CASES AND CLAUSES IN LAO

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The purpose of this paper is to present a syntactic analysis of Lao at the clause level. The format and approach employed will be that used by Nguyen Dang Liem in the study *Cases, Clauses and Sentences in Vietnamese* (Liem 1975). This approach utilises the principles and methods of both tagmemics and the lexiclex model of case grammar. This eclectic approach has been developed in this work and in earlier studies (Cook 1971, Liem 1971a, 1971b, 1974 and 1976, Heidi Platt 1970, and John T. Platt 1971) to provide a suitable framework for studies in contrastive analysis. Although the theoretical orientations of tagmemics and those of case grammar recognise and attempt to describe models of linguistic structure fundamentally different in many respects, the combination of their basic principles employed in this framework can provide a systematic and pedagogically useful analysis of some of the basic syntactic and semantic properties of a language for contrastive purposes. The findings of this study will be presented in two sections, the first dealing with case relations and case forms and the second with clause types and verb classes.

The tagmemic model of grammar is based on the concept that syntax is organised in hierarchical levels, and that the basic unit of analysis at each level is the tagmeme, a unit consisting of a slot and filler class. This study concentrates on the tagmemes that constitute the clause level of Lao. Current tagmemic theory, drawing upon the concepts of case grammar, recognises that the grammatical slots of this level have overt syntactic relationships (case forms) and covert semantic relationships (case relations) with the predicative verb, which is considered to be the central slot of the clause (Pike 1970 and Liem 1975). This study will attempt to define these properties for the clause tagmeme of Lao. The occurrence of Fillmore's (1968) set of case relations and case forms
along with additional case forms posited by Liem (1975 and 1976) will be assigned to clause level tagmemes in the form of syntactic features in accordance with the lexicase model of grammar (Starosta 1971a, 1971b and 1973). At the case level of analysis, the possible co-occurrences in a clause tagmeme of members of the set of case relations and the set of case forms established for Lao will first be determined. Then, clause types will be classified in terms of the case features marking their constituent tagmemes.

The data for this study was obtained through fieldwork with five native speakers of Lao. Two informants used are bilingual in English and Lao, one bilingual in Lao and Thai, and the other two basically monolingual with a limited knowledge of English. The elicitation procedure used with the bilingual speakers was to present each informant with an English sentence and request a translation of it into Lao. The procedure used with the other informants involved using an interpreter to present a situation or event to them and requesting a Lao sentence describing the situation or event from the informants. The system of transcription used in this study is that employed in the text, Lao Basic Course, published by the Foreign Service Institute (FSI 1970).

1. CASE FORMS AND CASE RELATIONS

1.1. LAO CASE RELATIONS AND CASE FORMS

Lao has the following twelve universal case relations, as defined by Fillmore (1968) and Liem (1975 and 1976).

1. AGENTIVE (AGT) case: the actant that instigates the action.
2. OBJECTIVE (OBJ) case: the actant whose rule in the clause is identified by the verb itself.
3. DATIVE (DAT) case: the animate actant receiving the action or effect of the verb.
4. BENEFACTIVE (BEN) case: the actant receiving the benefit of the verbal action.
5. COMITATIVE (COM) case: the actant accompanying another actant in the verbal activity or state.
6. INSTRUMENT (INS) case: the inanimate object or force causally involved in the verbal action or state.
7. LOCATIVE (LOC) case: the actant indicating the spatial location or area of the verbal action or state.
8. DIRECTION (DIR) case: the actant indicating the directional orientation of the verbal action or state.
9. TIME (TIM) case: the actant indicating the temporal setting of the verbal action or state.
10. SOURCE (SRC) case: the actant indicating the spatial or temporal point from which the verbal action began.
(11) GOAL (GOL) case: the actant indicating the spatial or temporal end point toward which the verbal action is oriented.

(12) EXTENT (EXT) case: the actant indicating the spatial or temporal extent through which the verbal action has occurred.

These case relations represent universal semantic relations holding between a predicate and its arguments within a clause in accordance with Fillmore’s standard case grammar approach (Fillmore 1968 and 1971). Fillmore's principle of limiting the possible occurrences of each case to one instance per clause will be adhered to in this study for the most part. However, as Starosta (1973) has noted, this constraint seems too strong, in that more than one instance of a single case per clause can be allowed providing that the NP's marked for this case are coreferential. Therefore, in this study, coreferential NP's having the same semantic relation to the verb of the clause, will be marked with the same case relation despite their co-occurrence in the same clause.

