1967

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Recommended Citation

Scholtz, Lyle (1967) "Kalam verb phrases," *Work Papers of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, University of North Dakota Session*: Vol. 11, Article 10.

DOI: 10.31356/silwp.vol11.10

Available at: <https://commons.und.edu/sil-work-papers/vol11/iss1/10>

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KALAM VERB PHRASES

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The Kalam language (also spelled Karam) is spoken by some 10,000 people in the Bismark Schrader Ranges along the Western Highlands--Madang district border in the Territory of New Guinea. The main population centers are in the upper Kaironk valley, the upper Simbai valley and the Asai valley.

Kalam, according to Dr. S. Wurm (1961), is distantly related to East New Guinea Highlands Stock. Dr. Andrew Pawley has since suggested that Kalam may have a closer relation to this stock than was shown by Dr. Wurm's early survey.

My wife and I under the auspices of the Summer Institute of Linguistics spent a total of 23 months at various periods between 1962 and 1967 among the Kalam people of the Gapin territorial group one mile north of the Simbai airstrip.

The Linguistic Information Retrieval Project of the Summer Institute of Linguistics and the University of Oklahoma Research Institute gave valuable assistance in the analysis behind this paper through preparation of a concordance of Kalam text made on an IMB 1410 computer at the University of Oklahoma. This "concordance project" is sponsored by a National Science Foundation grant.

Dr. Andrew Pawley's dissertation The Structure of Karam was very useful and Mr. David Thomas gave personal help in analysis and preparation of this paper.

I. General

Verb phrases consist of three optional modifier slots filled by Manner phrase (MAN), Delimiter phrase or clause (DEL), and Negative (NEG), followed by an obligatory head slot filled by any verb (V). Any relative order of fillers of the modifier slots is possible, but by far the most common is that given here. An intensifier nep 'just/only' can follow and can modify any one (but only one) of the tagmemes in a verb phrase.

Verb Phrase (VP) formula:

VP = +M:MAN +M:DEL +M:NEG +H:V

Read + "optional", + "obligatory", : "filled by",

M "modifier", and H "head".

2. Internal Tagmemes

Having now seen the general pattern of a Verb Phrase, we can take a closer look at its individual parts.

2.1. Manner Tagmeme

The Manner slot is occasionally separated from the rest of the Verb Phrase by clause level tagmemes (object, locative, etc.). The other two modifier tagmemes are very rarely thus separated from the rest of the Verb Phrase.

Adverbs fill the head slot in all Manner Phrases. Adverbs are a closed class consisting of the following words: kap-kap 'slowly/secretly', kamiket 'carefully/secretly', kasee~kasyek 'quickly'.

The two types of Manner Phrases are shown here in formula and examples.

$$\text{MAN}_1 = +\text{Adverb } \pm \text{time } \pm \text{yib}$$

Adverb is read "any adverb". time and yib are two Kalam words meaning 'terribly' and 'very' respectively.

In examples throughout this paper a whole phrase or clause is given to show a tagmeme in its environment. The specific tagmeme being illustrated is given in capitals; other elements in lower case letters.

KASEE YIB amn-ak.
quickly very go-he past

'He went very quickly'

KAP-KAP TIME YIB g-ak.
slowly terribly very do-he past

'He did (it) terribly very slowly'

KAMIKET amn-ak.
secretly go-he past tense

'He stole away'

Manner Phrase 2 formula:

$$\text{MAN}_2 = +\text{Adverb}_2$$

KASEE KASEE g-an.
quickly quickly do-you

'Quickly, quickly! do (it)!!'

KAMIKET KAMIKET am-ib.
quietly quietly go-pres. perfect

'He left very quietly/secretly!'

2.2. Delimiter Tagmeme

The delimiter slot may be filled by:

1. A simple delimiter phrase (DEL_1)
2. A derived delimiter phrase (DEL_2)
3. A derived delimiter clause (DEL_3)

2.2.1. Simple delimiter phrases (DEL_1) are by far the most common fillers of the delimiter slot. Adjuncts fill the head slot of all DEL_1 . Adjuncts are a large open class of words, such as yidik 'delicious', gu 'noise', yob 'big'. Because of mostly semantic restrictions, a given adjunct is compatible with only one or a few verbs.

$DEL_1 = +Adjunct \quad +time \quad +yib$

YIDIK TIME YIB g-ip. 'It is very truly delicious'
delicious terribly very do-present perfect

GU YIB ag-ip. 'It made a great noise'
noise very speak-pres. perfect

YOB g-isp-een. 'I am getting big'
big do-pres. progressive-1st singular

2.2.2. Derived delimiter phrase (DEL_2) is derived by adding class changing particle tek 'like' to any adjective phrase (AP) or to any noun phrase (NP).

