concurrence, locality, purpose, complement, etc, are often embodied among the verb phrases. The following examples illustrate.

A. **Temporal sequence**

The verbs or verb phrases reflect the chronological order of the events. In such a construction, the first verb phrase sometimes may also refer to the locality of the second verb phrase, and the second verb phrase usually denotes the aim of the first verb phrase.
B. Concurrence
SVs of this type describe events that occur concurrently.

C. VP1 describes the manner of VP2
In this construction type, the first VP describes the manner of the second VP. That is, the first VP functions semantically as an adverbial, while the second VP as the predicate.

D. VP1 is the locality of VP2
The first verb phrase of such a construction denotes the locality of the second verb phrase.
E. VP₁ is the cause of VP₂
The first verb phrase refers to the cause of the second verb phrase.

\[(45)\]
\[
\text{a. tsī}^{51} \text{ plī}^{24} \text{ pla}^{51} \text{ lo:m}^{51} \text{ jī}^{24} \text{ wei}^{55} \\
1SG \quad \text{close} \quad \text{eye} \quad \text{look} \quad \text{NEG} \quad \text{COMP}
\]
‘I closed my eyes (and thus) couldn’t see.’

\[
\text{b. lak}^{24} \text{ tsen}^{51} \text{ loj}^{55} \text{ ka}^{24} \text{ lai}^{214} \text{ kwe}^{11} \text{ wa:tl}^{11} \\
3SG \quad \text{eat} \quad \text{wrong} \quad \text{thing} \quad \text{shit} \quad \text{flow swiftly}
\]
‘He ate something wrong (and thus) had diarrhoea.’

F. VP₂ is the purpose of VP₁
The second verb phrase refers to the purpose of the first verb phrase.

\[(46)\]
\[
\text{a. lak}^{24} \text{ wei}^{11} \text{ ku:i}^{55} \text{ kjap}^{45} \text{ na:j}^{11} \\
3SG \quad \text{buy} \quad \text{cloth} \quad \text{sew} \quad \text{clothes}
\]
‘She bought cloth to make clothes.’

\[
\text{b. tsī}^{51} \text{ pa:j}^{41} \text{ tu}^{214} \text{ tsō}^{55} \text{ wok}^{24} \\
1SG \quad \text{help} \quad 3PL \quad \text{grow} \quad \text{vegetable}
\]
‘I helped them grow vegetables.’

G. VP₁ is the condition of VP₂
The first verb phrase designates the condition of the second verb phrase.

\[(47)\]
\[
\text{a. ma}^{231} \text{ jī}^{24} \text{ fen}^{55} \text{ tie}^{231} \text{ lo:m}^{51} \\
2SG \quad \text{NEG} \quad \text{believe} \quad \text{self} \quad \text{look}
\]
‘If you don’t believe it, have a look in person.’

\[
\text{b. ta}^{51} \text{ mi}^{231} \text{ lei}^{55} \text{ et}^{55} \text{ tī}^{214} \text{ ķī}^{231} \\
1PL \quad \text{have} \quad \text{reason} \quad \text{certainly} \quad \text{win}
\]
‘We will win (as long as) we have a point.’

H. VP₂ is the complement of VP₁
The second verb phrase functions as the complement of the first verb phrase.
I. Serial verbs as subject
Serial verbs sometimes may function as subject of a clause without nominalization.

J. Complex roles within the serial verb constructions
The grammatical relations of the arguments in SVCs can be far more complex when the nature of verbs are taken into account. Quite often, the semantics of the verbs in question dictates the grammatical relations of the arguments in discourse. For example, due to different semantics of V1 in (50a) and (50b), the actor of V3 in (50a) is N1, N3, and perhaps N2 as well in light of the ambiguous nature of the verb ‘help’ in V1, while in (50b), the actor of V3 is clearly N1 and N3. Similarly, though (50a) and (50c) share the same V1, the actor of V3 in (50c) is N3 and thus the grammatical relations are quite different from that of (50a).
c. lak[24] [N1]  pa:ŋ[51] [V1]  tsi[51] [N2]  [pro]  thiŋ[24][V2]  njũn[231][N3]  [pro]  
3SG help  1SG invite  people  
‘He looked for someone to do the work for me.’

The difference between (50a) and (50c) lies in the different semantics of the verbs puə:n[11]  ‘accompany’ and thiŋ[24]  ‘invite’. (50a) with ‘accompany’ assumes N2 and N3 are eating together; while (50c) does not have such implication, that is, only N3 will do the work.