There are ten case forms, or case realisations, into which the universal case relations are pigeon-holed. These forms are defined either in terms of position of the noun phrase relative to the verb or in terms of its occurrence with certain prepositions. Since the level of analysis is the clause level, these prepositions will not be assigned case frames as in the standard lexicase model. Only the main verb of each clause will host a case frame, which will specify both the required case relations it takes as well as the case forms with which they may co-occur. Accordingly, the entire prepositional phrase tagmeme rather than the case marking preposition will be marked for case form as well as case relation. This restriction of the level of case analysis to the clause level tagmemes has been made only to facilitate the classification and comparison of Lao clause types for pedagogical purposes. Overt case forms for tagmemes of the clause level, then, are marked by the following characteristics in Lao:

(1) NM (nominative): marked by the position immediately preceding the verb.
(2) O (objective): marked by the position immediately following the verb.
(3) D (dative): marked by the preposition hâj.
(4) B (benefactive): marked by the preposition sâm làp.
(5) C (comitative): marked by the preposition nâm.
(6) L (locative): marked by the preposition jüu.
(7) I (instrumental): marked by the preposition dùaj.
(8) Dl (directional): marked by the prepositions māa, paj, khâm, lōŋ, wâj,  sóc, khâm, khâw, taam,n hảa, sâj and mêa.
(9) Sr (source): marked by the prepositions câak and têe.
(10) G (goal): marked by the prepositions thâŋ and hôt.

The set of prepositions functioning as case markers in Lao consists of both non-derived (intrinsic) prepositions and derived prepositions (coverbs) as defined in Kullavanijaya 1974 and Clark 1975. The derived prepositions or 'coverbs' are the dative marker hâj, the comitative marker nâm, the locative marker jūn, the source marker câak, as well as the entire set of direction and goal marking prepositions. Each of these derived prepositions is derivationally related to a homophonous and synonymous verb in the language hosting the same case frame. The direction and goal marking prepositions are related to a set of adverbial particles usually occurring after an object NP as part of a transitive compound verb (FSI 1970). However, neither the verbal nor adverbial occurrence of these forms functions as a case marker. Since in the lexicase model, the syntactic category of a lexical item is determined solely by its structural position in a phrase marker, a separate lexical item must be listed in the lexicon for its occurrence in each kind of construction, unless a totally productive derivational rule can be written as a redundancy rule. Homophonous forms of different grammatical categories, but with identical syntactic-semantic features are related by lexical derivation rules. The markers listed above function as case form markers at the clause level only when marked as prepositions, or coverbs, in the lexicon enabling them to occur in construction with a noun phrase in a prepositional phrase. Therefore, the lexical items listed above must co-occur with another verb (the main verb) and immediately precede a noun phrase in a prepositional phrase tagmeme, in order to mark that tagmeme with the appropriate case form. For example, considering the sentences 1-5 below, only in the second and fifth sentences does paj function as a coverb marking a case form.

(1) lâaw lēēn paj.
[+NM] [+OBJ]
'He ran away.'

(2) lâaw lēēn paj wîaŋcan.
[+NM] [+Dl] [+OBJ] [+DIR]
'He ran to Vientiane.'

(3) lâaw paj sîyy pûm.
[+NM] [+O] [+OBJ] [PURPOSE]
'He went to buy books.'
(4) lăaw pāj wīaŋcan.
[+NM] [+O]
[+OBJ] [+DIR]
'He went to Vientiane.'

(5) lăaw aw pỳm pāj wīaŋcan.
[+NM] [+DI]
[+AGT] [+DIR]
'He took books to Vientiane.'

(6) lăaw aw pỳm pāj.
[+NM] [+O]
[+AGT] [+OBJ]
'He took books.'

In the first and sixth sentence pāj is an adverbial particle since it is followed by no NP. In sentence #4 it is a main verb since there is no other verb in the sentence. In sentence #3 it is also a main verb, followed by an embedded purpose clause in the +O case form. The other non-derived or intrinsic prepositions, are termed as such since they are derivationally related to no other forms marked for another grammatical category. That is, they occur only in prepositional slots as pāj does in sentences #2 and #5. Both types of prepositions, however, function identically as case markers with respect to the main verb of the clause.

