

AGREEMENT IN MIZO

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A system of agreement between a finite verb and its subject and object is characteristic of Chin languages. The systems in Lai and K'cho have been described in Bedell (1995 and 2000a). In this discussion, we outline the corresponding system in Mizo, and compare it with Lai.¹ The two languages are closely related, but show some striking variations on the common theme.

In both Lai and Mizo, the categories relevant to agreement are person (first, second and third; abbreviated 1, 2 and 3) and number (singular and plural, abbreviated s and pl). The Lai pronouns which correlate with these categories are the six in (i).

(i)	s	pl
1	<i>kei</i> 'I'	<i>kannih</i> 'we'
2	<i>nang</i> 'you'	<i>nannih</i> 'you'
3	<i>anih</i> 'he/she/it'	<i>annih</i> 'they'

Mizo has essentially the same system.

(ii)	s	pl
1	<i>kei</i> 'I'	<i>keini</i> 'we'
2	<i>nang</i> 'you'	<i>nangni</i> 'you'
3	<i>ani</i> 'he/she/it'	<i>anni</i> 'they'

The formation of plural pronouns is different in the two languages. In Lai, plurality is shown on the first syllable *kan*, *nan* or *an*, which seem related to possessive prefixes. In Mizo, there is a plural suffix *ni* which is attached to the singular form, though there is a hint of the Lai forms in *ani* versus *anni*.²

The subject agreement particles (or prefixes) in Lai are as illustrated in (iii) for intransitive verbs (and also for transitive verbs with third person singular objects).

(iii)	s	pl
1	<i>ka kal</i> 'I go'	<i>kan kal</i> 'we go'
2	<i>na kal</i> 'you go'	<i>nan kal</i> 'you go'
3	<i>a kal</i> 'he/she/it goes'	<i>an kal</i> 'they go'

The Mizo paradigm is as in (iv).

(iv)	s	pl
1	<i>ka kal</i> 'I go'	<i>kan kal</i> 'we go'
2	<i>i kal</i> 'you go'	<i>in kal</i> 'you go'
3	<i>a kal</i> 'he/she/it goes'	<i>an kal</i> 'they go'

The verb *kal* 'go' is the same in Mizo as in Lai. The subject agreement particles are also the same, except that Mizo *i* for second person corresponds to Lai *na*.

It should be clearly understood that the preverbal particles illustrated in (iii) and (iv) are syntactically distinct from the pronouns in (i) and (ii) in spite of the apparent morphological similarity, and the tendency in the literature to confuse them. The reasons for insisting on the distinction were enumerated in Bedell (1995) for the case of Lai. Analogous considerations will establish the same analysis for Mizo. Thus pronouns and the corresponding agreement particles may co-occur in the same sentence. Normally they do not, with the agreement particles being obligatorily present and the subject and or object positions (where the pronouns would appear) being empty.

The agreement pattern for transitive verbs is rather complex, and we will approach it one step at a time. First we consider verbs with first person subjects. In Lai there are ten forms, as in (vi) and (vii).

(v)	s	
1	<i>kaa hmu</i>	'I see myself'
2	<i>kan hmu^h</i>	'I see you'
3	<i>ka hmu^h</i>	'I see him/her/it'
2pl	<i>kan hmu^h hna</i>	'I see you'
3pl	<i>ka hmu^h hna</i>	'I see them'

(vi)	pl	
	2	<i>kan in hmuh</i> 'we see you'
	3	<i>kan hmuh</i> 'we see him/her/it'
	1pl	<i>kan i hmu</i> 'we see ourselves/each other'
	2pl	<i>kan in hmuh hna</i> 'we see you'
	3pl	<i>kan hmuh hna</i> 'we see them'

The properties of Lai agreement which are of interest here are: (a) the plural object agreement particle *hna*, which follows the verb; (b) the absence of third person object agreement; (c) the coalescence of the second person object agreement particle *in* with the first person singular subject agreement particle *ka*, producing *kan*; and (d) the coalescence of the reflexive object agreement particle *i* with the first person singular subject agreement particle *ka*, producing *kaa*. The plural agreement particle *hna* is homophonous with the most common noun plural particle. In the reflexive or reciprocal forms, the verb stem changes from *hmuh* to *hmu*; this seems to correspond to a change from transitive to intransitive. The coalescence of *ka* with *in* results in potential ambiguity: *kan* can show agreement with a first person singular subject and a second person object, or alternatively a first person plural subject and a third person object.