Furthermore, the valency of verbs may also affect grammatical relations of the arguments. In (51), for example, since V2 in (51a) is semantically and syntactically monovalent, the actor of V2 is N2 and probably N1 considering the context. By contrast, since V2 in (51b) is bivalent, N2 may be either the actor or the patient of V2.

3SG look for  people  swim  
‘He looked for someone to go swimming (together).’

b. lak[24] [N1]  la[11] [V1]  njũn[231][N2]  [pro]  tsa[23] [V2]  ([t1])  
3SG look for  people  investigate  
‘He looked for someone to be investigated. / He looked for some to investigate.’

It is also worth pointing out that a serial verb construction may not have a syntactic subject in discourse. This usually happens when the referent of a subject is not clear or presupposed. For example, the subject in (52) can be tsi[5]  ‘I’, ma[23] ‘you’, tau[5] ‘we’, tony[1] kjon[55] ‘everybody’, etc.

owe  debt  should  repay  
‘One should pay for debts.’

8.8 Causative construction

§5.5.2 has presented a description of causative verbs at word and phrase. Here we shall continue the discussion by looking at the constructions formed with them.

Lakkja causative constructions generally consist of two verb phrases in the frame [subject + causative verb + object + verb]. As shown in (53), in causative constructions, the first verb
phrase signifies the cause and the second verb phrase denotes the effect. Moreover, NP₁ functions semantically as the subject of VP₁, and NP₂ as the object of VP₁ as well as the subject of VP₂.

(53) a. NP₁ VP₁ NP₂ VP₂
    SUBJECT (CAUSE) ←→ OBJECT (EFFECT)

For example, in (54a), there are two verb phrases: tei₁¹ ‘tell’ and tsen⁵¹ khja:u²⁴ ‘drink’, and also two noun phrases: i⁵¹ se:ŋ⁵¹ ‘doctor’ and lak²⁴ ‘him, her’. In this sentence, lak²⁴ ‘him, her’ functions as the object of the first verb phrase tei₁¹ ‘tell’ as well as the subject of the second verb phrase tsen⁵¹ khja:u²⁴ ‘drink’.

(54) a. i⁵¹ se:ŋ⁵¹ tei¹¹ lak²⁴ ei²⁴ tsen⁵¹ khja:u²⁴
    doctor tell 3SG NEG eat liquor
    ‘The doctor told him to stay away from liquor.’
b. pən⁵¹ lak²⁴ pai³¹ ba:ŋ²⁴
    give 3SG go before
    ‘Let him go first.’
c. lak²⁴ ŋ²⁴ pən⁵¹ tsə⁵¹ tsa:ŋ²⁴
    3SG NEG give 1SG say
    ‘He doesn’t allow me to talk.’
d. ma²³¹ em²³¹ lak²⁴ tsa:ŋ²⁴ lei¹¹ pai⁵¹
    2SG let 3SG say COMP
    ‘You let him talk.’

In such a construction, the causative verb is usually a transitive verb which can take an object, while the second verb phrase can be either transitive (54a) or intransitive (54d).

Also, many cause-result (or resultative) constructions can be analysed as having causative meanings, as illustrated in (55) where NP₁ is the semantic subject of VP₁ and NP₂ is the object of VP₁ and the subject of VP₂.

(55) a. ma²³¹ e:u²⁴ mi²⁴ fan⁵¹ ni²³¹ kja:u²⁴ pai⁵¹
    2SG bend CLF bamboo this break go
    ‘You break this bamboo stick.’
b. lak\(^{24}\) njak\(^{55}\) tsi\(^{51}\) mie\(^{231}\) uk\(^{55}\) lie:t\(^{11}\)

3SG pinch 1SG hand go out blood

‘He pinched into my hand with his finger and made it bleed.’

A number of object-raising constructions may also be semantically analysed as causatives. As shown in (56a) which is apparently a cause-result construction, the first verb kjam\(^{55}\) ‘cut’ functions as the cause and the second verb njon\(^{11}\) ‘blunt’ as the result. Here NP\(_2\) is semantically the object of VP\(_1\) and the subject of VP\(_2\), even though it is raised before the main verb by a co-verb to object position. The non-object-raising construction of this sentence looks like (56b).

