ADPOSITIONS IN LUTUV
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Julia Haza\textsuperscript{1} and Alexis Wagner\textsuperscript{1}
\textsuperscript{1}Indiana University Department of Linguistics

ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the adpositional marking and case marking systems in Lutuv. This investigation finds that the basic adpositional phrase consists of a noun and a simplex or complex postposition. Complex postpositions are often used to convey information about both movement and location, whereas simplex postpositions are usually limited to expressing one of the two. The findings of this investigation are useful for highlighting potential future areas of research in Lutuv.

\textbf{Key Terms}— Lutuv, adpositions, deixis, Kuki-Chin languages

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper investigates case marking and adpositional marking in Lutuv\textsuperscript{1} (also known as Lautu), a Kuki-Chin language from the Tibeto-Burman language family (Eberhard et al 2020). Lutuv is spoken in Chin State in western Burma/Myanmar and in diaspora communities around the world. Indiana, where the fieldwork that informs this paper was conducted, is home to more than 25,000 Burmese refugees, many of whom are from Chin State (Berkson et al. 2019). Data in this study come from elicitation sessions with a native speaker of Lutuv who is in her early 20s and a member of the Indianapolis Chin community.

The noun marking system in Lutuv appears to be very complex, and the information contained herein should be considered preliminary. This paper presents preliminary data on noun marking, specifically on adpositions. We provide an overview of common adpositions in Lutuv and discuss some basic constructions which use simplex and complex adpositions. We conclude by identifying areas for further analysis and research.

Glossing conventions used herein are provided in Appendix A.

2. BACKGROUND

Lutuv is a Kuki-Chin language of the Tibeto-Burman language family mainly spoken in western Burma/Myanmar and diaspora communities in Indianapolis and elsewhere (Eberhard et al 2020). To our knowledge, linguistic work on Lutuv is nonexistent outside of the work being conducted here in Indiana. Lutuv was the language of focus in a field methods class taught by Kelly Berkson at Indiana University

\textsuperscript{1} This report is written in Lutuv orthography, which was developed by the language consultant. While Lutuv has an extensive tone system, no tonal features have been included in this report.

\textsuperscript{2} The work for this paper was conducted in an undergraduate Field Methods class at Indiana University Bloomington in Spring 2020. We are responsible for any errors or inconsistencies.
in Spring 2020. Lutuv is a head-final language and the basic word order is SOV, although variation seems possible in many situations.

3. METHODS

The data presented here comes from direct elicitation with a native speaker of Lutuv who was in her early 20s at the time of data collection. Fieldwork was conducted over a period of approximately four months. Early sessions were conducted in person on the Indiana University Bloomington campus. The COVID-19 pandemic then forced a shift to online elicitation sessions conducted via Zoom.

4. BASIC ADPOSITIONAL PHRASES IN LUTUV

As noted, Lutuv is a head-final language. The main adposition appears after the noun phrase as a postposition. A complete adpositional phrase in Lutuv consists of the noun phrase and one or more postposition(s). This structure is schematized and exemplified in (1).

(1) NOUN + POSTPOSITION(S) + NOMINAL MARKER(S)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lutuv (IPA)</th>
<th>Lutuv (Orthography)</th>
<th>Approximate English Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. ʦoŋ</td>
<td>cung</td>
<td>on top of/above/up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. ʦʰoŋ</td>
<td>chung</td>
<td>inside of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. n̥əŋkaa</td>
<td>hnangkaa</td>
<td>behind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. m̥i̥e</td>
<td>hmie</td>
<td>in front of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. o tʰɔ</td>
<td>a tha</td>
<td>near/by/next to/beside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. rɔɔ</td>
<td>raw</td>
<td>below/under/down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. ələləlie</td>
<td>alalalie</td>
<td>in between</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. lee</td>
<td>lee</td>
<td>outside of</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 outlines the eight most frequently observed adpositions in Lutuv. English glosses are also included.

Predictably, the different semantic domains of each particular adposition in English and Lutuv make an exact one-to-one translation impossible; the closest approximate translations have been provided in the table above. Further work could help define the specific semantics of each postposition.
5. SIMPLEX ADPOSITIONS

Simplex adpositions express either movement or location, but not both. One of the most common and basic uses of simplex adpositional phrases is to express the static location of an object. In these instances, the adpositional phrase, usually headed by one of the postpositions presented in Table 1, is used along with the verb *aw* ‘to be located’. Examples (2-9) below demonstrate these constructions using each of the adpositions outlined in Table 1. Adpositional phrases are generally marked with a case particle, often the locative case marker *lie*.

(2) Chinghna ca tiy cung lie na a aw  
leaf TOP water on top LOC FOC 3SG.SBJ to be located  
“The leaf is on top of the water.”

(3) Sui ca ruo chung lie na a aw  
Sui TOP forest inside LOC FOC 3SG.SBJ to be located  
“The forest is inside.”

(4) Caauv ca cabya hnangkaa lie na a aw  
book TOP table behind LOC FOC 3SG.SBJ to be located  
“The book is behind the table.”

(5) Capapaa ca ing hmie lie na a aw  
man TOP house in front LOC FOC 3SG.SBJ to be located  
“The man is in front of the house.”