The Mizo forms are given in (vii) and (viii).

(vii)	s	
	1	<i>ka in hmu</i> 'I see myself'
	2	<i>ka hmu che</i> 'I see you'
	3	<i>ka hmu</i> 'I see him/her/it/them'
	2pl	<i>ka hmu che u</i> 'I see you'
(viii)	pl	
	2	<i>kan hmu che</i> 'we see you'
	3	<i>kan hmu</i> 'we see him/her/it/them'
	1pl	<i>kan in hmu</i> 'we see ourselves/each other'
	2pl	<i>kan hmu che u</i> 'we see you'

The second person object agreement particle differs from Lai in (a) form: *che* versus *in*, (b) order: following rather than preceding the verb, and (c) its plural particle: *u* versus *hna*. The reflexive and reciprocal particle in Mizo is *in* corresponding to Lai *i*. Finally, third person objects in Mizo cannot be distinguished in terms of number agreement; this reduces the number of Mizo forms to eight. This is not a matter of homophony induced by coalescence, but a systematic restriction of the system.

In Lai there are an additional ten agreement forms for transitive verbs with a second person subject, as in (ix) and (x).

(ix)	s		
1	<i>na ka hmuh</i>		'you see me'
2	<i>naa hmuh</i>		'you see yourself'
3	<i>na hmuh</i>		'you see him/her/it'
2pl	<i>na kan hmuh</i>		'you see us'
3pl	<i>na hmuh hna</i>		'you see them'

(x)	pl		
1	<i>nan ka hmuh</i>		'you see me'
3	<i>nan hmuh</i>		'you see him/her/it'
1pl	<i>nan kan hmuh</i>		'you see us'
2pl	<i>nan i hmu</i>		'you see yourselves/each other'
3pl	<i>nan hmuh hna</i>		'you see them'

Lai agreement has the following properties of interest here in addition to those already noted: (a) the first person object agreement particles are *ka* and *kan*, identical to the corresponding first person subject agreement particles; (b) the plural object agreement particle *hna* is not used with a first person object; (c) the first person object agreement particles remain intact in the presence of a second person subject agreement particle; and (d) no ambiguity arises with the first person agreement particles *ka* and *kan*: they show object agreement if preceded by a distinct subject agreement particle, and subject agreement otherwise.

The Mizo forms are given in (xv) to (xvii).

(xi)	s(pl)	
1	<i>min hmu</i>	'you see me/us'
2	<i>i in hmu</i>	'you see yourself'
3	<i>i hmu</i>	'you see him/her/it/them'
(xii)	pl	
3	<i>in hmu</i>	'you see him/her/it/them'
2pl	<i>in in hmu</i>	'you see yourselves/each other'

As in (vii) and (viii), the number of a third person object is not distinguished in (xi) and (xii). But the first person object agreement particle *min* (or in some varieties of Mizo *mi*) not only does not distinguish singular from plural, but precedes the verb and excludes the second person subject agreement particles *i* or *in*, thus suppressing the indication of the number of the subject as well.³ Thus Mizo has only five forms here corresponding to ten in Lai. The homophony of the plural second person subject agreement particle *in* with the reflexive and reciprocal object particle *in* does not result in ambiguity: it shows a reflexive and reciprocal object if preceded by a distinct subject agreement particle, and second person plural subject agreement otherwise.

In Lai there are ten additional agreement forms for transitive verbs with a third person subject, as in (xviii) and (xix).

(xiii)	s	
1	<i>a ka hmuh</i>	'he/she/it sees me'
2	<i>an hmuh</i>	'he/she/it sees you'
3	<i>a hmuh</i> <i>aa hmu</i>	'he/she/it sees him/her/it' 'he/she/it sees him/her/itself'
1pl	<i>a kan hmuh</i>	'he/she/it sees us'
2pl	<i>an hmuh hna</i>	'he/she/it sees you'
3pl	<i>a hmuh hna</i>	'he/she/it sees them'
(xiv)	pl	
1	<i>an kan hmuh</i>	'they see me'
2	<i>an in hmu</i>	'they see you'
3	<i>an hmuh</i>	'they see him/her/it'

1pl	<i>an kan hmuh</i>	'they see us'
2pl	<i>an in hmuh hna</i>	'they see you'
3pl	<i>an hmuh hna</i>	'they see them'
	<i>an i hmu</i>	'they see themselves/each other'

Lai agreement has the following properties of interest here in addition to those already noted: (a) there is coalescence between the second person object agreement particle *in* and the reflexive object agreement particle *i* with the third person singular subject agreement particle *a*, producing *an* and *aa*, parallel to those with the first person singular subject, *kan* and *kaa*; and (b) the reflexive forms co-exist with non-reflexive forms, the former in case the subject and object have the same referent, the latter in case they do not. In the same way as for first person subjects, the coalescence of *a* and *in* results in potential ambiguity; *an* can show agreement with a third person singular subject and a second person object, or alternatively with a third person plural subject and a third person object.