(56) a. lak\(^{24}\) pa\(^{51}\) me\(^{11}\) kjam\(^{55}\) njon\(^{11}\) lie:u\(^{24}\)

3SG DISPO knife cut blunt PART

‘He made the knife blunt after cutting things with it.’

b. lak\(^{24}\) kjam\(^{55}\) me\(^{11}\) njon\(^{11}\) pat\(^{51}/\) lie:u\(^{24}\)

3SG cut knife blunt go/ PART

‘He made the knife blunt after cutting things with it.’

8.9 Object-raising construction

§5.5.3 and §7.10 have introduced the co-verb pa\(^{51}\) at different levels. It is also worth examining the pa\(^{51}\) construction from a grammatical perspective.

According to Wang (1947), the so-called bā-construction has been a much-discussed topic in the grammar of Mandarin Chinese, and is analysed as an object-raising mechanism which involves a number of syntactic, semantic and pragmatic factors. bā in Chinese was a full verb in classical Chinese with the meaning ‘hold, take’, but then grammaticalized to a preposition during Tang Dynasty (7th-9th c. A. D.), triggering the object-raising construction (Li and Thompson 1976). Therefore, closely related to the classical meaning, this construction conveys the sense of settlement of, or an action upon, the object. In this construction type, the verbs are generally transitive, and those expressing states or emotions are not common in sentences of this type. The object of the main verb occurs between the co-verb bā and the verb, exhibiting a SOV word order.

The Lakkja object-raising construction bears much similarity to the bā construction. As discussed in §5.5.3, the Lakkja co-verb pa\(^{51}\) normally occurs in the frame [pa\(^{51}\) + direct object + main verb], exhibiting a typical function of object raising, as in (57).
As a general rule, the main verb in this object-raising construction is a transitive action verb, taking the argument in direct object slot as its object. In other words, the direct object can be analysed as being raised to a preverbal position and thus a coindexed trace can be realized after the main verb. Take the sentence $lak^{24} tsen^{51} tsu^{231} la^{11}$ ‘He ate the sweet potato’ for illustration. The direct object $tsu^{231}$ ‘sweet potato’ can be raised before the main verb $tsen^{51}$ ‘eat’ by $pa^{51}$, leaving a coindexed trace at the object position (57).

Furthermore, Lakkja object-raising construction is usually followed by a final particle as aspect marker (57), or a resultative or purposive phrase as its complement in the following formula.

$$NP_1 + ti^{231}/pa^{51} + NP_2 + V + [t] \ (+) \ fP/C$$

The resultative or purposive phrase can be a noun phrase, adjective phrase, verb phrase. For example:

(58) a. $lak^{24}$ $pa^{51}$ $ou^{11}$ $to:m^{11}$ $fa:u^{55}$ $li^{24}$ $tip^{214}$ $lep^{55}$
    3SG  CO-VERB inside  room  sweep  PART  clean
    ‘He cleaned up the room.’

b. $lak^{24}$ $pa^{51}$ $toŋ^{11}$ $nam^{55}$ $lo:m^{214}$ $tsep^{11}$ $tsen^{51}$
    3SG  CO-VERB whole  egg  boil  eat
    ‘He boiled the whole egg to eat.’

c. $li:u^{24}$ $ti^{231}$ $tsi^{51}$ $pok^{24}$ $lak^{24}$ $ηâ:η^{55}$
    2PL  CO-VERB (take)  1SG  do  fool
    ‘You take me for a fool.’

From a semantic perspective, NP$_1$ and NP$_2$ usually function as agent (A), transitive object (O), instrument (I), or result (R), as shown in the following examples.

(59) a. $pan^{24}$ $seu^{61}$ $ηι^{51}$ [O] $pa^{61}$ $tsi^{51}$ [A] $lie:m^{11}$ [t] $tok^{24}$ $ho^{24}$ $lie:u^{24}$
    this book  CO-VERB  1SG  read  tired  PART
    ‘I became tired from reading this book.’
   this pen CO-VERB 1SG write tired PART
   ‘I became tired from writing with this pen.’

Writing this book made me tired.

   3SG CO-VERB knife cut blunt PART
   ‘He made the knife blunt after cutting things with it.’

   2SG CO-VERB clothes wash PART
   ‘Did you wash the clothes?’

   a meal CO-VERB illness eat exit PART
   ‘The meal made (someone) sick.’

As illustrated above, C is often coreferential with NP₂ (59a-d). However, it can be coreferential with NP₁ rather than NP₂ in some cases especially when an element expressing perceptional meanings fills in the C slot. (60) may be recognised as cases of C= NP₁.

