The verb system of Mon

Jenny, Mathias

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Preface

This study of the verb system of Mon would not have been possible without the assistance of a number of people in Switzerland, Thailand and Burma. Prof. Karen H. Ebert, head of the Seminar für Allgemeine Sprachwissenschaft at Zurich University guided me through my studies and gave me the support I needed, also during long stays in Thailand.

Prof. G. Diffloth, Dr. E. Guillon and Dr. Nai Pan Hla shared their profound knowledge of the Mon language and culture with me in personal communications on different occasions. Prof. Sujaritlak and Dr. Praphasi of the Institute of Language and Culture for Rural Development at Mahidol University in Bangkok were most helpful, especially in discussing parts of the present study with me and assisting with the publication of parts of my research results in *Mon-Khmer Studies* (Vol. 33).

I am most indebted to the many Mon people in Thailand and especially in Burma who sat through recording sessions and had to endure my (to them) nonsensical questions about their language. Abbots and temple boys, housewives and peasants, market sellers and story writers, pop stars and traditional musicians and dancers, drivers and hotel employees, teachers, journalists and politicians, scholars and illiterate workers, and the people just passing by and stopping for a chat, they all contributed to the completion of this study, more often than not unknowingly, sharing their culture and language with an outsider.

It is customary (and sensible) not to mention by name people in Burma itself who assist foreign researchers working on Burmese minority issues, however apolitical they may be. I therefore refrain from listing the names of the Mon in Burma, who not only invited me to their homes but also accompanied me through Monland and introduced me to places and people that I would not have had a chance to find on my own. It is experiences like listening to old monks telling the long forgotten local history, sitting in wooden houses eating freshly caught fried rats, watching whole villages participating in religious ceremonies at a local temple, being invited to an ordination party after a nightlong bus ride through southern Burma, spending nights in monasteries sleeping on the floor among monks who have to get up at five in the morning, and being given the chance to teach village children and at the same time learn a lot from them that keep the interest in a culture and its language alive. It is experiences like these that let one forget the heavy monsoon rains that pour down on Monland six months a year, the very moody electricity supply (if there is any at all), the less than perfect communication and transport facilities within Burma, as well as the political tension that surrounds all Burmese ethnicities, including the Burman themselves.
In Wangka (Sangkhaburi, Thailand), where most of the research was done, the situation is much more comfortable, although the village has its own share of tension (and heavy monsoon rains), being basically a huge Mon refugee camp in Thailand, though a very open one. Here I owe special thanks to Mr. Ok Pung, who in the first phase of my Mon studies was an invaluable help in almost all respects. He created many sets of Mon fonts for Windows computers and published a number of books, mostly editions of old manuscripts. His daughters Suda and Sajiang spent many nights transcribing and typing my audio recordings. Without their help I would not have been able to make the extensive use of recorded spoken language material that is necessary for a study of this kind. Mr. Ok Pung’s wife Mi Nge proved to be an inexhaustible source of a variety of delicious Mon food, which made working through the nights much more pleasant than it would otherwise have been. Other people worthy mentioning in Wangka are Mr. and Mrs. Phophueak-Sirihong of Wangka Cable TV, who possess an extensive video collection of documentaries and music, and an always open house. Mr. Win Myint was my first Mon teacher, patiently repeating his phrases and trying to understand my first steps in a language that seemed impossible to master. Many more followed, including a number of people who may never realise how much they helped me further my studies just by sitting and talking with me or with each other. Thanks to all of them.

Anon C. worked for months scanning and computerising all books in and on Mon we could get hold of, making a collection of a few hundred volumes covering all aspects of Mon culture and language conveniently available on CD ROM.

This research project was mainly financed by the Forschungskommission der Universität Zürich, which granted funds to conduct field studies for 30 months.

Last but not least I have to thank my family in Switzerland, who not only gave me financial assistance over many years of private field research, but also the moral support needed to keep on working in the ‘tropical paradise’ of the Thai-Burmese border area.

Mon is a language without overt gender distinctions in pronouns and most nouns. The political discussion of correct language use in terms of gender does therefore not arise in Mon, a society where “women enjoy as many rights as men, also if not necessarily the same ones” (quotation Nai Ok Pung). Throughout this study, I use ‘he, him, his’ in the third person where the context is neutral as to the gender of the person(s) concerned. It has to be kept in mind that the corresponding Mon pronouns, if present in the sentence at all, can always refer to either a female or a male person. The choice of the English male pronouns should
be understood merely as a default choice to make the translations more readable. The same goes for Burmese and Thai usage.

I use the translation ‘man’ in the glosses for Mon mənih from Pali manussa ‘man, human being’ (equivalent and ultimately related to German Mensch). This sometimes results in odd-sounding glosses like ‘man female’ for mənih prèə, which is rendered in English simply as ‘woman’ (although the Mon word is used for a female human of any age).

M. Jenny, Wangka/Bangkok/Zurich 2005
**Abbreviations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<tr>
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</tr>
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<td>Dictionary of Spoken Mon (Shorto 1962)</td>
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<tr>
<td>DUR</td>
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<td>EB</td>
<td>Epigraphica Birmanica (Duroiselle 1921 etc.)</td>
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<td>Middle Mon</td>
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<td>RDP</td>
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<td>Recipient</td>
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<td>REL</td>
<td>Relative</td>
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<tr>
<td>RP</td>
<td>Reading pronunciation</td>
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<td>RVC</td>
<td>Resultative verb compound</td>
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<td>SEQ</td>
<td>Sequential</td>
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<td>SER</td>
<td>Serial verb</td>
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<td>SFP</td>
<td>Sentence final particle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skt</td>
<td>Sanskrit</td>
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<td>SM</td>
<td>Spoken Mon</td>
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<tr>
<td>SRC</td>
<td>Source</td>
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<tr>
<td>SVC</td>
<td>Serial verb construction</td>
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<td>Th</td>
<td>Thai</td>
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<td>TOP</td>
<td>Topic</td>
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1. Introduction
1.1 The Mon people and language

The Mon language is linguistically a member of the Mon-Khmer group of the Austroasiatic family, which may be part of a bigger Austro stock comprising the Austroasiatic and Austronesian families, for some authors also the Sino-Tibetan family (s. Benedict 1991 for a summary of the Austric thesis). The Austroasiatic languages are spread all over the Southeast Asian subcontinent, from southern China to the Malay Peninsula and from Vietnam to India. The largest community of the Austroasiatic population, which Parkin puts at over 80 mio. (Parkin 1991:1), are the Vietnamese with over 65 mio. speakers. The Mon population is estimated at about one million. It must be kept in mind that this is a purely linguistic classification, based on comparative diachronic linguistic studies, and has no social or cultural significance. There are among the Mon-Khmer peoples in Southeast Asia tribes like the Mlabri with stone-age civilization (s. Pookajorn 1992, Rischel 1995) and civilizations as old as the Khmer and Vietnamese.

The origin of the Mon people and the details of their postulated migration to Southeast Asia are not known.¹ According to some indigenous legends, the Mon migrated from India, a thesis that is not supported by historical or archaeological evidence, though. This myth may have its origin in Indian merchants settling in what today is southern Burma, introducing not only overseas commerce, but also the Indian roots for Mon religious practice and culture.

Two names are commonly used for the Mon people, the etymology of both of which is still unknown. The Mon call themselves môn, a word that goes back to Old Mon (OM) ‹rmeñ›, which is found as ‹rmën, rêmën› in Old Javanese. Old Khmer has ‹ramañ, rmañ›, which corresponds to the Pali form rāmañña, the origin of the Thai designation rāmān. Formally OM ‹rmeñ› looks like the attributive of a verb *‹reñ›, which is not attested in Mon. See Guillon 1999:21 for a (very tentative) explanation of the ethnonym ‹rmeñ›. The other name applied to the Mon people by foreigners and considered derogatory by the Mon themselves, is ‘Talaing’. Different hypotheses have been proposed on the etymology of this name (s. Guillon 1999:17ff, J.B.R.S. Vols. II/I:73ff, 100f, II/II:246ff, III/I:1ff, 84ff), but no generally accepted conclusion has been reached so far. Another ethnonym applied by Westerners is ‘Peguan’, after the name of the Old Mon capital city Pegu (Hamsāvati, today Bago).

¹ For a more detailed discussion of the history of the Mon people and references see for example Guillon 1999 and Bauer 1990. A different view is presented in Aung-Thwin 2001. In this section only a short outline can be given.
The earliest direct linguistic evidence of the Mon are a handful of short stone inscriptions found in central Thailand and dating to the 6th century. These inscriptions are among the earliest record of an indigenous language of Southeast Asia, predating the earliest Khmer inscriptions (but being about contemporary with inscriptions in the now extinct Pyu language of central Burma). The fact that Mon is the only local language used during the Dvāravatī era strongly suggests that the Mon were at least an important part of the Dvāravatī population (cf. Saraya 1999:160ff, Guillon 1999:79ff). The inscriptions found so far are all very short and show the initial phase of an evolving literary language. The following 6th century inscription from Wat Pho Rang, Nakhon Pathom (Thailand) illustrates early Dvāravatī Mon.

The inscription is fragmentary and the reading and translation of most of it uncertain. The meaning of many words in the inscription is not known, e.g. ‹dnow›, which is given by Shorto as a not defined “quantifier” (DMI:202)² and ‹lañ-ur›, which is an “article given to monastery?” (DMI:331). The reading (and meaning) of ‹sra rā› is dubious, as is Shorto’s interpretation as silver (OM ‹srañ, sreñ›). Although the text is hardly intelligible, the language is clearly early OM.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OM text</th>
<th>Transliteration</th>
<th>Translation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>duñpoh cwas</td>
<td>seven-ty</td>
<td>one dnow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moy dnow</td>
<td>? hundred earth in</td>
<td>cast Buddha temple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hāñ klam ti dey</td>
<td>lam-ur silver (?)</td>
<td>shaman two this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...ra’ srañ kyāk wihār</td>
<td>... tree coconut temple</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lañ-ur sra rāñ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doñ ḫār ≅ ’awo’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...r taṁ brāw bihār</td>
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Table 1.1 Dvāravatī inscription (after Prapassorn 1999:115f)

² Formally ‹dnow› may be a nominalization of the verb ‹dow› ‘run’, in which case it would be a unit of length. SM uses kok ‘call’ as a unit of length (“as far as a call can be heard”).
The Dvāravatī kingdom\(^3\) (or rather cultural area) covered all of what today is central Thailand and southern Burma, extending to the north and northeast of present-day Thailand. In Thailand the original Mon population was gradually absorbed from the 12\(^{th}\) to 13\(^{th}\) centuries into the expanding Thai/Khmer communities of Ayudhya and Sukhothai,\(^4\) and the northern Tai kingdom of Lānnā, which took over the rule from the Mon at Haribhuñjaya at modern Lamphun, while the Mon kingdom of Sudhāmavatī (Thaton) in southern Burma was invaded by the expanding Burmese kingdom of Pagán. The Mon language all but disappeared from Thailand,\(^5\) leaving behind only a few remnants known today as Chao Bon in Thai (Nyah Kur ‘hill people’, s. Pan Hla 1986, 1991, 1992; Diffloth 1984), but retained its status as spoken and written language in Burma even under Burmese rule. During the 11\(^{th}\) century, the Burmese rulers of Pagán used Mon in their inscriptions, which appears in an elevated literary form. This highly developed style of the Mon language together with remarkable consistency in spelling from the earliest Dvāravatī inscriptions to the Pagān period, a time span of some 500 years, suggests that the lack of inscriptions from the 7\(^{th}\) to the 11\(^{th}\) centuries may be due to the lack of archaeological research in Burma rather than actual literary inactivity of the Mon. The following passage from the longest OM inscription, the 11\(^{th}\) century Shweizigon, illustrates the Mon language of Pagán (punctuation added for readability).

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\(^3\) Coedès 1968:76f uses the term kingdom for Dvāravatī and mentions the conflict between archeological evidence from the Chao Phraya basin and Mon tradition which places the old centre of the Mon kingdom in southern Burma, from where no archeological evidence has been recovered up to date. But cf. Myint Aung 1977.

\(^4\) Wongthet 2002 and 2003, as well as Bhumisak 2004 give details of the historical development of the early Thai states in the Chao Phraya basin from earlier Mon and Khom (Khmer) communities. Their unorthodox view is supported by historical and archaeological evidence, but not yet accepted in Thailand’s official history textbooks, which rather stick to the nationalistic version of the Thai migrating from China and expelling the Khmer and Mon to establish first Sukhothai and then Ayudhya as real Thai kingdoms. Unfortunately, neither Wongthet nor Bhumisak have been translated into English (yet), making them inaccessible to a broader international audience.

\(^5\) It is not clear how widespread the use of Mon as spoken language was in central Thailand under Thai rule after the 13\(^{th}\) century. A city map of Ayudhya published in 1693 (La Loubère 1693, facing p. 6) shows the “Peguan” quarters on the west bank of the river opposite the island of Ayudhya. This shows on one hand that there was a substantial Mon community in 17\(^{th}\) century Ayudhya, and on the other that they were considered foreigners, being assigned quarters outside the city walls like the Europeans and Macassars. The designation as Peguans further indicates that they were more recent refugees from Burma, rather than remnants of the original Mon population. Interestingly, in 17\(^{th}\) century European sources the Buddhist monks in Siam (Thailand), who since earliest recorded times formed an important sector of Siamese society, are referred to as ‘Talapoins’ from Mon òtala puin’, ‘master of merit’.
(1.1) Shweizigon inscription

tarley 'ānan ṇāc 'ascar goh, ḋor yil kint āl ju kyāk buddha tarley tūy, yuk sunhup tey smān row wo’: “ma tirla pa kir-īm wo’ ci, mu het yo? sak het kyāk buddha tarley guñiloñ sik-im ci kāh sak.” row goh tarley 'ānan smān da. goh ma kyāk buddha tarley gah gu 'ānan row wo’: “ānan, mnor ci risi moy ma imo’ bissūn, jnok riddhi, jnok ānubhāw, go’ abhiñā mśūn, kom ku kon ey gawamipati, ku smīn in, ku bissukarmmadewaput, ku katakarmmanāgarāja, skandairī dūn moy imo’ sisīt. [...] yan ruñiḥāt ṇāh ma cāk nor ṇāh ruñilos guñiloñ, na pun’ār tirtūy na moytricit ma dmas tey, gna smīn șrī tribhuwanādityadhammarāja sjit duol [...] ut mahājān ci row kon ma tāw pdey cris ’ambo. [...]”

Translation:
‘When the Lord Ananda saw this miracle he respectfully put the sole of the Lord Buddha’s foot on his head and, lifting up his hands, asked: “That you have smiled, my Lord, what is the reason for it? For it does not happen that Buddhas smile without a reason.” Thus the Lord Ananda asked, whereupon the Lord Buddha spoke to the Lord Ananda thus: “Ananda, in a time to come a hermit whose name is Bisnu, a man of great strength and spiritual power, one who has achieved the five transcendental faculties, together with my son Gavampati, with Lord Indra, with Bissukarma, the son of gods, and with Katakarma, the King of Nagas, will build a city called Sisit (Old Prome). [...] The tears of those who are separated from the ones they love, with perfect loving kindness like a hand he will wipe away. [...] All people will live like children in their mothers’ wombs.”

Although Mon was replaced by Burmese in the 12th century at Pagán, it continued to be used as spoken and written language in southern Burma, where the kingdom of Haṁsāvatī gained independence from Burmese rule on several occasions.
The 15th century Shwedagon inscription at Rangoon comes with parallel texts in Mon and Burmese, showing the shared status of the two languages in Burma during that time. The following passage from the Shwedagon inscription (face B) serves as an example of Middle Mon (MM).

(1.2) Shwedagon inscription

nor cnām tila puiy kyāk tray ma pa parinibbān ḍā klaṅ pi cwoh turau cnām gah kali lwon ‘ā tūy, tila puiy ‘arahan ḍā ma himu sonāthe uttarathe klūnī ptaṇ sāsnā pday duṇ suwannaḥhum ra. khā sāsnā ma tan tūy, gamī truḥ gamī brau, sāmanī truḥ sāmanī brau khā ma nwom tūy gah, khā gah smīn sırimāsoka gah gah ku tila puiy bā ra: “yo’ tila ey, dhammarat, saṅgharat gah puiy dīk go’ liṅor pūjau ra, buddharatana mwoy gah puiy dīk mik liṅor pūjau ha go’ swo’. dhāṭ kyāk tray
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tuy puiy ḍik ma sgo’ phiyih cuit buddharat, puiy ḍik ma sgo’ liñot pūjau ey-paray gah, tila ey ra’ reñ ku puiy ḍik ŋi.” rau gah smiṅ pa ‘āyācanā ku tila puiy ra.

Translation:
‘When two hundred thirty six years had elapsed after the Lord Buddha entered Nirvana, two Arahants called Sonathera and Uttarathera came to establish the religion in the land Suvannabhumi. When the religion was established and there were monks and nuns, male and female novices, King Sirimasoka said to the two Arahants: “My lords, we now have the jewel of the Doctrine (Dhamma) and the jewel of the monks’ order (Saṅgha) to worship and pay respects to, but we would also like to but cannot worship and pay our respect to the jewel of the Buddha. In order that we may lay down our hearts to the jewel of the Buddha, that we may worship and praise Him, please arrange and bring us a holy relic.” Thus made the king his request to the two holy men.’

With the destruction of the Mon capital Hàṁsāvatī (Pegu) in 1757, the last independent Mon state so far ended and Mon as spoken and written language was brought back to Thailand by large numbers of refugees. Mon language use and teaching was mainly reduced to the religious domain in what used to be Monland in southern Burma. Still the literary tradition was carried on and a language form that may be called ‘classical’ Literary Mon (LM) evolves after the fall of Hàṁsāvatī, especially with writers around the famous Acā Hwo’, the abbot of Hwo’ Monastery, who wrote and edited historical and religious texts, including the 550 Jātaka tales. Classical LM is very close to late MM, and it is the starting point of separate developments of Mon communities in Thailand and Burma, although in the initial phase there appears to have been intensive contact between the two groups. Early LM Mon texts are preserved in both Thailand and Burma and show influence from Thai and Burmese. Mon poetry exhibits rhyme patterns that work only in a pre-devoiced state of the language (s. section 1.5), i.e. vowel differences arising from register split in Mon are ignored, as the following passage from the epic of King Saṅgardā shows.⁶ A similar situation is found in classical Thai poetry, where tone rhymes are according to tone classes (orthographically tone markers 1 and 2, and unmarked tones) rather than actual phonetic tones, which have undergone a tone split at some time (probably after the 13⁰ century, s. Brown 1985, Hudak 1997:45ff). The passage given below describes the king’s anguish after his sister has been kidnapped by a ghost.

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⁶ Wedañña (1997) is the first and so far only comprehensive study of Mon poetry, unfortunately available only in Mon and therefore not readily accessible to the international scholar community.
(1.3) Saṅgadā epic (Kalyāṇa 1999:7f)

Transliteration: 

\( \text{’akruin} \) \( \text{smi} \) \( \text{nk kla} \) senāgutta, 
\( \text{iddh} \) \( \text{kalok} \) ma jnok teja, 
\( \text{smi} \) \( \text{nk cai cuip dun} \) \( \text{smi} \) \( \text{cai luun} \) \( \text{ha} \) \( \text{smo} \) \( \text{cnd} \) \( \text{d} \) \( \text{smo} \) \( \text{cnd} \) \( \text{smo} \) \( \text{cnd} \) \( \text{ryu} \) \( \text{ny} \) 
\( \text{ramat} \) \( \text{bruih} \) \( \text{bruih} \) gwiit suih spāt sba. 
\( \text{’ahte} \) \( \text{de} \) \( \text{sduik} \) bruik-bruik mat hā, 
\( \text{hah} \) \( \text{thaw} \) \( \text{thamnat} \) rup doñ padmā, 
\( \text{hah} \) \( \text{thaw} \) \( \text{thakoñ} \) hah the thamnat khdoj mōt hā 
\( \text{nāy} \) \( \text{sāy} \) nū ko ko dāñ īhāp-hā, 
\( \text{ko dāñ cān} \) tū ko dāñ pū chā, 
\( \text{ko dāñ thaspā} \) damān āuy gwa, 
\( \text{ko dāñ sōn} \) th ko dāñ hōn jra 
\( \text{galuñ} \) wwa’ pñī lwī law de’ ma, 
\( \text{ko dāñ ’uít kasap} \) khyap hwa’ mān ra.” 
\( \text{sāk wwa’ smi} \) dẖa’ wān gataw gya, 
\( \text{tuy smi} \) ptuy ’uīw kusuiw dāñ, 
\( \text{juīn puin nā ’au} \) kuiw de’ brau ra.

Reading pronunciation: 

?skrm smoñ kla senagutta? 
Itthi? kolok mē? hnoñ tēcē? 
smoñ cnd cnd d’ryu smoñ cnd ryu ny 
ramot prēh-prēh khwit snh pat pē? 
’hui? sāfāk prāk-prāk mōt hā 
’hui? thō thamnēt rūp dōñ pōmtēə 
’hui? thō thakoj khdoj mōt hā 
nāy say nū kāo kāo tēh ēp-ējēə 
kāo tēh sōnom kāo tēh hōm sē? 
khō mān nū ?uō kwē? 
kāo tēh sōnom kāo tēh hōm sē?” 
kāo tēh ’ōt kasaō khōp hō pān rā?.” 
kāo sō wū? smoñ thē yēm kāto kyē? 
yō smoñ pōsō ?o kāo?ō dēgē? 
cēy pōn na ?ao kō tē? prēc ra?.

Translation

‘This is King Senagutta’s acclamation of the powerful ghost. The king returned to his city, the king returned with sadness. Tears flowed from his eyes; he struck his breast in anguish. “Oh my dear sister, you were always in my eyes. Oh my purest gold, figure like a lotus bloom! Oh my gold piece, apple of both my eyes! You are parted from me, my way is lost! I have to suffer the pain, the anguish, I can hardly see, all because of my shame. In speechless sorrow I have to wither away. How much I tried to care for you, my dear sister! My thoughts are ended, I cannot think anymore.” Thus the righteous king wept and lamented. Then he made meritorious offerings, he made merit for his little sister.’

The second foot of each line ends in \( \text{’a} \) or \( \text{ā} \) in LM, but in the modern pronunciation many of the rhymes are lost, as \( \text{’a} \) and \( \text{ā} \) change into \( [-\text{e}^\prime] \) and \( [-\text{ē}^\prime] \) after heavy register (i.e. originally voiced) consonants. Similarly some of the internal rhymes are lost, such as \( \text{bruih} \) - \( \text{sruih} \), which become \( \text{prēh} \) - \( \text{srēh} \) and \( \text{’au} \) - \( \text{brau} \) which are today pronounced \( [?\text{a}] \) - \( [\text{prē}] \).

After the classical period of LM, Mon as a written language lost steadily in importance. Mon as a spoken language today is restricted mainly to the area south of the Sıttaung River in the north and Ye Township in the south. Earlier Mon speaking communities reported in the Irrawaddy delta and around Pegu have probably completely disappeared. Mon speakers found today in
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Rangoon, Pegu and Mandalay are more recent migrants from southern Burma. Today there are a few books published every year in Mon, subject to heavy Burmese censorship. Most texts published in Burma are rewritings of old religious books or local legends, sometimes in a modernised form. The most famous among the modern writers is Rev. Palita, abbot of Kama Wek New Monastery, who has written and published dozens of religious and historical works in an adapted form of LM, which makes the texts easily readable and thus accessible to a wider audience among the literate Mon, which are estimated to make up about 25-30% of the whole Mon population. Another centre of contemporary Mon literary activity is the Klo’ Pakao Monastery near Moulmein, where a large number of books have been published in a language approaching SM. The publications include religious texts as well as short stories and cartoons, many in bilingual Mon-Burmese editions. An important newer factor in Mon literature (and literacy in general) are not only the over 300 Mon schools now legally operating in Mon areas in Burma, but also the increasing number of popular and traditional music appearing as karaoke videos, with subtitles in Mon script. The first one to produce a Mon karaoke video was the popular singer Hongchan, who brought out his 1999 super-hit chan mòn chan này ‘Love the Mon, love you’ as karaoke VCD in 2000, available not only in Burma but also in Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore, as well as overseas where Mon refugee communities have settled. Mon newspapers appear in irregular intervals, due to the instable political situation in Burma and neighbouring Thailand, which favours a good relationship with the Burmese government.

The ‘Guiding Star’ newspaper is usually published once a month in Bangkok, with the editorial board chiefly in Sangkhlaburi. Textbooks for use in Mon schools are prepared by the Mon Education Office (with a branch office in Sangkhlaburi). Furthermore, a few young authors started writing short stories and poems which are published in Mon magazines, mostly with political topics. The first full length novel in Mon has yet to be written.7

In Thailand, older people are still able to speak Mon in a few Mon (or Thai-Raman) villages, but the younger generations have all but turned into monolingual Thai speakers. Mon language publications in Thailand are rare and mostly restricted to special memorial editions for (Mon) monks’ funerals. The only active Mon press in Bangkok, Tech Promotion and Advertising Co., Ltd., publishes chiefly internationally sponsored editions like Nai Tun Way’s two recent dictionaries and Talanon’s English grammar, among others.

A revival of interest in Mon culture and language can be observed in Thailand in recent years, with a number of Thai language publications on

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7 Where no other source is indicated, the information given in this and the preceding paragraph is from personal communication with Mon scholars and politicians in Thailand and Burma.
Mon history and culture and the opening of a new Mon Study Centre at Wat Muang in Rajburi Province, some 100 km west of Bangkok. Whether this (scholarly) Mon renaissance will ultimately lead to increased language use and literacy among Thai-Mon people remains to be seen.

1.2 Sources and methodology

The linguistic material used in this study comes from a variety of sources, covering some 1500 years of the written language and a selection of modern Mon dialects spoken in Burma and to a much lesser extent Thailand.

For OM and MM, the easiest reference book is Shorto’s excellent Dictionary of Mon inscriptions (DMI, Shorto 1971), which not only lists all words found in Mon inscriptions up to the date of publication, but also provides valuable information about the morphology and etymology of the lexical entries, together with sample sentences. The sample sentences are necessarily kept short in a dictionary of this kind. Wherever possible, the sentences given in DMI were cross-checked with other publications of Mon inscriptions to ascertain the reading and translation, taking into consideration the broader context.

The main editions consulted on OM and MM are the first three volumes of the Epigraphica Birmanica (EB I-III, Duroiselle 1921 etc.; in Roman transliteration with English translations), U Hkyit Thein’s Collection of Mon inscriptions (1965; in Mon-Burmese script, with Burmese translations) and Luce (1961; Roman transliteration, English translations) for the Kubyauk-Gyi inscriptions, besides a number of other editions mentioned in the references. Where there are wide discrepancies between the different editions, they are mentioned in the text and the most probable reading and translation is given.

The source of inscriptions of which complete editions are available are given with the name of the inscription (usually abbreviated), followed by the face (a-z) and line(s) (1-99) where the sentence appears. Where no other edition apart from DMI was available, Shorto’s reading and translation are taken as correct. In these cases the source is indicated as DMI:xx.

Most OM examples are taken from three inscriptions or inscription groups, viz. the Shweizigon inscription (SSK), the Ananda plaques (An), and the Kubyauk-Gyi inscriptions (Ku), all dating to the 11th century in Pagan.

The main texts used to illustrate MM are the Shwedagon inscription (SDG) of 15th century Rangoon and the Kalyani inscription (KLY) of the same century at Pegu.

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8 Data from Mon dialects in Thailand is used for comparison in some instances, and to estimate the age of certain phenomena in the language. The bulk of SM material comes from dialects spoken in Burma.
For both stages of the language other sources are used where the main inscriptions did not provide appropriate examples.

The main sources for LM can be broadly divided into two groups, viz. classical LM and modern LM. The first is represented mainly by the Jātaka tales (Jat) as edited by Aca Hwo’ in the 18th century, the epic poem of king (or prince) Sangadā (SGD), which is available in two slightly different printed editions (Mem Ong 1999, Kalyāna 1999), and the historical novel of Rājādhirāj/Razadirit (RDR), edited by Nai Pan Hla in 1958.

An intermediary form between classical and modern LM can be seen in the writings of Rev. Palita. Most examples of this style are taken from The story of King Dhammaceti (DC).

Examples of contemporary LM are taken from the short story Mi Kon Plin (MKP, Candidimāra 2001), a collection of Mon Prose (LPM) edited by Nai Htun Thein, newspaper articles taken from the Guiding Star, an independent Mon newspaper appearing in Thailand, and from the lyrics of popular Mon music, especially by Hongchan. Other sources were included were necessary and mentioned in the text and references.