The Mizo forms are given in (xv) and (xvi).

(xv)	s(pl)	
1	<i>min hmu</i>	'he/she/it/they see me/us'
2	<i>a hmu che</i>	'he/she/it sees you'
3	<i>a hmu</i>	'he/she/it sees him/her/it/them'
	<i>a in hmu</i>	'he/she/it sees him/her/itself'
2pl	<i>a hmu che u</i>	'he/she/it sees you'
(xvi)	pl	
2	<i>an hmu che</i>	'they see you'
3	<i>an hmu</i>	'they see him/her/it/them'
2pl	<i>an hmu che u</i>	'they see you'
3pl	<i>an in hmu</i>	'they see themselves/each other'

As in (vii), (viii), (xi) and (xii) the number of a first or third person object is not distinguished. The first person object particle *min* (or *mi*) excludes the third person subject agreement *a* or *an*, so that not only the number, but also the person of the subject is suppressed. Thus even though we have repeated *min hmu* in (xv), it is not distinct from the one in (xi), and here eight

Mizo forms correspond to fourteen in Lai.

The agreement pattern in the imperative mood differs in the treatment of subjects. The pre-verbal particles illustrated in (iii) through (xvi) are replaced by post-verbal particles which combine person and number with mood. The Lai intransitive (or transitive with third person singular object) particles are as in (xvii).

(xvii)	s	pl
1	<i>kal ning</i> 'let me go'	<i>kal u sih</i> 'let us go'
2	<i>kal</i> 'go!'	<i>kal u</i> 'go!'
3	<i>kal seh</i> 'may he/she/it go'	<i>kal hna seh</i> 'may they go'

The first person singular imperative particle is *ning*, in the plural, the number particle *u* is distinct from the person particle *sih*. The ordinary second person imperative is the bare verb stem, with a plural particle *u*. The third person imperative particle is *seh*, with the plural particle *hna*, homophonous with the second and third person object plural particle. The corresponding Mizo particles are as in (xviii).

(xviii)	s(pl)	pl
1		<i>kal ang u</i> 'let us go'
2	<i>kal rawh</i> 'go!'	<i>kal rawh u</i> 'go!'
3	<i>kal rawh se</i> 'may he/she/it/they go'	

Mizo has an imperative particle *rawh* which co-occurs with either the second person plural particle *u* or the third person subject particle *se*.⁴ Thus the number of a third person subject is not distinguished. It also lacks a first person singular imperative, so that there are four forms corresponding to six in Lai.

Transitive imperatives in general preserve the same object agreement particles as in indicatives. Thus in Lai we find the ten forms in (xix) and (xx), the ten in (xxi) and (xxii) and the ten in (xxiii) and (xxiv).

(xix)	s	
1	<i>i zoh ning</i>	'let me look at myself'
2	<i>in zoh ning</i>	'let me look at you'

	3	<i>zoh ning</i>	'let me look at him/her/it'
	2pl	<i>in zoh hna ning</i>	'let me look at you'
	3pl	<i>zoh hna ning</i>	'let me look at them'
(xx)	pl		
	2	<i>in zoh u sih</i>	'let us look at you'
	3	<i>zoh u sih</i>	'let us look at him/her/it'
	1pl	<i>i zoh u sih</i>	'let us look at ourselves'
	2pl	<i>in zoh hna u sih</i>	'let us look at you'
	3pl	<i>zoh hna u sih</i>	'let us look at them'
(xxi)	s		
	1	<i>ka zoh</i>	'look at me!'
	2	<i>i zoh</i>	'look at yourself!'
	3	<i>zoh</i>	'look at him/her/it!'
	1pl	<i>kan zoh</i>	'look at us!'
	3pl	<i>zoh hna</i>	'look at them!'
(xxii)	pl		
	1	<i>ka zoh u</i>	'look at me!'
	3	<i>zoh u</i>	'look at him/her/it!'
	1pl	<i>kan zoh u</i>	'look at us!'
	2pl	<i>i zoh u</i>	'look at yourselves!'
	3pl	<i>zoh hna u</i>	'look at them!'
(xxiii)	s		
	1	<i>ka zoh seh</i>	'may he/she/it look at me'
	2	<i>in zoh seh</i>	'may he/she/it look at you'
	3	<i>zoh seh</i>	'may he/she/it look at him/her/it'
		<i>i zoh seh</i>	'may he/she/it look at himself/herself/itself'
	1pl	<i>kan zoh seh</i>	'may he/she/it look at us'
	2pl	<i>in zoh hna seh</i>	'may he/she/it/they look at you'
	3pl	<i>zoh hna seh</i>	'may he/she/it/them look at him/her/it/them'