Most studies using the lexicase model (Kullavanijaya 1974, Clark 1975 and Manley 1971) have combined the locative, source, goal, and directional case relations into a single case termed 'locative'. Fillmore (1968) determined that it was unnecessary to posit separate cases for these since their distinctions are superficial and can be accounted for by the character of the verb hosting them. Kullavanijaya (1974) and Clark (1975) characterise their differences in terms of inherent syntactic-semantic features marking locative verbs and locative case markers, classifying the latter into markers of sub-case forms. The features used in their analysis are: [+dir] - (direction of motion or action), [+go1] - (extrapolated end point of directional action), [+src] - (starting point of directional action), and [+terminus] - (actual end point of +go1 action). Lexical redundancy rules establish the relationship among these features as reflected in their definitions above. In this study, however, the semantic functions grouped together in the locative case relation in the analyses mentioned will be distributed among the LOC, DIR, GOL, SRC, and EXT case relations as previously defined in order to simplify the semantic distinctions determined by these features for contrastive analysis. Likewise, the sub-case forms established by Kullavanijaya's and Clark's semantic-syntactic features will be maintained as separate case forms to more clearly
illustrate the semantic functions of their case markers. The forms
distinguished here, nevertheless, can be clearly correlated with the
sub-case forms in terms of features: +L - [-dir], +D ] [+dir, +gol,
(-ter)], +Sr - [+dir, +src], and +O - [+dir, +ter].

The definitions of the cases +SRC, +GOL, and +EXT indicate that
either temporal or spatial relationships can be represented by these
cases. The definition of +TIM states that a temporal relationship is
inherent in this case, whereas the +LOC and +DIR cases indicate inher-
ently spatial relationships. An examination of the possible co-
occurrents of case forms and case relationships reveals that although
a case form is listed as realising a particular case relation, when
there is more than one case marker for that form, only a specified sub-
set of these markers can realise a temporal or a spatial relation.
These restrictions indicate the need to establish sub-case forms clas-
sified by the syntactic-semantic features [+temporal] and [+spatial].
Case markers will be assigned these features according to their ability
to mark forms realising temporal or spatial sub-case relations. The
case relations +LOC, +DIR, +SRC, +GOL (since +TIM and +EXT occur only
in the +O form in Lao, they will not be considered here, although this
may not be true for other languages) co-occur with +L, +D, +SR, and +G
markers which must be assigned these syntactic-semantic selectional
features as a restriction on their co-occurrence with NP’s with these
semantic features.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lao</th>
<th>[-tem, +spa]</th>
<th>-tem, +spa</th>
<th>[-tem, +spa]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>jūu</td>
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<td>-tem, +spa</td>
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<tr>
<td>pāj</td>
<td></td>
<td>-tem, +spa</td>
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<td>māā</td>
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<td>-tem, +spa</td>
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<td>khêñ</td>
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<td>-tem, +spa</td>
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<td>lōŋ</td>
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<td>wāj</td>
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<td>śok</td>
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<td>-tem, +spa</td>
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<td>khâam</td>
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<td>-tem, +spa</td>
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<td>khâw</td>
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<td>-tem, +spa</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In Lao, it seems that the more general usage of prepositions, with
both temporal and spatial relations, is restricted to a small set,
basically +G and +SRC markers, with the exception of hāa. It is prob-
able that the +tem usage came about due to the metaphorical extension
of the basic [+spa] usage to a limited set of case form markers in
accordance with the localist theory (Anderson 1971). However, this
question is far beyond the scope of this paper. The features proposed
will be used only to illustrate this restriction on case marker usage.
Although this restriction occurs at the phrase level, it has been briefly
discussed because of its pedagogical usefulness.
There are 22 possible combinations of case relations and case forms in Lao as illustrated in the two-dimensional matrix chart below:

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<tr>
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<th>NM</th>
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<th>D</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>Di</th>
<th>Sr</th>
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<td>TIM</td>
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</table>

These possible combinations of case forms and case relations can be represented in terms of features marking noun phrases that fill clause level tagmemes in accordance with the lexicase model (Starosta 1973). The following example sentences illustrate the co-occurrence of case forms and relations in Lao, as listed in the above chart.

(1) [+NM, +AGT] is hosted by transitive, agentive verbs.
   (1.1) *lāw* sīy naṃsīyphīm.
         [+NM]  [+O]
         [+AGT]  [+OBJ]
         'He bought a newspaper.'

(2) [+NM, +OBJ] is hosted by copulative, stative, and intransitive verbs, and the submissive verb thyyk.
   (2.1) *lāw* mēēn naṃsīy.
         [+NM]  [+O]
         [+OBJ]  [+OBJ]
         'He is a doctor.'

   (2.2) *lāw* sāa lāaj.
         [+NM]  [+OBJ]
         'He is very slow.'
(2.3) láaw naaw lǎaj.
[+NM] [+OBJ]
"He is very cold."

(2.4) láaw taaj lêw.
[+NM] [+OBJ]
"He is dead already."

(2.5) láaw jūu wianćcan.
[+NM] [+O] [+OBJ] [+LOC]
"He lives in Vientiène."

(2.6) láaw paj wianćcan.
[+NM] [+O] [+OBJ] [+DIR]
"He went to Vientiène."

