The origin and development of the “Disposal” form in Bouyei language

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1. Introduction

In modern Bouyei language, SVDO (Subject + Verb + Direct Object) is the main pattern of active sentences, but there is also another sentence pattern expressing the active voice by using a preposition (grammaticalized from a verb) to shift the direct object in front of the verb, thus forming the sentence pattern “Subject + Preposition (from a verb) + Direct Object + Predicative Verb + Other Components.” This is the so-called “disposal” construction or “disposal” form, which is akin to the ba construction in modern Chinese.

The status of using the “disposal” form in the Bouyei language differs from geographical area to another. In some places the “disposal” form is used frequently, while in other areas the regular “SVDO” construction is used less commonly. Because of the strong influence of Chinese in some places, most of the time people use the Chinese ba construction directly. This paper examines the structure of the “disposal” form in Bouyei language on the basis of the data collected in the Fuxing Township of Wangmo County and some other geographical locations in Guizhou Province. Having researched the origin and development of the ba construction in Chinese and having made a study of the structural patterns of the ?au~1 construction in the Bouyei religious scriptures, the writer has tried to probe into the origin and development of the “disposal” construction in Bouyei language.

2. The construction types of “Disposal” form

In Modern Chinese, ba (in written language sometimes jiang is used) is used as the marker of a “disposal” form. In the Bouyei language, the “disposal” form also has a marker, which is a preposition grammaticalized from a verb, inserted between the subject and the direct object. According to the existing data we have, in most of the Bouyei areas, people use ?au~1, kua~6 as the markers in the “disposal” form. Moreover, besides ?au~1 and kua~6, people in Wangmo sometimes use djiu~3 (grammaticalized from a

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verb which means ‘carry, take with one hand’), and people in Pingba use tu²
(grammaticalized from a verb which means ‘bring, take’). Since the early years of this
century, as the influence of modern Chinese has increased, people directly borrowed the
Chinese ba construction into Bouyei; thus, ba serves as one of the markers of “disposal”
in the Bouyei language. The main syntactic framework of the “disposal” form in Bouyei
is “Subject + marker (a verb-like preposition) + Direct Object + Verb.” Around this
main framework, according to the grammatical function and construction of the other
additional components attached, the “disposal” form in Bouyei language can be further
subdivided into the following types:

2.1 Subject + Marker + Direct Object + Verb + Complement.

Samples from Wangmo Bouyei language:

(1) te¹ non² lian² kue⁶ sen² ge¹ liu⁴ pai.
    s/he today M. money lose all part.
    ‘Yesterday s/he lost all her/his money.’

(2) mun² ?au¹ va:n¹ ?jau⁴ ?di¹.
    You M. axe hide well
    ‘Please hide the axe well.’

(3) te¹ diu³ tui⁴ ko³ te¹ ?duat⁷ liu⁴ pai.
    s/he M. rice bowl soup that drink all part.
    ‘S/He drank all soup in the rice bowl.’

Samples from Zhenfeng Bouyei language:

(4) ku¹ pa⁴ pa³ tu³ yu³ ?di¹ leu⁴.
    I M. door close well part.
    ‘I have closed the door already.’

2.2 Subject + Marker + Direct Object + Verb

Samples from Wangmo Bouyei language:

(5) non² lian² pu⁴ law² kue⁶ liam² ge¹?
    yesterday who M. sickle lose
    ‘Who lost the sickle yesterday?’
(6) mjaŋ3 dıu3 (?au¹) əa¹ luan⁶ ɕit⁷.
don't M. paper arbitrary throw
'Don't throw paper everywhere.'

Samples from Zhenfeng Bouyei language:

(7) te¹ pu⁴laı² kuo⁶ tur²ci² kən² ya:u⁴.
be who M. cattle eat crops
'Who let the cattle eat crops?'

2.3 Subject + Marker + Direct Object + Verb + Indirect Object

Samples from Wangmo Bouyei language:

(8) liu⁴po² dıu³ te¹ ta:n⁵ puⁿok⁷.
everybody M. s/he regard as simpleton
'Everybody regards her/him as a simpleton.'