(xxiv)	pl		
1	<i>ka zoh hna seh</i>		'may they look at me'
1pl	<i>kan zoh hna seh</i>		'may they look at us'
3pl	<i>i zoh hna seh</i>		'may they look at themselves'

Because of the use of the particle *hna* to mark a plural subject in third person imperatives, as well as to mark a plural second or third person object, in the forms *in zoh hna seh* and *zoh hna seh*, either the subject or the object or both must be plural. Thus there are only ten imperative forms corresponding to fourteen indicatives.

In Mizo, we find the two forms in (xxv), the six in (xxvi) and (xxvii), and the five in (xxviii).

(xxv)	pl		
3	<i>en ang u</i>		'let us look at him/her/it/them'
1pl	<i>in en ang u</i>		'let us look at ourselves'

(xxvi)	s		
1	<i>min en rawh</i>		'look at me/us!'
2	<i>in en rawh</i>		'look at yourself!'
3	<i>en rawh</i>		'look at him/her/it/them!'

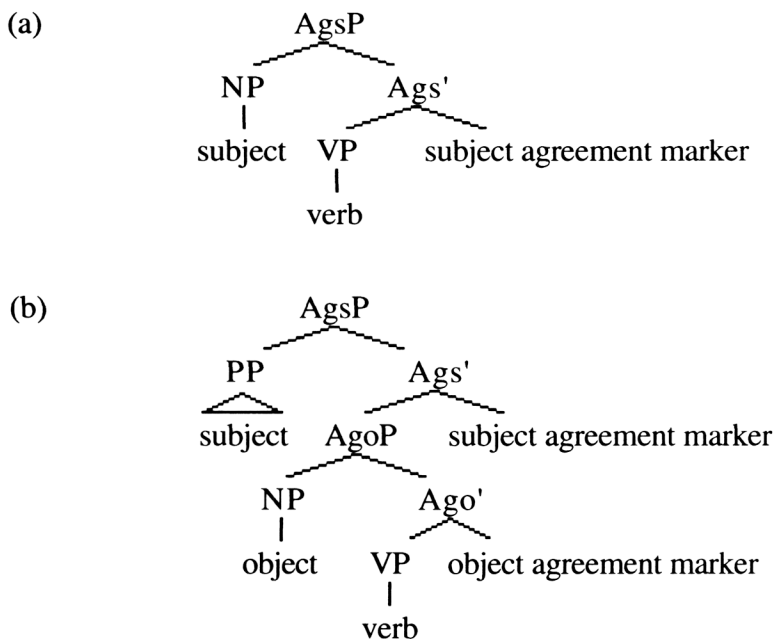
(xxvii)	pl		
1	<i>min en rawh u</i>		'look at me/us!'
3	<i>en rawh u</i>		'look at him/her/it/them!'
2pl	<i>in en rawh u</i>		'look at yourselves!'

(xxviii)	s(pl)		
1	<i>min en rawh se</i>		'may he/she/it/they look at me/us'
2	<i>en che rawh se</i>		'may he/she/it/they look at you'
3	<i>en rawh se</i>		'may he/she/it/they look at him/her/it/them'
	<i>in en rawh se</i>		'may he/she/it/they look at him/her/it/themselves'