The bulk of data used in this study comes from Spoken Mon (SM). Audio recordings were made with native speakers from different locations, geographically covering most of the actual Mon speaking area in Burma. Out of the recordings, four main sources were selected, representing four different dialect areas (s. Appendix A for maps of the Mon speaking areas):

1. Ko’ Dot (KD), the southernmost Burmese Mon dialect recorded for this study, is a big village some 180 kilometres south of Moulmein. The recording for this dialect, which provided the widest range of linguistic material used in this study, was made with an elderly couple who tell their experiences in Monland during WW II, covering periods of English, Japanese, and Burmese occupation of their land. This conversation is not only a rich source for SM data, it also gives interesting insights into life in Monland during the war. Both informants are bilingual with Burmese, which they speak fluently but with a heavy Mon accent. They are literate in Mon and Burmese.

2. Further to the north, some 35 kilometres south of Moulmein, is the village of Ko’ Kapoun (KKP). The recording was made with a young man, who at the time of recording had been working in Sangkhlaburi, Thailand for a few months. He was a quasi-monolingual speaker of Mon, with only limited command of Burmese and Thai. This informant does not read and write Mon (or any other language). The recordings made with this informant include a few short tales he remembered from his childhood, a personal account of his journey from Burma to the Thai border, as well as elicited
sample sentences, the correctness of which had later to be checked, given his low competence in any other language than Mon.  

3. The village of Kanni (KN) is near the town of Kawkareik in Karen State, some 80 kilometres northeast of Moulmein. This location is very close to Kaw Kyaik, the village where Shorto collected material for his Dictionary of Spoken Mon (1962) with which it shows many similarities. The recording was made with two brothers working as actors with a travelling Mon theatre group. The older of the two is fluent in Mon and Burmese, while the younger is a quasi-monolingual speaker of Mon, literate only in Mon. The younger brother tells the older one about his life as a temple boy in their home village.

4. The fourth location where linguistic material was gathered is the small town of Sangkhlaburi on the Thai-Burmese border, 400 kilometres northwest of Bangkok and some 220 kilometres southeast of Moulmein. The town is (geographically and ethnically) divided into a ‘Thai Side’ (sēŋ sem) and a ‘Mon Side’ (sēŋ mɔ̀n, Wangka, WK), connected by a 400 metre long wooden bridge. Wangka is the location most easily accessible to students of Mon language and culture, as it lies on Thai soil and most of the younger generation are fluent in Mon as well as Thai, while many older people speak Mon and Burmese. The population of Wangka is almost entirely Mon, interspersed with a few Tavoyan Burmese and even fewer Thais. Most of the children attend the Thai government school at Wangka, where they get a purely Thai education. The language spoken at home and among themselves remains Mon, although Thai influence (and language use) is increasing. Only few of the younger generation bother to learn the Mon script, seeing their future in Thailand rather than in Burma/Monland. Most recordings here were made with students of the local school, telling Mon tales their parents or relatives had told them in their childhood. All of the informants interviewed at Wangka are fluent speakers of Thai besides Mon, which they still consider their first language. Although Wangka is politically located in Thailand, the dialect spoken here is considered a Burmese Mon dialect, as the inhabitants migrated to the area within the past 50 years. With the speakers originating from different parts of Monland in Burma, the dialect spoken in Wangka shows levelling to some extent, resulting in a kind of standard SM. There are differences in usage among different speakers, but they tend to disappear in the younger generation who rapidly adapt to the WK dialect, especially when talking with friends rather than their family. Neologisms are taken mostly from Thai, less frequently from Burmese, although Burmese loans are still more frequent than in Mon dialects of Thailand proper.

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9 The informant’s competence in Thai increased rapidly, as he was working in a hotel serving Thai customers, which greatly facilitated the communication and collection of linguistic data.
Where the recorded texts did not provide the linguistic material needed to illustrate a certain point, sentences were constructed either with the help of native speakers or later checked for their correctness. Most helpful in constructing sentences (as well as providing explanations about nuances) was Nai Ok Pung, a native of Ko’ Dot and perfectly fluent (and literate) in Mon, Burmese, and Thai, and with a very good command of English. Sentences provided by Nai Ok Pung are marked (NOP). For other constructed examples no source is indicated. This is also the case with sentences picked up during informal conversations (both as an active participant and merely as a listener) while staying at Wangka during the past three years and during visits to Mon areas in Burma.

A very important and useful tool, especially in the initial phase of getting acquainted with Mon, but also in the further course of studying the language, is Shorto’s *Dictionary of Modern Spoken Mon* (1962), which not only gives example sentences for many entries, but also provides cross-reference with LM forms. The dictionary of Halliday (1955) is useful for LM, while Tun Way (2000) combines Shorto (1962) and Halliday (1955), with a number of additions by the compiler. Sakomoto (1994) is a valuable source for Mon as spoken (and written) in Thailand providing a wealth of example sentences, but the fact that it gives only Japanese translations makes this dictionary rather difficult to use for Western linguists.

Bauer’s (unpublished) 1982 thesis on *Morphology and Syntax of spoken Mon* as well as his 1989 paper on the verb in spoken Mon are based mostly on data collected in Thai-Mon communities, which obviously show some clear differences with Mon language usage in Burma described in this study. Reference to Bauer and other previous publications on Mon has been made where appropriate. It must be kept in mind, though, that Mon, in spite of its being one of the earliest languages of civilisation in Southeast Asia, has received little attention from linguists, and most of the published material is out of print and not readily available to the researcher.

The first step in preparing the present study included collecting and screening the available material published on Mon as well as recording SM and transcribing the audio recordings. Books written in Mon about different subjects were collected, although incomprehensible and unreadable to the author at that time. With a rather extensive array of ‘raw language material’ in both LM and SM, as well as a handful of earlier studies, a choice had to be made about which texts to use to get a representative picture of the Mon language.
Most of the material published by Western linguists on Mon treats diachronic comparative phonology, which makes it of limited use for a synchronic description of the language like the present study. Although this is basically a synchronic treatment of modern Mon, a diachronic element could not be excluded, as only the historical development can explain many aspects of modern Mon usage, as will be seen throughout the text.

The linguistic framework applied here in describing Mon does not adhere to a specific linguistic theory. The terminology used is what is considered to be general usage rather than theory-specific terms, although some labels (and ideas) are borrowed from Van Valin’s *Role and Reference Grammar* (1997), which, unlike other models such as GB, takes into account not only purely formal criteria of a language, but puts emphasis on semantic and pragmatic features. Like in most Southeast Asian languages, semantics and pragmatics are important factors in Mon syntax, as will be seen in the text.

The approach followed in this study is functional-descriptive, emphasising the description of the actual meaning and use of verbs and verbs-turned-auxiliaries/operators. As many auxiliaries/operators described in this study do not fit into any conventional grammatical category, I use the lexical meaning of the item in small caps as gloss to indicate a grammaticalized element, e.g. GO indicates that the morpheme has the lexical meaning ‘go’ but is used in a grammaticalized function, which in this case may be as a directional or as an aspect operator. There are instances where it is not clear whether a morpheme is to be taken as full lexeme (e.g. in a serial verb construction) or as a grammatical element. The choice in these cases is somewhat arbitrary and open to discussion. Where a form is exclusively used as an auxiliary/operator in modern Mon, a grammatical gloss is used for this stage of the language, while in earlier stages a full lexical meaning may be still is use and is accordingly glossed. An example is OM 〈míc〉 ‘desire, want’, SM *mòk*ʔ/mòc ‘DES’. While the OM form is used as a full verb, the corresponding lexeme in SM is used only in connection with a verb, indicating its grammaticalized status as modal auxiliary (DESIDERATIVE).

Although this study is concerned primarily with modern Mon, examples of older stages of the language have been included as much of Mon morphology and orthography can be explained only with reference to OM or MM. Data from other languages is included wherever conducive to the analysis or explanation of a specific phenomenon in Mon. The most important languages in this respect are Thai and Burmese, the sole national languages of both countries where Mon is presently spoken (and has been for at least 1500 years). The influence of both Thai and Burmese on Mon, both in structurally and in vocabulary, is considerable after 800 to 1000 years of not always peaceful co-existence, although in the initial phase the influence was the
other way round, with Mon being the culturally (and sometimes politically) superior language. The most important sources for Burmese, apart from own field notes, are Okell (1969) and Okell and Allott (2001). The former has the advantage of giving all Burmese words and examples in Roman transliteration, while the latter is more complete, covering both the spoken and the written language, including a large number of examples from both varieties. For Thai data I have mostly drawn on own field notes where not otherwise indicated.

1.3 Sentence structure

Mon can be described as a basically SVO language, i.e. the subject precedes the verb which in turn is followed by the (direct) object. This word order holds for standard sentences in most cases, but in natural speech a very different picture emerges. Both subject and object can be absent in a sentence, or the object can be topicalised or focussed, which usually involves a movement to sentence initial position, with or without overt marking as topic or focus. Then there are sentences which obviously exhibit two subjects, others containing no verb. A more adequate description of Mon sentence structure is probably in terms of pragmatic rather than syntactical categories, i.e. as topic-comment structure. The topic is old, given information which is known or believed to be known to the hearer, while the comment adds new information about the topic. Most commonly, but by no means exclusively, the subject of a sentence is also its topic and the verb is the central part of the comment or focus.

In sentence (1.4a) in a neutral context (if this exists at all in a natural language) ʔuə is understood as being the topic and the rest of the sentence the comment.

(1.4a) ʔuə ɕiaʔ ɕɤʔ.
SM 1 s eat rice
‘I eat rice.’

The pronoun in sentence initial position can be overtly marked as topic by one of a set of topic markers, most commonly ʔkɔh, ʔle and ʔteh.10

(1.4b) ʔuə ʔkɔh ɕiaʔ ɕɤʔ.
SM 1 s TOP eat rice.
‘I eat rice.’

10 ʔkɔh is the most widely used, neutral topic marker. ʔle is a Burmese loan (B lè) and has a connotation of additive (‘me too’). The last one, ʔteh, is a SM innovation of uncertain origin which has a conditional/temporal connotation.
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(1.4c) ?uə le  ciao? pryŋ.
SM 1s ADD eat rice
‘I too eat rice.’

(1.4d) ?uə teh  ciao? pryŋ.
SM 1s COND eat rice
‘As for me, I eat rice.’

In another context the same pronoun can function as comment rather than topic of the sentence. In this case the focus marker raʔ is usually added.

(1.4e) ?uə raʔ  ciao? pryŋ.
SM 1s FOC eat rice
‘It’s me who eats rice.’

If another part of the sentence acts as topic or focus, it is marked as such, with or without re-ordering of the words. Typically overtly marked topics are fronted, while overtly marked focal elements remain in situ or are fronted for emphasis, if they are nominal. There is no marker for the comment as such, only for the main predicative part of the comment, i.e. the focus.

(1.4f) pryŋ kɔh  ?uə ciao?.
SM rice TOP 1s eat
‘Rice I do eat.’

(1.4g) ?uə ciao? pryŋ raʔ.
SM 1s eat rice FOC
‘I eat rice.’

(1.4h) pryŋ raʔ  ?uə ciao?.
SM rice FOC 1s eat
‘It’s rice I eat.’

While nominal elements can freely be moved into sentence initial position, this is not generally possible for verbs. If a verb is marked as highly focal, it remains in situ.

(1.4i) ?uə ciao? raʔ  pryŋ.
SM 1s eat FOC rice
‘I eat the rice (I don’t throw it away).’
Usually only one element can be fronted in a sentence, either the topic or the focus. Marked fronting of both elements leads to ungrammatical or at least doubtful sentences, as in (1.4k).

(1.4k) *? ʔuə kòh ʔra? ʔiaʔ.
SM 1s TOP rice FOC eat
‘As for me, it’s rice I eat.’

A sentence with fronted topic and verbal focus (extended, non-emphatic focus in sitū) is unproblematic:

(1.4l) ʔiaʔ ʔra? ʔuə kòh.
SM rice TOP 1s eat FOC
‘As for rice, I do eat it.’

With the restrictions mentioned above, the word order in terms of topic and comment/focus in Mon is rather free, depending largely on emphasis and stress. Both verbs and nominals (syntactical subject and objects), as well as peripheral elements such as adverbials and prepositional objects can act as topic and focus.

1.4 Sentence types

This section gives a short overview of different sentence and clause types in Mon other than plain statements. SFPs marking illocutionary force and sentence/clause types share some similarities with the verbal operators, which will be discussed in chapter 6, and some are derived from verbs (viz. the imperative markers ʔi ‘a little’ and ʔa ‘touch, feel’). The sentence types to be discussed in this section are interrogative (1.4.1), imperative (1.4.2), and conditional (1.4.3).

1.4.1 Interrogative sentences

Absolute (yes-no) questions in Mon are formed by adding an interrogative SFP to a statement, as in other Southeast Asian languages. In modern Mon, the interrogative SFP is ʔa ʔha. This particle is attested in OM as ʔa and MM as ʔa in the following sentences.
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(1.5) ’abhiprāy tarla gaḥ ci cmat tā?
OM speech lord say EMPH true Q
‘Is what you say true, Lord?’ (SSKa40f)

(1.6) ma lapok ha tuin gaḥ ci nwom tun nā?
MM REL desecrate NEG move.up SAY EMPH exist further Q
‘Does it then happen that the desecration is ineffective?’ (KLYg12)

As Shorto correctly observes (DMI:147), the spelling of the question particle suggests that it was originally only [a:], i.e. a pure vowel sound without initial glottal stop, enclitically added to the last word of the sentence.11 This sound can not be represented in Indian derived Southeast Asian scripts, so the closest possible representation was chosen, i.e. repetition of the final consonant of the preceding word with a long ‘¬-ā’ added. In the modern language the spelling is standardized as ‘hā’,12 avoiding the inconvenience of having a large number of different spellings for the same morpheme. In SM, the pronunciation is usually [ha:], but in some cases the initial [h] is voiced or dropped completely.

Mon being a non-tonal language, there is the possibility to mark a sentence as a question by raising the pitch of the last word, without other overt marking. This contrasts with Burmese and Thai usage, both of which are tonal languages and do not readily allow changes of lexical tones for pragmatic purposes (although in some contexts tone changes are observed in both languages). Some speakers prefer a lowering of the pitch towards the end of the sentence instead of a rise, making questions virtually indistinguishable from statements.

There are thus two general ways to form absolute questions in Mon, one by the SFP ha (with the variants [ha:], [fia:], and [a:]) and by a rise of pitch towards the end of the sentence.13 The latter is found exclusively in SM, while the former is common in both LM and SM. There is no difference between positive and negative questions in LM and SM.

(1.7a) pèh ?a kṃ ha?
SM 2 go too Q
‘Are you going along?’

11 The same morpheme [a:] is also used to form questions by Chinese speakers of Thai, resulting in the same dilemma of impossibility of representation in Thai script. The normal choice in representing this morpheme in Thai script is as ‘¬ā’.
12 This standardization of the orthography may be seen as a generalization of its appearance in the frequent expressions khōṭ ha ‘is it good?’ and tēk ha ‘is it correct?’ or negative questions ending in ... pūh ha.
13 At least some Mon dialects in Thailand form absolute questions by repeating the main predicating element once with high pitch once with normal pitch, as in pèh tēm tēm ‘do you know?’ (data from Ko’ Kret, Nonthaburi Province).
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(1.8a) məkɔayers tɛm hɔmqo màn hɑ?
SM DES know speak GIVE WIN Q
‘I want to know (about it); can you tell me?’ (KKP)

(1.9a) ʔuʔa kɔkm hùʔ kɔʔʔ pùh (hɑ)?
SM 1s go too NEG get NEG Q
‘Can’t I go along?’

Sentence (1.9a) is usually pronounced with rising intonation on the negative particle pùh when the question marker ha is dropped.

It has to be noted that there are no simple morphemes in Mon corresponding to ‘yes’ and ‘no’ in English. This feature of Mon is shared with other languages of the region. The shortest affirmative answer to an absolute question in Mon consists of the main predicating element of the question this is a verb or an OP₁ or OP₄ verbal operator (cf. ch. 6), optionally followed by the focus marker raʔ. The equivalent of ‘no’ is the same element with the preceding negation marker hùʔ. The answers to the above questions are thus (affirmative and negative):

(1.7b) ʔa (raʔ).  hùʔ ʔa (pùh).
SM  go (FOC) NEG go (NEG)

(1.8b) (hɔm) màn (raʔ).  (hɔm) hùʔ màn (pùh)
SM (speak) WIN (FOC) (speak) NEG WIN (NEG)

(1.9b) (ʔa) kɔʔʔ (raʔ).  (ʔa) hùʔ kɔʔʔ (pùh)
SM (go) GET (FOC) (go) NEG GET (NEG)

Absolute questions may be used pragmatically to express negative statements. This is usage is not very frequent, though.

(1.10) ɲɛh  kp  dɔk məŋ hɑʔ ?uʔa chan-du lɛy.
SM person GIVE ride STAY Q 1s pity EMPH
‘They didn’t let them get on [the carts]; I really pitied them.’ (KD)

Relative (wh-) questions involve a focal question word (what, where, who, etc.),¹⁴ which in Mon either occurs in situ, or is moved to the beginning of the sentence like in Burmese. In some cases the question word occurs both in sentence initial position and in situ. This happens even if the question word is

¹⁴ Mon is exceptional in that there is no common component morpheme in the formation of question words (as e.g. Latin QV-, English wh-, Burmese be-, Thai -dəy). Cf. Mon məʔ ‘what’, ʔɔl ‘where’, ɲɛʔ-kɔh ‘who’, chəʔɔp ‘when’, etc.
the only element of the sentence, as in ‘what?’, which in SM is usually mù? mù? rao? (‘what what QREL’). In ‘correct’ Mon relative questions always end in the relative question particle rao. This particle is homonymous with the (negative) topic marker rao (cf. section 2.3.1), which corresponds to Burmese usage, where the topic marker lè is also used as relative interrogative SFP. The same particle is also used in Mon to ask an already uttered question about another individual or object, similar to the English ‘and what about ...?’. The precedent does not necessarily have to be a question itself, but may be a statement, as in the following example.

(1.11)ʔuə ʔa ɕiaʔ py̍ŋ. pèh rao?
SM 1s go eat rice 2 QREL
‘I am going to eat. What about you?’

In colloquial SM, the relative question marker is often dropped, especially if the sentence contains enough phonetic material (usually three or more syllables).

(1.12a) mù? hóm rao?
SM what speak QREL

(1.12b) mù? dèh hóm (rao)?
SM what 3 speak (QREL)
‘What did he say?’

This tendency is not absolute and varies among speakers and situations. Generally the formally ‘correct’ longer form sounds more polite.

1.4.2 Imperative sentences

The simplest way to form an imperative in Mon is by a verb alone, without any SFP and no overt subject: ʔa ‘go!’, ɕiaʔ ‘eat!’. As in other languages (including English) this is considered abrupt and rude by most speakers in most situations, though, and other ways are preferred in most contexts. The most common form of the imperative is by adding the originally verbal politeness particle ɲûʔ ‘a little (bit)’ to the sentence.

(1.13) hóm ɲûʔ pà kwēʔ!
SM speak LITTLE PROH shy
‘Please speak, don’t be shy!’

15 The repetition of the interrogative is mostly restricted mùʔ, other interrogatives being rarely repeated in the same sentence.
Other weakening adverbial expressions have the same function and can be used instead of \( p\i\), but only \( p\i\) can occur in prohibitive contexts (s. section 2.3.2).

(1.14) kon møŋ møŋ hənây nə? múə cut nah!
SM child stay STAY place this one moment EMPH
‘You stay here for a moment, will you, children.’ (KKP)

Intensifying aspectual operators are used to add urgency to a command.

(1.15) pèh pliə thpə ?a kon pèh!
SM 2 abandon THROW GO child 2
‘Go and get rid of your children!’ (KKP)

As described in section 5.1.4, the focus marker \( ra? \) can be used to form strong, definitive commands that do not allow any contradiction. In the following sentence it is reinforced by the use of the aspectual operator ‹tho’›.

(1.16) hāy i-dot ceh tho’ nū gluŋ ra!
LM hey PREFfem-small move.down THROW ABL boat FOC
‘Hey girl, get down from that boat right now!’ (MKP:28)

A less strong form of the imperative is achieved by adding the verb turned SFP particle \( c\mathcal{m} \) ‘feel (by touching), try out’. This form seems to be about half-way between \( ra? \) and \( p\i\). Its actual use in SM is rather restricted and much less frequent than the plain verb or verb + \( p\i\).

(1.17) kwah phèə tɔ? ?a rɔŋ nədì cɔm tek múi?-ci?!
SM pupil temple PL go look clock IMPER beat how.much
‘Go have a look at the clock, boys, and see what time it is!’ (KN)

As seen in the examples above, the subject may optionally be expressed in an imperative sentence.

SM uses direct imperative sentences to express requests, a feature Mon shares with Burmese but not with Thai (and English). The request ‘may I have some rice, please?’ in SM is

(1.18a) kɔ ?a pɔŋ pəi?.
SM give 1s rice LITTLE

which corresponds to Burmese
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(1.18b) cāno khōu htāmin pēi pa.
B 1sm OBJ rice give POL

This contrasts with the Thai equivalent:

(1.18c) khāw2 nāy1 day2 may4?
Th ask for rice little bit GET Q

A subcategory of the imperative is the adhortative (or ‘hortative’), which can be described as an imperative of the first person plural, corresponding to English ‘let’s V’. The adhortative in Mon is expressed by the SFP coʔ (according to Shorto with heavy register, cōʔ, s. Shorto 1962:100). This particle is a loan from Burmese sóu <cúi>, which the Myanmar-English Dictionary of the Myanmar Language Commission (1993:114) describes as a “cry uttered by a player when a spinning top is caught with the hand after flipping it into the air with the string (the last player to utter has to surrender his top which is placed in a circle for other players to hit it with their tops, until it is knocked out of the circle)” and a “postpositional marker following a verb indicating a proposal to do sth. together (equivalent in usage to the imperative ‘let’s’)”. This explanation suggests that the Burmese adhortative marker originally was an interjection which was grammaticalized as a SFP. In colloquial SM, coʔ is often used alone, dropping the verb which must be retrieved from the context. This is especially frequent as an answer to a question expressing an invitation or proposal, as in (1.19).

(1.19) ?a ciiʔ pyŋ ha? (?a) coʔ!
SM go eat rice Q (go) ADH
‘Shall we go for lunch?’ ‘Yes, let’s go.’

Usually the main verb is overtly expressed, but the subject (which is always poy ‘we’ in adhortative contexts) is dropped.

(1.20) ?a rāʔ kaʔ kām coʔ!
SM go catch fish too ADH
‘Let’s go fishing!’ (WK)

1.4.3 Conditional clauses

OM and MM make no clear distinction between conditional and temporal subordinate clauses. The main markers used are 〈yal〉 ‘if, when’, 〈yām〉 (MM) ‘if, when’, originally ‘time’ and the Pali loan 〈kāl, kāla〉 ‘when, if’, in SM shortened to laʔ, originally ‘time’. All of these markers occur in clause initial
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position, and the conditional/temporal clause usually occurs before the main clause.

(1.21) **yal** kcit sak ṇañh ma yām.  
OM COND die NEG:exist person REL weep  
‘If/when they die, there is no one to weep.’ (Ku 94)

In MM, the combination of ‹yaw› with the focus marker ‹ra› or the adverb ‹rau›,16 ‘as’ becomes popular. In combination with ‹yaw›, ‹ra› still retains its original semantics as ‘be’17 (at least partly) and the phrase can be translated as ‘if it is (the case that) ...’. This is in apparent contrast with Haiman’s analysis of conditional clauses as topics (Haiman 1978).

The most common ways to express conditional clauses in LM are by means of the above mentioned clause-initial particle ‹yaw›, usually in the combination ‹yaw ra›, sometimes ‹yaw khā ra› (lit. ‘COND time FOC’), and the clause-final marker ‹mgah›, lit. an attributive (or relative) form of the verb ‹gah› ‘say’. The two forms can co-occur in the same sentence, without obvious intensifying value. Less frequent is clause initial ‹yām› ‘time’.

(1.22) **yaw ra** ’ay rām̱ tin mgah...  
LM COND FOC Is disrobe EXIT ATTR:SAY  
‘If I disrobe ...’ (DC:20)

The use of a verb meaning ‘say’ in clause-final position parallels Burmese usage of clause-final hsou ‘say’ to mark a conditional clause. As in Mon, the Burmese marker may combine with the original conditional morpheme -yin as hsou-yin lit. ‘if one says’ (s. Okella and Allott 2001:61, 65ff). The time of emergence of this marker in LM and its clause-final position makes Burmese influence very likely.

SM uses ‹yā or yā ra’ in clause-initial or, more frequently, the innovative marker teh in clause-final position in conditional clauses. The origin and original meaning of the latter is obscure. It does not appear in Shorto 1962, but Tun Way 2000 has “‘teh’ [tih] affix. denoting condition (if).” The phonetic shape of the marker excludes Burmese or Thai origin (Burmese and Thai do not have final [-h]) and makes it look like ‘real Mon’. According to some native scholars it is derived from clause final mā-tēh, attributive of iēh ‘hit, correct, etc.’ (s. section 6.3.14), which is phonologically possible (if irregular), but semantically not very likely (‘which is correct, which must be’

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16 Usually contracted to ‹yrau›, which may also be analysed as a contraction of ‹yañ› ‘emphatic particle’ and ‹rau›.  
17 S. chapter 5.
> COND). This same morpheme is also used as clause linkage marker, especially in combination with toŋ ‘finish’ (cf. section 6.3.16), indicating a temporal rather than purely conditional value of teh. This can also be seen in the following sentences, where both a conditional and temporal component are present.

(1.23) chyr kwi tet teh təŋə nəhə ?at dək ləy.
SM meet cart exit COND worship person ask for ride EMPH
‘When/if they saw a cart leaving they prayed and begged to get a ride.’ (KD)

(1.24) məkəʔ cao teh cao ket.
SM DES return COND return TAKE
‘If one wanted to go back, he went of his own accord.’ (KD)

The use of sentence initial yə is unambiguously conditional, as in the following sentence.

(1.25) yə rəo kwan hùʔ həcək dəh tem mən həʔ?
SM COND fellow village NEG accuse 3 know WIN Q
‘If the villagers hadn’t turned him in, could they (the Japanese soldiers) have known about him?’ (KD)

Less frequently, clause-initial yənm (for some speakers yəm) is used, as in MM and LM.

(1.26) yənm ?əpat kəʔ prəŋ kyiʔ? hùʔ ceh ?a dəo ty-kyʔ tyʔ?,
SM COND time TOP bomb poison NEG move down GO LOC Tokyo that sign, deh kyʔ?, kyəpən kəʔəʔ thəʔ? ?ət-tah.
right? 3 get Japan get THROW all-INTENS
‘If the poisonous bomb (nuclear bomb) had not come down on Tokyo [sic!] at that time, the Japanese would just have got everything.’ (KD)

Alternatively, conditional clauses may remain unmarked.

(1.27) bəʔ hùʔ ket, bəʔ khyəʔt.
SM 2fam NEG take 2fam die
‘If you don’t take it, you’ll die.’ (KKP)

---

18 Another function of teh is as topic marker, as in the expression ḫəə teh ‘as for me, when [it comes to] me’.
There is no way in Mon, neither LM nor SM, to make a distinction between
realis and irrealis conditional clauses apart from the context. Thus the Mon
clause pèh ʔa teh can be translated into English either as ‘if you go’ or as ‘if
you went’. Sometimes irrealis conditional clauses are introduced by the
adverbial (noun) ʔuʔpəma ‘example, simile, parable’ from Pali upamā ‘id.’.
In rapid speech this is usually shortened to ʔuma and combined with teh as
ʔuma teh.

1.5 Phonology of Mon
1.5.1 Historical overview

As mentioned above many phenomena in modern Mon can only be
understood in the light of historical developments of the language. This
justifies a description of the phonological system of Mon, both diachronic
and synchronic before moving on to the main topic of this study.