(9) po⁷ku¹ ?au¹ te¹ ta:n⁵ tsui² ?di¹ ti¹ lau's¹¹.
we M. s/he take as most good part. teacher
'We regard her/him as the best teacher.'

Samples from Zhenfeng Bouyei language:

(10) mi²ju²⁴ pu⁴laı² pa⁴ ku¹ ta:n⁵ tur³¹vun³¹.
not have who M. me regard as human being
'Nobody regards me as a human being.'

2.4 Subject + Marker + Direct Object + Verb + Prepositional Phrase.

Samples from Zhenfeng Bouyei language:

(11) sə^nən² ?au¹ hau⁴lia¹ nən⁴lian² te¹ θuəŋ⁵ hau³ əau².
aunt M. leftovers yesterday that send to us
'Aunt gave us yesterday's leftovers.'

(12) te¹ fi⁶ dıu³ (?au¹) tsuo³mi² tɕia¹ hau³ ku¹.
s/he not M. homework hand in to me
'S/he hasn't given her/his homework to me.'
Samples from Wangmo Bouyei language:

(13) pu\textsuperscript{4}la:u\textsuperscript{4} mi\textsuperscript{2} kai\textsuperscript{1} $/)iu\textsuperscript{3} ji\textsuperscript{6}ts\textsuperscript{5} ?da:n\textsuperscript{1}kau\textsuperscript{5} ts\textsuperscript{2}hian\textsuperscript{2}ts\textsuperscript{2}ia\textsuperscript{1} hau\textsuperscript{3}
adult not should M. will oneself forcibly give

\textsuperscript{2}gi\textsuperscript{2}la:n\textsuperscript{1}.
children

'Adults shouldn’t force their children to accept their will.'

Samples from Zhenning Bouyei language:

(14) ti\textsuperscript{1} pa\textsuperscript{4} lok\textsuperscript{8} kou\textsuperscript{1} loŋ\textsuperscript{5} taŋ\textsuperscript{2} zan\textsuperscript{2}.
s/he M. son my sent arrive home

'S/He sent my son back home.'

2.5 Subject + Marker + Direct Object + Verb + Numeral Phrase

Samples from Zhenfeng Bouyei language:

(15) ?au\textsuperscript{1} əa:n\textsuperscript{1} kua\textsuperscript{5} ta:u\textsuperscript{5} əaŋ\textsuperscript{1} ?deu\textsuperscript{1}.
M. husked rice go over time sieve one

'Take the husked rice on to the sieve to go over once.'

(16) μuŋ\textsuperscript{2} $/)iu\textsuperscript{3} pjak\textsuperscript{7} kua\textsuperscript{5} ta:u\textsuperscript{5} əiəŋ\textsuperscript{6} ?deu\textsuperscript{1}.
you M. vegetable go over time balance one

Please put the vegetable on the balance to weighing.

(17) te\textsuperscript{1} pa\textsuperscript{4} lu\textsuperscript{3} na\textsuperscript{2} sai\textsuperscript{1} loŋ\textsuperscript{1} to\textsuperscript{6} leu\textsuperscript{4}.
he M. rice field plough two time already

'He has ploughed the rice field twice.'

2.6 Subject + Marker + Direct Object + Verb + Prepositional Phrase + Verb

Samples from Wangmo Bouyei language:

(18) te\textsuperscript{1} ?au\textsuperscript{1} mit\textsuperscript{8} go\textsuperscript{5} kum\textsuperscript{2} əin'pan\textsuperscript{2} pan\textsuperscript{2}.
s/he M. knife put on millstone sharpen

'S/he put the knife on the millstone and sharpened it.'

(19) ku\textsuperscript{1} $/)iu\textsuperscript{3} fuŋ\textsuperscript{2} go\textsuperscript{5} ?dau\textsuperscript{1} pu:n\textsuperscript{2} əuai\textsuperscript{5}.
I M. hand put inside basin wash

'I washed my hands in the basin.'