(2.7) láaw máa hōot wianćcan.
[+NM] [+G1] [+OBJ] [+GOL]
"He arrived in Vientiène."

(2.8a) láaw thỳyk paj.
[+NM] [+O] [+OBJ] [+INS]
"He was forced to go."

(2.8b) láaw thỳyk khaw dīi.
[+NM] [+O] [+OBJ] [+INS]
"He was beaten by them."

(2.8c) lōt láaw thỳyk fāj máj.
[+NM] [+O] [+OBJ] [+INS]
"His car caught fire (burned)."

(2.8d) lōt láaw thỳyk khaw lāk lêw.
[+NM] [+O] [+OBJ] [+INS]
"They stole his car."

(3) [+NM, +DAT] is hosted by transitive dative verbs.

(3.1a) láaw huùcák láaw.
[+NM] [+O] [+DAT] [+OBJ]
"He knows her."

(3.1b) láaw hùu láaw paj lêw.
[+NM] [+O] [+DAT] [+OBJ]
"He knows that she went already."
(3.1c) láaw jàak hâj láaw paj lècw.
   [+NM]       [+O]
   [+DAT]      [+OBJ]
   'He wanted her to go.'

Liem (1975) maintains that the combination [+NM, +LOC] occurs in the following clause type:

hâoŋ nii nàaw lâaj.
   [+NM]
   [+LOC]
   'This room is very cold.'

However, most studies in case grammar theory and analysis maintain that the [+OBJ] relation must be present in every clause. Therefore the features [+NM, +OBJ] will be assigned to the noun phrase above. The semantic distinction of this sentence is best marked at the word level with the syntactic-semantic feature [+location] marking the word hâoŋ.

(4) [+NM, +INS] is hosted by transitive, agentive verbs, and by intransitive verbs with 'potent' nouns.

(4.1) mlit duang nii tât slin.
   [+NM]       [+O]
   [+INS]      [+OBJ]
   'This knife cuts meat.'

(4.2) lōt nii paj wînaŋcan. (Only 'potent' nouns can occur in
   [+NM]       [+O]
   [+INS]      [+OBJ]
   this slot.)
   'This car went to Vientiane.'

(5) [+O, +OBJ] is hosted by transitive verbs.

(5.1) láaw sỳy pỳm.
   [+NM]       [+O]
   [+AGT]      [+OBJ]
   'He bought books.'

(5.2) láaw hûu lỳan nàn.
   [+NM]       [+O]
   [+DAT]      [+OBJ]
   'He knows that story.'

(6) [+O, +INS] is hosted only by certain transitive verb and by the
    submissive verb thỳyk.

(6.1) láaw sàj mlit lâaj.
   [+NM]       [+O]
   [+AGT]      [+INS]
   'He used knives a lot.'

(6.2) láaw thỳyk khâw paj.
   [+NM]       [+O]
   [+OBJ]      [+INS]
   'He was forced to go.'
(7) [+O, +LOC] is hosted by intransitive, locative verbs.
   (7.1) láaw jūū wǐāngcan.
         [+NM]    [+O]
         [+OBJ]    [+OBJ]
   'He lives in Vientiane.'

(8) [+O, +DIR] is hosted by intransitive, directional verbs.
   (8.1) láaw pah wǐāngcan.
         [+NM]    [+O]
         [+OBJ]    [+DIR]
   'He went to Vientiane.'

(9) [+O, +TIM] can be hosted by any verb, since it is a sentence level tagmem.
   (9.1) láaw pah mỳy wāān nii.
         [+NM]    [+O]
         [+OBJ]    [+TIM]
   'He went yesterday.'

(10) [+O, +GOL] is hosted by intransitive +GOL verbs.
    (10.1) láaw måa wǐāngcan.
            [+NM]    [+O]
            [+OBJ]    [+GOL]
    'He arrived in Vientiane.'

(11) [+O, +EXT] is hosted by any verb not marked otherwise.
    (11.1) láaw pah sōōŋ mỳy.
            [+NM]    [+O]
            [+OBJ]    [+EXT]
    'He went for two days.'

(11.2) láaw pah sōōŋ lak.
            [+NM]    [+O]
            [+OBJ]    [+EXT]
    'He went for two miles.'

(12) [+D, +DAT] is hosted by transitive agentive verbs.
    (12.1) láaw khâaj pỳm hâj khôj.
            [+NM]    [+O]    [+D]
            [+AGT]    [+OBJ]    [+DAT]
    'He sold books to me.'