$DEL_2 = +AP/NP \quad +tek$

That is, Delimiter₂ consists of obligatory adjective phrase or noun phrase followed² by obligatory tek 'like'.

Alikany NEEG AYEEDIK TEK mid-ek. 'There was blood there
blood water wild like stay-it past like a water pool'

Minymon yip KAJ TEK pik-ip. 'It rained on me like it rains
rain me pig like hit-pres.perfect on a pig'

The two examples above show DEL_2 derived from noun phrases. The two following examples show DEL_2 derived from adjective phrases.

Kaj ak TUD TEK ayee-p. 'That pig is becoming sort of
pig that white like become-pres. perfect. white'

Yakit kun MA NAG-EP TEK ayee-p. 'That bird has gone to
bird that not shoot-able like become- a position where he is
pres.perfect unshootable.'

2.2.2. Derived delimiter clause (DEL₃) is derived by adding tek.
to any clause.

DEL₃ = +cl +tek

In the formula cl stands for any clause.

KINI-TIK TEK midi-tik. 'The two of them were supposedly
sleep-3rd dual past like stay-3rd dual past sleeping'

Kijeng migan ningee, AMN-ITIK TEK mid-ek.
road inside seeing go-(3rd dual past)like remain-it past
'The path looked like the two had gone on it.'

YAD MA MIDEE TEK a-m-an. 'You speak as if I were not here.'
I not were like speak-pres. perfect-1st sing.

2.3. Negative Tagmeme

The Negative slot is filled only by negative morpheme ma.

Kasee MA gi-nigab-een. 'I will not do it quickly.'
quickly not do-fut-1st singular

MA ningi-b-een. 'I do not know.'
not know-pres. perfect-1st singular

Yidik MA g-ip. 'It is not good flavored'
delicious not do-pres. perfect

2.4. Verb Tagmeme

The verb slot filled by any verb stem optionally inflected with one or more suffixes. Uninflected stems occur only as head of dependent verb phrases. Inflected stems occur only as head of independent verb phrases (see 3. below). Suffixes on these independent verb phrases may be divided into two broad groups--those occurring on verbs in independent clauses (final verbs), and those occurring on verbs in dependent clauses (medial verbs). Suffixes on final verbs may indicate mood, tense-aspect, and person-number. Suffixes on medial verbs in general indicate whether the actor is the same or different from the actor of the following verb; and, if different, the person and number of the present actor. Medial verb suffixes also indicate whether the action of the medial verb is previous to, simultaneous with, or anticipated after the action of the verb following it.

Kasee AM AM AM AM kotip AFJAK-AK.

Quickly go go go go house come to-he past

'Quickly going and going and going he came to the house.'

Kotip nad AM-EE; kotip yad AM-JIP-EEN.

house your go-(first same actor)house my go-pres. prog.-1st sing

'After going to your house, I will go to my house.'

Kaj PIK DAD AW-AK.

pig hit bring come-he past

'He killed and brought a pig.'

Kaj yidik time G-AK.

pig delicious terribly do-it past

'The pork was terribly delicious.'

2.5. The particle nep

The particle nep 'only/just' optionally occurs attached to any tagmeme within the verb phrase, but may not be repeated within the same verb phrase.

Yidik NEP g-ak.

delicious only do-it past

'It was just delicious!'

Gi NEP mid-ek.

work only stay-he past

'He stayed (there) just working
(away).'

Ma NEP g-ak.

not just do-he past

'He absolutely did not do (it).'

3. Dependent and Independent Verb Phrases

Verb Phrases manifesting an uninflected verb stem are dependent verb phrases unable by themselves to fill the clause level predicate slot. Verb phrases manifesting inflected verb stems are independent verb phrases and fill the predicate slot of a clause.

The following are examples of dependent verb phrases: am 'go', gu ag 'make noise', pik 'hit'

Examples of independent verb phrases: amib 'He went', gu agee, 'first making a noise.....', pikak 'he/it hit'

Examples of complex verb phrases are given below. Each example has only one independent verb phrase though some have more than one dependent verb phrase.

Buwo AM bapee nup AG-AK. ".....

Uncle went father to-him speak-he past

'Father went and said to uncle,".....'

Wog GI GI GI AM kotip mikan KIN-AK
garden work work work went house inside sleep-he past.

'After working in the garden for a period of time
he went in the house and slept.'

Kaj PIK DAD AW-AK. 'He killed and brought a pig.'
pig hit bring come-he past

Dependent verbs are used when, in the mind of the speaker,
the actions are viewed as almost one long action not worthy of
separate clauses.