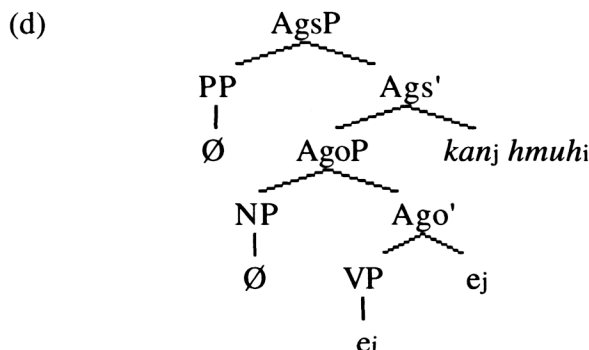
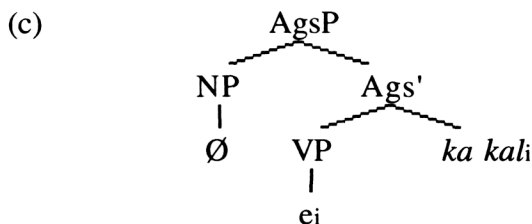
2pl *en che u rawh se* 'may he/she/it/they look at
 you'

As a rough overall comparison, we can count the number of distinct forms: 64 in Lai and 34 in Mizo. In this count, intransitive forms are considered to overlap transitive, and so are not counted separately. By this measure the Lai agreement system is roughly twice as complex as Mizo. But there are differences between the two languages not reflected in these numbers.

As noted above, first person object agreement in Mizo differs from Lai in at least three ways: (i) it is morphologically distinct from first person subject agreement, (ii) it does not distinguish number, and (iii) it excludes marking of subject agreement. The third property is the one of most interest: syntactically subject and object agreement constitute distinct projections whose heads are the agreement markers. That is, the syntactic structure of a clause with subject agreement but no object agreement is as in (a), and of a sentence with both as in (b).

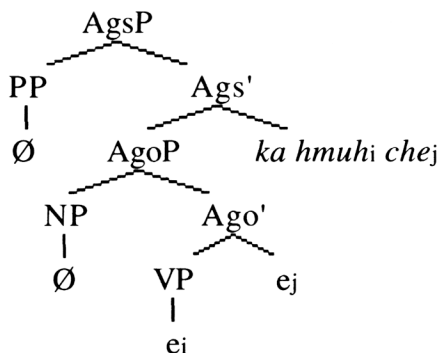


Finite verbs are formed morphologically by joining the verb and the agreement markers, and they actually appear within the highest agreement position. The components are linked with the syntactic structure as illustrated in (c) for both languages, or as in (d) and (e) for Lai and Mizo respectively. In Lai (d) the object agreement marker appears preverbally while in Mizo (e) it appears postverbally. The order of elements within the verb complex is determined morphologically and is irrelevant to the syntax. Thus in Lai the subject and object agreement markers coalesce into a single syllable, and object plural agreement appears postverbally.



A syntactic account of the restriction on Mizo first person object agreement would involve replacing (b) with a structure having only a single agreement marker position for such sentences. But there are at least two reasons why that would not offer a satisfactory account of the phenomenon. First of all, Mizo provides ample evidence that, for some clauses at least, an independent object agreement projection must exist. Clauses with second person object agreement *che* or *che u* in (vii), (viii),

(e)



(xv) and (xvi) have independent subject agreement markers; the interaction seen with first person object agreement is precluded here because the second person object agreement markers follow the verb. The reflexive object agreement marker *in* in (vii), (viii), (xi), (xii), (xv), and (xvi) both precedes the verb and co-occurs with the full range of subject agreement. Secondly, a purely syntactic account in terms of a single pre-verbal agreement position would not in itself explain why first person object agreement is dominant: that is, why if the object is first person, *min* must appear, but the subject agreement markers *i*, *in*, *a* and *an* are suppressed in the presence of *min*. The preferable account is to assume that the interaction of *min* with *i*, *in*, *a* and *an* is rather a morphological phenomenon. That is the syntactic structure of sentences with *min* is as in (b), but *i*, *in*, *a* and *an* disappear (or perhaps fail to appear) as a consequence of the morphological formation of finite verbs, a more extreme case of the coalescences observed in Lai.