The sound system of the Mon language has changed in many ways in the
almost 1500 years of its recorded history. These changes are only partly
represented in the script, as the spelling is, and for a long time has been,
rather etymological than phonological. Mon has proved to be very resistant to
influences from neighbouring languages, unlike its cousin Vietnamese,
whose phonological system resembles that of Chinese or Tai rather than its
Austroasiatic roots. The Mon dialects in Thailand show recent influence from
Thai (cf. Bauer 1986), while Burmese Mon seems to be more resistant to
Burmanisms in pronunciation. The phonological system of Old Mon has been
reconstructed by Shorto (1971), Diffloth (1984), and Ferlus (1986). Shorto
describes basically the classical OM language as used in Pagán under
Burmese rule (11th to 12th c.), while Diffloth reconstructs the language of the
Dvāravatī kingdom in central Thailand and perhaps southern Burma during
the first millennium A.D., based on the comparison of Mon dialects with their
closest relative, Nyah Kur. According to Diffloth (1984:271ff), the Dvāravatī
Old Mon language (DOM) had the following set of simple initial consonants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>k</th>
<th>c</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>j</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>m</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>l</td>
<td>w</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td>h</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.2 OM initials
No aspirated stops are included in Diffloth’s list, as they are analysed as clusters consisting of a stop + h, based on morphological evidence. Every syllable must begin with at least one consonant. Many types of clusters are permitted, including stop + stop, nasal + stop, stop + semivowel, stop + liquid, stop + nasal, consonant + ?, fricative + liquid, etc., and triple initials such as trp-, jrl-, etc. occur. In some cases an epenthetic vowel [ə] was probably inserted to facilitate pronunciation.

All words in DOM must end in one final consonant. There are no vocalic rhymes\(^\text{19}\) in DOM, with one exception. The word for ‘duck’ is reconstructed as *(ʔa)daa, SM ʔtēʔa. This is, according to Diffloth, probably an early borrowing from an eastern Mon-Khmer language (Diffloth 1984:68).\(^\text{20}\) Old Mon of the 11\(^{\text{th}}\) century shows final consonants in all native words, but has a large number of Pali and Sanskrit loans ending in long vowels. The following consonants could occur as finals in DOM:

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
k & c & t & p \\
j & j & n & m \\
y & r & l & w \\
s & h & ?
\end{array}
\]

Table 1.3 OM finals

The vowel system of DOM is not uniform. Some vowels occur only with certain final consonants, not with others. In Diffloth’s words:

It is difficult to speak of a single vowel system for Dvaravati-Old-Mon; there are incommensurable systems for each set of finals, and this diversity increased as DOM gradually changed into Modern Mon. For Modern Spoken Mon, Shorto spoke of co-existing vowel systems (Shorto, 1966). (1984:300)

In DMI, Shorto states that

The vowels of Old Mon present the most difficult part of the phonological analysis. It is complicated by the fact that not only do different systems have to be postulated before different classes of final consonants, but a given vowel may be written differently according to the consonant which follows it. (DMI:xvi f)

The following vowels seem to have existed in Old Mon:

\(^\text{19}\) The rhyme, i.e. vowel plus final consonant (if any), is a basic part of a syllable in indigenous descriptions of many Southeast Asian languages. This custom is due to the phonological structure and development, in which the quality of the vowel is often determined by the final consonant.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>i/ií</th>
<th>u/uu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e/ee</td>
<td>o/oo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e/eí</td>
<td>ë/ëë</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iə</td>
<td>uə</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.4 OM vowels

Some of the vowels listed may not actually have had phonemic status but must be considered allophones.

In Middle Mon, the system of initials appears simplified, with OM triple initials changed into CaC- sequences (Diffloth 1984:324):

DOM *kntuuiʔ MM gitu, gatu 'moon'
DOM *kntaal MM gatä 'sole, palm'

Some of the finals were lost, e.g. -l and -r, resulting in a large number of native Mon words now ending in a long vowel:

OM kirkūl, kirkul, karkul MM grakū ‘family, clan’
OM kyāl MM kyā ‘wind, air’

Palatal finals merged with the dentals after [-front] vowels, as in

OM ñāc MM ñāt ‘see, perceive’
OM smān MM smān ‘ask’
OM sac MM sat ‘fruit, bear fruit’
OM dūn, duñ MM dun ‘bamboo’

and with the velars after [+front] vowels, as in

OM piñ MM peñ ‘full’
OM phic MM phek ‘fear, be afraid’.

Final -s merged with -h (-h after ā):

OM cis MM cuih ‘descend, go down’
OM das MM dah ‘be’
OM manus, manis MM m(a)nih, manuih ‘human, man’
OM goh, goh, gohā MM gah, gāh ‘that’
OM gaḥ MM gaḥ ‘say’
OM kās MM kah ‘shave’
OM manus is an early loan from Pali maussa, which has undergone the regular changes from OM to MM.\textsuperscript{21} The change from -s to -h was gradual. The Kyaik Maraw inscription of Queen Mi Cao Pu (1455) still shows the spelling ‹das› for ‘be’,\textsuperscript{22} but ‹cwah› for ‘ten’ (OM ‹cwas›). (U Hkyit Thein 1965:114)

1.5.2 From Middle Mon to Modern Mon

The following list illustrates the changes from MM to LM and SM of the above items.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LM</th>
<th>SM</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gakū</td>
<td>hako</td>
<td>‘family, kind’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kyā</td>
<td>kya</td>
<td>‘wind, air’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nāt</td>
<td>pāt</td>
<td>‘see, perceive’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>smān</td>
<td>hman</td>
<td>‘ask’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sat</td>
<td>sät</td>
<td>‘fruit, bear fruit’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dun</td>
<td>tūn</td>
<td>‘bamboo’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peñ</td>
<td>pəñ</td>
<td>‘full’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LM gakū SM hako ‘family, kind’ LM phek SM phəc ‘fear, afraid’
LM kyā SM kya ‘wind, air’ LM ceh SM ceh ‘move down’
LM nāt SM pāt ‘see, perceive’ LM dāh SM tīh ‘be’
LM smān SM hman ‘ask’ LM mnih SM mnih ‘man, human’
LM sat SM sät ‘fruit, bear fruit’ LM gah SM kōh ‘that, TOPIC’
LM dun SM tūn ‘bamboo’ LM gah SM kōh ‘say’
LM peñ SM pəñ ‘full’ LM kah SM kah ‘shave’

An interesting development is the emergence of a new set of palatal finals in SM,\textsuperscript{23} as in pəñ ‘full’ and phəc ‘fear’. These palatals do not correspond to the OM palatals though.\textsuperscript{24} SM palatals rather originate in MM velar finals after ā, e, i, in some dialects also after u, irrespective of the origin of these. The following example further illustrates the differences between MM, LM, and SM:

(1.28) a. MM (DMI:148), b. LM, c. SM

\begin{verbatim}
(a.grakwombruim grakwom dewatau ma tau pədaycah-lńim cakkawā gah 
b.gakom bruim gakom dewatau ma tau pədaycah-lńim cakkawā gah 
c.hakom prźm hakom tēwǎtao ma mōn mōn dźo cəh-ńim cəkkawā kəh  
comp company Brahmacompany god REL stay STAY LOc 10,000 universe TOP  
‘the company of Brahmas and the company of gods who dwell in the 10,000 universes’
\end{verbatim}

The verb tau ‘stay, dwell, stand’, also used as durative marker in MM, has been replaced in the spoken language by məŋ ‘be (somewhere)’, both in its

\textsuperscript{21} That manus is indeed a very early loan in Monic is shown by its presence and regular development in Nyah Kur. Diffloth reconstructs a DOM form *mnus (Diffloth 1984:117).

\textsuperscript{22} The archaic spelling ‹das› ‘be’ and ‹mnis› ‘man’ is still sporadically used in 20\textsuperscript{th} century publications.

\textsuperscript{23} Shorto (1962) does not include palatal finals in his description of SM but notes the corresponding finals as velar, according to the pronunciation prevalent in the northern dialects.

\textsuperscript{24} OM dāk ‘water’ becomes SM dəc, while OM ŋāc ‘see’ becomes pāt.
function as full verb and as aspect marker, and by its derivate hətao (gatau, thatau, datau) in the meaning ‘stand up’. In LM tau and dmān are used interchangeably, apparently without semantic difference in most contexts.

It is obvious that LM is much closer to MM than to SM and the transition from MM to LM is not clear-cut.

Although MM looks very similar to LM, some of the major changes in Mon phonology came about at some point towards the end of the MM period. As the orthography has remained more or less unchanged since MM times, it is not easy to reconstruct the events that occurred and to determine the exact time they took place. What is certain is that at some point before the 16th century, in some areas as early as the 10th century or even earlier, a phenomenon started spreading, probably from the north, over Southeast Asia, which has been called ‘devoicing wave’ or ‘great tone split’ (s. Brown 1985:18). This devoicing wave affected virtually all words in virtually all languages in the area, irrespective of their genetic affiliation, and its effects were similar throughout the area. Originally voiced initial stops were devoiced, merging in some cases with plain voiceless stops, in others with aspirated stops. The loss of the voiced-voiceless contrast was compensated for by a new distinction, which doubled (or even tripled) the number of phonemic tones in tone languages, and gave rise to register distinctions in non-tonal languages like Mon-Khmer. The registers in turn affected the quality of the vowel sound of the syllable in many languages, including Mon. In some languages, such as Khmer, the registers as distinctive feature was later lost, leaving vowel differences as the only trace of the old distinction.25 The devoicing of the initials in Mon probably came about quite late, maybe as late as the 16th century.

One morphologically important development is the loss of most distinctions in weak presyllables. All voiced and aspirated stops, together with s were reduced to h in this position, while t and k merged in k. This development started in MM and is still going on in the modern dialects. All recorded dialects allow only a very limited set of regular initials in presyllables, viz. /l/, h-, k-, p-, m/, some even less. This simplification of presyllables led to a distortion of the morphological system of Mon, with derived forms becoming obscured and old infixes now looking like prefixes, in some cases of otherwise unattested roots. These changes are not usually represented in the orthography, although etymologically incorrect spellings occur often, representing the uncertainty of the initial.

25 In Khmer, as in Mon and Thai, the old voiced-voiceless distinction is still present in the orthography.
Mon as it is spoken today is clearly a language with two registers, ‘clear’ and ‘breathy’ or, in native terms, ‘light’ (sa) and ‘heavy’ (sàṅ). The light register is usually, but not necessarily, spoken with a higher pitch than the heavy register. The main feature of the heavy register is a certain amount of breathiness throughout the syllable, which results from a lax glottis. The light register is marked by clear voice, i.e. tense glottis. In some idiolects of Mon especially in central Thailand, register distinctions are replaced by pitch distinctions. This can be seen as Thai influence in semi-speakers. Burmese influence in some (semi-)speakers of Mon in Burma leads to uncertainty regarding registers, usually without resulting in adaptation of Burmese tone patterns.

The arising of registers can actually be taken as the beginning of modern Mon as opposed to MM. The register distinctions are indicated in the orthography by the old voiced-voiceless distinction. The voiced set of initials is used for heavy register syllables, the voiceless set for light register syllables. The value of many vowel symbols varies according to the register of the syllable. Diphthongisation tends to occur more frequently in the light register. The writing system of Mon makes perfect sense historically, preserving a stage of the language very close to MM, but it is at the same time far removed from the actual spoken dialects. It is a good means, though, to cover the dialect differences, which are substantial, especially in the phonological system.

As the Mon script itself does not give any hint to the phonological development of the language after MM (except for the weakening of presyllables), the only evidence we can gather comes from external sources. The earliest record of Mon in European letters is a Pegu (Mon)-English wordlist compiled in 1601 and published by Blagden in the Journal of the Burma Research Society in 1940 (J.B.R.S.40:371-5). The list contains 55 words and phrases in romanised Mon with English translations. The list is rather short and the representation of the Mon sounds is very broad and
inconsistent, but some conclusions can be drawn from the vocabulary. The comparisons in Table 1.6 of MM, LM, early SM (or late MM), and SM give an idea of the state of the language at that time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MM</th>
<th>LM</th>
<th>1601</th>
<th>SM</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mù gah ro</td>
<td>mù gah ro</td>
<td>mugaru</td>
<td>mù? kôh rao</td>
<td>‘what is it?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>bgay</td>
<td>fegoe</td>
<td>hôkô</td>
<td>‘cat’ (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tay</td>
<td>tay</td>
<td>toway, -doê</td>
<td>tao</td>
<td>‘hand’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kdi, kduip</td>
<td>kduip</td>
<td>cadup</td>
<td>dop</td>
<td>‘head’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dui’ k˘à</td>
<td>dui’ k˘à</td>
<td>tegla</td>
<td>r˘à k˘à</td>
<td>‘wait a bit’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kitu, gatu, gitu</td>
<td>gitu</td>
<td>catu</td>
<td>kôtao˘à</td>
<td>‘moon’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>krajo’, gajo’</td>
<td>gaja’</td>
<td>kecho</td>
<td>hacom˘à</td>
<td>‘sit’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k˘àan</td>
<td>k˘àan</td>
<td>cabang</td>
<td>fè˘à</td>
<td>‘ship’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>br˘àw, brau</td>
<td>brau</td>
<td>braw</td>
<td>prè˘ào</td>
<td>‘woman’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>’ey ’à da</td>
<td>’ay ’à ra</td>
<td>oïara</td>
<td>?û˘ à ra?</td>
<td>‘I am going’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gluin</td>
<td>gluin</td>
<td>cling, clang</td>
<td>kl˘à</td>
<td>‘much’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>klik</td>
<td>kleg</td>
<td>kloc</td>
<td>‘pig’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d˚àk</td>
<td>d˚àk</td>
<td>daick</td>
<td>daç</td>
<td>‘water’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>daw tarañ</td>
<td>daw tarañ</td>
<td>dotarang</td>
<td>tô k˘àren˘à</td>
<td>‘shut the door’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.6 The 1601 Mon Vocabulary

Some of the words in the 1601 list (table 1.6) show devoicing, while others seem to retain their voiced initials. MM voiced ⟨d⟩ is apparently retained in do tarang ‘shut the door’, but devoiced in te gla ‘wait a bit’. MM ⟨g⟩ appears voiced in mu ga ru ‘what is it’ and fegoe ‘cat’, but voiceless in clang ‘much’. We might here have a direct witness of a major phonetic shift taking place, with devoicing having started but not being completed yet at the beginning of the 17th century. There is of course the possibility of interpreting the un-English non-aspirated voiceless stops as voiced, as is obviously the case in te gla ‘wait a bit’, where gla stands for kla. ‘Woman’ seems to retain the old voiced initial, together with the vowel /au/ unchanged. This is especially noteworthy, as almost three hundred years later according to a superficial survey of the languages of India by G. Campbell (1874), the ‘Talain of Pegu (Burmah)’ use “pra-ou” for ‘woman’, showing the voiceless initial but the original value of the vowel. Other words with ⟨au⟩ in heavy register listed in Campbell are K-na-ou ‘belly’ (⟨gnau⟩, /nèə/) and Kla-ou ‘cow’ (⟨glau⟩, /klèə/). A few years later Haswell gives the value of the same

26 The inconsistency of the spelling can be seen from the various ways of representing the relative question particle /rao/ in the list, viz. mugaru ‘what call you it?’ (/mû? kôh rao/ ‘what is that?’), memura ‘what is your name?’ (/mû? yómû? rao/) and mucherow ‘how sell you?’ (/mû? cîl rao/ ‘how much?’).

27 The order of the words of the original list as published by Blagden is retained.

28 The list gives “fegoe, a carte”, which according to Blagden is “perhaps a misprint for catte”.

29
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vowel in second register words as “àow (the flat nasal sound of ow)” (Haswell 1901, reprint 2002:8). There is no known dialect today that retains the old diphthong /au/ in heavy register syllables, neither in Burma nor in Thailand.  

‘Water’ shows palatalisation before final velar, as in most modern dialects, while ‘pig’ retains the quality of both the vowel and final. ‘Hand’ and ‘I’ show vowel shift from /ay/ to /sy/, which in modern dialects developed into /ɔ/ and /uə/. ‘Head’, ‘sit’ and ‘ship’ retain the initial consonant cluster as represented in the orthography, all with an epenthetic vowel, presumably ə. In modern SM the initials have been simplified. These might be instances of reading pronunciation (s. 1.5.3). In spite of all its shortcomings and shortness, the 1601 vocabulary remains an important document, showing an intermediary stage between MM and Modern Mon, which Diffloth labels “Early Modern Mon” (Diffloth 1984:57).

1.5.3 Modern Dialects

There is no recognized standard dialect of Mon. Pronunciation varies from village to village, to greater or smaller degrees. Basically common to most dialect areas is the reading pronunciation (RP), employed especially by monks reciting texts and in other formal contexts, to a lesser extent also in modern music. Many artists sing in reading pronunciation, but speak their dialect after the performance. The reading pronunciation is closer to LM than SM, especially regarding presyllables and initial consonant clusters. Rhymes are usually the same as or close to SM. RP enjoys some prestige among Mon people, although it is definitely not natural spoken language. It is considered ‘clear’ pronunciation (hm klah ‘speak clearly’), as opposed to the local dialects. There is in Mon today a situation of diglossia, which is likely to have existed at least since late MM times and to go on existing with the literacy rate increasing among the Mon population. The following table illustrates the differences between LM, RP, and SM.

---

29 The diphthong is retained as /au/ in the Nyah Kur dialects of Central Thailand.
30 According to Shorto’s phonemization of OM, the pronunciation of ‹ey, ay› was already /sy/ in OM.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LM</th>
<th>RP</th>
<th>SM</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>smiŋ</td>
<td>səməŋ</td>
<td>hmoŋ</td>
<td>‘king’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sani</td>
<td>səŋəʔ</td>
<td>həʔ</td>
<td>‘house’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tla</td>
<td>təlaʔ</td>
<td>kəlaʔ</td>
<td>‘master, lord’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lpa</td>
<td>ləpaʔ</td>
<td>paʔ</td>
<td>‘don’t’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pdəy</td>
<td>pədəyo</td>
<td>dəyo</td>
<td>‘in; LOCATIVE marker’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jaku</td>
<td>çəkəʔ</td>
<td>həkəʔ</td>
<td>‘body, self’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>laca</td>
<td>ləcəʔ</td>
<td>(ləcəʔ?)</td>
<td>‘lake’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.7 Reading Pronunciation

The last item in Table 1.7 is rarely found in SM and when it is, it can be considered a loan from LM.

Most authors on Mon agree on the general division of Mon into two major dialect groups, viz. Pegu (northern) and Martaban (southern). The former is also called ‘Mon Ro’, the latter ‘Mon Rao’, from the pronunciation of the common relative question marker *rao* as [ro] or [rao] respectively. The dialect situation of SM is far from clear, though. The first (and so far only) detailed account of different dialect forms is Diffloth 1984, which compares Mon dialects of Burma and Thailand with Nyah Kur. A comprehensive dialectology of Mon has still to be worked out. With (slightly) improved communication facilities within Monland and the resulting increased mobility and contact between communities, a certain levelling of dialects can be expected. This tendency can already be observed in Wangka, where speakers of different dialect areas live together. The increasing Mon language use in Moulmein might also lead to a new urban standard dialect in the Mon capital. With Mon education now offered in over 300 schools throughout Mon State and in parts of neighbouring Karen State and Tenasserim Division, attended currently by some 52,000 students on ten levels, a kind formal standard pronunciation seems to be evolving, probably close to the current reading pronunciation.

As mentioned above, the bulk of data for the present study comes from four distinct dialect areas, all but the first one in Burma: Baan Wangka (kwan wèŋ kaʔ?), Kanni Village (kwan kan ni), Ko’ Kapoun Village (kwan koʔ həpγyŋ), and Ko’ Dot Village (kwan koʔ ʔot). Although there are clear and regular differences between these three dialects, they are mutually intelligible without difficulty. Ko’ Kapoun and Kanni share some phonemic features, such as the merger of /uə/ and /uə/ into [uə] ([uə] for some Kanni speakers),

31 For most speakers, RP of this item is həʔ.

32 The relative question particle in Ko’ Dot and Wangka, for example, is ro ~ rə, although these dialects are classified as “Mon Rao”.

31
which have been retained as different sounds in the dialects south of the small market town of Mudon. Other features are common to Ko’ Kapoun and Ko’ Dot, such as the merger of /ɔ/ and /ɔ/ into [ʊ] and [ɔ] respectively, as well as the retained distinction ky - c. This gives the following distributional pattern for the phonemes /u/ ~ /ɔ/ ~ /ʊ/ ~ /ɔ/:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Wangka</th>
<th>Kanni</th>
<th>Ko’ Kapoun</th>
<th>Ko’ Dot</th>
<th>LM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘performance’</td>
<td>pu</td>
<td>pu/pu</td>
<td>pu</td>
<td>pu</td>
<td>poy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘hand’</td>
<td>tɔ</td>
<td>tɔ/tau</td>
<td>tɔ</td>
<td>tɔ</td>
<td>tay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘finish’</td>
<td>tɔ</td>
<td>tɔ/tau</td>
<td>tɔ</td>
<td>tɔ</td>
<td>tay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘sand’</td>
<td>hɔtɔɔ</td>
<td>hɔtɔɔ/hɔtɔu</td>
<td>hɔtɔu</td>
<td>hɔtɔ/hɔtɔ</td>
<td>bfi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.8 Dialects compared 1

In Kanni /ky/ and /c/ merge into [c], while Ko’ Kapoun, Wangka, and Ko’ Dot keep the sounds apart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Wangka</th>
<th>Kanni</th>
<th>Ko’ Kapoun</th>
<th>Ko’ Dot</th>
<th>LM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Buddha’</td>
<td>cyaic</td>
<td>caic</td>
<td>cyaic</td>
<td>cyaic</td>
<td>kyåk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘be torn’</td>
<td>caic</td>
<td>caic</td>
<td>caic</td>
<td>caic</td>
<td>cåk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘live’</td>
<td>cyåŋ</td>
<td>cåŋ</td>
<td>cyåŋ</td>
<td>cyåŋ</td>
<td>guåi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘foot, leg’</td>
<td>cåŋ</td>
<td>cåŋ</td>
<td>cåŋ</td>
<td>cåŋ</td>
<td>jüi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.9 Dialects compared 2

The presyllable /kɔ-/ is retained in Kanni and Ko’ Kapoun with the initial velar stop, but weakened to [ɔ/-] in Ko’ Dot and Wangka:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Wangka</th>
<th>Kanni</th>
<th>Ko’ Kapoun</th>
<th>Ko’ Dot</th>
<th>LM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘return’</td>
<td>ɔliŋ</td>
<td>kɔliŋ</td>
<td>kɔliŋ</td>
<td>kɔliŋ</td>
<td>kalên</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘New Year’</td>
<td>ɔtah</td>
<td>ɔtah</td>
<td>ɔtah</td>
<td>ɔtah/ɔtæh</td>
<td>̣atah</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.10 Dialects compared 3

Based on these features, we get the following picture of the four dialects under consideration:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phoneme</th>
<th>Wangka</th>
<th>Kanni</th>
<th>Ko’ Kapoun</th>
<th>Ko’ Dot</th>
<th>LM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/u/</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>u/u</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>ay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ɔ/</td>
<td>ɔ</td>
<td>ɔ/ɔu</td>
<td>ɔ</td>
<td>ɔ</td>
<td>oy, way, ay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ʊ/</td>
<td>ʊ</td>
<td>ʊ/ʊu</td>
<td>ʊ</td>
<td>ʊ</td>
<td>uy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ɔ/</td>
<td>ɔ</td>
<td>ɔ/ɔi</td>
<td>ɔ</td>
<td>ɔ</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ky/</td>
<td>cy</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>cy</td>
<td>cy</td>
<td>ky, gy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/c/</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>c,j</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/kɔ-/</td>
<td>ɔ-</td>
<td>kɔ-</td>
<td>kɔ-</td>
<td>kɔ-</td>
<td>ka-, ta-, la-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ɔ-/</td>
<td>ɔ-</td>
<td>ɔ-</td>
<td>ɔ-</td>
<td>ɔ-</td>
<td>‘a-, la-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.11 Dialects compared 4
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Although no recorded dialect makes a four way distinction /ɔ/ - /uɔ/ - /oɔ/ - /oə/, we have to postulate four different phonemes in order to explain the distributional pattern in the dialects. Throughout this study I use a standardized phonemic spelling for spoken sources of Mon. There may be no actual spoken dialect making use of the complete inventory of sounds, but they have to be considered phonemic, based on the criteria outlined above. The actual pronunciation in the main dialects used in this study is given in comparative tables in Appendix B.

1.5.4 The phonology of SM

The following syllable patterns are found in SM:

CV, CVC, CCV, CCVC, caCV, caCVC, caCCV, caCCVC

This gives the overall syllable structure:

\[(ca)C(C)V(C)\]

where \((ca)\) represents the weak presyllable and \(V\) can be a simple vowel or a diphthong. Every full syllable must begin with at least one but not more than two consonants followed by a vowel (or diphthong) and can end in not more than one consonant. The initial consonant of a presyllable and the final consonant of a full syllable is one of a restricted set (see below). Notice that the aspirated consonants count as single consonants in Modern Mon. Only the neutral vowel \(ə\) can occur in a presyllable. Examples of the different syllable types are given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>?a</th>
<th>CV</th>
<th>‘go’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ket</td>
<td>CVC</td>
<td>‘take’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phya</td>
<td>CCV</td>
<td>‘market’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plop</td>
<td>CCVC</td>
<td>‘insert’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kola</td>
<td>caCV</td>
<td>‘box’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hatem</td>
<td>caCVC</td>
<td>‘remember’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?əkra</td>
<td>caCCV</td>
<td>‘between’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?sklekk</td>
<td>caCCVC</td>
<td>‘blind person’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Initials

The following initials are phonemic in SM:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>k</th>
<th>kh</th>
<th>ɲ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>ch</td>
<td>ɲ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>hn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>ph</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>hm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r</td>
<td>l</td>
<td>hl</td>
<td>w</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hw</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>h</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.12 SM Initials

There are no voiced stops in SM, the MM voiced stops having been changed into voiceless stops with a following heavy register vowel. According to some scholars, the second register stops and /s/ are still partly or fully voiced in SM. One actually hears voiced stops and /s/ in some Mon varieties, but this appears to be due either to Burmese influence or to hypercorrectism and does not always correspond to LM usage. Dr. Nai Pan Hla, a respected authority on Mon, states that “they [the heavy register stops and s] are perfectly voiced [in SM]. If anyone does not believe this, let him have a look at the Sanskrit values of the letters.” (p.c. 2002). Shorto writes, “In chest register words, k, c, t, p, s are partly voiced in initial position and fully voiced in medial position.” (1962:xi) Shorto uses the voiceless series throughout in his transcription, though.

The aspirates now are an integral part of the phonemic system, as can be seen from derivates from words with aspirate initials, e.g. *pəth₄ ‘make strong’ from th₄ ‘be strong’, where th is treated as a simple initial. The causative of words with initial cluster are formed by inserting a vocalic infix between the two initials, e.g. klah ‘be clear’ > kəlah ‘make clear’. If th was considered a cluster we would therefore expect a causative *kəh₄ instead of the attested pəth₄. Another indication that aspirates are treated as single consonants is the possibility of clusters of the type ChC, as in phya ‘market’, khra ‘be separated’, etc. Three place initial clusters do not appear in SM.

The phoneme f was introduced through loans from Burmese and is still mostly restricted to loans from Burmese and English. In some dialects it merges with the very rare phoneme /ɕ/, which occurs only in a handful of words and only with the equally rare rhyme /iə?/, which in turn is found only after this initial, most importantly in the common verb ciəʔ ‘eat’, an irregular development from OM ɕa.,
Except for ŋ all nasals can be aspirated. Original ḣṅ is reduced to ḡ in all recorded dialects. In some people’s pronunciation, an epenthetic vowel can be heard between the aspiration and the nasal: ḡman ~ ḡman ‘ask’. This habit is especially common among the younger generation speakers of Wangka Mon and can be attributed to Thai influence, where the original aspirated nasals have been lost.

The pronunciation of hw varies among speakers. Most commonly it is realized as [xw], [khw] or [f]. This variation seems to be idiolectical rather than dialectical.

The possible initial clusters are the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ky</th>
<th>kr</th>
<th>kl</th>
<th>kw</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>khy</td>
<td>khr</td>
<td>khl</td>
<td>khw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>py</td>
<td>pr</td>
<td>pl</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phy</td>
<td>phr</td>
<td>phl</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.13 SM initial clusters

Some of the initial clusters are prone to simplification in some dialects. In the southern dialects ky- is realized as ‘doubly palatalised’ [cy-], while in the dialects north of Moulmein it merges with the simple palatal stop c-. khy- retains its original value only in the most conservative dialects. It usually is pronounced as [ch-] in all areas, merging with ch-. phy- merges in some people’s pronunciation with ch-, khw- with hw-. Unlike in neighbouring Thai, there is no reduction of initial clusters of the type kr/l- > [k-], pr/l- > [p-] in any dialect of Mon, including the ones in Thailand.

