

The Grammar of Pronouns: Pron. as means of  
Regulating Relations of Nouns and Verbs in Asian lgs.

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The investigation of lgs. of East and South-East Asia undertaken by the joint Soviet-Vietnamese linguistic expedition which carried out the fieldwork in Vietnam during the last ten years since 1979 showed that the lgs. as a whole give a complicated picture of evolution. Most of the lgs. of this area shifted from the inflectional non-isolating type of languages to agglutinative isolating lgs. Though in the various lgs. of the area diachronic changes reveal themselves differently, in many lgs. we find residues (1) of the previous stages as a heritage of these previous stages. Actually by these residues we can judge what the previous stages looked like.

The typological shift in these lgs. came as a result of many processes. The main process was the tendency towards monosyllabization of words in these lgs. (This tendency in its turn was also a result of many special processes -we shall not deal with them here- since this is another problem). The tendency to monosyllabization led to a change in the structure of words and in their nature. It led in the first place to the loss of the first syllables of words which in most cases were either derivative either inflectional markers of morphological categories. The disappearance of prefixes led to a change in the morphological paradigms of categories. The prefixes which remained in the structure of the word lost their grammatical meanings and became mere parts of sound patterns of words. At first all this led to the malfunctioning of categories and then to the loss of these categories.

We can state that due to the typological shift the changes took place on all levels of these lgs.

At the morphological level the main direction of changes was the disappearance of the so-called "old" morphology and the rise of the "new" morphology. There not only appeared a new stock of morphological categories but they in principle were of different

character than those of the previous stage. The old morphology was mainly represented by the morphological categories the markers of which expressed not only the morphological meanings but also the syntactical relations between the words. The new morphology is represented by the categories morphological markers of which do not express the syntactic relations between the words and have non-relational functions such as tense and aspect markers of verbs and plural markers of nouns and pronouns.

There also was a great change in the character of the markers of these categories. The old morphological markers were mostly of pronominal origin and the morphological markers of the new morphology mainly if not always are of adverbial and verbal origin. This origin of new verbal markers provides no bases for morphological agreement or morphological government.

In the previous stage the pronouns possessed case forms and forms of plurality. In Ruc (one of the oldest Viet-Muong lgs.) the personal pronouns have preserved two case forms and the form of plurality. In Taoih (a Mon-khmer language) the personal pronouns have preserved four case forms, which are nonobligatory and plural forms. Other lgs. investigated in Vietnam do not have case forms, but have forms of plurality. The Chinese personal pronouns in the previous stage according to Wan Li (2) also had an inflectional paradigm of forms. In Modern Chinese the personal pronouns have only forms of plurality.

The verbs in previous stages were inflected for causative, causative-transitive and state forms. They also had personal forms of pronominal origin. Most of the lgs. of the area have had lost these forms. And in some of the lgs. we find vestiges of these forms, which still continue to function.

In the new stage the verbs acquired new categories such as tense, aspect and passive voice, which in some respects replaced the category of state.

Actually only nouns were least of all affected to changes. According to the data of lgs. of East and South-East Asia nouns as a rule do not possess the category of case. We find vestiges of case forms only in Ruc and Taoih.

On the next stage of evolution the nouns in the lgs. of this area did not acquire this category. The only category which the nouns possess now is the category of number.

The above named developments in the lgs. in turn determined the changes on the syntactical level. They determined changes in the character of functioning of

words in the sentences and led to the changes in some sentence structures. The role of the word order also changed with a shift of completely free to a relative fixed word order.

In the previous stages there existed morphological government and morphological agreement, which completely disappeared in the new stage of evolution in most of the lgs. But in some of the lgs. there are residues of morphological agreement and morphological government.

It is necessary to underline that on different stages of evolution the lgs. of the area possessed such forces as Reciprocity, Reflexivization, verb serialization, referentiality, which govern the relationships in the sentences and which are connected or oriented to the functional properties of nouns and verbs and are influenced by two dominant categories-the category of animacy and the category of activity.

On different stages the lgs. used different means to materialize these forces. When these lgs. were of non-isolating type they as a rule used inflectional morphemes. But alongside they also used pronominal clitics with verbs and inflectional or other forms of pronouns to relate nouns to verbs or nouns to nouns or adjectives to nouns.

Due to the extensive functioning of pronoun forms or pronominal elements in these lgs. we may characterize the grammar in these lgs. as a "pronoun grammar".

In lgs. which are more advanced in their development only traces of the so-called pronoun grammar remain. And in some of the lgs., which are less advanced in their development there still exists a relatively well functioning pronoun grammar. We find such a grammar in Taoih and in Ruc. The pronoun grammar was widely used in Archaic and in Ancient Chinese.

The forms of pronouns were used for regulating the Subject-Predicate and the Predicate-Object relations. For instance a dative form or a genitive form of a pronoun being added to a noun applies to it the dative or the genitive meaning. Such usage of the forms of pronouns is well seen in Taoih. In Taoih the third person pronoun (singular) is ?0 "he, she, it". Its genitive form is ?ong?0 "his, her's, it's". The dative form is a?0 "for him, for her, for it". In order to use the noun in the genitive one has to add to the noun the third person pronoun in the genitive form, for example: Ikon and Ial ?ong?0 Ikan "mother's daughter" (liter. child female her's mother). In order to use the noun in the dative one has to place before the noun a

dative form of the pronoun, for example: a?0 av0 ?uiaw "for the old man" (liter. for him grandfather old), kun ?aw kah upUah a?0 am0 "The clothes were not washed for the elder sister" (liter. pants shirt not wash for her older sister). In Taoih as well as in Ruc the kinship terms could receive the dative forms themselves, for instance, ku ploy ?aw kun a IkOn "I have bought the clothes for the son" (liter. I buy shirt pants dative morpheme child). An example from Ruc: ni<sup>1</sup>kal<sup>2</sup>kuk<sup>3</sup>?aw<sup>3</sup>co<sup>1</sup>pame<sup>4</sup>"Let's button the buttons on mother's blouse" (liter. let's button button shirt dative marker of new morphology dative morpheme mother).

In Taoih and in Vankieu there are vestiges of using the genetive form of a pronoun in the Subject when an inactive verb is in the Predicate. By such use of the pronoun forms the lgs. achieve not only a content, but also a formal correlation between a Subject and the Predicate of the sentence. Here is an example from Taoih ?ong?0 a?ay "He is ill" (liter. his ill).

The pronouns in the East and South-East Asian languages were also used in another way for the purposes of correlating the Subject and the Predicate of the sentence. When an inanimate noun was used in the Subject in such lgs. as Ma, Aceh, Ancient Chinese usually there was placed a special form of a pronoun or a special pronoun before a verb in the Predicate, which in general easily combined with animate nouns but not with inanimate nouns. In Aceh according to M. Durie (3) for such purposes are used two third person clitics, or reduced forms of pronouns: ji=, familiar, and geu=, polite. They are used when in the Subject of the sentence there are nouns denoting organisations, moving vehicles, natural processes, involving water, wind, rain, cloud and so on.

There exists an analogous pronominal clitic gɔ in Ma, which T. Pogibenko counts to be a marker of inactivity. According to her (4) this marker is used with the verbs when they are combined with inanimate nouns or with animate nouns denoting animals. This marker is not used with verbs when they combine with all other animate nouns, for example,

laT "to go" (animate)      gɔlaT (inanimate)

dU "to run" (animate)      gɔdU (inanimate)

tAm "to start" (animate)      gɔtAm (about the rain).

Mark Durie names the clitics in Aceh as cross-referencing clitics, which are used when "the argument corresponding to the Agent is not an intentional initiator of the state or event being