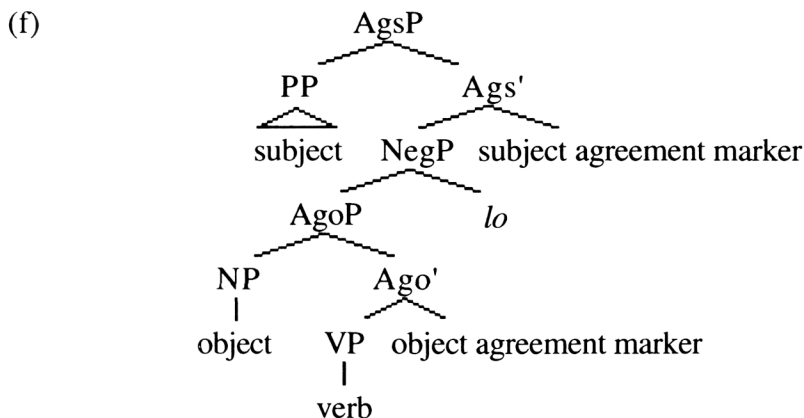
Though Mizo second person object agreement does not differ from Lai in the three ways noted for first person object agreement (in Lai as well as Mizo, second person object agreement (i) is distinct from second person subject agreement, (ii) distinguishes plural from singular, and (iii) does not preclude first or third person subject agreement), still it differs in other ways. Its postverbal position has already been mentioned, but there is more to say about its location in the verb complex. Consider the following examples in comparison with their counterparts in (v) and (vii).

- (1) (Lai) *kan hmu hna lo* 'I don't see you'
kan hmu hna lai 'I will see you'
kan hmu hna cang 'I have seen you'

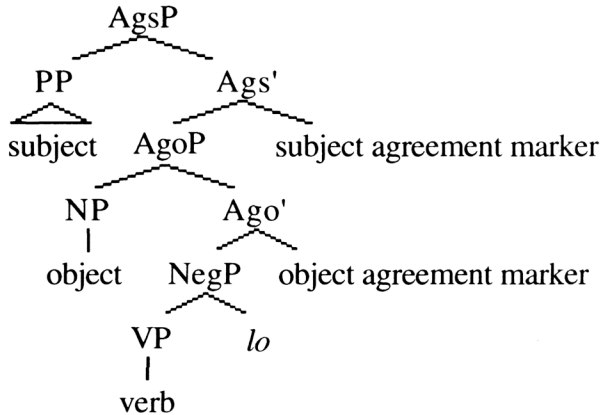
- (Mizo) *ka hmu lo che u* 'I don't see you'
ka hmu ang che u 'I will see you'
ka hmu tawh che u 'I have seen you'

In the Lai examples in (1), the second person object agreement marker is *-n* in *kan*, while the plural marker *hna* follows the verb. In the corresponding Mizo examples, both the second person and plural object agreement markers *che u* follow the verb. But in Lai the negative particle *lo*, the future particle *lai* and the perfect particle *cang* all follow the postverbal plural object agreement marker, while in Mizo the corresponding particles *lo*, *ang* and *tawh* all precede both the second person and plural object agreement markers. As with the behavior of Mizo first person object agreement, this difference might be accounted for either syntactically or morphologically.

In general we assume that negation, tense and aspect particles constitute syntactic projections just as agreement particles do. Thus there will be a negative phrase (NegP) whose head is the particle *lo* in both languages. One way to deal with the order difference observed in the first examples in (1) is to assume that the syntactic relation between NegP and AgoP is as in (f) for Lai but as in (g) for Mizo.



(g)



Finite verb formation absorbs the negative particle along with the agreement particles, and the order reflects the syntactic hierarchy. Exactly the same account can be given for the tense particle *lai* or *ang*, which heads a tense phrase (TP) and the aspect particle *cang* or *tawh*, which heads an aspect phrase (AsP). The negative, tense and aspect particle may co-occur in both languages in the order *cang lai lo* or *tawh ang lo*, but they always follow object agreement in Lai but precede in Mizo.

