

# DIRECTIONAL AUXILIARIES IN DAAI CHIN

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## 0. Introduction

The Daai Chin language<sup>1</sup> belongs to the Southern Branch of the Kukish Section of the Tibeto-Burman language family. It is spoken by approximately 30,000 people in the townships of Matupi, Mindat, Kanpetlet and Paletwa in the Southern Chin Hills of Burma.

Within the Chin language family Daai Chin is most closely related to M̄n Chin (also called Mindat Chin), Chin Pon (also called Ūt P̄i) and Matu Chin.

This paper is based on a dialect of Daai Chin spoken in Kanpetlet township.<sup>2</sup>

## 1. The auxiliary verb system in general

Preverbal auxiliaries. Eight preverbal auxiliaries have been found so far. All of them are directional and they are mutually exclusive. They are never used as main verbs, except *jǎng*.

Postverbal auxiliaries. The postverbal auxiliary system is much more complicated. There are more than fifty postverbal auxiliaries, which can be divided into several sets according to their position and meaning. The auxiliaries closest to the verb tend to be directionals, following them are causatives, reciprocals, attitudinals, phases, speech act indicators, and the like.

## 2. Preverbal auxiliaries

The eight preverbal auxiliaries form four pairs. Three of these pairs express the spatial directions forward, down and up. The fourth pair expresses the temporal direction 'in advance'. The pairs are divided by the two manners reaching out (physical or mental, without change of present position) and going.

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David Bradley ed., *Papers in South-East Asian linguistics* No.11: *South-East Asian syntax*, 81-92. *Pacific Linguistics*, A-77, 1989.

	forward	down	up	in advance
reaching out	<i>hei</i>	<i>juk</i>	<i>jän</i>	<i>na</i>
going	<i>va</i>	<i>ju</i>	<i>jäng</i>	<i>ana</i>

Table 1: The preverbal auxiliaries

a) **hei**<sup>3</sup> 'to V to the front, to V in forward direction, to V over there'

*kah hei pyen<sup>4</sup> kyo*  
 I forward speak futile  
 I speak to them over there (though without success)

*lóu hei bük-a<sup>5</sup>*  
 field front look-IMP  
 look in front to the field

*lung sun ah hei xot-in*  
 stone this he forward throw-quick  
 he quickly throws the stone over there

b) **va** 'to go and V to the front, to go and V in forward direction, to go and V over there'

*ah nih va-dou u*  
 he PL forward-greet mPL  
 go and greet them

*ím-a va-lut lü kah hmuh*  
 house-in forward-enter and I see  
 and I saw that he went and entered the house over there

*kah va-hmuh kti*  
 I forward-meet PRES  
 I go and meet (him) over there

c) **juk** 'to V downwards, to reach down and V'

*juk kkhui hlü be kti*  
 downward help want again PRES  
 he wants to help (him) again from above

*kahjuk péét*  
 I down give  
 I reach down and give

*juk pyén-a*  
 down speak-IMP  
 speak downwards

d) **ju** 'to go down and V'

*kah ju-lit lut ei be kkhai ni*  
 I down-go enter self again will indeed  
 I myself will go down and enter again

*ju-pe-a*  
 go-down-give-IMP  
 go down and give it

*ah ju-mtheh lo*  
 he go-down-tell come  
 he comes to the state of going down and telling

e) **jän** 'to V upwards, to reach upwards and V'

*ah jän kpyaai in*  
 he up discard quick  
 he quickly throws (it) away upward

*kah jän poh ei kkhai ni*  
 I up do self will indeed  
 I myself will reach upwards and do (it).

*jän kthäh be-a*  
 up ask again-IMP  
 ask again upwards (ask someone who is higher)

f) **jǎng** 'to go up and V'

*kah jǎng pyen*  
 I go-up speak  
 I go upwards and speak

*im kkhaan-a ah jǎng poh*  
 house up-in he go-up does  
 he goes up into the house and does (it)

*ah ve náák-a jǎng hmu-hüt-a*  
 he stay place-at go-up look-IMP  
 go up to the place where he is and look for (it) back there

g) **na** 'to V in advance, ahead'

*nah na-poh am ve*  
 you ahead-work not is  
 you have not done it in advance

*kei noh kah na-ei ma kti*  
 I SUBJ I ahead-eat go-ahead PRES  
 I eat in advance (of everybody else)

*ah na-mtheh*  
 he ahead-tell  
 he tells it in advance

h) **ana** ‘to go and V in advance, ahead’

**ana-ngshut** ip kti-é  
 go-ahead-start sleep PRES-PL  
 they go and fall asleep in advance

**ana-pyén** hü kom kti  
 go-ahead tell around of:course PRES  
 of course he has gone and told it around in advance

**ana-poh** u bä  
 go-ahead do PL all-right?  
 go and do it in advance, will you?

### 3. Postverbal semidirectional auxiliaries

The semidirectionals, the first seven auxiliaries after the verb, do not form a tight semantic set, but are a composite of direction, phase, and distributiveness. Most of them can also be used as a main verb.

<i>pha</i>	to arrive at the state of Ving
<i>lo</i>	to come to the state of Ving
<i>vaai</i>	to go and V, to V frontward
<i>seh</i>	to V and bring along
<i>hü</i>	to V from place to place
<i>táák</i>	to V and leave behind
<i>hüt</i>	to V back there

Note that Table 2 shows *lo*, *vaai*, and *seh* as a mutually exclusive set, though their relationships with other auxiliaries are different.

<i>pha</i>	R	O	X	X	X	X
<i>lo</i>		O	O	X	R	X
<i>vaai</i>			O	R	R	R
<i>seh</i>				O	X	X
<i>hü</i>					R	X
<i>táák</i>						R
<i>hüt</i>						

X = fixed order  
 R = reversible order  
 O = mutually exclusive

Table 2: Postverbal semidirectionals: pairwise co-occurrence and order