(6) Bawlung ca thlepie a tha lie na a aw  
bball TOP wall next to LOC FOC 3SG.SBJ to be located  
“The ball is next to the wall.”

(7) Alung cavaa tiy raw lie na a aw  
rock lake water below LOC FOC 3SG.SBJ to be located  
“The rock is at the bottom of the lake.”

(8) Capapaa ca ing lee lie na a aw  
man TOP house outside LOC FOC 3SG.SBJ to be located  
“The man is outside.”

(9) Capapaa ca ing hne bienaing a lalalie na a aw  
man TOP house and church between FOC 3SG.SBJ to be located  
“The man is in between the house and the church.”
A similar structure involving a simplex adpositional phrase is observed in adposition constructions expressing directionality or movement with a verb of motion. Note that the simplex postpositions in the following examples do not provide information about location.

(10) Uv ca Kelly luo na a cakuo
  Dog TOP Kelly to FOC 3SG.SBJ to walk
  “The dog walked to Kelly.”

(11) Capapaa ca ing lue lie na a cakuo
  Man TOP house outside LOC FOC 3SG.SBJ to walk
  “The man walked outside of the house.”

(12) Kelly ca Italy taa-ta na France luo a vaa
  Kelly TOP Italy from-? FOC France to 3SG.SBJ to go
  “Kelly went from Italy to France.”

6. COMPLEX ADPOSITIONS

Adpositions in Lutuv may be used together to form complex adpositions. These complex constructions seem to be more common when expressing movement as opposed to static locations as in (13-15). All examples of complex adpositions thus far include either luo ‘to’ or taa ‘from’. These complex adpositions express both movement and direction. As seen in (10) and (12) above, the morphemes luo and taa can stand alone as the adposition in a sentence. However, as seen in (13-16), they can also work in conjunction with the other common adpositions to create a complex adpositional phrase.

(13) Sui ca ruo chung luo ta na a cakuo
  Sui TOP forest inside to ? FOC 3SG.SBJ to walk
  “Sui walked through the forest.”

(14) Tiypalaw ca cavaa cung taa ta, a za shie le to leave ?
  boat TOP river top from ? 3SG.SBJ downwards

  “The boat went down the river.”

(15) Uv ca cavaa a tha luo na a ruo
  dog TOP river next to to FOC 3SG.SBJ to run
  “The dog ran to the river.”

(16) Capapaa ca a raw luo na a mang
  man TOP down to FOC 3SG.SBJ to look
  “The man looked down.”
These specific adpositions are complex because they require the simplex adposition to be used in conjunction with an additional morpheme. As noted, these complex adpositions often provide information on both movement and location in a way that simplex adpositions do not.

As seen in examples 13-14, these complex adpositions sometimes add additional particles, such as ‘ta’. These particles could be additional noun case marking or they could be something outside of this area of investigation, such as focus. The morpheme ‘ta’ is further discussed in Section 7.

7. AREAS FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION

Although the data and analysis above provide a description of the fundamentals of adposition behavior in Lutuv, much more work remains to be done. Additional elicitation may reveal more adpositions than those listed here, as well as instances of complex adpositions that include neither luo ‘to’ nor taa ‘from’.

Perhaps more importantly, at this point we cannot confidently gloss some of the morphemes that commonly occur in utterances with adpositions. We are still investigating the grammatical role of the morpheme ‘ta’. In written elicitations, our language consultant wrote this morpheme variably, sometimes as one word with taa ‘from’ as in (12), repeated in (17) below, and sometimes as a separate word, as seen in (18-19). It is unclear whether the variation is grammatically relevant or the product of a non-standardized orthography.

(17) Kelly ca Italy taa-ta na France luo a vaa
Kelly TOP Italy from-? FOC France to 3SG.SBJ to go
“Kelly went from Italy to France.”

(18) Sui ca bienaing hnangkaa luo ta na a
Sui TOP church behind to ? FOC 3SG.SBJ
cakuo.
to walk
“Sui walked behind the church.”

(19) Capapaa ca ingkuo taa ta na a pya
man TOP room from ? FOC 3SG.SBJ to exit
“The man walked out of/exited the room.”

We do not yet have an analysis at present with regards to the function of this morpheme, we provide additional examples in (19-20) below as additional pieces to the puzzle. In (20), ta is absent and the sentence is expressing a stative location verb. However, in (21), motion is encoded by the verb and the utterance includes the morpheme ta.

(20) Sui ca Kelly hmie lie na a aw
Sui TOP Kelly in front of LOC FOC 3SG.SBJ to be located
“Sui is in front of Kelly.”
This article presented an overview of the basic adpositions in Lutuv. This system includes both simplex and complex adpositions that occur alongside the noun phrase and its relevant markers to form an adpositional phrase expressing location and/or direction. As discussed in Section 7, the identity of some of these additional morphemes remains unclear, and further research into related literature as well as more opportunities for data collection and analysis will likely reveal more about the roles of these morphemes.

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REFERENCES


Appendix A

Glossing Key
LOC - Locative
3 - 3rd Person
SG - Singular Person
SBJ - Subject
FOC - Focus marker
TOP - Topic marker