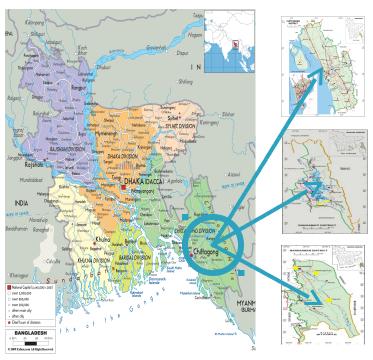# IMPERFECTIVE ASPECT IN HYOW

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Presentation at a glance

- Language background
- Aspectual markers in Hyow
- Polyfunctional nominalizers in Hyow
- Imperfective aspect of Type A and Type B verbs
- Findings

Language background

Laitu
Buddhist
Approx.
600

Laitu & Kontu
Buddhist,
Christian
Approx. 1500

Laitu & Kontu
Buddhist,
Christian
Approx. 2100

- Southern Kuki-Chin
- Locally called Khyang
- Approx. 4200-4500
- Two varieties: Laitu & Kontu
- Laitu: Buddhist
- Kontu: Christian
- Multilinguals
- Contact with Bangla, Marma, Bawm, Tripura, Tanchaingya and Chakma

Aspectual markers in Hyow

(1)   ɔ-tsɔ=hoy=la   ey=tsak=**dək**=hoy   (example of anterior aspect)

     3SG:POSS-child=DL=ERG   eat=all=ANT=DL

     'Those (two) children ate all.'

(2)key   ka-kap   **phɔ**   (example of imperfective aspect of a dynamic verb in Laitu Hyow)

     1SG   1SG-cry:IPFV COP

     'I am crying.'

(3)   key   ka-kap   **sɔ**   (example of imperfective aspect of a dynamic verb in Kontu Hyow)

     1SG   1SG-cry:IPFV COP

     'I am crying.'

(2)ey=la   shel   hat   e-hle=ey   **hyɔ**   (example of imperfective aspect of stative verb in Hyow)

     3SG=ERG   cow   one   3SG-buy=IPFV   COP

     'They are buying a cow.'

Aspectual markers in Hyow

(5)   a-kap=hnɔ=la=tsɛ   tsu=a=ni   a-myak=ni   krɔ=**hnɔ**=ti
3SG-cry=PFV=CONJ=TOP there=LOC=DET 3SG-diamond=DET   fall=PFV=EVID

'When he cried, the diamond fell there.'

Aspects	Hyow forms
Anterior	-dək
Imperfective	-0 (Type A), -ey (Type B)
Perfective	-hnɔ

Table 1: Hyow aspectual markers

Polyfunctional suffixes in Hyow

Hyow agentive nominalizer *–ti* is also used as a secondary (hearsay) evidential marker and second person negative marker on verb. The agentive nominalizer *–ti* takes a verb root to form a noun out of the verb.

(6)   ey   laybi=**ti**=la lay=a   bi   hɔ   (Laitu, field notes)
DEM   field.work=NMLZ=ERG   field=LOC   work:IPFV COP   'That farmer is working on the field.'

(7)   a-kap=hnɔ=la=tsɛ   tsu=a=ni   a-myak=ni   krɔ=hnɔ=**ti**3SG-cry=PFV=CONJ=TOP
         there=LOC=DET   3SG-diamond=DET   fall=PFV=EVID
         'When he cried, the diamond fell there.'

(8)   key   kɔ-hmɔt=khoʔ   nang   bu   ey=**ti**   (Laitu, field notes)
         1SG   1SG-know=PAST   2SG   rice   eat=NEG
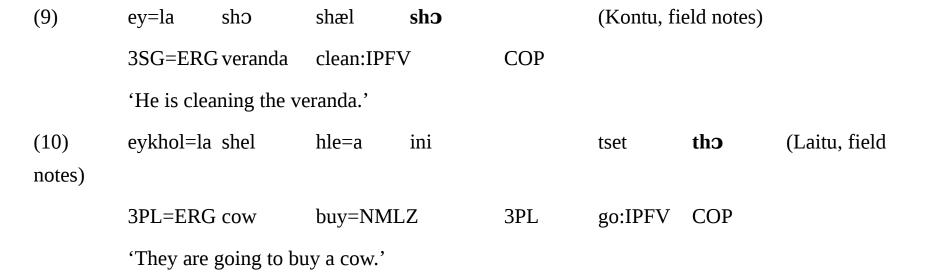   'I knew that you did not eat rice.'

Imperfective aspect in Hyow

Hyow Type A verbs do not use any overt imperfective marking, while there is a polyfunctional suffix *–ey*, which is used to encode imperfective aspect of Hyow Type B verbs. The following table lists some of the Type A and Type B verbs in Hyow.

Type A (0 imperfective marker)		Type B (imperfective marker -ey).	
Verb	Gloss	Verb	Gloss
tsoy	lit fire	yæ	sell
thi	kick	tok	get hurt by something sharp
tuk	kill	dok	wear tops
hi	ask	yɤŋ	feel cold
yɔk	hear	shi	quarrel
ɔy	sing	Tsi	take
yɤk	write	tsaŋ	clean
shæ	sneeze	lok	play
yɤ	pick up	pu	lend
shɔk	wear bottoms	tset	walk
phæt	rebuke	ni	pain
shɔk	make	thɔk	itch

Type A verbs

Type A verbs of Hyow do not use any overt imperfective aspectual markers. The verb root with a final equational/existential copula gives an interpretation of imperfective aspect of the verb.

(9)   ey=la   shɔ   shæl   **shɔ**   (Kontu, field notes)

        3SG=ERG veranda   clean:IPFV   COP

        'He is cleaning the veranda.'

(10)   eykhol=la shel   hle=a   ini   tset   **thɔ**   (Laitu, field notes)

        3PL=ERG cow   buy=NMLZ   3PL   go:IPFV   COP

        'They are going to buy a cow.'

Type B verbs

Hyow Type B verbs use a grammaticalized suffix for encoding imperfective aspect of the verbs. This polyfunctional suffix is also a nominalizer and a polar question marker in both Kontu and Laitu Hyow. The imperfective suffix –ey originated in an old PTB copula *wey.

(17)   Key   tse=**ey**   ki-pi   (Laitu, field notes)
          1SG   walk=NMLZ   1SG-like
          'I like walking.'

(18)   key   long   kɔ-hɔ=**ey**   hyɔ   (Laitu, field notes)
          1SG   boat   1SG-row=IMPF   COP
          'I am rowing a boat.'

(19)   eykhol=la   shi=**ey**   hyɔ   (Laitu, field notes)
          3PL=ERG   quarrel=IMPF   COP
          'They are quarrelling.

Findings

- Nominalizers have tendencies to be grammaticalized as TAM marker in TB languages;

- Nominalizers are polyfunctional;

- Imperfective aspect in Hyow are not overtly marked for Type A verbs;

- Type verbs can enter into the Type B class with the affixation of the Type B verb imperfective suffix –*ey;*

- Laitu declarative sentence final copulas are reminiscent of old final copula in Hyow. This is another example of *s* developing into *h* in Hyow as can be found in some examples like *s-nung>hnung (back), *s-mut>hmu (blow), etc.

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