(60) a. tsi⁵¹ [A] pa⁵¹ ma²³¹ [I] nji¹¹ [t] plie⁵¹ lie:u⁴⁴
   1SG CO-VERB 2SG miss die PART
   ‘I missed you so much.’

b. tsi⁵¹ [A] pa⁵¹ a¹¹ koŋ⁵¹ ni⁵¹ [t] pok⁴⁴ njai²³¹ lie:u⁴⁴
   1SG CO-VERB this kind of work do tired of PART
   ‘I got sick of doing such work.’

Cross-linguistically, this object-raising construction is not common among Tai-Kadai languages such as Thai and Nung, but can be occasionally found in languages that have close contact with Mandarin Chinese. Bouyei has a similar preverbal prepositional phrase formed with pa⁴ yielding the SOV construction (Somsonge 2000). As speakers of Lakkja and Bouyei are mostly multilingual in Chinese, the SOV feature is apparently a borrowed status rather than an internal development.
Chapter 9
Conclusion

This thesis offers a first systematic description of the Lakkja language from a modern functional-typological perspective. As discussed in §1.7.1, Lakkja is one of the scantily-established Kam-Tai languages with only two book-length research outputs in the Chinese form, leaving a huge gap in the study field. By fully examining the people and the language, this thesis may provide abundant data and feasible frames for further studies, especially for comparative studies with surrounding languages genetically related or unrelated.

This concluding chapter recapitulates the findings and contributions of each chapter, and suggests future directions for further research.

9.1 Summary of the chapters

9.1.1 The language and its speakers

A member of the Kam-Tai language family of the Tai-Kadai stock, Lakkja shares a remarkable percentage of cognates and other linguistic features with members of Kam-Tai languages.

The majority of Lakkja speakers are bilingual because of the multi-ethnic-populated situation, and as such the issue of language maintenance and preference is interesting in Lakkja-speaking area. Although Lakkja is not considered as an endangered language, there is a growing tendency that younger generations are losing their ability of speaking their native language, and have shifted to Mandarin and local Chinese dialects due to the impact from outside. The current state for Lakkja vernaculars is relatively optimistic but the situation may change with the development of local society. If language shift continues, the future linguistic situations of Lakkja may look uncertain. Measures need to be taken to promote language maintenance through promoting the fine ethnic culture and establishing organizations and schools for minority language teaching and learning. For these purposes, a thorough documentation of the language with full database will prove vital for language preservation.

Lakkja culture exhibits notable features of its own. Many fine cultural traditions are inherited in the language and are still practised, including the concepts of sustainable development, unity and friendship, which are reflected in various aspects of daily activities.
With the development of the society and improvement of economic and social conditions, Lakkja is undergoing significant change with increasing integration with other cultures and ethnic groups. The spectacular natural environment and abundant forest resources have fuelled the tourism industry in this region, and the unique ethnic customs have attracted people from far and near. The connection with the outside world brings opportunities for development as well as challenges to culture and language maintenance.

9.1.2 The sound system
Lakkja phonology exhibits a number of typological features, some of which are unique among the Kam-Tai language family.

Lakkja distinguishes between aspirated and unaspirated stops, voiced and voiceless nasals, as well as voiced and voiceless liquid. Among them, the contrast between voiced and voiceless nasals is of typological significance to both diachronic and synchronic investigation of languages in this region and cross-linguistically. Palatalized and labialized initials are also a feature of Lakkja sound system. Lakkja vowel system exhibits complicated characteristics, manifesting itself as one of the richest vowel systems within Tai-Kadai. Most significantly, there is a clear distinction between plain and nasal vowels, the distribution of which is constrained by certain consonant types and tones. Subtle but noticeable differences can be observed in instrumental analysis in voice quality among contrastive pairs. Certain groups of initials in Lakkja are in complementary distributions with others in their tonal assignments, providing evidence showing that Lakkja by and large follows the principles of what is known about the historical phonology in Tai-Kadai.

Tone sandhi in Lakkja is largely conditioned by the left edge of the following tone. With increasing contact with surrounding languages, a number of sounds are found to undergo lenition, especially consonant clusters. An increasing number of free variants can be observed as a result of merger and simplification of certain consonants and vowels.

9.1.3 Word formation
Word-formation in Lakkja is operated through affixation, compounding, reduplication, and phonological alternation. There is a continuum between morphology and syntax, blurring the boundaries between word classes, and between words and phrases. In many cases, complex syntactic relations and semantic features can be observed in Lakkja compounds.
Lakkja exhibits a rich system of affixation, with circumfixation being quite an unusual device not only in Tai-Kadai but also cross-linguistically. Prefixation and suffixation figure quite prominently in Lakkja word formation. A significant number of prefixes and suffixes are derived from noun classifiers or other lexical words, displaying features of bound morphemes and free roots. Some affixes show the characteristics of taxonomic function, head-initial morphology and endocentric property. Contact-induced word order change has been noted as a result of intense language contact.