As mentioned above, only a restricted set of consonants is used in common presyllables. Others do occur in formal language and in reading pronunciation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ؤ-</th>
<th>ḡ-</th>
<th>Ḽ-</th>
<th>ṭ-</th>
<th>Ṭ-</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ṣ-</td>
<td>ṡ-</td>
<td>ṭ-</td>
<td>ṭ-</td>
<td>ṭ-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.14 Presyllables

Only the presyllables in the upper row occur regularly in native Mon words and in foreign loans. ṭ- is usually changed to Ḽ-, but it retains its original value before main syllables beginning with a velar sound: LM ṭala > Ḽla? ‘master, lord’, but LM ṭakuit, lakuit > ṭakuit ‘startle, be frightened’. In the

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33 According to Bauer (1982:21), the difference between khy and ch “is retained in all Thailand varieties where /ky-/ ≠ /c/.” This is not true in most Burma dialects, even where the difference between non-aspirated ky and c is retained.
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southern dialects, both kə- and tə- merge with ʰə-. Presyllables do not show register distinctions.

**Rhymes**

The vowel system of SM is best described in terms of rhymes, i.e. the vowel and final consonant of a syllable, as shown in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-V</th>
<th>-Və</th>
<th>-ʔ</th>
<th>-h</th>
<th>-k</th>
<th>-ŋ</th>
<th>-ɛ</th>
<th>-n, t, p, m</th>
<th>-y</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>iə</td>
<td>ʔi</td>
<td>ih</td>
<td>iək</td>
<td>iŋ</td>
<td>iŋ</td>
<td>it in ip im</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>eə</td>
<td>ʔe</td>
<td>eh</td>
<td>eək</td>
<td>eŋ</td>
<td>eŋ</td>
<td>et en ep em</td>
<td>əy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ə</td>
<td>ʔə</td>
<td>eh</td>
<td>ek</td>
<td>eŋ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>et en ep em</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>ʔa</td>
<td>ah</td>
<td>ak</td>
<td>an</td>
<td>ac</td>
<td>ap</td>
<td>at an ap am ay</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>ʔo</td>
<td>oh</td>
<td>ok</td>
<td>oc</td>
<td>ən</td>
<td>ot on op om oy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>ʔu</td>
<td>uh</td>
<td>uk</td>
<td>uc</td>
<td>əc</td>
<td>ot on op om oy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ao</td>
<td>aoh</td>
<td>ao</td>
<td>ak</td>
<td>ac</td>
<td>əc</td>
<td>oc</td>
<td>ot on op om oy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.15 Rhymes

The distribution of the vowels depends to a large degree on the final consonant and on the register of the syllable. Although register is originally a function of the initial, it is presently realized in the rhyme of the main syllable.

Not all rhymes occur in both registers. Boxes marked V(C) are found only in light register, while boxes marked V(C) are found only in heavy register syllables.

Unmarked boxes show rhymes that occur with both registers. There is some difference in the quality of most vowels between light and heavy registers, with the breathiness of the heavy register influencing the vowel quality. Some vowels that today appear to be light - heavy register pairs do not share a common origin, e.g. tem ‘know’ vs. kəm ‘step’. The former is spelt ‹ti ›, the latter ‹gā ›, supposedly reflecting the MM pronunciation of the two words. In other cases, words with historically identical rhymes now exhibit different vowel sounds due to register differences, e.g. LM ‹kuin › ‘also’ and ‹guin › ‘warm, comfortable’ are pronounced kəm and kəm respectively. Vowel length in modern SM is no longer distinctive, although it used to be so in older stages of the language. What in LM looks like vowel length distinction actually represents different vowel qualities, e.g. ‹man › ‘Mon’ vs.
The Verb System of Mon

\(<mān>\) ‘win, be capable’ in SM is /môn/ vs. /màn/. Written short vowels in final position are always pronounced with a following glottal stop.

### 1.5.5 Phonology and the writing system

The Mon writing system is based on Indian models, presumably on the South Indian Pallava script (Wanida 1996:9; Than Myat 1956). Mon first appears as written language in what today is central Thailand, on inscriptions of the Dvāravatī era dating from the 6th century. After a gap of several centuries during which hardly any Mon inscriptions are found, Mon flourishes as the official language of the Burmese empire centred at Pagan beginning in the 11th c. and of the Mon kingdom of Haribhūñjaya in what today is northern Thailand around the 12th c. The orthography appears remarkably stable throughout the OM era. This suggests that the gap in inscriptions is due to poor archaeological research especially in southern Burma, rather than to lack of Mon language use during that time. After another gap of over two hundred years, Mon re-emerges as written language again in the 15th century, now in a clearly different shape. It is this MM that was to be the basis of the modern written language.

The Mon alphabet today consists of 35 consonants, arranged in Indian fashion in five groups of five letters each, starting with the velar sounds, and ten “unclassified” letters. The vowel symbols are added like diacritics, before, above, beneath, or after the consonant. In consonant clusters, the second element is written in an abbreviated form usually beneath the first initial.

#### Consonants

The transliteration in the LM column reveals the Indian values of the consonants, with two special symbols added for sounds foreign to Pali and Sanskrit, viz. \(\text{ṁ}\) and \(\text{ṁb}\). The latter is a combination of \(m\) and \(b\) (\(\text{ṁ}\)), the shape of which has been modified and given rise to a new letter (\(\text{ṃ}\)), which today is considered a simple initial. The comparison of the LM and SM values of the letters reveals the notation of registers in Mon. Almost all original voiced consonants are now pronounced in the heavy register with the inherent vowel changed from /a\(\text{ṁ}\)/ to /æ\(\text{ṁ}\)/, while the original voiceless consonants are pronounced in the light register with the inherent vowel remaining unchanged. The Indian retroflex series merged in Mon with the dentals in pronunciation, the symbols being used only to represent Indian loans in LM. Two of letters of the retroflex series are assigned a special value, i.e. \(\text{ḏ}\) to represent the dental implosive /d\(\text{ḥ}\)/ and \(\text{ṇ}\) to represent the light register counterpart of \(\text{ṇ}\). The former was used in this function already in OM, while the latter is a more recent innovation. The same goes for the use
of /l/ for light register /l/. Unlike in Thai (and other Tai languages) and Burmese, the consonants of Mon do not have special names. The original retroflex and dental series are distinguished in spelling out by adding mút to the retroflex and tₐn to the dental consonants: ꟾ /t/ is taʔ mút, ꟾ /t/ is taʔ tₐn.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>vel.</th>
<th>pal.</th>
<th>retr.</th>
<th>den.</th>
<th>lab.</th>
<th>unclassified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>plain stops</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LM</td>
<td>ka</td>
<td>ca</td>
<td>ta</td>
<td>ta</td>
<td>pa</td>
<td>ya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SM</td>
<td>kaʔ</td>
<td>caʔ</td>
<td>taʔ</td>
<td>taʔ</td>
<td>paʔ</td>
<td>yēʔ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aspirated stops</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LM</td>
<td>kha</td>
<td>cha</td>
<td>tha</td>
<td>tha</td>
<td>pha</td>
<td>ra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SM</td>
<td>khaʔ</td>
<td>chaʔ</td>
<td>thaʔ</td>
<td>thaʔ</td>
<td>phaʔ</td>
<td>rèʔ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voiced stops</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LM</td>
<td>ga</td>
<td>ja</td>
<td>da</td>
<td>da</td>
<td>ba</td>
<td>la</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SM</td>
<td>kêʔ</td>
<td>cēʔ</td>
<td>daʔ</td>
<td>tēʔ</td>
<td>pēʔ</td>
<td>lēʔ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voiced aspirated stops</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LM</td>
<td>gha</td>
<td>jha</td>
<td>dha</td>
<td>dha</td>
<td>bha</td>
<td>wa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SM</td>
<td>kêʔ</td>
<td>cēʔ</td>
<td>thēʔ</td>
<td>thēʔ</td>
<td>phēʔ</td>
<td>wēʔ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nasals</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꟾ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LM</td>
<td>nha</td>
<td>ña</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>ma</td>
<td>sa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SM</td>
<td>nēʔ</td>
<td>nēʔ</td>
<td>naʔ</td>
<td>nēʔ</td>
<td>mēʔ</td>
<td>saʔ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.16 The Mon Alphabet

The subscript consonants (kwek, kamek ‘hang, hanging’) are used in second position in clusters. Only a few letters have special subscript forms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full consonant</th>
<th>Subscript</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Ex.</th>
<th>LM</th>
<th>SM</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>‘day’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ꟺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>‘tree’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>‘Burma’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>‘market’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>‘early’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>‘tiger’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ꟾ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>ꄺ</td>
<td>‘err, do wrong’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.17 Subscript consonants

All other consonants functioning as second element in a cluster are written below the initial without any change of shape. Often the pronunciation of written clusters is reduced to a simple initial, with the original initial dropped. The first two examples in table 1.17, written ꟾ tʰay, ꟾ tʰaʔ, show initial ꟾ t, which is dropped in the pronunciation, leaving traces only in the light register of the syllable. The word ꟾ həmèè ‘Burma’ is spelt ꟾ bma, with the initial
cluster extended by insertion of ə and originally voiced /b/ regularly weakened to h.

Vowels

There are two sets of vowel symbols, independent ones used in initial position, and dependent ones used after initial consonants. Some of the vowels can be combined to represent different sounds. All written vowel signs in Mon have special names, used when spelling out a word. The independent vowel signs are mostly used in Indian loans. In native words initial ʼ with the corresponding dependent vowel is preferred, with the exception of a few fixed spellings using independent vowels. In the following examples, the dependent vowel symbols are illustrated in combination with the letter /k/:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Light reg.</th>
<th>Heavy reg.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a, e, e</td>
<td>ë, ë, ë</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>ë</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i, ëa?</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>ë</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u, ao?</td>
<td>û</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u, ao</td>
<td>û</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e, e, ey</td>
<td>é, è, ëy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eo, ao</td>
<td>å, û</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ao</td>
<td>å</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ao</td>
<td>û</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e, e, ey</td>
<td>é, è, ëy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ao</td>
<td>å, û</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ao</td>
<td>û</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å, û</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å, û</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.18 Vowel symbols

Inherent vowel sounds

In many syllables, no vowel symbol is written. The quality of the inherent vowel depends on the register of the initial as well as on the final consonant. In transliteration, the inherent vowel is always written /a/. The following examples illustrate the quality of the inherent /a/ in different environments.
The last two examples show irregular vowel quality (ö for expected ø, due perhaps to the labial initial).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LM</th>
<th>SM</th>
<th>gloss</th>
<th>LM</th>
<th>SM</th>
<th>gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>∞</td>
<td>ka</td>
<td>‘fish’</td>
<td>ö</td>
<td>gwa</td>
<td>‘be shy’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>ka’</td>
<td>‘island, neck’</td>
<td>ö</td>
<td>la’</td>
<td>‘long time’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>tak</td>
<td>‘hit’</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>dak</td>
<td>‘tie’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>kæn</td>
<td>‘guard’</td>
<td>ë</td>
<td>man</td>
<td>‘wait’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>kat</td>
<td>‘practice’</td>
<td>ë</td>
<td>gat</td>
<td>‘knot’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ë</td>
<td>pan</td>
<td>‘shoot; four’</td>
<td>ë</td>
<td>ban</td>
<td>‘hug’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ë</td>
<td>paw</td>
<td>‘fly’</td>
<td>ë</td>
<td>baw</td>
<td>‘heap up’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ë</td>
<td>kæh</td>
<td>‘shave’</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>gæh</td>
<td>‘say’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>kæh</td>
<td>‘be dry’</td>
<td>ö</td>
<td>gæh</td>
<td>‘TOPIC’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>tay</td>
<td>‘hand’</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>ray</td>
<td>‘friend’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>smat</td>
<td>‘black ant; child’</td>
<td>ë</td>
<td>man</td>
<td>‘Mon’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The regular realization of the inherent vowel can be summarised as follows:34

\[C_La] \rightarrow [Ca]/____\theta, \varnothing\]
\[C_Ha] \rightarrow [C\theta]/____\theta, \varnothing\]
\[a] \rightarrow [ø]/____C_{[-velar]}\]
\[a] \rightarrow [ɔ]/____C_{[-velar]}\]

If a consonant is to be read without an inherent vowel as syllable final, the ‘killer hook’ (c hacpt) is used to silence the inherent vowel sound.

The final consonant as well as the register of the syllable influences the quality of the vowel, and the quality of the vowel in some cases influences the pronunciation of the final consonant, so that there is no one-to-one correspondence between written vowel symbol and vowel sound. Mon can be considered an example of syllabic writing system, rather than alphabetic, although the syllables are made up of alphabet-like symbols. Table 1.19 illustrates the representation of different kinds of syllables in written Mon. It is obvious that Mon orthography not only does not directly represent the actual spoken language, but it is also far from being unambiguous. There is often more than one way to write a given syllable, and there are usually different ways to read a given written word. This is not the place to give a complete presentation of correspondences between LM and SM. A detailed description of the Mon writing system and its relation to SM is given in Pan Hla (1988-89:xiv-19), including comparative tables of two major dialects. The reader should also refer to Shorto (1962) for SM-LM correspondences.

34 C_L stands for light register consonant, C_H for heavy register consonant.
Throughout this study I give a literal transliteration of LM forms and a phonemic representation of SM forms according to the system outlined above. The number of dialects the phonemic system is based upon is obviously limited due to a number of reasons. The system can therefore not be claimed to be final, but as the dialects considered are spread over most of the main Mon speaking area in Burma, it can be taken to be a reasonably good working basis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ၨက</th>
<th>LM</th>
<th>SM</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>ၨက</th>
<th>LM</th>
<th>SM</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ၨက</td>
<td>kā</td>
<td>ka</td>
<td>‘car’</td>
<td>ၨက</td>
<td>lāp</td>
<td>lēp</td>
<td>‘prize’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ၨက</td>
<td>bhā</td>
<td>phē</td>
<td>‘school, temple’</td>
<td>ၨက</td>
<td>jāt</td>
<td>cēt</td>
<td>‘theatre’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ဗ</td>
<td>gi</td>
<td>kīʔ</td>
<td>‘hurt’</td>
<td>ၨက</td>
<td>daḥ</td>
<td>tēh</td>
<td>‘hit, right’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ဗ</td>
<td>pi</td>
<td>pōʔ</td>
<td>‘three’</td>
<td>ၨက</td>
<td>kweʔ</td>
<td>kweʔ</td>
<td>‘really’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ဗ</td>
<td>sun</td>
<td>sīʔ</td>
<td>‘drink’</td>
<td>ၨက</td>
<td>tiṃ</td>
<td>tem</td>
<td>‘know’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ဗ</td>
<td>luin</td>
<td>lēn</td>
<td>‘step on’</td>
<td>ၨက</td>
<td>mām</td>
<td>mēm</td>
<td>‘young man’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ဗ</td>
<td>puin</td>
<td>pōn</td>
<td>‘merit; property’</td>
<td>ၨက</td>
<td>dām</td>
<td>dām</td>
<td>‘true’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ဗ</td>
<td>sein</td>
<td>sīn</td>
<td>‘(not) be so’</td>
<td>ၨက</td>
<td>būi</td>
<td>bē</td>
<td>‘salt’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ဗ</td>
<td>peń</td>
<td>pōn</td>
<td>‘full’</td>
<td>ၨက</td>
<td>kluiw</td>
<td>klō</td>
<td>‘dog’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ဗ</td>
<td>stīk</td>
<td>toc</td>
<td>‘sleep’</td>
<td>ၨက</td>
<td>khyū</td>
<td>khyu</td>
<td>‘write’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ဗ</td>
<td>riṁ</td>
<td>rōn</td>
<td>‘hot, peppery’</td>
<td>ၨက</td>
<td>tū</td>
<td>tō</td>
<td>‘burn’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ဗ</td>
<td>tah</td>
<td>tōh</td>
<td>‘milk, breast’</td>
<td>ၨက</td>
<td>plan</td>
<td>plān</td>
<td>‘again’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ဗ</td>
<td>tah</td>
<td>tah</td>
<td>‘clean, clear’</td>
<td>ၨက</td>
<td>màn</td>
<td>mãn</td>
<td>‘stay’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ဗ</td>
<td>sāi</td>
<td>hōʔ</td>
<td>‘house’</td>
<td>ၨက</td>
<td>tuy</td>
<td>tô</td>
<td>‘finish’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ဗ</td>
<td>sāa</td>
<td>kāha</td>
<td>‘monk’s robe’</td>
<td>ၨက</td>
<td>ga’uy</td>
<td>hā’uy</td>
<td>‘medicine’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.19 Sample syllables LM and SM

In transliterating OM, MM, and LM, I basically follow the standard used by Shorto (1962, 1971), with one small alteration: where the written symbol 〈〉 (anusvāra) represents final h, I use 〈ĥ〉 instead of Shorto’s 〈‘〉, e.g. 〈kweh〉 is 〈kweh〉 for Shorto’s 〈kwe’〉, SM kweh. Where the same written symbol has the value of final m, I transliterate 〈мя〉, where it stands for the final glottal stop, I use 〈‘〉, in accordance with Shorto. No distinction is made in the transliteration between final glottal stop written 〈‘〉 (anusvāra) and 〈‘〉. The former spelling is not found in OM/MM and is in many words again being replaced by the latter in modern LM for clarity reasons. Where the anusvāra represents the vowel /ə/ before velar finals, I use 〈‘〉, according to Shorto, for MM and LM.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>LM</th>
<th>Shorto</th>
<th>SM</th>
<th>gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ḳweh</td>
<td>kweh</td>
<td>kweh</td>
<td></td>
<td>‘true’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḳle</td>
<td>kle’</td>
<td>kleʔ</td>
<td></td>
<td>‘disappear, be lost’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḳlemb</td>
<td>klem</td>
<td>klem</td>
<td></td>
<td>‘short note on palm leaf cover’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḳåk</td>
<td>ḳåk</td>
<td>ñåk</td>
<td></td>
<td>‘pick out; levy duty’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In many cases the orthography varies even within a single written text. In these cases I stick to the spelling of the original, thus keeping the irregularities in the transliteration. This involves mostly presyllables and initial clusters, in a few cases also the final.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>LM</th>
<th>Shorto</th>
<th>SM</th>
<th>gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ḳwəc - ḳu - ḳəcəc</td>
<td>ʔəcəa - ʔəcə - ʔəcə</td>
<td>ʔəcə</td>
<td>‘teacher’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḳə - ḳəc - ḳə - ḳəcəc</td>
<td>ʔələ - ʔələ - ʔələ - ʔələ</td>
<td>ʔələʔ</td>
<td>‘master’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḳəמע - ḳəμ</td>
<td>ʔəμ</td>
<td>ḳəμ</td>
<td>‘spouse’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḳə - ḳə</td>
<td>ʔə - ʔə</td>
<td>ʔə</td>
<td>‘island’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḳəd - ḳəd</td>
<td>ʔəkd</td>
<td>ʔəkd</td>
<td>‘join’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḳəp - ḳəp</td>
<td>ʔəp</td>
<td>ʔəp</td>
<td>‘verse’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḳəʃ - ḳəʃ</td>
<td>ʔəʃ</td>
<td>ʔəʃ</td>
<td>‘Mon’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Verbs in Mon

Before describing the verb system of Mon, it is necessary to establish the fundamentals, in other word reach a definition of verbs as a distinct category in Mon. The following section gives a general theoretical overview of verbs, while the remaining sections of this chapter are dedicated to the predicate in Mon and more specifically to the category of verbs and possible subcategorisations.

2.1 What are verbs?

According to Givón (1984:51f),

[w]e most commonly find four major lexical classes ("word classes") in languages: (a) Nouns; (b) Verbs; (c) Adjectives; (d) Adverbs. [...] [N]ouns, adjectives and verbs distribute rather systematically along one coherent semantic dimension [...]. We will call this the time-stability scale.

Experiences - or phenomenological clusters - which stay relatively stable over time [...], tend to be lexicalized in human language as nouns. [...] At the other end of the lexical-phenomenological scale, one finds experiential clusters denoting rapid changes in the state of the universe. These are
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prototypically events and actions, and languages tend to lexicalize them as verbs. Members of this lexical category are much more abstract than nouns [...]. [...] Further, within the verb category, members may be graded by their degree of time-stability.

The classes of noun and verb, the two prototypical extremes on our time-stability scale, are attested in the lexicon of all languages. On the other hand, the class ‘adjective’ is a bit problematic.

Verbs as main predicative elements in an utterance enjoy universal status among the world’s languages. Although some languages do not make a clear formal distinction between verbs and other word classes, all languages seem to have a word class that corresponds to what we usually call verbs. Having low time-stability, verbs are prone to temporal and aspectual distinctions, which may be marked morphologically or periphrastically. Verbs describe actions, states, or events (situations) that can occur only in connection with nominals and that prototypically are temporally unstable or limited. Situations described by verbs do not exist in their own right, but only as interaction between or characteristics of real-world or imaginative objects expressed by nouns (the arguments of the verb). Unlike (real world, concrete) objects described by nouns, which are in most cases clearly and visibly delimited in space, situations described by verbs are not visibly delimited and cover the temporal rather than the spatial dimension, which in many languages leads to an extended use of spatial features to the temporal dimension in connection with verbs.

In most languages verbs can be grouped into different classes. The most common classes include action verbs versus stative verbs, transitive versus intransitive, and telic versus atelic. In the following sections I will give a short overview of previous treatments of verbs in Mon, followed by an account of characteristics of Mon verbs, and finally I will outline the verb classes that can be established in Mon on formal grounds.

2.2 The predicate in Mon

The predicative part of a sentence in Mon in its most common form consists of one or more verbal elements, optionally accompanied by verbal operators and objects. There exist in Mon nominal predicates, but these have to be marked specially, usually with the focus marker raʔ (s. ch. 5). The prototypical function of the predicate is to describe actions, events, or characteristics of the subject. In other words, the subject (or in some cases the object) of a sentence is the topic, i.e. given information, about which the predicate adds new information. The predicate is typically the comment of a sentence and thus the main domain of the focus. While we can say that not all predicates have to be verbal in Mon, it is equally true that all verbs in a
sentence have not to be predicative or focal. Verbs or whole VPs can be topicalised just like nouns or NPs. I will return to the discussion of nominal predicates and topicalised verbs in section 2.2.3. The topic-comment syntactical structure of Mon will be discussed in section 3.2.

2.2.1 Previous studies of the verb in Mon

The earliest extensive description of Mon in a European language is Haswell’s “Grammatical Notes and Vocabulary of the Peguan Language”, which was first published in 1874. The second edition (edited by Rev. E.O. Stevens) was published in 1901 in Rangoon and reprinted (actually retyped) in 2002 by the Mon Education Committee. Pages 27ff (in the 2002 edition) give an overview of verbs in Mon:

§ 17. Verbs

There are two kinds of verbs, transitive and intransitive. Some transitive verbs are formed from intransitive. [...] [Active verbs are transformed into passive by the use of ‹dü › ‘endure, suffer’ [...]. The impersonal use of verbs is also quite common [...]. Ed.] The tenses and modes of verbs are very imperfectly shown by affixes and prefixes. Frequently there is nothing but the connection to show the tense or mode. The present is always expressed by the simple verb [...]. Sometimes two or three verbs follow a single nominative without anything to distinguish tense or mode. This does not cause the confusion that one would suppose [...]. The only substitute, which the Peguans have for the present participle, is expressed by the use of ‹mā › [‘stay’].

Haswell goes on listing and explaining first the “Verbal Prefixes” and then the “Verbal Affixes”, of which he distinguishes “Assertive Affixes”, “Interrogative Affixes”, “Imperative Affixes”, “Affix of Number”, “Qualifying Affixes”, “Euphonic Affixes”, and “Closing Affixes”.

The dictionaries of Halliday (1922, reprint 1955) and Shorto (1962) both give a short grammatical overview in the introduction. Talking about verbs Halliday simply states that “Verbs are transitive or intransitive, and in some cases can be either with a slight change in vocalisation. Transitive verbs have the longer form.” (1955:xix). With the “longer form” of transitive verbs Halliday means morphological causatives (s. ch. 4), which in LM and SM are formed by a variety of affixes.

According to Shorto, “words are of three classes, which may be further divided into subcategories.”(1962:xii) The word classes as given by Shorto are as follows:
1. **Nouns.** This class includes the translation-equivalents of English numerals and pronouns.

2. **Verbs.** This class includes the translation equivalents of English adjectives. There is a subclass:
   (a) Auxiliary verbs, comprising words marked as verbs by their occurrence in combination with verb particles (cf. below, 3 (b)), and capable of combining with most members of the class of verbs to form verbal phrases; the majority of members of this subclass also occur in one-word verbal phrases, i.e. as full verbs. In combination they exhibit a high degree of generality of reference and might be described as ‘modal’ or ‘aspectual’. Examples are kʰʔ, òh, mân.

3. **Particles.** This class comprises of four subclasses: [...]
   (b) Verb particles. These occur in combination with verbs, forming verbal phrases; examples are hûʔ, nem. (1962:xii)

The detailed analysis of Shorto’s “auxiliary verbs” is the topic of chapter 6.

The Saddā Man (‘Mon Grammar’) of the Mon Textbook Publication Committee (undated) is a textbook used in Mon schools in Burma. The definitions of word classes seem to be influenced by traditional Pali grammatical categories as well as western grammar books. The Saddā Man distinguishes verbs from adjectives and auxiliaries. Some of the words listed as adjectives are better analysed as nominal operators, e.g. ʔa ‘this’, tnaḥ ‘other’, others are stative verbs, e.g. kʰuih ‘good’, ḍot ‘small’. Interestingly these two and other lexemes are listed twice, once as nominal modifiers/adjectives (nāmawisesana) and once as (stative) verbs. Among the auxiliaries one finds elements that are better described as conjunctions, e.g. gho ‘while’ (from Pali kho ‘really, then, now’, occasionally used in SM to express the continuous aspect as in kʰʔ kʰɨʔ ‘is coming’), japhan ‘when, while’.

I give a full translation of the relevant sections of the Saddā Man in appendix C for the purpose of reference and as an example of an indigenous treatment of verbs.

The most exhaustive studies of the Mon verbal system so far are Bauer 1982 and 1989. In his 1982 thesis on Mon morphology and syntax, Bauer dedicates some seventy pages to what he calls “the verbal piece” as opposed to “the nominal piece”. In his 1989 paper on the verb in spoken Mon, Bauer basically repeats his findings of 1982. According to Bauer,

> [a]t least four main classes of words are to be distinguished in spoken Mon, nouns, verbs, auxiliaries and clitics. These classes or categories can all be distributionally and morphologically defined. Morphologically, verbs cannot be derived by prefixation with ʔə-, and the scope of the negative particle /hûʔ/ may
extend only over verbs. Historically verbs and nouns can be distinguished in that
the former alone may take inflectional affixes (OM «-s-» and «-m-», for the
hypothetical and attributive respectively). (1982:298)

Bauer attempts a classification of verbs based on phonological features:

A phonological classification of verb is possible within certain limits, and has
already been outlined in the nominal specific shapes like /əC-/ /ʔiʔC-/ tri- and
tetra-syllables (except /həcəra/ ‘to reflect, think’, P. vicāra). No noun-verb
classification, on phonological grounds alone, is possible for the bulk of simple
forms in the lexicon, CV(C), CCV(C), CCCV(C), CəCV(C), CəCCV(C). [...] The
majority of nouns and verbs cannot be distinguished phonologically, and the
lexicon abounds in homophonous forms. (1982:367)

Bauer goes on describing subclasses of verbs, such as “operational” versus
stative verbs, as well as different verb complexes, ordered according to the
number of terms involved. One interesting point in Bauer’s treatment of verbs in Mon concerns the
status of numerals. He lists the numerals in the chapter on the nominal piece
(1982:352ff), classifying them as nominals. In a footnote, though, Bauer states that

Historically, numerals do not belong to a separate word-class of their own, but
function as simple verbs, contrary to Shorto’s statement in DMI (1971.xxiv) where
he recognizes “numeral roots” – which, in fact, are interpreted here as
verbal bases – and in DSM (1962.xii) where numerals are subsumed under
nouns. An important trace in SM favours my interpretation of cardinal numbers
as verbs: The negation of ‘to have, possess; be’, /nʊm/, is the verb /mɔa/ ‘[to be]
one’ preceded by the negative particle /hù/, in /hù mɔa/ ‘not to have; there is
no n’. The second argument is that in OM numerals form derivatives by
affixation, and it is assumed that only verbals can function as bases. (1982:521,
footnote 134)

In his 1989 paper Bauer merely states that “numerals in Mon are verbs”
He states that “it is assumed that only verbals can function as bases [for
derivation]”. There are, however, OM forms like /jɪŋjʊŋ/ ‘post of building,
pillar’, which is derived by affixation (reduplication of initial with nasal
infix) from the nominal base /jʊŋ/ ‘foot, leg’. The base is well attested in
Mon-Khmer languages (DMI:121f, 125). The formation looks similar to the
derivate of the numeral OM /mɔy/ ‘one’, OM /mirmɔy/ ‘one, unit, each’
(DMI:295). An argument against classifying the numerals as verbs is Bauer’s
own restriction that verbs cannot occur in shapes like /ʔiʔC-/ (s. above). The
numeral ‘five’ is $pas\,\text{\textsc{n}}$, which becomes $\dot{\text{\textsc{r}}}\,\text{\textsc{n}}$ in combination with ten and its multiples, exhibiting the frequent nominal prefix $\dot{\text{\textsc{r}}}\,\text{\textsc{?}}$. This use is not attested in OM, where five in combinations has the simple form ‘sun’. Furthermore, there are no recorded instances of numerals taking the inflectional affixes ‘$s$-’ and ‘$-m$-’, which according to Bauer is one criterion to establish verbs as a distinct class (s. below).