(13) [+D, +BEN] is hosted by transitive and intransitive verbs and is structurally ambiguous with sentences containing [+D, +DAT],
    (13.1) láaw sỳy pỳm hâj khôj.
            [+NM]    [+O]    [+D]
            [+AGT]    [+OBJ]    [+BEN]
    'He bought books for me.'
(13.2) lāw  pāj hâj khôj.
[+NM]  [+D]  [+OBJ]  [+BEN]

'He went for me.'

(14) [+B, +BEN] is hosted only by the verb mīi wâj 'to be used'. The meaning associated with the use of this case form is 'purpose' or 'for the use of' rather than 'for the benefit of' as in the sentences above. Consequently, the filler class of this tagmeme consists of nouns derived from verbs.

(14.1) pyyn  mīi wâj sâmlāp njîn.
[+NM]  [+B]  [+OBJ]  [+BEN]

'Guns are for shooting.'

(15) [+C, +COM] can occur with any verb.

(15.1) lāw  pāj nâm khôj.
[+NM]  [+C]  [+OBJ]  [+COM]

'He went with me.'

(16) [+C, +INS] is hosted by intransitive verbs.

(16.1) lāw  pāj nâm lôt.
[+NM]  [+C]  [+OBJ]  [+INS]

'He went by bus.'

(17) [+I, +INS] is hosted by transitive and intransitive verbs.

(17.1) lāw  sîy pỳm  dùaj lâaw  gên.
[+NM]  [+O]  [+I]  [+AGT]  [+OBJ]  [+INS]

'He bought books with Lao money.'

(17.2) lāw  dâenthâng  dùaj khîaŋ  bin.
[+NM]  [+I]  [+OBJ]  [+INS]

'He travels with (by means of) aeroplanes.'

(18) [+I, +SRC] is hosted by the stative verb hēt 'to be made'.

(18.1) pɔ5ŋjlam  nî  hēt  dùaj  këw.
[+NM]  [+I]  [+OBJ]  [+SRC]

'This window is made of glass.'

(19) [+L, +LOC] is hosted by any verb.

(19.1) lāw  sîy pỳm  jùu  amerika.
[+NM]  [+O]  [+L]  [+AGT]  [+OBJ]  [+LOC]

'He bought books in America.'
(20) [+Di, +DIR] is hosted by transitive verbs and by intransitive verbs when the [+D] marking prepositions or coverbs occur in a clause.

(20.1) lăw aw pỳm paj wñącán.
[+NM] [+O] [+D1]
[+AGT] [+OBJ] [+DIR]
'He brought books to Vientiene.'

(20.2) lăw njāān paj wñącán.
[+NM] [+D1]
[+OBJ] [+DIR]
'He walked to Vientiene.'

(21) [+Sr, +SRC] is hosted by all verbs if it is [+tem], and by most verbs if [+spa].

(21.1) lăw máa câak amerika.
[+NM] [+Sr]
[+OBJ] [+SRC]
[-tem]
'He came from America.'

(21.2) lăw paj lèww tētē m BY wán nlí.
[+NM] [+Sr]
[+OBJ] [+SRC]
[+tem]
'He has been gone since yesterday.'

(22) [+G, +GOL] is hosted by all verbs if [+tem] and by most if [+tem].

(22.1) lăw paj thēŋ wñącán.
[+NM] [+G]
[+OBJ] [+GOL]
[-tem]
'He went to (and arrived at) Vientiene.'

There is no +E case form in Lao as in Vietnamese. The case relation +EXT is realised in the +O case form only.

(23) In addition to the case relations discussed, adjectival phrase tagmemes denoting 'manner' function like nominal case relations in respect to a clause level predicate, and seem to take case relations in the same fashion as the cases above. The [+MANNER] slot is filled with an adjective (or stative verb) phrase realised as the +O case form.

(23.1) lăw paj sāā.
[+NM] [+O]
[+OBJ] [+MANNER]
'He went slowly.'

Liem (1975) assigns the case-like relation [+PURPOSE] to embedded sentences forming surface purpose phrases in his analysis of Vietnamese. However, as example #14 illustrates, purpose can be conveyed in Lao by a tagmeme marked [+B, +BEN] filled with the preposition sāmāp and a derived noun. To be consistent in this analysis, purpose phrase tagmemes
will be marked [+BEN] when realised by the +O case form relative to the higher verb, as well. This eliminates the need to set up a separate case-like relation to account for these phrases.

lāaw  pāj syy  naŋsyphṃ.
[+NM]  [+O]
[+AGT]  [+BEN]

'He went to buy newspapers.'