Reduplication is a highly productive morphological mechanism in Lakkja. Various patterns of reduplication apply to different word classes. Elaborate expressions are an important word formation device, with special aesthetic effects.

Morphological processes is a feature of Lakkja. They are realized as phonological alternations or doublets, forming word families with related meanings.

9.1.4 The noun phrase
Lakkja noun phrases display features of ethnosemantics. Various semantic functions and syntactic features are encoded in the noun phrase. Among them is a rich numeral-classifier system where a significant number of classifiers function as prefixable or suffixable morphemes, some of which can be analysed as heads in nominalisation. Structural particles are also found to participate in this morphsyntactic process. Demonstratives distinguish between proximal and yonder forms. Noun phrases are generally head-initial, with modifiers occurring after the head nouns. However, significant word order change has been observed in Lakkja where modifiers are found to precede the head. This morphosyntactic feature sets Lakkja apart from many other Kam-Tai languages.

9.1.5 The verb phrase
The verb class plays a crucial part in the grammar of Lakkja. The majority of native verbs are monosyllabic, while Chinese loan verbs are basically disyllabic or trisyllabic. A considerable number of verbs have dual or multiple membership of word class and may function as nouns, adjectives, or even grammatical words.

Concatenation of lexical verbs is typical in Lakkja as in many other Tai-Kadai and Sino-Tibetan languages. Various semantic relations and syntactic functions between concatenated verbs are attributed to constituent order.
Lakkja has a rich system of verbs or verb phrases to designate locational and directional meanings. Directional verbs in Lakkja may carry deictic meanings. Modal auxiliary verbs in Lakkja are not rich in amount. Chinese loans account for a large proportion in this regard.

Since Lakkja verbs lack inflection, the temporal-aspectual system is basically formed through tense-aspect markers that are derived from verbs. Several sentence final particles may also convey temporal-aspectual meanings.

A small number of lexical verbs behave like causative operators. Several lexical verbs are in the process of grammaticalization to convey control or passive meanings.

9.1.6 Adjectives and adverbs
Adjectives are quite a large and open class in Lakkja. A number of adjectives are formed through unique morphological processes like reduplication and suffixation. Forms like descriptive suffixes and elaborate expressions separate adjectives from verbs and adverbs.

Lakkja adjectives can fill the predicate slot in a clause, sharing similar features with verbs. A number of adjectives may also function as pre-verbal or post-verbal adverbial, just as adverbs do.

When functioning as modifiers, Lakkja adjectives typically follow the head nouns they modify. Some adjectives may precede the head nouns under the influence of Chinese.

The majority of Lakkja adverbs are pre-modifying. Post-modifying adverbs are by and large native. Several adverbs may carry temporal-aspectual meanings.

Comparative constructions may employ specific verbs (co-verbs) or adverbs as markers to express equality, superiority, and superlative. Adjectives do not undergo inflection in comparative constructions.

9.1.7 Sentence types and other syntactic issues
Various sentence types can be found in Lakkja, including simple sentences, subjectless and verbless sentences, subordinate sentences, simplex sentences, compound sentences and complex sentences.

In locative applicative sentences, the verb forms a transitive clause with locative applicative structure. Sentences of this type generally involve complex grammatical relations.

Negation in Lakkja is expressed through negative adverbs. Negators may carry temporal-aspectual meanings. Different scopes of negation are indicated by constituent order and prosody.
Declarative, interrogative and exclamative sentences can be syntactically or phonetically recognized. They are often generated by different intonations or clause-final particles that carry various pragmatic meanings. Interrogatives are operated through interrogative pronouns and other devices. Imperatives and commands are formed through intonation and special syntactic devices.

9.1.8 Grammatical relations

Though analysed as pivotless, Lakkja presents special features in treating the semantic, syntactic and thematic relations between subject, object and their roles in different sentence types.

Lakkja treats A, S and O the same way syntactically excepting when a reduplicated classifier functions as the semantic O in a clause where it is required to occur before the main verb, drawing some parallels with nominative-accusative languages.

