Encoding of spatial relations: motion, direction, and location in Lalo

Tingsheng ZHOU 周廷升

Harvard-Yenching Institute, Minzu University of China
哈佛-燕京学社、中央民族大学

Email: tingshengzhou@126.com

1. Introduction
1.1 About the Lalo language: distribution, genetic affiliation, and previous work and current research
1.2 Spatial frames of reference, research question, and the main point
Analysis of linguistic data shows that Lalo spatial relations are encoded by locational nouns, spatial demonstratives, locative particles, directional particles, motion verbs, and serial verb constructions that contain motion verbs.

2. Locational nouns and spatial demonstratives
2.1 Locational nouns by the absolute frame of reference
Table 2 Some Lalo locational nouns by the absolute frame of reference
2.2 Locational nouns by the relative frame of reference
Table 3 Examples of Lalo locational nouns that indicate spaces by the relative frame of reference
2.3 Spatial demonstratives
Figure 6 Lalo spatial demonstratives
Lalo has five demonstratives that indicate the relative spaces in the physical surroundings of the speaker. /tʃu⁵⁵/ “this space”, indicates the space in which the speaker is standing;
/nu⁵⁵/ “the pointed space”, indicates the space to which the speaker pointed in the vicinity;
/gu³³/ “that space”, the further horizontal space identified by the speaker;
/nu³³/ “the upper space”, the further upper vertical space identified by the speaker;
and /dzy³³/ “that lower space”, the further lower vertical space identified by the speaker.
All those spaces are defined by the relative frame of reference in speaker-centered perspective.

3. Locative
3.1 Locative particles
Lalo locative particles encode the location of a focused object by the reference object, this is the intrinsic frame of reference. The locative particles are post-nominal or postpositional.
Table 4 Locative particles and locative phrases in Lalo
3.2 The derivation of locative particle in Lalo
The locative particles are derivative from either the existential verb /khu⁵⁵/ “nest” or verbs of placing, including /di⁵⁵/ “sit, place oneself”, /tha³³/ “make sth. attached to sth”, /khu³¹/ “place sth. under sth.”, khy³³ “place sth. above sth.”, and ta³³ “put, place”.
And some locative particles are compounds of a body part noun and a derivational particle.
Table 5 Derivation of locative particle in Lalo
4. Direction

4.1 Directional particles

Lalo has seven particles that respectively encode the directions of “up”, “down”, “toward”, “away from”, “out”, “in(to)”, and mutual direction. All those particles are post-verbal.

Table 6 Directional particles in Lalo

4.2 The derivation of directional particle in Lalo

In Lalo, directional particle /thi³/ “up” is the causative of motion verb /di³/ “go up”; /tey³/ “in(to)” is that of /dzey³/ “go into(to)”; and /ku³/ “toward” is that of /gau³/ “move centripetally”. And /te³/ is the causative of existential verb /dz³/ “exist, stay”. /thi³/ “outward” is the same as locative /thi³/ “on” /ki³/ is the unaspirated counterpart of the locative /khi³/ “with”; and the reciprocal /di³/ “in” and psych-verb /hi³/ “feel”.

In particular, the directional particles derivative from motion verbs can be optionally used after their respective derivational verbs e.g. di³/dz³ t³³ “go up”; dz³/dz³ te³³ “go in(to)”; ga³³ ku³³ “Come together!” (Imperative).

Table 7 Derivation of directional particle in Lalo

5. Motion verbs and the related serial verb constructions

5.1 Motion verbs

Table 7 Examples of Lalo motion verbs

5.2 Serial verb construction containing motion verb

Table 8 Examples of Lalo serial verb construction containing motion verb

6. A discussion on the grammaticalization of spatial concept in Lalo

6.1 Patterns of grammaticalizing Lalo verbs into locative particles and/or directional particles (Table 9)

Lexical causativization and the grammaticalization of spatial concept in Lalo

About 40 pairs of simplex or stative verb and causative verb are found in Lalo

Phonological correspondence patterns Lalo simplex or stative /causative verb-pairs (Table 10).

Table 10 Examples of Lalo simplex or stative /causative verb-pairs

6.2 From locative particle to directional particle

(1) locative /thi³/ “on” as used as directional /thi³/ “out”, e.g.

a. a⁵⁵ ʂa⁵⁵ ʂt⁵⁵ ʂt⁵³ ʂthi³³ ʂta³¹ ʂlo³¹. “The maize is on the desk.”

maize desk LOC put ASP

b. a⁵⁵ ʂa⁵⁵ ʂgau³⁵ ʂɕi⁵⁵ ʂlo³³ ʂthi³³ ʂpe⁵⁵ ʂa⁵⁵. “The maize was thrown out to the yard.”

maize yard throw DIR ASP

(2) from locative /ki³/ “with” to directional /ki³/ “away from” (the aspirated to the unaspirated)

a. nd⁵⁵ ʂa⁵⁵ ʂkhi³³ ʐdzi³³ ʂlo³¹. “I’m staying with A’sa.”

SL Name LOC stay ASP

b. a⁵⁵ ʂl⁵¹ ʂa⁵⁵ ʂdi³¹ ʂdɛ³¹ ʂki³³ ʂua³³. “A’lu stroke A’sa.”

Name Name P strike DIR EVI

6.3 From verb to locative particle and then to patient marker

Lalo verb di³ “sit, place oneself” to locative di³ “in (tree, etc.)”, which is also used as patient marker, e.g.

(1) a⁵³ ʐne³³ ʂf³by³³ ʂkui³³ ʐdi³³ ʂlo³¹. “The kid is sitting in the straw rain cape.”

kid cape LOC sit ASP
Table 11 Lalo aspect markers derivative from motion verbs

References


Zhao, Tingsheng, and Hu Suhua. Vitality and endangerment of the Lalo language: A case study in Xiaowan area and a comparison of the domains of language use between Nuosu Yi areas and Lalo Yi areas. Linguistics of the Tibeto-Burman Area 38.2 (2015): 225-244.