1.2. The case realisations of Lao seem to have the following relative order:

+I  + NM  + Verb  + O  + D  + Sr  + D1  + L  + C

Although it is theoretically possible for all of the case forms to occur in a single clause, it does not seem likely that more than four (or five if one is sentence level rather than clause level) ever do in actual speech. Those sentences containing more than three case marked tagmemes were considered awkward by the informants and tended to be rejected in favour of sentences consisting of two or more clauses.

The occurrence of case forms is restricted to one instance per clause, generally, for either syntactic or performance reasons. There is a syntactic restriction against the co-occurrence of more than one +NM, +I, and +B slot. When two case relations are neutralised by a single case form, two occurrences of that form are allowed if they realise different relations. This occurs in Lao with the +C and +D cases.

lāaw  pāj nām lōt nām khōj.
[+NM]  [+C]  [+C]
[+OBJ]  [+INS]  [+COM]

'He went by bus with me.'

lāaw  khāaw pūm  hāj hākhān  hāj khōj.
[+NM]  [+O]  [+D]  [+D]
[+AGT]  [+OBJ]  [+DAT]  [+BEN]

'He sold the books to the students for me.'

In both cases, however, there seem to be order restrictions requiring the case relation Fillmore classifies as 'inner' to occur before the 'outer' case relation (Fillmore 1971). In other words, the +INS and +DAT must precede the +COM and +BEN cases respectively when they take the same form within a single clause.

Also more than one 'locative' case form (+L, +Di, +Sr, +O) providing they are coreferential (inclusive)(Starosta 1971). When there is more than one occurrence of these cases, the included occurrence must precede the occurrence with more general reference.
lāw sŏn jūn hōng hān jūn wọn̄can.
[+NM] [+L] [+L]
[+OBJ] [+LOC] [+LOC]
'He teaches at a school in Vientiane.'

When two +O case forms occur in a single clause, the second occurrence must be either the +BEN purpose clause or the +MAN adverbial.

lāw khāw pỳm waj.
[+NM] [+O] [+O]
[+AGT] [+OBJ] [+MAN]
'He sells books quickly.'

lāw khāw pỳm sỳ y kīn.
[+NM] [+O] [+O]
[+AGT] [+OBJ] [+BEN]
'He sells books to buy food.'

2. CLAUSE TYPES AND VERB CLASSIFICATION

Lao clauses contain at least an obligatory nucleus predicate tagmeme and an obligatory nucleus nominative tagmeme. There are five types as classified in the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clause Types</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3 (Trans.)</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+Copulative</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Copulative</td>
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<td>+Stative</td>
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<td>-Stative</td>
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<tr>
<td>+Transitive</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Transitive</td>
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<tr>
<td>+Submissive</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Submissive</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2.1. CLAUSE TYPES

2.1.1. Copulative Clause

[[[-NM, +OBJ] [+Verb, +Copula] [+O, +OBJ]]

2.1.2. Stative Clause

[[[+NM, +OBJ] [+Verb, +Stative]]

2.1.3. Submissive Clause

[[[+NM, +OBJ] [+Verb, +Trans., +Submiss.] [+O, +INS]]
The [+O, +INS] in this clause type must be filled by a clause. Only one verb, thyyk, can fill the +Verb slot.

2.1.4. Transitive Clause

[[+NM, +DAT]
[+NM, +AGT] [+Verb, +Trans.] [+O, +OBJ]]
[[+NM, +INS]]

2.1.5. Intransitive Clause

[[+NM, +OBJ] [+Verb, +Trans.]]

2.2. CLASSIFICATION OF VERBS

The verbs of Lao can be classified into types according to the case frames they have. The case frames occurring with each group along with a few sample verbs from that group are given below.

2.2.1. mēēn 'be'

This class consists of copula verbs. It hosts the [+NM, +OBJ] and [+O, +OBJ] tagmemic slots:

[[+NM, OBJ] [+O, +OBJ]]

noun phrase noun phrase
verb phrase verb phrase
clause clause
prep. phrase prep. phrase

The [+NM, +OBJ] and [+O, +OBJ] slots must be filled by the same grammatical category, and if the category is a noun phrase, the fillers must be coreferential:

lāaw mēēn nājmōo
[+NM] [+O]
[+OBJ] [+OBJ]
[+NP] [+NP]

'He is a doctor.'

pāj mēēn tōnŋ taj.
[+VP] [+VP]

'To go is to die.'

lāaw pāj mēēn kwoo sālāa kōoŋ lēōw.
[+clause] [+clause]

'He was intelligent to go.'

cāāk mīi pāj tyyŋ hān mēēn sōŋ lāk.
[+PP] [+PP]

'From here to there is two miles.'