I will return to the problem of the negation of the existential verb $\text{n\text{\textsc{\textit{um}}}}$ in section 2.5.4. I now turn to sorting out criteria for classifying verbs as opposed to other word classes.

### 2.2.2 Verbs as a word class in Mon

Bauer does not succeed in using phonological criteria to define verbs as opposed to other word classes, especially nouns, apart from the inability of verbs to be formed with the (nominalizing) prefixes $\dot{\text{\textsc{r}}}\,\text{\textsc{-}}$ and $\dot{\text{\textsc{a}}}\,\text{\textsc{-}}$. The number of tri- and tetra-syllabic verbs is small, due to the fact that most words in Mon with more than two syllables are loans, mostly from Pali or Sanskrit. Obviously nouns are more easily borrowed than verbs, a trend that can be observed in languages around the world. Verbs as a separate word class in Mon then must be established on formal grounds. Bauer’s restriction that only verbs can take the inflectional affixes in OM is valid for OM and probably MM, but as one of the affixes has been lost in SM (‘$s$-’) and the other is not productive anymore (‘$-m$-’), its usefulness for SM is restricted.

How can we define the verb in Mon then? The most intuitive statement we can make about verbs in terms of syntax is that they occupy the position after the subject NP of the sentence. This rule is not absolute, though, because the subject NP does not have to be overtly present in the sentence, and a number of topic and focus particles can occur between the subject and the verb. This leads to the conclusion that the verb cannot be defined by its position after the (overt or understood) subject alone.

In the following examples the verbal complex of each sentence is in bold script. (2.1) exhibits ‘normal’ SVO word order, with all arguments overtly expressed.

(2.1) kyapan $\text{klo}\,\text{\textsc{?}}$ na dan tak ty?.
SM Japanese cross CAUS:GO road walking that
‘The Japanese crossed that road.’ (KD)

---

35 There is one instance, though, of a numeral taking the nominalising infix ‘$w$-’: OM $c\,\text{\textsc{a}}$ ‘ten’ - $c\,\text{\textsc{was}}$ ‘-ty’ (i.e. multiples of ten). The semantics do not, however, suggest a verb - noun relation here.

36 In SM, especially in the southern dialects, there are a number of verbs with the phonemic structure ‘$\text{\textsc{k}}\,\text{\textsc{a}}\,\text{\textsc{C}}\,\text{\textsc{V}}\,\text{\textsc{C}}$’ (e.g. $\text{\textsc{klo}}\,\text{\textsc{na}}$ ‘be startled’. These regularly correspond to k$\,\text{\textsc{a}}\,\text{\textsc{C}}\,\text{\textsc{V}}\,\text{\textsc{C}}$ and t$\,\text{\textsc{a}}\,\text{\textsc{C}}\,\text{\textsc{V}}\,\text{\textsc{C}}$ in the northern dialects.
The object can be topicalised and the subject left out, as in (2.2). If the subject was to be overtly expressed, its position would be between kòh and tek.

(2.2) kwah kyac hnòk tek kp jii?.
SM pupil monk big TOP beat GIVE LITTLE
‘Please hit your pupils [for me], Reverend.’ (KN)

In (2.3a), it is the subject that is marked as topic, while in (2.3b) the subject is marked as focus:

(2.3a) tokòh kòh kyo ceh ?a.
SM ogre TOP look MOVE.DOWN GO
‘That ogre looked down.’ (KKP)

(2.3b) tokòh ra? kyo ceh ?a.
SM ogre FOC look MOVE.DOWN GO
‘It was the/an ogre that looked down.’

Among other properties of verbs not shared with nouns or other word classes is their ability to form a complete statement of their own without obligatory verbal or sentential particles. This is possible with nouns only in restricted contexts, such as one-word answers to questions in very informal colloquial SM. If a non-verbal element is to form a predicative statement, a particle like the focal ra? or the assertion marker noŋ is usually added. Notice that numerals cannot form a one-word answer, which further indicates that they are not to be analysed as verbal elements.

(2.4a) nèh-kòh čiŋ? b bà pràt?
SM who eat KEEP banana 1s FOC / friend ASRT
‘Who ate the bananas?’
‘I did.’ / ‘My friend did.’

(2.4b) pràt no? čiŋ? kà? ha?
SM banana this eat GET Q (eat) GET
‘May I eat this banana?’
‘Yes(, you may).’

(2.4c) kà? b bà pràt mú?cì? mè??
SM get KEEP banana how.many CL (get) one CL FOC
‘How many bananas did you get?’
‘I got one.’

Apart from their ability to form a one-word sentence, verbs alone can be preceded by the negation particle hù?. If a nominal expression or a whole clause is to be negated, the longer negation hù? siŋ ‘it is not so’ is used,
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which has wider scope than the simple negation marker (s. 2.3.1). The shortest possible negative answers to the above sentences are for (2.4a) ʔuʔ hùʔ siŋ ‘It wasn’t me’, for (2.4b) (ʔiəʔ) hùʔ k岈 ‘You may not’, and for (2.4c) k岈 lə prət hùʔ siŋ ‘I didn’t get any bananas’. Only the answer to (2.4b) can be negated directly.

The only case of a non-verbal element directly negated is hùʔ mìo ‘there is no; have no’, lit. ‘NEG one’. Historical reasons can account for this usage, which I will return to below. Notice that the other numerals do not have this possibility. An expression like *hùʔ laʔ ‘not two’ is not acceptable in any form of modern Mon nor is it attested in older stages of the language.

In this paper, I define as verbs words that can form a one-word sentence without obligatory clause or sentence particles, and, more importantly, that can be preceded by the simple negation marker hùʔ. Different verb classes can be established on semantic rather than structural grounds. This will be the subject of section 2.5.

2.2.3 Nominal predicates and topicalised verbs

A sentence in Mon can be complete without a verb, exhibiting a nominal predicate. This may be considered a marked case as opposed to common verbal predicates, which in standard speech requires the presence of a predicate marker. The most common predicate markers are the focal raʔ and the assertive noŋ, which will be discussed in detail in chapter 5.

(2.5a) kon-rə həʔ nəʔ raʔ.
SM follower house this FOC
‘He’s a follower of this house. / He belongs to this house.’ (KD)

(2.6a) bəʔ kəʔ ?əŋkələc noŋ.
SM PREF TOP English ASRT
‘That was the English [who did it].’ (KD)

Although nominal phrases can form a predicate in certain contexts, their predicative functionality is restricted. Nominal predicates can take operators only on clause level, i.e. they are not accessible to aspect, modality and direct negation. Negation of sentences with nominal predicates is possible only in combination with the defective existential verb (hùʔ) siŋ, which acts as dummy verbal predicate (s. sections 2.3 and 2.5.4).

(2.5b) kon-rə həʔ nəʔ hùʔ siŋ.
SM follower house this NEG be.so
‘He’s not a follower of this house. / He does not belong to this house.’
On clause level, at least the interrogative operator is possible with nominal predicates:

(2.5c) kon-rə̀ həəʔ nəʔ ha?
SM follower house this Q
‘Does he belong to this house?’

(2.6c) bèʔ kəh ʔεŋkələc ha?
SM PREF TOP English Q
‘Was that the English?’

Any element in a sentence can be topicalised or focussed, including verbs. A verb in topic position does not act as predicate of the sentence. As topic, the verb can with certain restrictions co-occur with predicate operators.

A common structure in sentences with verbal topics is an initial verb with a topic marker (most commonly kəh or le, more rarely rao, especially in negative contexts) and a copy of the verb in predicate position.

(2.7) klon məŋ hənəy kəh kəh deh klon ket.
SM do STAY place TOP TOP 3 do TAKE
‘The work at that place, they did it themselves.’ (KD)

Notice that the first kəh in (2.7) marks hənəy ‘place’ as topic, while the second topicalises the whole verbal expression. The topic klon is a verb, and it occurs in this sentence with the aspectual məŋ ‘STAY’. In (2.8), three marked topics occur in one sentence, the second one a verb, which is repeated in predicate position.

(2.8) hətin kəh cəp, chaʔ məŋ kəh ʔuə məŋ ʔənəsi kəh kləŋ.
SM Hatin TOP arrive but stay TOP 1st stay Lounzi TOP much
‘I did get to Hatin, but stay I did a lot at Lounzi.’ (KD)

The analysis of the third topic in this sentence is ambiguous. It is possible to take only the place name Lounzi as topic. Alternatively, the topic may include the verb and subject ʔuə məŋ, leaving kləŋ ‘be much’ as predicate, leading to a reading ‘as for my staying at Lounzi, it was a long time/a lot.’ Recursive topicalisation is common in Mon.

Another common pattern of verb topicalisation which is used with transitive verb expressions consists of the object in marked topic position and the verb
in its normal position. The topic marker used in this construction type is usually *le*. Very often the object is generic (non-referential) or semantically empty.

\[(2.9)\]  
\[kəlon le hùʔ klon, prŋ le hùʔ ciəʔ.\]

SM  work TOP NEG do rice TOP NEG eat  

‘He doesn’t work nor eat.’

If the verb is intransitive or no object is overtly expressed, the verb itself is repeated, as in (2.10).

\[(2.10)\]  
\[lèə rao lèə kəɲèh.\]

SM  tell TOP.NEG tell GIVE 3  

‘You didn’t even tell him about it.’ (KN)

In (2.10), *rao* could be replaced with the more common *le hùʔ* ‘TOP NEG’ without changing the meaning: *lèə le hùʔ lèə kəɲèh*.

It is a small step from topicalised verb expressions to conditional clauses,\(^{37}\) which are treated in section 1.4.3.

### 2.3 Negation

It has been stated above that the ability to be negated is one exclusive characteristic of verbs in Mon. Modern Mon has two basic negation markers, *hùʔ* in statements and questions, *paʔ* in prohibitive contexts. Both exhibit irregular semantic and phonological developments from their OM sources. Although *hùʔ* and *paʔ* formally always negate the verb which they precede, semantically another part of the sentence can be the element negated. An extended negation marker, *hùʔ siəŋ* ‘it is not so’ is used to negate a whole sentence or utterance or to mark contrastive/high focal negation of a part of the sentence. In the latter case, the element to be negated usually directly precedes *hùʔ* *siəŋ*.

#### 2.3.1 Negated statements and questions

In OM two verbs were used to express negative statements, *kah* (with a weak form *ka* attested already in OM) ‘do not’ and *sak* ‘be without, lack, be free from’. Only the first occurs with the prospective/hypothetical prefix *s-*,

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which makes the verbal status of the latter somewhat dubious. The two verbs pleonastically co-occur in OM as ‹kah sak› with the meaning ‘lack, not have’. Both ‹kah› and ‹sak› combine with verbs as well as with nouns.

(2.11) ma kah rb(i)n tinran
OM REL NEG firm door
‘who have not secure doors’ (DMI:54)

(2.12) pa pun kah moy prakar
OM do merit NEG one kind
‘made merit of several kinds’ (DMI:54)

The scope of the negative verb is over the numeral ‹moy› ‘one’ only, giving a reading as ‘not one, several’. The numeral ‹moy› preceded by the negative verb ‹sak› or its MM weak form ‹ha› gives a reading ‘there is not one, none’, which already in MM replaces the negative of the existential verb ‹nom/nwa› ‘exist, be, have’. In OM ‹sak› alone or the combination ‹kah sak› is used to express the negation of ‹nom›.

(2.13) sak het
OM lack reason
‘without reason’ (DMI:354)

Used with verbs, ‹sak› expresses simple negation or the modal negation ‘cannot’.

(2.14) ma sak tim tarla
OM REL NEG know master
‘which their masters do not know of’ (DMI:354)

(2.15) sak das smo[h
OM NEG be equal
‘cannot match him’ (DMI:354)

The combination of the two negative verbs ‹kah sak› is very frequent in OM:

(2.16) smi[n ma taw dey sth[n ma kah sak ks[iw
OM king REL dwell LOC place REL NEG NEG shake
‘the king who lives in a place that cannot be shaken’ (SSKh11f)

38 That no s- inflected instances of ‹sak› are found in the OM corpus may be due to the fact that ‹sak› most often occurs as second element in the combination ‹kah sak› and only the first verb of a compound is usually inflected for the prospective/hypothetical aspect/mood.
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In LM and SM, 〈kah〉 has survived only in connection with the negative marker 〈hùʔ as hùʔ kaʔ〉 ‘not lacking, be at least as much as’. Sentence (2.17) is the answer to the question “What year was it when the camp at Panga fell?”.

(2.17) pəʔ kləm cəh, pəʔ kləm cəh hùʔ kaʔ raʔ pùh.
SM three 100 ten three 100 ten NEG lack FOC NEG.INT

‘It was in 1310 (AD 1948), at least 1310.” (KD)

The modern Mon form 〈kaʔ〉 appears to be a re-loan from Burmese 〈kà〉 ‘lack’, which is mostly used as negative 〈mă-kà〉 ‘be not less than’, and was originally borrowed from OM or MM 〈kaʔ〉 (s. Okell and Allott 2001:252). An indication that modern Mon 〈kaʔ〉 is not a direct development from MM 〈ka〉 but rather a borrowing from Burmese is the position of the (modern) negation marker. While in OM and MM the order is always 〈kaʔ sak〉, the modern form is 〈hùʔ kaʔ〉, which goes back to a non-attested *〈sak kaʔ〉. The negative marker 〈hùʔ〉 is an irregular development from OM 〈sak〉 via the MM weak form 〈ha〉, which is still widely used in LM. For MM 〈kaʔ sak〉 we would expect something like *〈kəsɛk〉 in SM.

The OM/MM negative verb 〈sak〉 has two representations in the modern language. In LM we find the regular development 〈sak〉 in the fixed form 〈sakku〉 ‘be without, have not’. This is composed of 〈sak〉 and the oblique marker 〈ku〉, which is still used in LM but merged in SM with the verb 〈kəp〉 ‘give’. The form 〈sakku〉 is used as opposite of 〈nwaʔ ku〉 ‘be with, have’.

In SM, only the MM weak form 〈ha〉 has survived. While 〈ha〉 is frequent in LM (pronounced 〈hə〉 in SM), the secondarily strengthened form 〈hwa’〉 〈hùʔ〉 is preferred in modern texts and in careful pronunciation. This is a rare case of a weak form being reinforced by adding phonetic material that was not present in the original form (vowel, final glottal stop). The heavy register value of the syllable is unexpected, too, after the initial light register consonant 〈h〉. The irregularity of this word is also reflected in the modern orthography as 〈hwa’〉. The semantic development from a verb meaning ‘lack’ into a general negation marker is found also in Archaic Chinese and some African languages (Bemba, Fulfulde; s. Heine and Kuteva 2002:188).

The negation marker in modern Mon can negate only verbs (including auxiliaries), with the only exception of 〈hùʔ müʔ〉 ‘not to have’ (lit. ‘not one’) mentioned above. This is not an indication that numerals are verbs, as stated by Bauer; it is rather a relic of OM and MM usage. Probably the numeral 〈moy〉 was originally used to reinforce the negation, as it still sometimes is in
As mentioned above, the part of the sentence that is actually negated is not necessarily the verb, although it is the element formally marked as negative. The scope of the negation marker hùʔ depends on the context of the utterance. While in a neutral context (2.19) is understood to exhibit sentence negation, other contexts can change the scope of the negation in the same sentence, usually involving a shift of the main stress to the element to be negated. This grammatically relevant variation of intonation cannot be expressed in the written form.

To put more stress on the negation of a specific constituent of the sentence, the extended negation marker hùʔ siəŋ ‘it is not so’ is used. In SM hùʔ siəŋ is usually placed after the constituent to be negated, although it can be placed in front of it, especially in LM. The latter word order is probably the original one, which was replaced in the modern language by the Burmese influenced order XP - hùʔ siəŋ. In this construction the negated constituent may be moved into topic position at the beginning of the sentence to add more stress.
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(2.19b) ʔuə hù? sian⁴ ton phèə ęə naʔ.
SM 1s NEG be.so move.up school day this
‘It is not me who is going to school today.’

(2.19c) ęə naʔ? ʔuə ton phèə hù? sian⁴.
SM day this 1s move.up school NEG be.so
‘It is not school I am going to today.’

The verb sian⁴ is used only in negative and interrogative contexts. Already in MM ‹se⁵ï› appears to be restricted to negative sentences. The only context where ‹se⁵› can occur in an affirmative context in LM is the compound form ‹se⁵ len⁴› ‘truly’, where ‹len⁴› appears to be a semantically empty euphonic rhyme element, pronounced liəŋ with irregular light register in SM.

In serial verb constructions the negation marker always stands in front of the verb that is logically negated, which can be either V₁ or V₂ (or Vₙ), depending on the semantics of the expression. So the natural negation of ŋə klày ‘go looking for’ is hù? ŋə klày ‘not to go looking for’, not ŋə hù? klày, which could be interpreted as ‘go but not look for’. For klày chr⁴ ‘(look for and) find’ on the other hand, the most natural negation is klày hù? chr⁴ ‘(look for but) not find’. An expression like hù? klày chr⁴ could only be understood as ‘not look for and find’, which is pragmatically problematic.⁴² In some instances the position of the negation marker varies, usually with a difference in meaning:

(2.20a) ŋə cia⁴ hù? kyr⁴.
SM 1s eat NEG GET
‘I cannot eat.’

(2.20b) ŋə hù? cia⁴ (le) kyr⁴.
SM 1s NEG eat (TOP) GET
‘I don’t have to eat; I can do without eating.’

In this case negation of both verbs is possible, with the meaning as logically expected:

(2.20c) ŋə hù? cia⁴ hù? kyr⁴.
SM 1s NEG eat NEG GET
‘I have to eat; I cannot do without eating.’

In connection with the focus marker ra⁴?, the interpretation of the negation is

⁴² The meaning ‘find without looking for, find by coincidence’ is expressed by chr⁴ têh (s. 6.3.14)
often negated NSIT (‘not anymore’), although there are examples where the NSIT reading is excluded (s. ch. 5). With the sentence final persistive marker nəm ‘still, yet’, the negation marker yields the reading ‘not yet, still not’.

The negation marker is always used in connection with preverbal kla ‘before, prior to, first; PROVISIONAL’, often reinforced by the sentence final persistive marker nəm ‘still, yet’: kla hùʔ ciəʔ (nəm) ‘before eating’, kla hùʔ ʔa (nəm) ‘before going/leaving’ (s. 6.3.18)

The general negation marker in Mon since at least early LM is hùʔ or its weak form hə. With a closed set of verbs there has been a secondary development with hùʔ splitting into a h-prefix and a labial infix. This development is restricted to single position velar initials (k and kh), giving rise to pre-aspirated labialised velar sounds (hkw-), in one case a doubly aspirated labialised velar (hkhw-). The pre-aspiration is sometimes skipped, leaving only a labial infix as marker of negation. This development is common to all recorded Mon dialects of Burma but unknown to the varieties spoken in Thailand. As the bulk of Thai-Rāmān (‘Thai Mon people’) settled in Thailand in the second half of the 18th century, we can conclude that this development set in at some point after the 18th century. The verbs invariably taking the negation infix are the following:

ket  -  (h)kwet   ‘take’
kə -  (h)kwə   ‘give’
kəʔʔ -  (h)kwəʔʔ   ‘get’
kənəh -  (h)kwənəh   ‘good’

A few others usually take the infixed form:

kəŋi  -  (h)kwəŋi   ‘have ever, EXPERIENTIAL’
kəŋi  -  (h)kwəŋi   ‘dare’

Rarer is the use of the negation infix with kok  -  (h)kwok   ‘call’

Notice that the negation infix is used irrespective of the use as full verb or as

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43 kla in modern Mon is used as an adverb, while its OM source ‹tlār› was a verb. The attributive form ‹tamlā› ‘former, earlier’ is still used in LM.
44 see Jenny 2002.
45 Shorto (1963:58) mentions this phenomenon in a footnote but does not elaborate or give any examples.
46 In some speakers pronunciation, (h)kwənəh ‘not good’ becomes [xwənəh], [fwnəh] or even [fbh].
auxiliary with all the above listed verbs.\textsuperscript{47}

While the above listed verbs always or mostly occur with the negative infix, there are many other verbs with an initial simple velar which are used only with the full form of the negation \textit{hùʔ}, never with the infix. These include such frequent verbs as \textit{kək} ‘be cold’ and \textit{kem} ‘grasp’. Interestingly, the verb \textit{kaʔ} ‘lack’, which as mentioned above occurs only in connection with the negative marker, does not allow the infixed form \textit{*hkwaʔ} as one might expect. Frequency of negative use cannot be the (only) explanation for the development of the infixed negation forms.

The infixed forms are still mostly restricted to the spoken language. Only a few pieces of modern popular literature actually employ these forms in writing, and when they do, they do it inconsistently. In the spoken language, on the other hand, the infixation is automatic and occurs even in very careful and slow speech. The inconsistency in use in LM is shown in the following sentence with the same verb \textit{〈kwuiw〉} ‘give’ once negated with the full form of the negative and twice with the infix.

\textit{(2.21) gamit ro kwuiw kit, gagit ro kwuiw cat,}
\textit{LM mosquito TOP NEG:GIVE bite bug TOP NEG:GIVE sting}
\textit{ruy lew hwa’ kwuiw dun ra. fly TOP NEG GIVE perch FOC}
\textit{‘They wouldn’t allow the mosquitoes to bite [their baby girl],}
\textit{they wouldn’t allow the bed bugs to sting her, and they wouldn’t}
\textit{allow the flies to sit down on her.’ (MKP:6)}

One might suspect that the choice of the topic marker here has an influence on the use of the negation. We have seen above (sentence (2.10)) that \textit{〈ro〉} can be used as negative topic marker. The first two parts of sentence (2.21) would then exhibit double negation. In some contexts, though, \textit{〈ro〉} is used as simple emphatic topic marker, as in questions like \textit{pèh rao?} ‘And what about you?’. OM \textit{〈yo〉} and MM \textit{〈ro〉} are mostly used as relative question particles (sentence final after \textit{WH}-questions). Burmese has borrowed the form with the spelling \textit{〈ro〉}, pronounced \textit{yò} as topic marker (s. Okell and Allott 2001:190f).

The negative connotation of \textit{〈ro〉} seems to be a secondary development of the older interrogative/topical meaning. There is obviously no relation between the use of the topic marker and the form of the negation. The text from which sentence (2.21) is taken indiscriminately makes use of both infixed and non-infixed negation in other places.

\textsuperscript{47}The verb \textit{̌ə} ‘go’ with the negation marker becomes \textit{hwa}, which is often pronounced [xwa].
2.3.2 Prohibitive

Negative imperative or prohibitive in OM was expressed by the preverbal particle ‹lah›,\(^{48}\) as in

(2.22) laḥ sandeḥ gaṁ da.
OM PROH doubt more FOC
‘Don’t doubt anymore!’ (SSKh43)

(2.23) ’or kuṁ mirnas laḥ wit!
OM order 2s remember PROH forget
‘So that you may remember, don’t forget!’ (SSKf6)

In MM, ‹lah› is replaced by the combination ‹lah pa› ‘don’t do’, which is contracted to ‹lapa› and may be reinforced by the imperative or politeness particle ‹ñi› ‘a little bit’.

(2.24) lapa pa ñi!
MM PROH do LITTLE
‘Don’t do it!’ (DMI:330)

(2.25) [tar]la ‘ey ta’ lapa lor jareñ ñi!
MM lord 1s PL PROH keep vicinity LITTLE
‘My Lords, don’t keep them near [you]!’ (DMI:330)

Sentence (2.25) shows that the subject can be overtly expressed in prohibitive contexts.

In LM the form is further contracted to ‹pa›, which is regularly pronounced \(pa\)\(^{2}\) in SM, making the prohibitive particle homophonous with the verb \(pa\) ‘do’. Sentence (2.24) in SM thus becomes \(pa\)? \(pa\)? ñi\(^{2}\)? . From a historical point of view the verb ‹pa› ‘do’ was first used to reinforce the prohibitive particle, which was eventually dropped leaving only the reinforcing verb ‘do’ to mark the prohibitive. This leads to less confusion than might be expected, as \(pa\) as full verb is always followed by non-verbal expressions, usually nominals, while \(pa\) as prohibitive marker is normally used only with verbs. The only situations that could conceivably lead to confusion are verbal expressions composed of a noun and a verb, such as \(c\)\(dō\) \(dō\) ‘be dispirited’, lit. ‘the heart is small’. The sentence \(pa\)? \(c\)\(dō\) \(dō\) is technically ambiguous (‘don’t be dispirited’ or ‘make your heart small’). In almost all natural contexts only the first interpretation makes sense, though, leaving hardly space for

\(^{48}\) This particle is probably related to Khm. ‹laḥ› ‘abandon, set free’. Cf. also the derivates of this (unattested) root OM ‹blah› ‘be free’, MM ‹salah› ‘give away, abandon’ (DMI:279, 368).
ambiguity to arise in a conversation.

In reading pronunciation, the literary form 〈lpa〉 is pronounced *lpaʔ*, while many modern publications spell the prohibitive particle 〈pa〉, making it a homonym of the verb ‘do’. In classical texts, 〈lpa〉 is always the preferred form, but 〈pa〉 is sometimes used in lyrical texts when the use of 〈lpa〉 would result in violation of the syllable rules of the stanza.

As in MM, in SM the subject can be overtly expressed with the prohibitive.

\[(2.26) \text{ bëʔ paʔ ket raʔ lèy!} \]
\[\text{SM 2s PROH take FOC EMPH} \]
\[‘\text{Don’t you take anymore!’ (KN)}\]

The prohibitive can be reinforced by the imperative/politeness particle 〈ni〉 in modern Mon as in MM.

\[(2.27) \text{ mi lpa dah gawi n lpa gwi ni!} \]
\[\text{LM mother PROH be NML:worry PROH worry LITTLE} \]
\[‘\text{Don’t you be worried, mother, don’t worry!’ (DC:19)}\]

The prohibitive, like the simple negation, can be modified by the sentence final particles raʔ ‘FOCUS’ and nem ‘still, yet’. The former is usually understood as ‘don’t V anymore’ (s. (2.26) above), the latter as ‘don’t V yet’.

\[(2.28) \text{ paʔ ?a nem, mòŋ ?anʔ kla!} \]
\[\text{SM PROH go PERS stay here before} \]
\[‘\text{Don’t go yet, stay here for the time being.’}\]

### 2.3.3 Summary

In LM and SM there is one basic morpheme indicating negation, viz. 〈hwa’〉 *hùʔ*, which has the spelling variants 〈ha, h-〉 and the pronunciation variants *h*yʔ, *hə* and (h)CW-*. The historical development of *hùʔ* is rather unusual, it being a strengthened form of a weak form of the original verb 〈sak〉:

\[\text{sak} \rightarrow *\text{sə} → \text{hə} → \text{hùʔ} (\rightarrow \text{h-w-})\]

The negation marker always stands in front of the verb to be negated, although its scope can extend over arguments of the verb and peripheral elements such as adverbs. To put emphasis on the element to be negated, the extended negation *hùʔ siŋ* is used. The same form is also used to negate non-verbal elements or as emphatic sentence negation.
The prohibitive in SM is expressed by the form *paʔ*, which is homophonous (and historically identical) with the verb ‘do’. The subject in prohibitive sentences can be expressed overtly.

Both negation and prohibitive markers can be modified by the sentence final particles *raʔ* and *nem*, resulting in (implied) negated NSIT and persistive readings respectively.