Constituent order is the most significant mechanism in Lakkja to identify semantic roles. In general, S and A occur before verbs while O occurs after the verbs. But a syntactic subject may also function as semantic object. Subject and topic sometimes are regarded distinct syntactic elements in Lakkja, and non-subject topics are as common as subject topics. No grammatical topic markers are found to separate topic and comment. Topicalization is mainly realized through word order.

In double object constructions, the direct object usually follows the main verb and the indirect object precedes the direct object. But when the co-verb \( pən^51 \) ‘give’ introduces the indirect object, it yields syntactic alternations to disambiguate cases where ambiguities exist.

Passivity in Lakkja can be formed with or without a passive marker. Grammatical passivity in Lakkja is conveyed by a semantic change of the subject.

Transitivity in Lakkja can be understood from a syntactic and semantic perspective. The semantic valence of the main verb is different from its syntactic valence. In a mono-transitive clause, the patient and the agent can be syntactically reversed in some cases. A number of semantically bivalent verbs may also form intransitive clauses. In such cases, semantic criteria play a vital role to determine the meaning of the sentence, and the syntactic realization of semantic contents often involves increasing or decreasing of verbal valence.

Serial verb constructions are very common in Lakkja. They show complex grammatical relations among the concatenated verbs. Shared arguments, empty category and trace are useful notions in the analysis of SVCs.
Causative constructions convey the meanings of cause and result. A number of construction types can be analysed as having causative meanings. Object-raising construction is a common syntactic mechanism whereby a direct object is raised to preverbal position by a co-verb.

9.2 Future directions

This thesis has offered a typological profile of Lakkja, a Kam-Tai language spoken in South China. The findings of this study largely support the existing observations on Kam-Tai languages as well as other languages in this region. Meanwhile, Lakkja exhibits noticeable characteristics of its own that separate it from other languages of the Kam-Tai family. Due to limit of space and time, a lot remains unsolved and awaits further investigation in the area of phonology, semantics, syntax, ethnolinguistics and comparative studies.

9.2.1 The linguistic affiliation of Tai-Kadai

The genetic classification of Tai-Kadai language stock remains a hotly-debated research topic in the field. There is a growing consensus to group Tai-Kadai as a member of Austronesian languages with which it has a genetic relationship.

Lakkja holds a key to Tai-Kadai from a historical perspective. Apart from the fact that Lakkja preserves the mechanism of tone split in Kam-Tai, it also shares a significant number of basic vocabulary items with other Kam-Tai languages, providing solid evidence for their genetic relationships. Based on the works of Luo (2013) and Ostapirat (2000, 2005), Table 9.1 presents a sample of stable roots in Lakkja in comparison with other Kam-Tai languages.

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<th>Kam</th>
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<th>Thai</th>
<th>Zhuang</th>
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<td>vi</td>
<td>fai</td>
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<td>te:k</td>
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<td>ndiu</td>
<td>nde</td>
<td>tu</td>
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<td>nda</td>
<td>nda</td>
<td>ta</td>
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<td>tai</td>
<td>tai</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>y a:i</td>
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<td>djak</td>
<td>kju:r</td>
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<td>fa3</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>pha3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘water’</td>
<td>mum</td>
<td>nam</td>
<td>nam</td>
<td>nam</td>
<td>nam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘father’</td>
<td>pe5</td>
<td>pu</td>
<td>pu</td>
<td>te3</td>
<td>po6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘bird’</td>
<td>mlak</td>
<td>mok</td>
<td>nok</td>
<td>nok</td>
<td>nok</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘chicken’</td>
<td>kai5</td>
<td>ʔai5</td>
<td>qai5</td>
<td>kai5</td>
<td>kai5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘pig’</td>
<td>khah</td>
<td>nu</td>
<td>nu</td>
<td>mu</td>
<td>mu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘horse’</td>
<td>ma4</td>
<td>ma4</td>
<td>ma4</td>
<td>ma4</td>
<td>ma4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘straw’</td>
<td>wa:y</td>
<td>pa:y</td>
<td>va:y</td>
<td>fa:y</td>
<td>fa:y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘you’</td>
<td>ma2</td>
<td>na:i6</td>
<td>na:i6</td>
<td>mu:i</td>
<td>nai3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘village’</td>
<td>ba:n4</td>
<td>ba:n4</td>
<td>ba:n4</td>
<td>ba:n4</td>
<td>ba:n4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘dustpan’</td>
<td>lon</td>
<td>lon</td>
<td>don</td>
<td>don</td>
<td>don</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘plough’</td>
<td>lai2</td>
<td>khai</td>
<td>bi</td>
<td>kwai</td>
<td>thai</td>
<td>thai</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As illustrated, Lakkja displays areal features in the stable roots of ‘this’, ‘fire’, ‘go’, among others. Of particular significance are a set of consonant clusters \(pl, phl, bl\) and \(ml\) that are well preserved in Lakkja, such as ‘eye’, ‘die’, ‘grasshopper’ and ‘forget’, which supply vital clues to the reconstruction of Proto-Tai-Kadai. Lakkja retains nasal vowels in the stable roots for ‘pig’, ‘come back’ and ‘urine’. Labialized and palatalized consonants provide important clues to the complexity of the phonological system of the proto language.