The only other verb in this class is pen which must occur with the +NM and +O slots filled with noun phrases marked +human.
2.2.2. sàa 'slow'

This class of verbs is stative and can be adverbialised. Its case forms contain a [+NM, +OBJ] slot and it can take an intensifier.

låaw sàa lāaj.
[+NM] [+intens.]
[+OBJ]
'He is very slow.'

låaw paj sâa lâaj.
[+NM] [+O] [+intens.]
[+OBJ] [+MAN]
'He went very slowly.'

Other verbs in this class include waj 'fast', sua 'bad', and dìi 'good'.

2.2.3. nàaw 'cold'

The verbs in this class occur in a case frame containing [+NM, +OBJ]. They are stative and can take an intensifier, but cannot be adverbialised.

låaw nāaw lâaj.
[+NM] [+intens.]
[+OBJ]
'He is very cold.'

Other verbs in this class include diicaj 'happy', sāāw 'sad', and khâj 'sick'.

2.2.4. taaj 'to be dead'

This class consists of stative verbs, hosting a [+NM, +OBJ] slot, and which cannot take an intensifier.

låaw taaj.
[+NM]
[+OBJ]
'He is dead.'

Also in this class are the verbs sivit 'to be alive', and kâet 'to be born'.

2.2.5. thîyôk 'to be affected'

There is only one verb in this class, which hosts [+NM, +OBJ] and [+O, +INS] tagmemes. The latter slot must be filled with a clause.

[+NM, +OBJ] [+] [+O, +INS]
[+NP] [+] [clause]
CASES AND CLAUSES IN LAO

lāaw thûyk pāj.
[+NM] [+O]
[+OBJ] [+INS]
[+NP] [+clause]
"He was forced to go."

lōt thûyk kāk lētw.
[+NM] [+O]
[+OBJ] [+INS]
[+NP] [+clause]
"The car was already stolen."

In the lesser urbanised dialects of Lao, this verb can host only an animate +NM noun like the Vietnamese submissive verbs ᵇɨ and ᵇuʂɨ. However, due to the influence of Western languages, particularly French, the usage of thûyk has been extended to non-animate subjects to parallel the passive constructions found in European languages. Therefore, in Lao, the case frame for thûyk contains a [+NM, +OBJ] slot rather than a [+NM, +DAT] slot as the Vietnamese submissive verbs ᵇɨ and ᵇuʂɨ.

2.2.6. sɤɭı 'buy'

This class of ditransitive benefactive verbs has been the case frame [+NM, +AGT], [+O, +OBJ], and [+D, +BEN].

lāaw sɤɭı pɤ̄m hâj khōj.
[+NM] [+O] [+D]
[+AGT] [+OBJ] [+BEN]
"He bought books for me."

2.2.7. khâaw 'sell'

This class of verbs is characterised by the case frame consisting of the tagmemes [+NM, +AGT], [+O, +OBJ], and [+D, +DAT].

lāaw khâaw pɤ̄m hâj khōj.
[+NM] [+O] [+D]
[+AGT] [+OBJ] [+DAT]
"He sold books to me."

Due to the neutralisation of the +DAT and +BEN relations in the +D case form, the above sentence is ambiguous. The phrase hâj khōj can also be marked [+D, +BEN] in a sentence with a deleted [+D, +DAT] phrase.

2.2.8. lɤak 'choose'

This class of transitive verbs is characterised by the case frame [+NM, +AGT] and [+O, +OBJ], the latter of which can be complementised by an embedded copulative sentence.
khaw lâyak lâaw pen aw nâaj.
[+NM]  [+0]  [+complement]
[+AGT]  [+OBJ]
'They chose him to be the guide.'

The internal structure of the complement is as follows:

lâaw pen aw nâaj.
[+NM]  [+0]
[+OBJ]  [+OBJ]

The noun phrase subject is not present due to coreference with the higher +0 noun phrase. Other verbs in this class include tu lâyak 'elect', and p65n bât 'cast a vote'.

2.2.9. kîn 'eat'

The verbs in this class host the [+NM, +AGT] and [+O, +OBJ] tagmemes, the latter of which cannot be complementised. Other verbs in this class are dyym 'drink', sîwîp 'inhale', and kîyn 'swallow'.

lîw kîn sîwî.
[+NM]  [+0]
[+AGT]  [+OBJ]
'He eats meat.'

2.2.10. wâa 'say'

This verb class hosts [+NM, +AGT] and [+O, +OBJ] tagmemes. The [+O, +OBJ] tagmemes can be filled by an embedded sentence. There is no surface clause introducer in Lao.

[+NM, +AGT]  [+O, +OBJ]

noun phrase
dep. clause

lâaw wâa lîyâ nîi.
[+NM]  [+0]
[+AGT]  [+OBJ]
'He told this story.'

lâaw wâa lâaw pâj âok.
[+NM]  [+0]
[+AGT]  [+OBJ]
'He said that she went.'