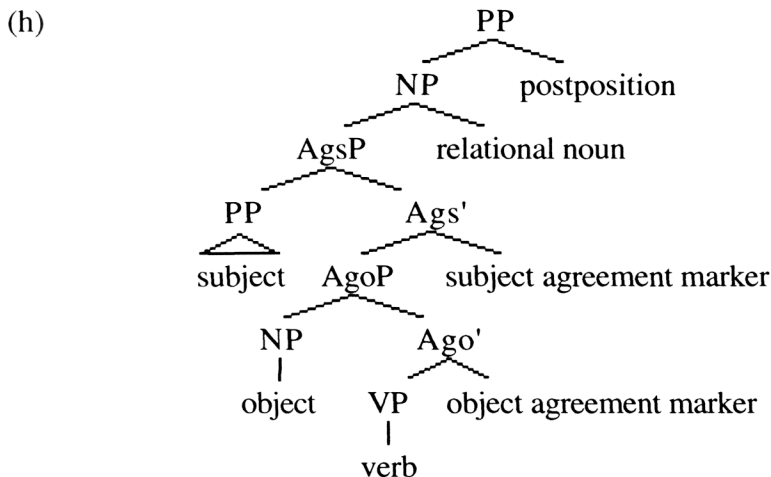
Alternatively, it could be that the syntactic structure of Mizo is (f), the same as in Lai, but when finite verb formation takes place, the second person agreement markers *che u* are regularly left in final position. In effect, the negation, tense and aspect particles are treated as infixes in the process. Examples like those in (1) seem equally amenable to either analysis. (1) does not exhaust the relevant cases, however; examples like those in (2) and (3) need to be considered as well.

- (2) (Lai) *kan hmuh hna tikah* 'when I see you'
kan hmuh hna hlanah 'before I see you'
kan hmuh hna hnuin 'after I see you'

- (Mizo) *ka hmuh che hunah* 'when I see you'
ka hmuh che hmain 'before I see you'
ka hmuh che hnuah 'after I see you'

- (3) (Mizo) *ka hmuh hun che ah*
ka hmuh hma che in
ka hmuh hnu che ah

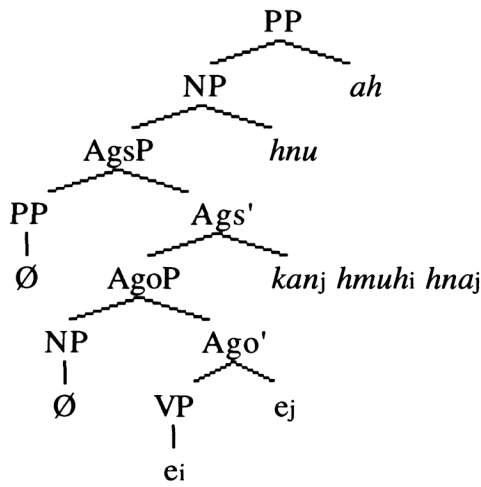
The examples in (2) are adverbial clauses which we take to be postpositional phrases, with head *ah* or *in* in either language.⁵ The complement in each case is a noun phrase headed by a 'relational noun' whose complement is a finite clause as illustrated in (b). That is, their structure is as in (h).



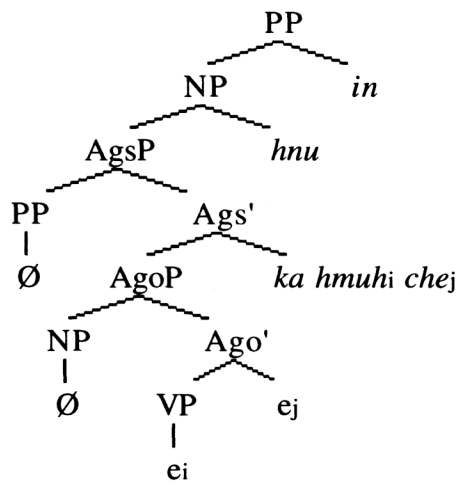
The examples in (3) are variants of the Mizo examples in (2) with a different order of the second person object agreement marker, which may follow the relational noun.⁶ In this case, no syntactic solution involving change of hierarchy is viable; the complement of an object agreement phrase must be a verb phrase and not a noun phrase, and the complement of a relational noun must be a clause (a subject agreement phrase) and not a verb phrase. In any case such a distorted structure could not account appropriately for the meaning.⁷

A solution can be offered using morphology. The structure of a Lai sentence with the syntax in (h) could be something like (i), in which the subject and object positions are empty, and the finite verb fills the subject agreement (clause head) position. And the Mizo examples in (2) could have the same structure, as in (j).

(i)

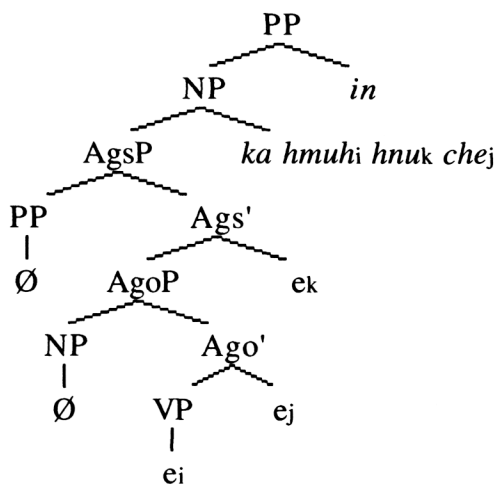


(j)



In the case of (3), Mizo may allow a structure like (k) in which an additional layer of morphology is seen. The relational noun is incorporated into the verb complex, inside the second person marker just as in the Mizo examples in (1). In the resulting structure the verb complex fills the relational noun position one level higher than the subject agreement position.