### 2.4 Verbal morphology

OM exhibits a relatively rich set of verbal morphological processes, both inflectional and derivational. In modern Mon, most of these processes have been lost, leaving only traces in opaque forms. Most of the old derived forms today can be considered lexical, as the processes involved lost their productivity in MM times. The only major morphological process that is still transparent in modern Mon is the causative, which is described in detail in chapter 4. Many of the old morphological affixes merged in modern Mon, giving rise to a new ‘universal’ derivational prefix *hə-,* which takes over many of the roles of the old prefixes and infixes, and the use of which is increasing in SM, replacing also other surviving prefixes such as the causative *pə-.*

### 2.4.1 Historical development

Diffloth (1984:263ff) reconstructs several morphological affixes for Dvāravatī Mon. As the Dvāravatī inscriptions themselves are rather short and not particularly rich in morphological forms, Diffloth’s reconstruction is mainly based on the comparison between Mon and Nyah Kur. Whenever the two closely related languages have a given morphological affix in common, the affix is supposed to be inherited from at least Dvāravatī times. The following affixes are reconstructed for Dvāravatī Mon by Diffloth:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affix</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-w-</td>
<td>infix</td>
<td>nominalizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-m-</td>
<td>infix</td>
<td>attributive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-m-</td>
<td>infix</td>
<td>agentive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-n-</td>
<td>infix</td>
<td>nominalizer</td>
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<td>-n-</td>
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<td>instrument</td>
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<td>-n-</td>
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<tr>
<td>-r-</td>
<td>infix</td>
<td>locative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p-</td>
<td>prefix</td>
<td>causative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*caʔ? ‘eat’ - *cwaʔ? ‘flesh’\(^{49}\)

\(^{49}\) In modern Mon *cwa* means ‘curry’.

\(^{50}\) The attributive and agentive infixes are probably historically identical. They appear to be related to the proclitic relative marker *ma*.

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k- prefix causative? *təər ‘get up’ - *ktəər ‘have arise in one’
-u- infix causative *dməŋ ‘stay’ - *duməŋ ‘install, set’

Shorto gives an overview of the morphological affixes found in OM inscriptions. Two of the affixes are inflectional, the rest derivational. Interestingly the most common and widely used affix of OM, the “hypothetical” s- prefix, does not appear in the Dväravatī inscriptions and was not reconstructed for Dväravatī Mon by Diffloth (1984). Bauer dedicates two papers (1991, 1992) to this aspectual morpheme, while Duroiselle (1963) and Jacob (1963) each give a short account of the form. I will return to the prefix s- below.

Shorto (1971:xxiiff) lists the following morphological affixes:

An attributive is derived from simple verb forms by means of the infix -m-, -um-, -u-. It is equivalent to the construction with the clause-subordinating particle ma (gmon ‘brave’ = ma goh, literally ‘who are brave’) [...].

Causatives are formed by means of two affixes in complementary distribution, p- (before nasals pu-, pa-) with simple-initial roots and -u- with others: pdas ‘to bring into being’ ~ das [‘be’], gurani ‘tell’ ~ grañ [‘know’]. Frequentatives are rarely found contrasting with simple forms [...] and generally denote continuous or repeated action. The majority are formed by means of the infix -in- &c. /ən/, before labials -uĩ-. Infixes -ir- and -i- occur in a few verbs.

Nouns are formed from verbal roots in a number of ways, not readily distinguishable semantically. [...] The most frequent of the nominal formations proper is with the infix -ir-: dirdas ‘existence’ ~ das [‘be’]. [...] An infix -in- (&c; before labials -um-, -im-) in roots with two-place initial usually corresponds to an infix -n- in simple-initial roots[.]. Simple-initial roots only may combine with with an infix -w- following p, b -uw-, with root-initial m, w pu- [...]. Two other nominalizing infixes may be regarded as compounds of the foregoing: -ir-n- (cf. cirna ‘food’ ~ ca ‘eat’) and -uĩ-w- (cf. jin ‘make over’).

The most prominent and only real inflectional affix of OM is the prefix s-., with allomorph si- before initial s-. The s- prefix can technically be attached to any verbal base, both dynamic and stative. The fact that some verbs are not attested with the prefix is probably due to the limitedness of the material available. In expressions containing more than one verb, only the first in the series carries the inflectional prefix, the others remain unmarked.

Duroiselle (1963:201) states that

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51 The k- prefix is quite common in Nyah Kur causatives (s. Gainey 1990), but its role in Mon is marginal at best.
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As a verbal prefix, very often denotes, first, the future [...]; it seems to be an attenuation of the old prefix 〈sì〉; 〈s(a)〉 is also used on the Ānanda plaques and Pagan inscriptions with a future sense, and is very common in the modern literary language, in which we find also the form 〈sì〉. Second - It has sometimes a causal sense (O[ld].T[alaing]. 〈sù〉) [...]. Third - Very often, it does not appear, from the context, to have any particular force or sense.

Only the first sense listed by Duroiselle describes OM usage (in part at least) correctly. The second seems to be a reanalysis of the causative infix 〈-u-〉 in verbs with initial sC- cluster where the s is integral part of the root, not the inflectinal prefix, e.g. 〈stitk〉 ‘sleep’ 〈sütik〉 ‘put to bed’. The form was reinterpreted as containing a ‘causative prefix’ 〈su-〉. The MM variant regularly is 〈sa-〉, which later changed in pronunciation to [ha-], merging with other prefixes and infixes. The third reflects the modern LM usage, with the original value of the prefix lost.

According to Shorto (1971:xxii) “[Verbs] may be combined with the prefix 〈s(i)-〉 to yield the hypothetical form which in particular denotes futurity.” This prefix differs from other affixes in that “[a]lone among affixes it combines with secondary-system loanwords (e.g. 〈ānubhāw 〈‘have supernatural powers’〉, sāmarttha [‘be competent’]).”

Jacob (1963:69) mentions that OM uses a prefix for the “hypothetical and preparative function (prefixes 〈s〉 and 〈sa/su〉). These I have put together as they are similar in meaning as well as possibly identical phonologically: e.g. gap ‘please’, sgap ‘shall please’; rap ‘hold’, surap ‘put ready at hand’.” In a footnote Jacob states that “Mr. Shorto has suggested that the OM preparative function is in effect a ‘causative [-u-] of the hypothetical [s-]’. ‘Put ready at hand’ might then be paraphrased ‘cause (someone) to be about to hold’.” There are, however many instances of the combination of hypothetical and causative with the 〈s-〉 prefix added to the causative, rather than the causative affix added to the 〈s-〉 inflected form, e.g. (ibid.) c’aḥ ‘be pure’ scu’aḥ ‘shall purify’ (not *suc’aḥ).

In 1991 Bauer published a short article on Old Mon s-, in which he analyses the usage of the prefix in OM inscriptions and the Ānanda plaques. The Ānanda plaques give pictures of the Jātaka stories, together with glosses in OM, thus providing the rare possibility to actually see what is expressed in the written sentence, comparable to modern comic strips. Bauer found out that

“[w]hile occurrences of s- in the Shweizigon inscription (EB #1) would strongly suggest the identification of a tense/modal prefix ‘future/irrealis’, the glosses, on the contrary, would imply the aspect ‘ingressive’. This is especially clear in plaque #565 (Duroiselle #28) [...], where the action referred to in the verb (#565
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scis ‘descend’ [...] has not yet been accomplished, but has already been initiated.”
(Bauer 1991:241)

The gloss of plaque #565 (An28) is given below as (2.29).

(2.29) kāl scis han tī.
OM time s-move.down LOC earth
‘When [Temiya] is descending to the ground.’

The accompanying picture given in the 1963 edition of the Epigraphica Birmanica is unfortunately not very clear. It is apparent, though, that Temiya is descending from the chariot, with one foot stepping down to the ground. In this case the prefix certainly does not have hypothetical meaning, but rather progressive (rather than “ingressive”, as stated by Bauer, obviously due to a confusion of terms, as Bauer’s own explanation suggests). A prospective interpretation is possible, too, in this context, with the goal object tī as telicizer. The interpretation in this case would be ‘Temiya is about to reach the ground’.

The other plaque mentioned by Bauer in the same article is #721 (An189):

(2.30) mahos slop sī smīn.
OM Mahosadha s-enter house king
‘Mahosadha enters the king’s house.’

The accompanying picture shows Mahosadha about to enter the house where the king sits waiting for him. Also in this context the prefix may be regarded as progressive, although Bauer’s analysis as “ingressive” is here possible, too, as is the prospective reading suggested in other contexts, again with a telicizing goal object sī ‘house’. There is far from enough linguistic material in the Ananda plaques, though, for an in-depth analysis of the functions of s-, but I would favour the label ‘prospective aspect’ based on the available evidence from the Ananda glosses and other inscriptions. The s- prefix has lost its original morphological function in the modern language and is added seemingly indiscriminately to verbs in LM. Its function has partly been taken over by the assertive sentence particle noŋ in SM and LM.

In his 1982 thesis, Bauer writes that

Although noŋ conveys the idea of future events or actions [...], its scope [...] includes eventuality or hypothetical events as well (“would, might”). This confirms well with the historical evidence from OM and EMM where its
corresponding role was taken by the inflectional prefix ‹s› marking the hypothetical. [...] SM non, LMM/LM /roŋ/ emerged later, taking up that function, even if LM shows still the starred [= fossilized, frozen] prefix ‹s› (co-occurrence of this prefix and non in classical texts is still to be examined).

(Bauer 1982:436)

Although it is true that the ‹s› prefix has been lost in modern Mon and part of its functions have apparently been taken over by the assertive particle noŋ, there is no one-to-one correspondence between the two (s. ch. 5). While ‹s› was still alive in MM, the assertive marker ‹rwoŋ› already emerged during the MM period and the two co-existed for some centuries, sometimes (but not necessarily) co-occurring in the same sentence:

(2.31) na jraku hen dewatau ma sduŋ bali-bakar
MM INSTR body EMPH god REL S-receive offering
puiy rwoŋ sdah ḍeh ksap tuy.
1pl ASRT S-BE 3 think FINISH
‘He thought: The god must be going to receive our offering in person.’ (DMI:326)

The ‹s› prefix here seems to indicate the prospective aspect, while the assertive adds a dubitative element.

At the present stage of our knowledge and with the inscriptive material available, it is not possible to give a more precise analysis of the exact function of the ‹s› prefix in OM and MM. Nothing is known about the origin of the prefix, and no cognates in other Mon-Khmer languages have been found.\[^52\] I use the gloss PROSP for the ‹s› prefix in examples from LM, even if in most cases it obviously has lost its grammatical function and appears to be purely cosmetic.

Unlike other prefixes such as the causative ‹p›, ‹s› does not induce a change of register when prefixed to nasal or liquid initials, which might indicate either that the prefix was not pronounced anymore at the time of the emergence of registers in Mon, or that it was pronounced as [s] when prefixed to voiceless initials and as [z] when prefixed to voiced ones. More research in historical phonetics of Mon is needed to reach a conclusion on this point. At the time being there is not even consensus about when the devoicing of initial consonants and with it the emergence of two distinct registers took place in Mon.

\[^52\] The similarity with Lao siʔ ‘will, shall; PROSPECTIVE’ and Vietnamese sể ‘FUTURE’ is probably coincidental.
Apart from some frozen forms containing traces of the old <s>- prefix, nothing survives in modern Mon of the OM inflectional morphology. One example is LM <stiʃ, satiʃ, samtiʃ>, SM hətəm ‘remember’ and LM <samtiʃ, gatii>, SM hatəm ‘souvenir, memorial gift’, which are derivations of OM <tii> ‘know’. According to Shorto (1971:359, 365) MM <satim> is “probably originally [a] preparative formation, ‘bring to the notice of’”, of which the form <samtim> would be the attributive (‘that which brings to the notice of’). The LM spelling shows the uncertainty of the initial syllable, which had been weakened to [hə-] in late MM times. For native speakers today the form hatəm is connected to the base tem, of which it is a derivate by means of the new universal prefix hə-.  

The attributive -m- infix survives in modern Mon only in frozen traces. While the labial nasal was probably still pronounced as such in MM, it is weakened to -ə- in SM. LM sometimes still reflects the original nasal infix, but it does so inconsistently. Also the OM nominalizing infixes <-n-, -rn-, -ir->, as well as the causative infix <-u-> merged in SM in -ə-, wiping out the difference between attributive, nominalizer, and causative in many cases. While OM had three distinct derivates from the root <glui> ‘be plentiful, much’, viz. <gumlui> ‘much’, <girlui> ‘quantity’, and *<gulu> ‘increase’, only two derived forms from the root <glui> are left in LM, <gamluin> ‘much’ and <galui> ‘quantity; increase’, while in SM they all merge in holəŋ. The connection with the base SM kləŋ ‘be much’ is still evident to native speakers, though not readily understandable in terms of derivation. Shorto (1962) explains cases like this one as “base with vocalic infix”. The “vocalic infix” is applied to bases with initial consonant clusters, with the first part of the cluster undergoing (mostly) regular changes:

<g, j, d, b, s> → [h-]  
<galuin> → holəŋ ‘much’, <janok> → hanək ‘big’

<k, c₅⁴, t, b → [k-]₅⁵>  
<kalon> → kalon ‘do, work’, <caruit> → karət ‘cover’

Where there was originally a labial nasal infix, the SM reflex is often [p-], while LM retains <-m->:

<damcək> → pəcək ‘black’ from the base <lcək> kəcək ‘be black’
<tamra’, kamra’> → pəral ‘madman’ from the base <tra’, kra’> krəp
<kamlat, palat> → palət ‘thief’ from the base <klat> klət ‘steal’

₅³ This intuition of native speakers is reflected in Shorto 1962, which analyses the form simply as “¶hə-, tgm ‘to know’”.

₅⁴ The reflex of <c-> with vocalic infix is usually [k-], sometimes [h-]

₅⁵ If the main syllable begins with a velar sound, the reflex is [t-]
The LM variant ‹palat› for the last example shows adaptation to SM usage and is of recent date.

There are cases, though, where the original ‹-m-› infix was lost without leaving any traces apart from the vocalic infix, such as

\[ \text{〈kamlon〉} \rightarrow \text{kalon} \quad \text{‘royal attendant’ (*palon)} \]

which was originally the agentive/attributive form of 〈klon〉 ‘do, work’.

After the old derivational morphology had collapsed in modern Mon, new devices had to be applied to take over some of the functions of the original affixes. The most common, as we have seen, is the new universal prefix 〈hə-〉, which originates in different prefixes as well as in some infixes. This prefix is used in SM to spontaneously create derivates as needed. A Mon speaker can, for example, ask for a 〈hapək pəley〉, and everyone involved understands that he wants a bottle opener, although the word may never have been used before and is not part of the standard language. The formation is transparent as 〈hə-, pək ‘open’ and pəley ‘bottle’〉.

In more formal contexts, a new nominalizing prefix 〈la-〉 is used. This prefix probably originates in the reanalysis of OM/MM infixed forms with r as first element in initial clusters, such as OM 〈rjuh〉 ‘be deep’, of which a MM nominalized form 〈layoh〉 ‘depth’ is attested. Other verbs that show the same initial patterns and could form similar nominal derivates (although they are not attested in the inscriptions discovered and published so far) include OM 〈rjuŋ〉 ‘be clear’, 〈rbim〉 ‘be firm’, 〈rmeŋ〉 ‘hear’, 〈rlim〉 ‘be ruined’, etc. For examples in modern Mon see the excerpt of Saddā Man given in appendix C.

Other nominalizing devices are used in modern Mon, but as they are restricted to small sets of verbal bases, they can be considered lexical rather than morphological, such as 〈buček〉 ‘succession, lineage, descent’ from the base 〈chək〉 ‘connect’ which is a loan from Burmese 〈hse’〉 〈chak〉 ‘connect, continue’, with the nominalized form 〈dəhse’〉 〈’achak〉. In some instances there are alternative affixes for the nominalization, sometimes with a difference in meaning: 〈pac〉 ‘split, halve’ - 〈pəpac〉 ‘half-viss (measure of weight)’, 〈kəpac〉 ‘side, direction’ - 〈kəwac〉 ‘half’. The latter form exhibits the old nominalizing 〈-w-〉 infix. The LM forms are 〈pək〉, 〈’apək〉, 〈lpək, lapək〉, and 〈pəwək〉 respectively.

Other formations have undergone so drastic changes that no connection between the base and the derivate is apparent in SM, e.g. 〈bəhna’〉 ‘lower part, beneath’ from 〈sə ‘be low’; həra’ ‘wound, sore’ from 〈sa’ ‘be sore, wounded’. Only the LM forms reveal the connections: 〈’asmaw〉 - 〈saw〉 and 〈sara〉 - 〈sra’〉 respectively.

In SM, the most widespread device to form verbal nouns is by means of a periphrastic construction with a nominal head, such as 〈pərao ‘story’〉, 〈pərən̩y〉...
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‘affair, thing, cause’, sêk ‘thing to do, something to V’, combined with the verb to be nominalized:

\[ \text{chan ‘love’} \rightarrow pərao chan ‘love’ \]
\[ \text{dûh ‘hate’} \rightarrow pərao dûh ‘hated’ \]
\[ \text{ciô ‘eat’} \rightarrow sêk ciô ‘food, something to eat’ \]

In many contexts where we would expect a nominal element the verb does not need nominalization at all. Verbs in Mon combine freely with prepositions such as nû ‘from, since’, dɔ in, at, while’ and some quantifiers as kəmèp ‘every, each’.

As mentioned above, the attributive form as such has become indistinguishable from other derived forms, while its function is still alive in LM and formal SM. Where clarity is desired, the attributive is now usually built analytically by means of the relative proclitic mə, which in SM is often dropped or almost inaudible, leaving a trace only as slight prenasalization of the initial of the following verb. It is more common in SM to leave the attributive unmarked or mark it by means of reduplication of the verb, as in mənîh hnôk-hnôk ‘the big people’, wut kye-kye ‘the pretty girls’.

2.4.3 Summary

SM does show traces of morphological processes, but the formations are not transparent anymore in the modern language. Bauer (1982:156ff) speaks of “Affix-Synkretismus”. Shorto (1962) lists as morphological affixes the prefixes hə-, pə-, kə-, ə-, tə-, the vocalic infix, and the “labial” and “nasal” forms of verb roots, without trying to assign semantic values to the different affixes (which would not be possible for SM in the first place).

It is evident that the modern Mon verbal morphology cannot be understood without referring to older stages of the language. This we are fortunate enough to be able to do, given the rather large corpus of Mon inscriptions covering over one thousand years of language development.

The causative formation as only surviving real morphological process in Mon is described in chapter 4.

2.5 Verb classes and types of verbs

Verbs can be subcategorised into different classes, some of which are language specific while others appear to be universal. Most languages make a distinction between transitive and intransitive verbs. Another widespread feature for verbal subcategorisation are aktionsarten (actionality), though not all languages seem to make clear-cut distinctions between verb classes based
on aktionsarten. The relevant verbal subcategories in Mon are described in
the following sections.

2.5.1 Transitive and intransitive verbs

In most languages there is one class of verbs that can form a statement of
their own, without additional complements, and another class consisting of
verbs that allow or require a complement, nominal, adverbial, adpositional, or
sentential. Most transitive verbs do not necessarily require an overt object,
although in some languages some do. In English an expression like *He killed
Ø* is syntactically incomplete, as the undergoer of the verb *to kill* must be
present. The verb *to eat* can occur with a direct object, but it does not have to.
*I have already eaten* is a complete sentence in English, although *to eat* is
considered a transitive verb. In Mon, on the other hand, arguments of verbs
do not have to be overtly expressed, neither subject nor object. The Mon
translation of the English sentence *He killed Ø* is therefore perfectly
grammatical in many contexts:

\[
\text{Active topics, as well as other information retrievable from the general context, are not usually expressed in a sentence and no use is usually made of weak pronouns like English he, she, it. There is a set of verbs, though, that in many contexts require a generic or inherent object, which is non-referential. In the Mon translation of *I have already eaten*, the verb *əiəʔ* ‘eat’ requires an object, the default for which is *pŋəŋ* ‘cooked rice’:
}\]

\[
(2.32a) \text{ʔuə əiəʔ pŋəŋ toə yaʔ.}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{SM} & 1s \text{ eat rice FINISH NSIT} \\
\end{array}
\]

‘I have already eaten (rice).’

This sentence can also be uttered when the food eaten was actually bread or
noodles but the speaker does not want to mention the kind of food he had.
The object here merely indicates that a meal has been eaten and not just some
sweets or fruit, which is not considered ‘real eating’ in many Southeast Asian
cultures. Without the object *pŋəŋ* the sentence loses its general meaning and
refers to some food mentioned or visible:

\[
(2.32b) \text{ʔuə əiəʔ toə yaʔ.}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{SM} & 1s \text{ eat FINISH NSIT} \\
\end{array}
\]

‘I have already eaten of that.’

\[
\text{56 In this case a specific object has to be expressed in Mon, e.g. əiəʔ kwap ‘eat sweets’ or əiəʔ səx-chu ‘eat fruit’.
}\]

68
The situation is similar with the verb *həton* ‘learn’,\(^{57}\) which naturally combines with the generic object *ləc* ‘book, writing’ when no specific object of learning is expressed.

The range of nouns functioning as direct objects in Mon is much wider than in European languages (s. also section 2.6 on complements), including also location and goal, among others. In the following sentences, both location and goal are unmarked, appearing as direct objects of the respective verbs of location and motion. There are alternative forms marking the location and, less commonly, the goal as prepositional (oblique) objects, sometimes with a difference of reading.

(2.33a)  деh  мəŋ  пəhə  лəкγəc.
SM    3stay temple monk
‘He is staying at the temple.’

(2.33b)  деh  мəŋ  дəŋ  пəhə  лəкγəc.
SM    3stay  LOC temple monk
‘He is at the temple.’

(2.34a)  пoй ʔa  ʔəŋkək.
SM    1pl  go  Bangkok
‘We are going to Bangkok.’

(2.34b)  пoй ʔa  тəʔyʔ  ʔəŋkək.
SM    1pl  go  GOAL Bangkok
‘We are going (all the way) to Bangkok.’

Transitive verbs typically express activities, while intransitive verbs can express both states and activities. There are a few verbs expressing states\(^{58}\) that can take a direct object. In many cases the combination of state verb and object seems to be lexically fixed, with only a limited number of nouns available as object. The most common example of a fixed object is the noun *cədt* ‘heart’ (from Pali *citta* ‘id.’), which combines with state verbs to express feelings or states of mind, such as *məp* *cədt* ‘be happy’ (lit. ‘pleasant heart’), *ʔon* *cədt* ‘be disheartened’ (lit. ‘little heart’). The verb *ʔon* ‘be few, little’ also occurs with other nouns as object, e.g. *ʔon* *hloʔ* ‘have little money, be poor’.

In OM there are expressions like ʔjnok riddhi, ʔjnok ʔənubhəw ‘big in supernatural and spiritual power’ (SSKa31). SM has expressions like ʔuʔ ʔhloʔ

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\(^{57}\) When *həton* has the meaning ‘teach’ it does not take the generic object. ‘He teaches’ as a general statement is rather expressed as  деh  паʔ ʔəca lit. ‘he does (work as a) teacher’.

\(^{58}\) I will return to the question of “stative verbs” as a formally distinct aktionsart category in Mon below. For the time being I prefer to refer to them as “verbs expressing states” from a purely semantic point of view.
‘be easy money, i.e. be rich’. Other verbs expressing states can take a wide range of direct objects, such as tem ‘know’, chan ‘love’, tëh cdr ‘like’, etc.

Although objects do not have to, or in many cases cannot, be overtly expressed, the distinction transitive versus intransitive holds for Mon. There are verbs that cannot take an unmarked (direct) object, e.g. toc ‘lie down, sleep’, yuh ‘be awake, wake up’.

Some verbs take only one out of a very restricted set of nouns as objects, in some cases only the nominalization of the verb itself, e.g. krip mua harip ‘run a course’. The same verb krip ‘run’ may occur with a few other nouns as object, e.g. krip phèò ‘run away from school, skip classes’, where the direct object phèò ‘school, temple’ has ablative value. See section 2.6 for a more detailed discussion of verbal complements and their functions.

Most verbs can take at least one of a restricted set of nouns as unmarked object, ranging from fixed combinations such as hlo pə ‘be calm, without worries’ (lit. ‘be.asleep heart’) to very general activities taking about any nominal as object, such as paʔ ‘do’ and ciʔ. The choice of object in these cases is restricted only by semantic criteria.

A small set of verbs can logically take more than one unmarked object (ditransitive verbs). The most prominent example is kə ‘give’. In SM only one object is usually expressed, though, and the ordering with two overt objects is not always certain. The normal word order is Actor-Verb-Recipient-Theme, although some speakers put the theme before the recipient in some contexts.

(2.35a) ðeh kp ?aca lóc mà.  
SM 3 give teacher book one  
‘He gave the teacher a book.’

(2.35b) ðeh kp ló lóc ?ũ.  
SM 3 give KEEP book 1s  
‘He gave me a book.’

Other speakers prefer to mark the recipient as oblique. This is especially frequent with verbs other than kə ‘give’, which is homophonous with the oblique marker. It is however possible for the two to co-occur:

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59 tëh cdr is itself a compound of the verb tëh ‘hit’ and the noun cdr ‘heart’, resulting formally in expressions with two direct objects.

60 Verbs like toc can have an unmarked nominal complement if that nominal expresses a period of time, such as ðà hàt çxin ‘two nights’. This is an adverbial rather than an object, and does not form part of the core (or VP).
(2.35c) ɗeh ƙoƙ ɗeŋ ƙoƙ ʔọca.
SM 3  give book OBL teacher
‘He gave the teacher a book.’

Another way of avoiding two adjacent unmarked objects is by fronting the theme into topic or focus position. In this case it is usually overtly marked as topic or focus:

(2.35d) ɗeŋ kɔh ɗeŋ ƙoƙ ʔọca.
SM book TOP 3  give teacher
‘He gave the teacher the book (we were talking about).’

(2.35e) ɗeŋ raʔ ɗeŋ ƙoƙ ʔọca.
SM book FOC 3  give teacher
‘It is a book he gave to the teacher.’

In LM the recipient is regularly marked as oblique with the preposition ƙu or its newer variant kuiw.⁶¹ There are instances in LM (and less frequent in SM) where also direct objects are marked as oblique, which shows the uncertainty of the distinction between direct and oblique objects in Mon.

Some authors mention morphological pairs of verbs expressing intransitive and transitive verbs respectively (Haswell 2002, Halliday 1955, Saddā Man). These pairs of verbs are actually simple verb bases and the morphologically derived causatives. While it is certainly true that all derived causatives are transitive, there are many bases that are transitive too, e.g. pateŋ ‘inform’ from the base ƙen ‘know’, pɛiaʔ ‘feed’ from ɛiaʔ ‘eat’, etc. The opposition can therefore not be stated as intransitive versus transitive, but rather as base versus causative. The causative formations are the topic of chapter 4. In section 2.6 different kinds of verb complements will be discussed, including direct objects.

2.5.2 Aktionsarten

Aktionsarten is a term used to describe aspectual properties of the semantics of a verb. The most common distinctions made among the world’s languages are telic versus atelic, dynamic versus stative, and punctual versus durative. Aktionsarten of the verbs of a given language must be established based on language specific formal criteria. No universal set of tests can be applied, although there are some rules of thumb that help to establish groups of verbs belonging to different aktionsarten. Aktionsart is an inherent part of the

⁶¹ The form kuiw ƙoƙ is actually the result of the merger of two etymologically distinct words, viz. OM ƙil ‘give’ and ƙu ‘to, for, with’. S. section 6.3.11 for more details.
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verbal semantics and must not be confused with aspect, which is expressed morphologically or periphrastically (Johanson 2000). According to some linguists (e.g. Sasse 1991), aktionsart and aspect are not to be regarded as generally distinct phenomena. They are rather the same phenomenon expressed by different means, i.e. lexically versus morphosyntactically. According to Sasse, a given language more or less closely represents one of three basic types, which correspond to points on a continuum ranging from “zero lexical, maximal grammatical” to “maximal lexical, zero grammatical” (Sasse 1991:44). The three basic types according to Sasse are

- The purely morphosyntactical type, where no aktionsarten are lexicalised and all aspectual differences are expressed by means of aspect markers. Verbs in these languages are neutral (underspecified) in terms of aktionsart.

- The interactional type, where lexicalised aktionsart and morphosyntactically aspect marker interact to express aspectual differences.

- The lexical type, in which aspect is expressed by purely lexical means and no morphosyntactical processes related to aspect are found.

No explicit study of aktionsart in Mon has to my knowledge been made. From the data available, it seems that Mon is to be positioned close to the morphosyntactical type, with aktionsart hardly lexicalised in most cases. Other languages close to this type are Chinese and Thai (s. Jenny 2000), which show only marginal lexicalised aktionsarten.