Several seemingly irregular sound correspondences have been noted, which are equally worth observing. Lakkja shows a tendency to employ \(k/kh\) in words where many other Kam-Tai languages have \(m\), as in the case of \(khũ\) ‘pig’, \(khwaṭ\) ‘flea’, \(khũ̂\) ‘dog’, and \(kũ̂:i\) ‘bear (animal)’. The last item is particularly significant as is uniformly represented with \(m\) across Tai-Kadai languages.

A set of Lakkja words take palatalized velar stops \(khj-, kj-\) that correspond to the \(s\)- initial in other Kam-Tai languages. Examples include \(khjaːŋ\) ‘tall, high’, \(kjaː:i\) ‘intestine’, \(kjaː:p\) ‘cockroach’, and \(khjum\) ‘sour’.

Similarly, Lakkja \(f\) corresponds to \(s\) in a set of cognates, such as ‘three’ (\(faːm\) in Lakkja, \(saːm\) in Kam, \(saːm\) in Maonan, \(θaːm\) in Zhuang), \(fiːn\) ‘line’, \(feiː\) ‘four’, \(fooː\) ‘to send’, among others. Research into this area may unveil more interesting results that may shed light on the reconstruction of Proto Kam-Tai and the genetic affiliation of Kam-Tai languages.
The issue of the relationship between Tai-Kadai and Austronesian is undoubtedly of vital importance for us to gain a deeper and broader understanding of the prehistory and linguistic situation of mainland Southeast Asia and the spread of the Tai-Kadai and Austronesian languages and cultures in this vast and dynamic region of Southeast Asia. To address this issue, detailed descriptions of lessor-known Tai-Kadai languages, particularly those that are not well described such as Lakkja. Research into Lakkja will certainly help answer the question of whether the lexical similarities are due to language contact or to genetic relationship, as Lakkja has already started playing a role in Sagart’s recent research (2004, 2005). Ostapirat (2005) addressed some issues of phonological development and vocabulary distribution of Austronesian-related etyma in Kadai. Blench’s latest work (2018) evaluates all existing proposals and suggests new comparisons. As far as the previous comparisons are concerned, we examine in Table 9.2 below some basic vocabulary items shared by Lakkja, Proto-Kam-Sui (PKS), Proto-Austronesian (PAn), and Proto-Malayo-Polynesian (PMP) in the hope to supply evidence to the current debate.