(k)



It might be that the examples in (3) in fact have structures as in (k) rather than (i) or (j), so that independent evidence is needed as to what exactly constitutes the verb complex in these languages.

Notes

¹ Mizo, also known as Lushai or Lushei, is the major language of the Indian state of Mizoram. It is also spoken in northern and central Chin State, Myanmar. Standard Lai and Mizo orthography is used throughout, except that alveolar stops are written *tr* and *thr* instead of *t* and *th* with a subscribed dot. I am grateful to Ms. Go Deih Lun for her assistance in writing this paper, and to those present at the conference in Bangkok, particularly David Peterson.

² Both Lai and Mizo have a second set of pronouns incorporating *mah* 'self'. They show corresponding differences.

(i')	s	pl
1	<i>keimah</i> 'I'	<i>kanmah</i> 'we'
2	<i>nangmah</i> 'you'	<i>nanmah</i> 'you'
3	<i>amah</i> 'he/she/it'	<i>anmah</i> 'they'

(ii')	s	pl
1	<i>keimah</i> 'I'	<i>keimahni</i> 'we'
2	<i>nangmah</i> 'you'	<i>nangmahni</i> 'you'
3	<i>amah</i> 'he/she/it'	<i>anmahni</i> 'they'

³ In the Mizo Bible (1964) there are exceptions to this, which are not possible in current Mizo:

- (xi) *i mi baptis ka trûl zâwk si a*
 'you should baptize me' (Mt. 3:14)
i mi chhawrna tûr hi
 'what you would have got from me' (Mt. 15: 5)

Such examples are few, and it is difficult to discern what differentiates them from the mass of others in which the subject agreement marker is suppressed (*i* in these phrases). The first example involves an overt contrast between the subject and object, while the second seems to be nominalized.

⁴ Mizo has a second imperative in which *che* appears apparently marking agreement with a second person subject.

- (xviii) *kal ang che kal ang che u*
 Examples are numerous in the Mizo Bible (1964):
 (xviii) *kan batte hi min ngaidam ang che*
 'forgive us our debts' (Mt. 6:12)
lungkham suh ang che u
 'do not worry' (Mt. 10:19)

⁵ Lai and Mizo share the postpositions *ah* and *ni*. But their exact meanings and functions differ between the two languages in rather complex ways. For a discussion of the facts in Lai, see Bedell (2000b).

As noted on p. 2, the Lai verb *hmuh* has a variant form *hmu*. In Mizo, the verb *hmu* has the variant *hmuh*. Thus this variation is also common to the two languages, but the details of usage differ in rather complex ways. On 'verb stem alternation' in Lai, see Lehman (1996) and Kathol and Van Bik (2000). On the same phenomenon in Mizo, see Lorrain (1990) and Chhangte (1993).

⁶ It is also possible for *che* to appear after the postposition, as in (4):

- (4) *ka hmuh hunah che*
 ka hmuh hmain che
 ka hmuh hnuah che

Such examples are archaic in current Mizo, but are found in the Mizo Bible (1964):

- (4') *dâwta sual tinrênga an hêk hunah che u*
 'when they tell various lies about you' (Mt. 5:11)
 he khuaah hian an tihduhdah hunah che u
 'when they persecute you in this town' (Mt. 10:23)

⁷ I am grateful to David Peterson for pointing out that forms analogous to (3) are in fact possible in Lai.

- (3') *kan hmuh tik hna ah* 'when I see you'
 kan hmuh hlan hna ah 'before I see you'
 kan hmuh hnu hna in 'after I see you'

Nevertheless, since the Lai particle *hna* pluralizes nouns as well as verbs, the situation in Lai remains different from that in Mizo (where *u* does not pluralize nouns). The construction is of interest in the support it provides for the analysis of Lai relational nouns (Cf. Bedell 2000b). It seems that forms like (4) do not exist in Lai.

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