A distinction can be made between activities and states in Mon, the latter including adjectives in European languages (verbs expressing a quality). The main distinctive characteristic of the verbs expressing states is the possibility of reduplication.62 Reduplication of state verbs occurs chiefly in attributive and adverbialex function, rarely in predicative: klə hənk-hənk ‘a rather big dog’, ɕiʔ prəh-prəh ‘eat quickly’.63 The distinction between activity verbs and verbs describing states is relevant in connection with the directional-aspectual operators ʔa ‘go; move away from point of reference’ and klən ‘come; move towards point of reference’ (s. sections 6.3.2 and 6.3.3). In combination with activity verbs, ʔa and klən express an ongoing action/situation, i.e. they lead to (or at least favour) an imperfective/progressive reading, while with statives the (perfective) inchoative/ingressive reading is preferred.64

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62 Dynamic verbs can be reduplicated in certain contexts, e.g. after interrogatives to express a general meaning: måj dək klən-klən ‘whatever he does’.

63 See sentences (6.36) and (2.94) for examples of reduplication in predicate position.

64 See the relevant sections in chapter 6 for details and differences between the two operators.
The aspectual value of the directionals is only present when the main verb does not involve a movement. Where this is the case the original directional reading is always preferred.

Although telicity is often described as part of the verbal semantics, it is in many cases more appropriate to speak of the telicity of a verb phrase or a verbal expression. The addition of a (mostly specific) object can turn an atelic verb into a telic one, as in the English expressions ‘eat apples’ versus ‘eat an apple’. The former is atelic, i.e. it does not imply an inherent end point of the action. The act of eating apples can be interrupted at any point and the subject will still have eaten apple(s). The second expression is telic, i.e. it has an inherent end point, namely the point where the apple has been eaten up. If the act of eating is interrupted before that point is reached, the subject cannot be said to have eaten an apple. In Mon, where no object has to be overtly expressed, about any verb can be interpreted as telic in an appropriate context.

There are, on the other hand, verbs that can hardly be interpreted as atelic, i.e. they must include an end point or more precisely a change of state/event. These verbs express a change of state (not the process leading up to that point) and the period following the change of state, i.e. they are “initiotransformative” as established by Johanson (2000) or “ingressive-stative (ISTA)” according to Sasse (1991). Examples of this group of verbs are c‘p ‘arrive’, h‘tyt ‘die, be dead’, p‘k ‘open, be open’, etc. They all combine with the originally imperfective/progressive marker mŋ to describe the situation following the change of state. The change of state itself can be highlighted by an operator, such as the original directionals ‘a ‘go’ and ‘come’, often combined with the sentence final NSIT marker ya?.

(2.36a) d‘h c‘p h‘tyt bŋkŋk ya?.
SM 3 arrive COME Bangkok NSIT
‘He has arrived in Bangkok.’

(2.36b) d‘h c‘p mŋ bŋkŋk ra?.
SM 3 arrive STAY Bangkok FOC
‘He is in Bangkok now.’

(2.37a) kl khyt ‘a ya?.
SM dog die GO NSIT
‘The dog has died.’

(2.37b) kl khyt mŋ ra?.
SM dog die STAY FOC
‘The dog is dead.’
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According to some informants, sentence (2.37b) can refer only to the situation where the dead dog is visible. If the carcass is out of sight, (2.37a) is preferred.

With some verbs, such as $p\mk$ ‘open’ and $mat$ ‘close’, there is a difference whether the subject is actor or undergoer:

(2.38a) $\text{ðeh } p\mk \text{ mòŋ } \text{pàŋŋ}$.  
SM 3 open STAY door  
‘He is opening the door.’

(2.38b) $\text{pàŋŋ } p\mk \text{ mòŋ}$.  
SM door open STAY  
‘The door is open.’

While (2.38a) describes the act of opening the door (telic in most contexts), (2.38b) describes the state after the change of state. The underlying difference between the verb $p\mk$ in (2.38a) and (2.38b) is that the former is causative (activity), while the latter is non-causative/intransitive (ISTA). With most verbs this difference is morphologically marked, ‘open’ and ‘close’ being conspicuous exceptions (cf. 4.3.7). If in sentences (2.36) and (2.37) the subject is actor instead of undergoer, the causative forms of the respective verbs ($h\z\d\z$ and $h\z\d\z\z$) must be used:

(2.36c) $\text{ðeh } h\z\d\z \text{ nèŋ } \text{bèŋkòŋ } \text{yaʔ}$.  
SM 3 CAUS:arrive CAUS:COME Bangkok NSIT  
‘He has brought (her) to Bangkok.’

(2.36d) $\text{ðeh } h\z\d\z \text{ mòŋ } \text{bèŋkòŋ } \text{raʔ}$.  
SM 3 CAUS:arrive STAY Bangkok FOC  
‘He is bringing (her) to Bangkok.’

(2.37c) $\text{ðeh } h\z\d\z\z \text{ kₗₚ}/\text{nèŋ } \text{kòŋ } \text{yaʔ}$.  
SM 3 CAUS:die COME/CAUS:COME dog NSIT  
‘He has killed a dog.

(2.37d) $\text{ðeh } h\z\d\z\z \text{ mòŋ } \text{kòŋ } \text{raʔ}$.  
SM 3 CAUS:die STAY dog FOC  
‘He is killing a dog.’

In sentence (2.37c) either the intransitive directional $kₗₚ$ or the causative $nèŋ$ can be used. The former implies that the subject killed a dog and left it at the place where he killed it, while the latter implies that he killed the dog and brought the carcass along.
The aspectual difference seems to be due to the opposition ISTA versus activity. With the former, the aspect operator \( m\dot{\varepsilon} \) focuses on the situation following the event expressed by the verb, while with the latter the same operator puts the focus on the causation of the event.

Verb classes in Mon are semantically underspecified and the interpretation depends very much on the context. The common tests for actionality do not seem to be generally applicable in Mon (cf. Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:94). Tentatively I propose two main aktionsart classes in Mon, viz. activities and ISTA, the latter with two semantic sub-classes, i.e. more punctual (transformation prominent), and more stative (state prominent). The distinction is not an absolute one, though, as an appropriate context and/or choice of operators can in most cases lead to a non-standard reading, i.e. highlight the beginning of an event or the ongoing event. The distinction is made here based on the reading produced by the directional operators and the default interpretation without operators. Without operators present and in a neutral context, the most natural interpretation of the verbs listed below is \( hpm \) ‘speak’, \( khyt \) ‘die’ and \( kye \) ‘be beautiful’.

1. Activities:  
   2a. ISTA (transformation): \( khyt \) ?a ‘die’  
   2b. ISTA (state): \( kye \) ?a ‘become beautiful’ or ‘become more beautiful’

2.5.3 Resultative verb compounds (RVC)

In many Southeast Asian languages, a common construction is what has been described as “resultative verb compounds” (cf. Bisang 1992). Resultative verb compounds are typically made up of a verb describing an activity and another verb expressing the result of the first one, thus producing telicity of the whole expression. While \( V_1 \) is obligatorily dynamic, \( V_2 \) can belong to any verbal category. The subject of resultative verb constructions has usually control over only \( V_1 \); \( V_2 \) is not within the scope of the direct control of the subject. Resultative verb compounds in Mon frequently occur in the following constructions:

\[
\begin{align*}
V_1 & - V_2: & klây \; ch\varepsilon & \text{‘find’ (lit. ‘look for - meet’)} \\
V_1 & - \text{NEG}-V_2 & klây \; hú? \; ch\varepsilon & \text{‘cannot find’ (lit. ‘look for - not - meet’)} \\
V_1 & - \text{GOAL} - V_2 & klây \; thr'y? \; ch\varepsilon & \text{‘must find’ (lit. ‘look for - until - meet’)} \\
V_1 & - \text{GIVE} - V_2 & klây \; kó \; ch\varepsilon & \text{‘must find’ (‘look for - so that - meet’)} \\
V_1 & - \text{COND} - V_2 & klây \; teh \; ch\varepsilon & \text{‘if you look for you will find’}
\end{align*}
\]

While neither \( V_1 \) nor \( V_2 \) have to be telic, the whole expression is usually considered telic, with the final limit of the activity explicitly expressed by \( V_2 \).
Apart from $V_1$ having to be an activity, there are no formal restrictions on resultative verb compounds in Mon. What makes sense semantically is deemed correct, although some expressions are more idiomatic than others. Examples of frequently used compounds are:

- $\text{ci} \, \text{ʔ phɔɔ}$: ‘eat - full’
- $\text{ʔa hù}$: ‘go - far’
- tøc hloŋ: ‘lie down - asleep’

If $V_2$ is a morphological causative in the construction $V_1$-$V_2$, it is changed to its base form in the other constructions listed above. The conditional construction does not occur with these $V_2$s at all. As the subject has control over both $V_1$ and $V_2$ with causative $V_2$s, it is questionable if we should talk about resultative verb compounds at all in these cases. With the subject controlling also $V_2$, there is always a conative connotation, i.e. the result may or may not be realised. Another indication that the construction with a causative $V_2$ is fundamentally different from genuine resultative verb constructions is the position of the direct object, which stands between $V_1$ and $V_2$ in resultative verb constructions, but after $V_2$ if this is causative.

- $\text{pon hæŋt}$: ‘shoot - CAUS:die’
- $\text{pon hùʔ khyt}$: ‘shoot - NEG - die’
- pèk pøtøt: ‘chase - CAUS:exit’
- pèk hùʔ tøt: ‘chase - NEG - exit’
- $\text{ci} \, \text{ʔ høʔbt}$: ‘eat - CAUS:all’
- $\text{ci} \, \text{ʔ thỳʔ ꤘnt}$: ‘eat - GOAL - all’

One might be tempted to analyse directionals as resultative verb compounds as well, as in

- kwac ?a: ‘walk - go’
- ket nën: ‘take - CAUS:come’

The analysis would be along the lines that the movement is the result of the activity (‘move away from point of reference’ as result of the activity ‘walk’). This analysis does not hold, though, as the impossibility of the following constructions shows:

*kwac hùʔ/thỳʔ/teh ?a
*ket hùʔ/thỳʔ/teh nën

Compare these with the common expressions
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čiɔ? hùʔ/θɛʔ/teh phɔɔ  ‘eat not enough/your fill/and you will be full’
pon thɛʔ khyøt  ‘shoot until it dies, shoot dead’

I take as real resultative verb compounds in Mon only constructions with an active ([+control]) V₁ and a V₂ which is beyond the control of the subject ([−control]). The position of the direct object is between V₁ and V₂ and there can be a switch of function from object to subject, as in

(2.39a) dɛh pɔn hæcem hùʔ khyøt.
SM 3 shoot bird NEG die
‘He couldn’t shoot the bird; he shot the bird but it did not die.’

Here the bird is syntactically the object of pɔn but subject of khyøt. Semantically it is the undergoer of both verbs. With this sentence compare (2.39b) with a causative V₂ and a shared object, both syntactically and semantically (hæcem is undergoer of both verbs):

(2.39b) dɛh pɔn hæcep hæcem.
SM 3 shoot CAUS:die bird
‘He shot dead a bird.’

In other cases the subject of V₁ is also the subject of V₂:

(2.40) ?ua čiɔʔ pɔŋ phɔɔ yaʔ.
SM 1s eat rice full NSIT
‘I am full; I have eaten and am full now.’

In (2.40) hæ is syntactically the subject of both verbs, but semantically it is actor of V₁ and undergoer of V₂.

Resultative verb compounds can be considered a sub-category of serial verbs constructions, an account of which will be given in section 3.1.

2.5.4 Existential verbs (Copulas)

A small set of verbs, labelled existential verbs or copulas, show unusual syntactical and semantic behaviour in Mon. This group includes the following verbs, some of which are defective:

SM     LM
tɔh    <dah>  ‘be sth., be in a state of’
mɔŋ    <mǎŋ, mɔmɔŋ>  ‘stay, remain, be at’
nɔm    <nwɔm>  ‘be at, there is, have’
(hùʔ) sɔiŋ  ‘(not) be so’
The first three verbs listed above have developed into aspect/manner operators while the last item occurs only in negative and interrogative contexts. The verb *nùm* never occurs in negative contexts, where it is replaced by the numeral *mùə* ‘one’ as mentioned above (2.2.2).

2.5.4.1 *̓dah* *təh* ‘be something, be in a certain state, be born, become’

The existential verb *təh* (OM ‹das›, MM, LM ‹dah›) ‘be sth., be in a state of’ is mainly used as copula with nominal predicates:

(2.41a) dehy *təh* rəə *ʔuə*.
SM 3 be friend 1s
‘He is my friend; he is a friend of mine.’

The use of *təh* with nominal predicates is not obligatory, as the following sentence shows. The construction in (2.41b) is actually more common than (2.41a).

(2.41b) dehy kəh rəə *ʔuə* raʔ.
SM 3 TOP friend 1s FOC
‘He is my friend; he is a friend of mine.’

The use of *təh* is obligatory with nominal predicates that express a state of mind or an illness:

(2.42) dehy *təh* kəsak.
SM 3 be NML:happy
‘He is happy.’

(2.43) dehy *təh* yəə nəə.
SM 3 be illness stomach
‘He has got the cholera.’

(2.44) paʔ *təh* həwən ɲiʔ.
SM PROH be NML:anxious LITTLE
‘Don’t worry.’

The verb *təh* is also used with expressions of time, as in the following sentences.

(2.45) pem tau klən ‘away ’yuk 5 snəm *dah* ra.
LM full STAND COME age age 5 year be FOC
‘It was when she reached the age of five years.’ (MKP:7)
(2.46) ma lɔʔ bɔt mɯa hnam krɔp tɔh.
SM extent long.time about one year near be ‘It was a long time, nearly a year.’ (KD)

In certain contexts, tɔh has ingressive-stative reading. This is the case for example in the expression nga tɔh mɔnɪh ‘birthday’ (lit. ‘day be man’).

The causative form of tɔh, hɔtɔh/pɔtɔh, means ‘bring into being, organize, establish’ and can occur as secondary verb or as a full verb.

(2.47) poy dhaw jnok-jnok lew klon badah tuin ’uit ra.
LM performance teaching big-RDP TOP do CAUS:be UP all FOC ‘I shall organise a great performance of all teachings.’ (DC:16)

(2.48) nga yèh deh hɔtɔh puə.
SM day morning 3 CAUS:be performance ‘The next day they organized a theatre.’ (KD)

In postverbal position, tɔh developed into a modal operator, expressing the ability to do something or the successful result of the activity expressed by the main verb. This is directly comparable to and may have been influenced by (or influenced) both Burmese hpyi ‘be’ and Thai pen ‘id.’ with the same function in postverbal position (Okell and Allott 2001:140f).

(2.49) yaw ra hwa’ khyap bacā pday cuit klon mgaŋ mū ’arā kicca
LM COND FOC NEG ponder consider LOC heart do COND what thing affair
   mway ro klon hwa’ mān, klon hwa’ dah sak-sak ra.
   one TOP do NEG WIN do NEG BE INTENS FOC ‘Whatever we do, if we do not think about it thoroughly in our hearts, we will
   not be capable of doing it, we will not achieve the goal at all.’ (LPM:24)

SM 1s speak language Chin TOP TOP NEG BE ‘I cannot speak Chin.’ (‘As for me speaking that Chin language, I cannot speak it.’) (KD)

In sentence final position, MM 〈dah〉 developed into the focal marker ra?, with which tɔh can co-occur in the modern language. Sentence final tɔh is best translated as ‘it is the case’ (unless it has modal value as in (2.50) above).
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This usage is probably influenced by Burmese sentence final *hpyi’ ‘be’ with the same function, explained by Okell and Allot as “used redundantly in some contexts, perhaps for stylistic effects”. (Okell and Allott 2001:141).

(2.51) jwa gah ’anāy tuip law hwa’ khyuit-pluit ra dah.
LM corpse TOP uncle bury KEEP NEG certain FOC BE
‘It must be the case that you haven’t buried that corpse well.’
(MKP:17)

For details of the development of the focus marker raʔ from ‹dah› see chapter 5.

In negated contexts, tˆh as full verb/copula is usually replaced by (hùʔ) siŋ ‘it is not the case, it is not so’:

(2.41c) dêh ròʔ? ṭu hùʔ siŋ.
SM 3 friend 1s NEG be.so
‘He is not my friend.’

The negation of tˆh is common with expressions of states of mind, but less so with expressions of illnesses. With the latter, the whole clause is usually negated with hùʔ siŋ.

(2.42b) dêh hùʔ tˆh kêsak.
SM 3 NEG be NML:happy
‘He is not happy.’

(2.43b) dêh tˆh yã ñë ñê hùʔ siŋ.
SM 3 be illness stomach NEG be.so
‘He has not got the cholera.’

2.5.4.2 〈mâŋ› mäh ‘be at, remain, stay’

As a full verb, mäh (OM 〈dmoŋ›, MM 〈dmâŋ›) means ‘stay at a place, remain, be at a place’. As mäh expresses a conscious, controlled activity, its subject is usually animate, although inanimate subjects can occur.

Since MM times, 〈dmâŋ› has developed a secondary meaning as imperfective/progressive auxiliary, which has become very widespread in LM and SM, in the latter replacing the older progressive marker tao ‘dwell, stand, be somewhere’. The aspectual use of mah will be described in section 6.3.1.

The old spelling 〈dmâŋ› is preserved in older LM, but increasingly replaced by the more phonetic variant 〈mâŋ› in newer texts. Some authors apparently
attempt to make a distinction between the full verb ‹mān› and the aspect
operator ‹dmān›, but this usage lacks a historical basis and no consistency
has arisen so far.

There are no restrictions on the combinability of mā with verbal and
clausal operators:

(2.52) ?uə ʔu kí ʔənə? ra?.
SM   1s stay here FOC
‘I am going to stay here; I live here.’

(2.53) ?uə ʔu kí ʔu hà? màn ra?.
SM   1s stay here NEG WIN FOC
‘I cannot stay here anymore.’

(2.54) đəh məkə? mā kí ʔənə hà ʔəməə.
SM   3 DES stay LOC land Burma
‘He wants to stay in Burma.’

SM town Sangkhlaburi this 1s NEG stay NEG
‘I am not going to stay in Sangkhlaburi.’

The idiomatic expression mā phèə ‘stay at school’ means ‘be a pupil of a
certain school, be studying’, as opposed to mən phèə ‘go up to school’, which
means more specifically ‘be going to school right now’.

Two old derivates of the base verb ‹dmān› still exist in LM and SM. The
form and pronunciation of both have merged in the modern language, but the
meanings are kept apart: OM ‹dirmo›, MM ‹dramān, damān› ‘dwelling
place, place’ is a regular nominalization of ‹dmān›, while OM ‹duño›, MM
‹damān› ‘set, install, cause to dwell’ is the morphological causative. In LM
both forms are ‹damān›, in SM hàmā. The use of the causative hàmā is rare
in SM, the periphrastic construction kə mā ‘GIVE stay’ being preferred (s.
chapter 4 on causatives).

In a given text in LM and especially in SM, mā is easily one of the most
frequent words. This is due to the extended use of the verb as aspectual
marker, which can combine with practically any verb or verbal expression in
practically any context as will be shown in section 6.3.1.

2.5.4.3 〈nwaṅm〉 nûm ‘be at, exist, have’

In OM, the verb 〈nom〉 with the regular ‘hypothetical’ form 〈snom〉 and the irregular attributive 〈lmom〉 (< *〈nmom〉 with nasal dissimilation) has the meaning ‘be, exist; to have, possess’ (DMI:216). The causative 〈pnom〉 means ‘endow, confer’. In LM the base verb is 〈nwaṅm〉, the attributive usually 〈mnûm〉, rarer 〈ma nwaṅm〉. The hypothetical and causative forms have been lost in the modern language.

The meaning ‘have, to possess’ in OM can be expressed either by 〈nom〉 and a direct object, as in (2.56), or by 〈nom〉 and an oblique object marked with the preposition 〈ku〉, as in (2.57). Notice that both sentences are from the same inscription.

(2.56) ñahl ma ‘an yiryuk dirhat gumlıon
OM  person REL lack vigour NML:strong ATTR:many
snom  yiryuk dirhat.
PROSP:exist vigour NML:strong
‘Those who lack vigour and strength shall have them.’ (SSKe18-19)

(2.57) ma 〈nom〉 ku yiryäs jirku
OM  REL exist OBL NML:bright body
‘(he) who has light shining from his body’ (SSKa5)

In the MM inscriptions, the meaning ‘have, possess’ is usually expressed by the 〈nom ku〉, apart from a few set expressions, such as

(2.58) thähl thor ma 〈nwom〉 bnat ñuh mwoy lak kasāp
MM  bowl gold REL exist amount price one 10,000 Kyat
‘a golden bowl which was about 10,000 Kyat worth’ (Ajapālacefī A12)

The normal construction in MM is illustrated in the following example.

(2.59) sмин ma 〈nwom〉 tau ku saddhā
MM  king REL exist STAND OBL faith
‘the king who has faith’ (SDGb22)

In SM nûm can be used as transitive verb with the meaning ‘have, possess’, as in

66 〈yiryuk〉 is the nominalization of a not attested verb *〈yuk〉 ‘be vigorous’. Cf. LM 〈that yuk〉 ‘be in good health’, which represents the root verbs of both 〈yiryuk〉 and 〈dirhat〉.
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(2.60a) ṭuə makŷʔ nûm ka.
SM  1s  DES  exist car
‘I would like to have a car.’ (NOP)

This construction is rare, though. The preferred expression in SM and LM is with nûm as existential verb ‘there is’, be at’, with either the possessor or the possessed marked as oblique. The above sentence (2.60a) is deemed unnatural language by some speakers, the more idiomatic expression being

(2.60b) ṭuə makŷʔ kûʔ ka.
SM  1s  DES  get car
‘I would like to get a car.’

In (2.61) the possessor is marked as locative, while the possessed object is unmarked (subject):

(2.61) pady ide’ brau gah kawen chăn nwaı̂n damân hâ?
LM  LOC  y.sister woman TOP NML:play love exist  STAY Q
‘Do you have a lover, little sister?’ (MKP:20)

In (2.62) it is the possessed object that is marked as oblique, while the possessor functions as subject.

(2.62) mnih mnuûm  kuiw puin kusuiw ta’ gah
LM  man  ATTR:exist OBL  merit fortune  PL  TOP
‘the people who have fortune and merit’ (DC:6)

In SM, the preferred construction of possessive expressions is with either the possessor or the possessed in sentence initial topic position, the latter being more common.

(2.63a) ka ṭuə nûm. (ʔuə ka nûm. / ṭuə nûm ka.)
SM  car 1s  exist ( 1s  car exist / 1s  exist car)
‘I have a car.’

This construction can also be analysed as ‘my car exists’, with ṭuə as (regularly unmarked) possessive.

It is interesting that in OM the use of ⟨nom⟩ as transitive ‘have, possess’ appears to have been more widespread than in MM and in the modern language. Perhaps this development can be attributed to Burmese influence, which as we have seen must have been rather strong since late Pagán times. In Burmese, possessive constructions involve the verb hyï ‘exist, there is, be at’ and the possessor marked as locative:
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(2.63b) cāno-hmàkà hyí te.
B 1sm-LOC car exist RL

In colloquial Burmese, as in SM, the possessor can be unmarked (cāno) or marked as possessive (cānó). The Burmese sentence corresponding to (2.60a) is

(2.60c) ‘cāno kà hyí hcin te.
B 1sm car exist DES RL

This sentence is not accepted by all speakers, though. The more idiomatic expression in Burmese, both written and colloquial, is

(2.60d) cāno kà lou hcin te.
B 1sm car want DES RL

It would be interesting to investigate the development of nūm in the Thai-Mon dialects, which have been under increasing Thai influence for the past 250 years. The existential verb miː in Thai is regularly used as a transitive verb meaning ‘have, possess’:⁶⁷

(2.60e) chan⁴yaːk¹ miː rot³.
Th 1s DES have car

The basic meaning of nūm in SM and LM is ‘be at, there is’, which overlaps with the meaning of māj. The main difference is that nūm excludes the control (and volition) of the subject, while māj is controlled by the subject. This means that nūm cannot be used in imperative, desiderative or most other modal contexts, as the following examples illustrate.

(2.64) *ʔuə nūm ʔənəʔhùʔ màn.
SM 1s exist here NEG WIN

(2.65) *pèh nūm ʔənəʔniʔ!
SM 2 exist here LITTLE

(2.66) *dēh məkəʔ nūm dəə wəŋkəʔ raʔ.
SM 3 DES exist LOC Sangkhaburi FOC

⁶⁷ Interestingly the same verb in Shan, a Tai language spoken in northern Burma and increasingly influenced by Burmese, is not commonly used as a transitive verb, possession being usually expressed with the possessor marked as locative, as in Burmese: (ti) kāu kha mi hən ʔə ‘(LOC) I have house SFP’ (s. Cushing 1906:17).
If *nùm* is replaced by *mì nécessaire* the above sentences become grammatically correct and yield the readings ‘I cannot stay/live here.’, ‘Stay here!’, and ‘He wants to stay/live in Sangkhlaburi.’ respectively.

**Negation of *nùm***

No negative occurrence of *nùm* is attested in any period or dialect of Mon. In OM, *<nom>* was in complementary distribution with the negative marker *<sak>*

\[ \text{OM} \quad \text{NEG.exist reason holy Buddha lord:1s ATTR:many PROSP:smile ci kāh sak.} \]

\[ \text{EMPH NEG NEG.exist} \]

‘It does not happen that the Buddhas smile without a reason.’

(2.67) *sak* het kyāk buddha [tα]rley guñlōn sik’im

In MM the negative verb *<sak>* had been weakened to *<ha>* and lost its original verbal character. As *<nom>* now lacked a lexical opposite, its negation had to be expressed periphrastically, as is the case with all other verbs in Mon. Interestingly the most obvious negation *<ha nom>* was not chosen. Instead the originally reinforced negation OM *<sak moy>* ‘there is not one’ was taken as regular negative form of *<nom>*

It is not clear whether the inability to be negated is an original feature of *nùm* or a later development due to the presence of a lexical opposite in OM. No cognate forms outside the Monic branch have been found, making an interpretation of the Mon word rather difficult.

(2.68) *ku nômnômnômih chuµu tim.*

NyK NEG exist man name Tim

‘There is no-one (here) called Tim.’ (Diffloth 1984:218)

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68 We would expect second or ‘breathy’ register also in Nyah Kur after the initial voiced nasal. Diffloth (1984:218) reconstructs *nôm* for Proto-Monic and *ʔnôm* for Proto-Nyah Kur.
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(2.69a)  wêy ku nûn prak.
NyK 1s NEG exist silver
‘I don’t have any money.’ (Thongkham 1984:284)

The same sentences in SM are given below.

(2.68b)  hûʔ mûa mûn mûn tem. / mûn mûn tem hûʔ mûa.
SM NEG one man name Tim man name Tim NEG one

(2.69b)  hloəʔ uə hûʔ mûa. / (dəə) ?uə hûʔ mûa hloə.
SM copper 1s NEG one / LOC 1s NEG one copper

The fact that the Nyah Kur verb can be negated while the corresponding Mon verb cannot cannot be explained in two ways. First, it is possible that in pre-Pagán Mon (Dvâravatī period), ‹nom› was a regular verb with the possibility of negation, which was preserved in the Dvâravatī Mon enclave in central Thailand which is known as Nyah Kur. The other possibility is that Nyah Kur developed the regular negation of DOM ‹nom› under the influence of Thai, which must have been very strong for many centuries. As there is no instance of negated ‹nom› in the Dvâravatī inscriptions so far discovered and published, this issue cannot be solved at the present.

In sentence final position, nûm has developed into an auxiliary which “denotes [a] general and persecuting state of affairs” (Shorto 1962:132). This use is not very frequent in either LM or SM. Shorto gives one sample sentence of this use (spelling adapted):

(2.70)  ʔawk kûʔ pûn sənat ʔən?ʔuə tèh tûŋ ʔəmənh nûm ha?
SM for GET shoot gun here 1s HIT receive permit EXIST Q
‘Do I have to get a permit to shoot here?’

With no further examples of nûm as SFP in my database, I consider the grammaticalised use of nûm as rather marginal in LM and SM.