**Table 9.2 Vocabulary shared by Lakkja, PKS, PMP and PAn**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PAn</th>
<th>PMP</th>
<th>PKS</th>
<th>Lakkja</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘nose’</td>
<td>*unuŋ</td>
<td>*idŋ</td>
<td>*ɗaŋ</td>
<td>naŋ'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘eye’</td>
<td>*maCa</td>
<td>*mata</td>
<td>Kam ta'</td>
<td>pla'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘tooth’</td>
<td>*ŋipen</td>
<td>*ipen</td>
<td>pyan</td>
<td>wan'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘tongue’</td>
<td>*Sema</td>
<td>*hema</td>
<td>*fan</td>
<td>wā'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘liver’</td>
<td>*ŋaŋy</td>
<td>*ŋatay</td>
<td>tap</td>
<td>tap'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘fart’</td>
<td>*qetut</td>
<td>*qetut</td>
<td>*tut</td>
<td>kjɔ:t'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘bird’</td>
<td>*manuk</td>
<td>*manuk</td>
<td>*mluk</td>
<td>mlok'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘crow’</td>
<td>n/ɾ</td>
<td>*wåak (P-Ph)</td>
<td>*ka'</td>
<td>ka'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘bran, chaff’</td>
<td>*qeCah</td>
<td>*-pa</td>
<td>kuo'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘taro’</td>
<td>*biRaq</td>
<td>*biRaq</td>
<td>*ɓ-ra:k'</td>
<td>ja:k'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘water’</td>
<td>*daNum</td>
<td>*danum</td>
<td>num'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘fire’</td>
<td>*Sapuy</td>
<td>*hapuy</td>
<td>Kam pui</td>
<td>pu:i'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘name’</td>
<td>*ŋaŋan</td>
<td>*ŋaŋan</td>
<td>*ɗa:n</td>
<td>ja:n'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘come, arrive’</td>
<td>*ɗaten</td>
<td>*taŋ</td>
<td>*taŋ'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘borrow’</td>
<td>*Sezam</td>
<td>*hezam</td>
<td>la:m'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘cut’</td>
<td>*Setek</td>
<td>*hetek</td>
<td>*ka'</td>
<td>kjak'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'die'</td>
<td>*maCay</td>
<td>*matay</td>
<td>*tai</td>
<td>plei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'pinch'</td>
<td>*a-tip</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>nep^5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'sell'</td>
<td>*-liw</td>
<td>*-liw</td>
<td></td>
<td>ple^1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'slap'</td>
<td>*-pik</td>
<td>*-pik</td>
<td></td>
<td>phe:k^3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'black'</td>
<td>n/r</td>
<td>*(q)item</td>
<td>*?nam</td>
<td>lam^1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'sharp'</td>
<td>*tajəm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ti:m^1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'this'</td>
<td>*-ni</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>n^2^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'we (incl.)'</td>
<td>*(k)-ita</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>tau^1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The lack of a convincing Proto-Daic has placed languages like Lakkja in a crucial position. As shown above, Lakkja shares a sizeable number of basic words with PAn and PMP. With further comparison and analysis in the future, similarities of this kind may bring us a step closer to the facts underpinning the relationship between languages and the linguistic affiliation of Kam-Tai.

9.2.2 Contact-induced constituent order change

The main issue explored in this study regarding the grammar of Lakkja has much to do with language contact. As discussed, Lakkja is influenced by surrounding languages not only in phonology and vocabulary but also in word order. Due to the dominant prestige of Chinese dialects in this area, an overwhelming number of Chinese words have entered the Lakkja lexicon, resulting in deeper adoption of language features of grammar from the outside.

Although Lakkja basically follows the generic head-initial principle, a number of morphosyntactic changes in constituent order can be observed, particularly with affixation, deictic and personal pronouns, possessive and relative phrases, descriptive phrases and nominalisation. Some subordinative compounds are found to undergo a shift from left-headedness to right-headedness.

Co-verbs or prepositions have triggered remarkable changes to the traditional SVO (AVO) word order, yielding the SOV order. This is one of the most notable impacts of contact-induced change. Pre-modifying Chinese-loan adverbs appear to outnumber post-modifying native ones, indicating a profound impact of head-final feature from Chinese.

It would be significant to examine the issue of language contact and the accompanying linguistic changes in multi-ethnic-populated regions in this region. Apart from the phenomena mentioned above, there are perhaps more prototypical cases that have not been discovered in this study. Moreover, a number of related questions could be raised for further research, such as how the basic features of grammar can diffuse from Chinese to Lakkja, whether contact-
induced changes are one-directional or mutual. The analysis in this study may set a precedent for future work on contact-induced change in Lakkja and related languages.

### 9.2.3 Ethnosemantics

Like many Asian languages, the categories of Lakkja vocabulary may present the feature of ethnosemantics and reflect the local knowledge and conceptual structure by which people interact with their surroundings. A rich array of culturally significant concepts can be elicited, including multiple forms to distinguish different types of daily production activities such as ‘carry’, ‘wear (clothes, ornament)’, ‘wash (hair, clothes, dishes)’, and the like. Lakkja is also found to possess various concepts and categories for rituals, body parts, space, time, illness, herbs, wild animals, kinship, among others. Related questions could be raised as to how they deal with different subtypes of these concepts, what the social and psychological meanings are behind the contents, how they distinguish various types of beliefs. An account from a semantic and cultural point of view should be given in the future.

### 9.2.4 Other issues

Several topics have been mentioned in this thesis but not systematically studied. These include an acoustic study of voiceless nasals and nasal vowels, comparison with surrounding vernaculars, detailed examinations of discourse particles, grammaticalization and lexicalisation, among other things. There are possible structures in Lakkja that are just as rare and have not yet been discovered. Research in these areas may further reveal the internal characteristics of the language and shed more light on the issue of language change, language contact and linguistic affiliation in this region.
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