Other verbs in this class are tuau 'advise', and byak 'tell, inform'.

2.2.11. hûu 'know'

This class of verbs occurs in the frame:

[[+NM, +DAT]  [+O, +OBJ]]

noun phrase
dep. clause
Iəaw huu Iəaw paj lètw.

[+NM] [+O]
[+DAT] [+OBJ]
[+clause]

'He knows that she already went.'

Iəaw huu Iəaw.

[+NM] [+O]
[+DAT] [+OBJ]

'He knows her.'

Other verbs in this class are dəaj njīn 'hear', kbwcej 'understand', and khīt 'think'.

2.2.12. sāñ 'hate'

These verbs take the same case frame as huu, but differ in that they can be modified by an intensifier. The [+O, +OBJ] tagmeme can be a dependent clause.

[[+NM, +DAT] (intensifier) [noun phrase]]

[+O, +OBJ]

dep. clause

Iəaw lāaj sāñ Iəaw.

[+NM] [+intens] [+O]
[+DAT] [+OBJ]

'He hates her a lot.'

Other verbs in this class include hāk 'love', liΔon 'pity', and aaj 'shy, ashamed'.

2.2.13. jūu 'live at, be at'

The locative verb, juu, is the only member of this class. It can serve as a main verb or as a coverb marking the +L, locative, case form. As a main verb it hosts [+NM, +OBJ] and [+O, +LOC] tagmemes.

Iəaw jūu wíančan.

[+NM] [+O]
[+OBJ] [+LOC]

'He is in Vientiene'.

2.2.14. sōk 'go out'

The verbs in this class are intransitive and are characterised by being directional and having the [+locomotion] feature. They host [+NM, +OBJ] and [+O, +DIR] tagmemes.

Iəaw sōk hōq.

[+NM] [+O]
[+OBJ] [+DIR]

'He went out of the room.'
These verbs are derivationally related to a set of homophonous co-
verbs marking the directional, +Di, case form. Other verbs in this
class include lông 'go down', khôn 'go up', and khảm 'go through'.

2.2.15. paj 'go'

Verbs in this class host the [+NM, +OBJ] and [+O, +DIR] case frame.
They are distinguished as [-locomotion].

lông paj wñačcan.
[+NM] [+O]
[+OBJ] [+DIR]

'He went to Vientiene.'

These verbs are derivationally related to a set of coverbs marking
the +Di case form. The other verb in this class is mua 'come'.

2.2.16. thọ 'arrive'

This class of verbs is marked by the feature [+goal], and the case
frame [+NM, +OBJ] and [+O, +GOL]. The verbs in this class are deri-
vationally related to a set of coverbs marking the +G case form.

lông thọ wñačcan.
[+NM] [+O]
[+OBJ] [+GOL]

'He arrived in Vientiene.'

2.2.17. There does not seem to be any verb class functioning as an
existential sentence introducer similar to the Vietnamese verb có.
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A CLASSIFICATION OF THAI CLASSIFIERS

SamAng HIRANBURANA

One area which has hardly been touched and which has always baffled a non-Thai speaker is the use of classifiers. At first impression there seems to be one classifier for each noun. My counting, which I believe is fairly extensive, reveals 75 in all, not counting those classifiers used as units in measurement of weight, distance and time, nor those referred to by U. Warotamasikkhadit (1963) as 'reduplicative classifiers', which is the use of the noun itself as its own classifier such as /myû sooû myû/ 'two hands',¹ nor classifiers for the non-concrete nouns such as /wàmûk/ 'a flash', /kàmûk/ 'a rap'.

The fullest account of the use of Thai classifiers can be found in Noss 1964. It is a word which occurs with a noun when a number and/or a demonstrative is also present - /burî sooû muân/ 'two cigarettes' or /burî muân niî/ 'this cigarette'. However, in the context where the noun is understood, the noun may be omitted, leaving its classifier to act as the head of a classifier phrase - /sooû nîî laûû/ 'the yellow pack'. Noss recognises that there are well over 200 classifiers in Thai. He groups them into four types:

1. A unit classifier which has a specific relationship with one or more concrete nouns.

2. A metric classifier which occurs in enumeration. It has no special relationship with the noun in the way that unit classifiers do but it is used for measurement of a mass noun into fixed unit or conventional contents of a container such as in /khaaw saam tcaan/ 'three platefuls of rice'. Noss also divides the metric classifiers into five subclasses namely (1) distance and size, (2) weight, (3) container, (4) value, and (5) time.

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