2.5.4.4 ‹(hwa’) seîn› (hûʔ) siây ‘(not to) be so’

The verb siây ‘be so, be the case that, be a fact’ in modern Mon is defective as it can occur only in negated and interrogative contexts. The verb is not attested in inscriptions before MM, where its occurrence is restricted to negative contexts. As seen above, siây is in quasi-complementary distribution with tûh ‘be’, of which it functions as regular negation in many contexts. The LM compound ‹seîn-leî› ‘truly,indeed’ suggests that at an earlier stage of the language ‹seî› could be used also in affirmative contexts. Data from Nyah
Kur seem to confirm this to some extent. Diffloth (1984:184) writes about the corresponding verb in Nyah Kur, which he reconstructs as *siəŋ for Proto-Monic and *cian for Proto-Nyah Kur: “(usually, but not always in Negative Sentence): (not) to be right; (sth./s.one)(not) to be (sth./s.one) [V. intr]”. Diffloth gives no examples of the use of *cian in Nyah Kur, but L. Thongkham (1984:310) lists chiəŋ with the meaning ‘that’s it; be so’. She illustrates the use of this verb with the expression chiəŋ ʔya ‘Yes, it is.’ The second, longer example given by Thongkham is interesting, as it shows that in Nyah Kur, too, chiəŋ appears to function as the negative form of thèh ‘be’, just as it does in Mon:

(2.71a)  mənìh dìi ʔeh ku chiəŋ phàaʔ wèy, jin thèh cawaay wèy.
NyK man CL_HUM that NEG be.so father 1s, 3 be uncle 1s
‘That man is not my father, he is my uncle.’ (Thongkham 1984:310)

The negated first part of the sentence uses chiəŋ, while the affirmative second part has thèh. The same sentence translated into SM is given in (2.71b).

SM man that father1s NEG be.so 3 be uncle 1s

The use of hùʔ siəŋ as extended or emphatic negation marker has been illustrated above (section 2.3.1). Another important function of the expression is as negative answer to a question or proposition, often, but not necessarily, ending itself in (hùʔ) siəŋ (ha) ‘isn’t it?’. The affirmative counterpart in this case is usually tèh ‘hit (the mark); be right, correct’.

(2.72) ʔiʔnəʔ lòc pèh siəŋ ha? hùʔ siəŋ. / tèh raʔ.
SM NML: this book 2 be.so Q NEG be.so / HIT FOC
‘This is your book, right.’

Younger speakers of Mon in Thailand sporadically answer a question like the above with siəŋ alone, but in most cases immediately realise that something was wrong and correct themselves, adding tèh. This is a case of strong Thai influence confusing bilingual speakers rather than an indication of a tendency to extend the use of siəŋ to affirmative contexts. This development under Thai (and Khmer) influence may be the cause for the Nyah Kur usage, though, and it remains to be seen if something similar happens in the future in the Thai-Mon dialects. Sakomoto (1994:1124f) lists

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69 Spelling adapted.
70 NyK thèh is historically related to SM tèh (OM 〈das〉).
71 In colloquial SM, the sentence final question marker ha is often dropped, leaving many sentences ending in siəŋ, which in turn is shortened to sé with high intonation.
only negative occurrences under ‘hu sen’ in his dictionary of the Pakkret Mon dialect, north of Bangkok.

2.5.5 Directionals

Directionals are verbs that add a direction usually, but not exclusively, to a verb denoting a manner of movement. Bisang (1992) makes a distinction between “orientation verbs” and “directionals”. The former group comprises the verbs ‘go’ and ‘come’, the latter such verbs as ‘enter’, ‘exit’, ‘move up’, ‘move down’, etc. This distinction is basically justified also for Mon, as orientation verbs may co-occur with directionals, while only one directional may occur in a verbal expression. I take orientation verbs to be a subcategory of the directionals, rather than a separate class, as they share a number of features, such as the licensing of a goal object with motion verbs and similar grammaticalization paths. Two directionals (usually one directional and one orientation verb) may co-occur in Mon, but series of three or more directionals are ungrammatical.

(2.73) \text{krip ceh ʔa, krip tpn plɔn.}
SM run DOWN GO run UP again
‘We ran down, and then we ran up again.’ (KN)

(2.74) *deh kwac ceh tet ʔa nù hnoʔ.
SM 3 walk DOWN OUT GO ABL house
‘He walked down out of the house.’

The choice of the orientation verb depends on the point of reference, by default ‘here and now’ or ‘I’, i.e. the speaker. If the movement (actual or imagined) expressed by the verb is away from the point of reference, the orientation verb ʔa ‘go’ is used, if the movement is towards the point of reference, klɛŋ ‘come’. If the main verb denotes the induced movement of an object, the causative forms, na and nɛŋ respectively, are used.

As a verb denoting a manner of movement, such as krip ‘run’ or kwac ‘walk’ does not include a direction of movement (is not oriented), it can not include a goal of the movement. In order to add a goal to the movement, a directional or orientation verb has to be added.

(2.75a) *deh kwac phɛɔ.
SM 3 walk school
‘He is walking to school.’
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(2.75b)  dêh kwac ʔa phêa.
SM 3 walk GO school
‘He is walking to school.’

(2.75c)  dêh kwac tun phêa.
SM 3 walk UP school
‘He is walking up to school.’

The directionals here take over the function of prepositions in other languages, a phenomenon labelled “co-verb” by Bisang (1992).

As directionals denote a movement in reference to a specific point in space, the extension to the dimension of time is readily made. Directionals (including orientation verbs) therefore could easily develop aspectual meanings. Transferring the movement from the concrete to an abstract level resulted in directionals having modal or manner value in some cases. These developments and other functions of the directionals will be discussed in chapter 6 in the respective sections.

2.6 Complements of Verbs

A complement is an integer part of the VP (or the core, i.e. it is a core argument, in RRG terminology), in other words it forms part of the predicate per se. Three kinds of verbal complements can be distinguished in Mon, which will be discussed in the following sections. Section 2.6.1 deals with direct (unmarked) objects, section 2.6.2 with oblique (prepositional) objects and section 2.6.3 takes a look at complement clauses/sentences, i.e. clauses or sentences that function as complements of verbs. As will be seen in the following sections, the use of the different complement types is overlapping in some cases. There are some verbs that may take either a direct object, i.e. a simple NP, or a clause/sentence as its complement, as for example tem ‘know’ and têh ‘hit, be affected by’ (s. 6.3.14), which occur in expressions like tem lôc ‘know the text, can read’, tem pêh klîŋŋ ‘know that he comes’, têh pôŋ ‘be hit by a bomb’, têh klîŋ kit ‘be bitten by a dog’. Some verbs may take a simple verbal complement besides a direct object, such as têh cût ‘like’: têh cût wîŋŋ ‘likes to play’ besides têh cût sô-kryk ‘likes mangoes’. The difference between verbs like têh and têh cût is that the former combines with a subordinate clause with a different subject from the matrix clause,72 which may or may not be overtly expressed, while the latter takes a subordinate clause with the same subject as the matrix clause. In this case the subordinate

72 In the case of têh ‘hit, be affected by’, the subject of the matrix clause is identical with the object of the subordinate clause, which is obligatorily deleted. This is due to the semantic structure of têh, not to a general syntactic restriction.
subject is always deleted, the subordinate clause appearing as simple VP. Other verbs may take either an NP, a VP, or a clause as complement. One example is \( \text{ph.} \) ‘fear, be afraid (of)’, which occurs in expressions like the following: \( \text{ph.} \) \( \text{kolok} \) ‘be afraid of ghosts’, \( hù? \) \( \text{ph.} \) \( \text{khyə} \) ‘not be afraid to die’, and \( \text{ph.} \) \( \text{dëh} \) \( hù? \) \( \text{klyə} \) \( \text{pûh} \) ‘be afraid that he will not come’. If the complement is a V or VP, the verb may be interpreted as an auxiliary, though often, as in the case of \( \text{ph.} \), it can hardly be said to be grammaticalized.

### 2.6.1 Direct objects

As already outlined in section 2.5.1 on transitive vs. intransitive verbs, the range of functions covered by unmarked or direct objects in Mon is much wider than in European languages. I will here only briefly recapitulate the different kinds of direct objects in Mon.

The prototypical direct object expresses the semantic undergoer of the verb. This holds also in Mon. The object is identified only by its postverbal position in unmarked sentences with SVO word order: \( \text{ʔuə} \) \( \text{chan pèh} \). ‘I love you’ vs. \( \text{pèh} \) \( \text{chan ʔuə} \). ‘You love me’. The object may be fronted, in which case it is usually, but not invariably, marked either as topic or as focus. The subject remains in preverbal position, leading to OSV sentences: \( \text{pèh k} \) \( \text{ʔuə} \) \( \text{chan} \). ‘I do love you’ (\( k\) = TOP), \( \text{pèh raʔ ʔuə} \) \( \text{chan} \). ‘It’s you I love; you are the one I love’ (\( raʔ = \text{FOC} \)).

A number of verbs take a generic (inherent) object, like \( \text{ɕiʔ}\) ‘eat’, which is usually combined with \( \text{pyn} \) ‘cooked rice, food’, and \( \text{khyu} \) ‘write’, which takes \( \text{lōc} \) ‘writing, text’ as its natural object. As other objects, the inherent object is dropped when the verb is repeated in the near context (usually within the same paragraph). Not having a semantic content of their own, inherent objects cannot be fronted to topic or focus position like other direct objects.

Verbs of directed motion (e.g. \( \text{ʔa} \) ‘go’, \( \text{kləŋ} \) ‘come’, \( \text{ceh} \) ‘move down’, etc.) may take a locational noun as direct object, expressing the goal of the movement: \( \text{ʔa} \) \( \text{phə} \) ‘go to the temple’, \( \text{ceh wəŋka} \) ‘come/go to Sangkhlaburi’, \( \text{lùp hər} \) ‘enter the house’, etc. Verbs expressing manners of motion (\( \text{kwac} \) ‘walk’, \( \text{krip} \) ‘run’, etc.) need either a preposition or a directional verb to introduce a goal-object: \( \text{kwac ʔa hər} \) ‘walk home, walk to the house’, \( \text{krip əkrə pəpər} \) ‘run in the forest’ (with the preposition \( əkrə \) ‘LOC’), etc. The expressions \( *\text{kwac hər} \) and \( *\text{krip krəp} \) are ungrammatical. If these verbs occur with an unmarked object, it usually expresses the path: \( \text{kwac kləŋ nəʔ} \). ‘walk this way’.

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73 In Mon, moving from the capital city to any other place is expressed by \( \text{ceh} \) ‘move down’, irrespective of the geographical altitude.
With verbs that express a transfer of possession (subject = source), such as *kò* ‘give’, *cèn* ‘hand over’, etc., the direct object can be either the theme, i.e. the object transferred, or the recipient: *kò hòa* ‘give me’, *kò lòc* ‘give (me) a book’. The same goes for verbs expressing a request for a transfer of possession (subject = recipient), such as *làt* ‘ask for’, where the direct object may be either the theme (*làt hloa* ‘ask for money’) or the source (*làt ʔèmèy* ‘ask from mother’). Where both theme and recipient/source are overtly expressed, the word order is ‘V recip/src theme’, but in SM VPs with two overt objects are usually avoided (cf. section 2.5.1).

Some verbs describing states (equivalent to adjectives) may take direct objects, the relationship of which to the verb is semantically defined. The combination of state verbs with a direct object is not frequent in SM and LM, though, and most, if not all instances can be seen as fixed idioms. Examples include expressions like *lòc hloa* ‘be well-to-do, rich’, lit. ‘be easy money’, *ʔon hloa* ‘have little money, be poor’, lit. ‘be few money’. Constructions of this type are found already in OM (s. 2.5.1).

The range of semantic roles covered by unmarked objects in Mon includes patient, theme, recipient, goal, source, location, path, among others (cf. Van Valin 1997:85f).

2.6.2 Oblique objects

Although a wide range of functions can be expressed by unmarked direct objects in Mon, prepositions are used to mark oblique relations in some cases. The most common object marking prepositions in SM are *kò* ‘to, for, with, by’, the ablative *nù* ‘from’ and the locative *dɔ* ‘in, at’. Among these prepositions, *kò* has gained something like universal status as oblique marker and may combine with *nù* and *dɔ* as *nù kò* and *dɔ kò* respectively, without change in meaning. Prepositional objects are chiefly adjuncts/adverbials, i.e. they belong to the periphery of a clause. Some oblique objects appear as core arguments, though, as will be seen below.

The development of *kò* has already been described in section 6.3.3.11 as a merger of the OM preposition ‹ku› with the grammaticalized verb ‹kil› ‘give’. The history of *nù* is less clear. Shorto lists OM ‹nor› as a noun meaning ‘space, time, bounded by initial term; from, after, than’ (DMI:216f). The word is obviously lost in Nyah Kur, but its 6th century (Dvāravaṭī) occurrence confirms its ancientness in Mon. There are no certain Mon-Khmer connections of this word, DMI mentioning only Boloven74 *nuarr* ‘formerly’

74 Boloven (Loven, Jru) is a West-Bahnaric language spoken in Laos (s. Parkin 1991:80).
as a possible cognate. L. Thongkham (2001:543) reconstructs PWB *nuər, nəər with the meaning ‘before’ (Thai kə,n̩r), based on Jru (Laven) nuər and Laveh nəər. Although Shorto classifies OM <nor> as a noun, the (attributive) derivate OM <mnor> ‘time after, subsequent or future time’ (DMI:301) suggests a verbal origin of this lexeme. The Thai translation of the Bahnaric forms given by L. Thongkham is does not help to clarify the classification of the Mon-Khmer word, as the status of Thai kə,n̩r ‘before’ is not certain. It has some verbal features (negation in some contexts possible, attributive function), but it cannot function as main predicative element of a sentence, which makes it more noun-like. This might be a rare instance of a ‘real’ adjective in Thai and in Mon-Khmer.

OM <dey> is given in DMI as a preposition “introducing location in space or time, in, on, at, into, to, and sometimes beneficiary of action, to, towards, for”. The form has Austro-Asiatic and Austronesian cognates, such as Indonesian di ‘in, at’ (DMI:137). It may be considered a ‘real’ preposition, together with OM <ku> ‘for, to, etc.’.

The three basic prepositions mentioned above are semantically underspecified to the extent that with some verbs any of them can occur to introduce an oblique object, without obvious semantic difference.

\[(2.76a)\] deh ?at hloə nù ?əməy deh.  
SM 3 ask.for money ABL mother 3

\[(2.76b)\] deh ?at hloə dəə ?əməy deh.  
SM 3 ask.for money LOC mother 3

\[(2.76c)\] deh ?at hloə kəd ?əməy deh.  
SM 3 ask.for money OBL mother 3  
‘He asked his mother for money.’

Some verbs can occur either with a direct or with an oblique object, the latter usually marked with kəd, sometimes also with the locative marker dəə.

\[(2.77a)\] pèh ?a hman ?əməy.  
SM 2 go ask mother

\[(2.77b)\] pèh ?a hman kəd/dəə ?əməy.  
SM 2 go ask OBL/LOC mother  ‘Go and ask mother!’

The prototypical functions of modern Mon kəd include INSTRUMENTAL, COMITATIVE, and BENEFACTIVE. All three of these functions can be expressed
more elaborately to avoid ambiguity, in some cases by means of a combination of *kd* with a more specific preposition.

(2.78a) ɗeň ciqʔ *kd* cən.
SM 3 eat OBL spoon

(2.78b) ɗeň ciqʔ *nèʔ* *kd* cən.
SM 3 eat INSTR OBL spoon
‘He eats with a spoon.’

(2.79a) ɗeň kwac ?a *kd* rðə.
SM 3 walk GO OBL friend

(2.79b) ɗeň kwac ?a *smd* (kd) rðə.
SM 3 walk GO INCL (OBL) friend
‘He walked off with his friend.’

(2.80a) ɗeň rån kwæn *kd* kon.
SM 3 buy sweets OBL/GIVE child

(2.80b) ɗeň rån kwæn ḋeɾeŋ/swεk kon.
SM 3 buy sweets BEN child
‘He bought sweets for his children.’

The preposition ḋeɾeŋ ‘for’ in (2.80b) is colloquial SM, pronounced by some speakers as ræŋ or riŋ. The form is probably an extension of use of the verb ræŋ ‘bring, be together, align’ (resp. of a nominalized form of it), which also used in the expression ræŋ hokʔ ‘together, mutually, each other’ (with hokʔ ‘group’). The form swεk is used in LM and formal SM, showing reading pronunciation of the initial cluster. In colloquial SM, sw- is reduced to hw-, and the preposition is by some speakers actually pronounced [hwk].

As benefactive, *kd* is best analysed as a grammaticalized form of the verb *kd* ‘give’ (s. 6.3.11), while the instrumental and comitative functions go back to the old preposition *kw*. This overlapping makes the glossing of *kd* somewhat inconsistent as the choice between GIVE and OBL is not always obvious and may seem rather arbitrary in some cases.

The preposition *dɔə* places an object or event in space or time. The usual notion is that of locative, which is also used here consistently to gloss *dɔə*, but in some contexts it may be allative or ablative, as in (2.76b) above. Sometimes the preposition *dɔə* is replaced by the derived adverb ḋeɾdɔə ‘inside’, which leads to an unambiguous locative, or more precisely ‘inessive’ reading. Other forms competing (but not synonymous) with *dɔə* are
the nominal *cəɾiəŋ* ‘vicinity, near, at’ (formal) and *ʔətao* ‘top, on’, and the verbal *krəp* ‘be close, near’ and *cəp, làk* ‘arrive, to’. Examples are given in the following sentences.

(2.81) ɗeh nùm ɗəa həə?.
SM 3 exist LOC house
‘He is in the house.’

(2.82) kləŋ ɗəa ʔapa!
SM come LOC father
‘Come to Daddy!’

(2.83) ɗəa məŋ ɗəa/cəɾiəŋ ɓęŋkək.
SM 3 stay LOC/vicinity Bangkok
‘He lives in/near Bangkok.’

(2.84) ɗəa hnam nəʔ? ʔuə hūʔ cao ɗəŋ həməə raʔ?
SM LOC year this 1s NEG return country Burma FOC
‘I am not going to Burma this year.’

The preposition *nù* denotes the source of an object in space (‘from’) or the starting point of an event in time (‘since’). It is also used as temporal preposition to locate an event in the past (‘at, on, in’). This usage corresponds to the Burmese postpositional marker -kə ‘from, since; past time’ (cf. Okell 1969:315ff; Okell and Allott 2001:1). It may combine with nouns to form secondary prepositions, such as *hət nù* ‘because of’ (with *hət* ‘cause, reason’ from Pali *hetu* ‘id.’) and *həmən nù* ‘because of’ (with *həmən* ‘cause, reason’). Furthermore, *nù* is used to mark the comparative degree (‘more than’), usually, but not exclusively, with verbs describing qualities.

(2.85) ɗeh kləŋ nù ɓęŋkək.
SM 3 come ABL Bangkok
‘He comes from Bangkok.’

(2.86) nù caʔ chəŋ pəh ʔuə həm ‘I love you’.
SM ABL begin meet 2 1s speak ‘I love you’
‘When I first met you I said ‘I love you’’. (Hongchan)

(2.87) nùdah kwaŋ həŋh ɗyə̂k jnok ...
LM ABL be pupil temple holy.being big
‘Since he became a pupil of the abbot ...’ (DC:7)
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(2.88) həmànnù bèʔ ?uə tẽh tek.
SM cause ABL 2ram ls HIT beat
‘Because of you I was beaten up.’ (KKP)

(2.89) nəʔ kon ðeh,tôk-khe həm, ?apa ðeh teh
SM NML:thi:s 75 child 3 Tok-Khae speak father 3 COND
hnôk nû nəʔ màsɔn chaʔ nem.
bīg ABL this five measure PERS
‘This is his son, Tokkhae said. If it comes to his father, he is
five times bigger than this one.’ (WK)

(2.90) kôn klûŋ nû ?uə.
SM dare come ABL 1s
‘You dared to come (to Thailand) more than I (would have dared).’
(KKP)

Functions not covered by these three basic prepositions are expressed either
by nouns or verb functioning as prepositions, such as the above mentioned
ʔətao ‘top’ > ‘on (top of)’, cəp ‘arrive’ > ‘until, to’, and a number of other
ones. The liberty in combining multiple verbs and nouns to express a variety
of relations makes the use of prepositions, and therefore of oblique objects, in
Mon less prominent than in European languages. This feature is shared with
Thai, which makes heavy use of verbal and nominal combinations
(serialization, cf. Bisang 1992), but is strikingly different from Burmese
usage, which prefers the use of postpositions to unmarked verbal or nominal
compounds (cf. Okell 1969).

2.6.3 Complement clauses

One of the most common paths of grammaticalization found in languages
around the world is from a verb meaning ‘say’ to a complementizer (s. Heine

Mon shares this development, but the use of the resulting complementizer is
restricted to rather formal contexts and plays a marginal role in SM, which
prefers unmarked complement clauses.

The verb that underwent this grammaticalization in Mon is OM ʔgah ‘say,
tell’, which is either followed or preceded by reported speech. The former
word order corresponds to original Mon usage, while the latter shows
Burmese influence. In OM, the verb is not found as complementizer yet,
occurring only as a full verb with a sentential complement. In MM, ʔgah also
appears as second element in verbal compounds, such as ʔtwas ʔgah ‘mean,
be equivalent to’ (with ʔtwas ‘utter’) and ʔsaddhā ʔgah ‘declare sincerely’

75 For the contracted (infixed) nominalized form of nəʔ ‘this’ s. Jenny 2003:187ff.
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(with Pali ‹saddhā› ‘be honest’). When ‹gaḥ› was extended in use and applied to a wide variety of *verba dicendi* and verbs of cognition, the path was open for the development into a general complementizer.

Starting in MM, ‹gaḥ› was gradually replaced as a full verb by ‹huim› (LM ‹hui›, SM *hm*), which in the modern language covers the meanings of ‘say’ and ‘speak’. The meaning ‘tell’ is expressed by the verb ‹lè› (LM ‹lau›), which may be connected to (or borrowed from) Thai *law*² ‘id.’. It is not found in OM and MM, and no related Nyah Kur form is recorded by L. Thongkham (1984) and Diffloth (1984). ⁷⁶ These lexemes have not undergone grammaticalization and are used only as full verbs.

In LM, the verb ‹gaḥ› is still used as full verb, but its main function is as SFP indicating a conditional clause (cf. section 1.4.3). Its use as complementizer is illustrated in the following sentences.

(2.91)  *smiñ dùn  ’añwa khyap gaḥ tuin sāk ṇa’ ra.*
LM    king city Ava consider SAY move.up kind this FOC
‘The king of Ava thought that they had gone up that way.’ (DC:12)

(2.92)  *yaw ra  ’ā glāngluñ kuiw bamā samtiñ gaḥ  ’ā glāng tuik,*
LM    COND FOC go way boat GIVE Burmese know SAY go way land
*yaw ra  ’ā glāntuik kuiw bamā samtiñ gaḥ  ’ā glāng gluñ.*
COND FOC go way land GIVE Burmese know SAY go way boat
‘If we go by boat, let the Burmese think (lit. know⁷⁷) that we go by land; if we go by land, let the Burmese think that we go by boat.’ (RDR:199)

(2.93)  *’ay ṇāt gaḥ ’ay dah juin kuiw dùn ku kon ’ay.*
LM  1s see SAY 1s HIT hand.over GIVE country OBL child 1s
‘I see that I have to hand over the kingdom to my son.’ (DC:30)

(2.94)  *theṅ gaḥ yay gna-kyāk ḍāṅ-ḍāṅ pra-pra.*
LM    think SAY illness queen real-RDP true-RDP
‘He thought that the illness of the queen was real.’ (DC:17)

⁷⁶ Li 1977 does not reconstruct the Thai root for Proto-Tai, but cognate forms are found e.g. in Lānnā *law* ‘read, recite; spread a rumour’ (Watcharasat 1995:212), Shan *law*³ ‘address (royalty)’ (Tern Moeng 1995:285), Dai (Lü) *lāu* ‘tell a story’ (Burusphat 1996:361). The lexeme seems to be restricted to the Southwestern Tai languages, which makes borrowing from Mon-Khmer at least possible, but in this case not very likely, given the phonetic shape of the word (tone pattern) and the lack of Mon-Khmer cognates for Mon ‹lau›.

⁷⁷ The morphology and semantics of ‹samtiñ› are not entirely clear. The form is obviously derived from the verb root ‹tiñ› ‘know’, but the derivation is obscure. In SM, *htem* means ‘remember’. Notice also the application of a verb meaning ‘know’ to an untruth.
As mentioned above, SM prefers unmarked complement clauses to the use of *kēh*. The only instance of the complementizer *kēh* in the recorded data is given in (2.95), where the complement sentence precedes the main clause instead of following it. Such syntactic Burmanisms are frequent among Mon speakers and have been pointed out on different occasions throughout the text.

(2.95)  mōŋ mōŋ hənāy kō h mūzhətəm ?iʔtoə, həya? *kēh* teh.
SM stay STAY place TOP one night PREF:FINISH think SAY COND
‘If you thought that you’d just have to stay there one night, and that’s it ... ’ (KD)

More common are sentences containing unmarked direct or indirect reported speech like the following ones. The complement sentence may be a statement, a question, or an command, without formally marked difference.

(2.96)  kwan poy ?ətvə? hūʔ mūŋ raʔ dēh həm.
SM village 1pl NML:that NEG one FOC 3 speak
‘Our village there does not exist anymore, they said.’ (KD)

(2.97)  ?əmēy dēh həm mōŋ thəʔ phēə kla.
SM mother 3 speak stay THROW school before
‘My mother said that I should remain in school for the time being.’ (KN)

Sentence (2.98) exhibits negation raising, i.e. the negation which logically belongs to the subordinate clause appears in the matrix clause. Negation raising is not very common in Mon, though, and restricted to a few verbs of cognition, especially expressing ‘thinking’ or ‘believing’. In most cases the negation appears where it logically belongs, with differently positioned negatives expressing different ideas, as in English ‘know that it is not good’ vs. ‘not know that it is good’.

(2.98)  ?uə hūʔ hāyaʔ pūh ɲēh nəʔ kəʔ kēh.
SM 1s NEG think NEG person this GET understand
‘I don’t think that he’ll understand.’ (= ‘I think that he will not understand.’)

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78 The only regular use of *kēh* in SM is in the combination *chaʔ kēh* ‘but’ (literally ‘only SAY’). The word *chaʔ* is originally a noun meaning ‘measure, amount’. It is used together with numerals in expressions like *tə chaʔ* ‘twice as (much)’ (cf. sentence (2.89)). Another extension of meaning led to ‘as much as’ > ‘only as much as’ > ‘only’; ‘only SAY’ > ‘but’.
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Summary

Verbs in Mon can take a wide range of unmarked objects, which are interchangeable in some contexts with marked objects. The objects may be either nominal, verbal, or sentential, the latter sometimes marked with the complementizer "gah" in LM, rarely in SM. Instead of real prepositions, of which a small number exists in Mon, verbal and nominal elements are often used to express semantic relations. In this respect Mon again is closer to Thai than to Burmese, which makes heavy use of postpositional markers on nouns and clauses in connection with verbs as well as post-clausal complementizers/subordinators.

3. The Syntax of Verbs

Verbs in Mon exhibit some interesting syntactical features, which are the topic of the present chapter. The first section gives an account of serial verb constructions in Mon, a construction type that is widespread in Asian and African languages. Section 3.2 deals with the topic-comment sentence structure common to most languages of Southeast Asia. The use and development of the passive voice in Mon from OM to SM is described in section 3.3. Finally 3.4 takes a look at the relative constructions and the attributive form of verbs, which share a common origin as still easily seen in OM and MM, but are all but lost in SM.

3.1 Serial verb constructions

Verb serialisation is a construction type found in African and Creole languages, as well as in many languages of East and Southeast Asia. Although the phenomenon has received a fair amount of attention from linguists, no commonly agreed definition of the term ‘serial verb’ has been established so far. As Lord states:

Defining serial verb constructions is a sticky business. Most definitions include a string of verb phrases sharing the same tense, aspect, mood and polarity, where the understood subject of a non-initial verb is the subject or object of the preceding verb. If we focus on surface form, we can limit prototypical serial verb constructions to successive verb phrases without overt connective morphemes. (Lord 1993:1)

Other authors define serial verb constructions in similar terms but tend to leave out the parts of the definition that do not neatly apply to the language they are describing (cf. Sebba 1987, Hansell 1993, Seuren 1991) or add other
aspects, such as the ‘one event constraint’, i.e. a serial verb construction describes a single event rather than a series of distinct events (cf. Durie 1997). The definition that most authors seem to agree upon is that serial verb constructions are strings of the type

\[ \text{NP} - \text{V}_1 - (\text{NP}) - \text{V}_2 - (\text{NP}) - \ldots - \text{V}_x - (\text{NP}) \]

with no overt linkage marker between the VPs. An NP can be the syntactical subject of any number of Vs to its right and/or the object of the V (or, in some languages, Vs) to its left. An NP referring to the same entity is expressed only once in a serial verb construction, irrespective of its function as subject and/or object.

This very broad definition of serial verb constructions includes also strings of verbs that are not considered serial verbs by most authors, such as the combination of verbal operators (in Mon basically expressing aspect, direction and modality/manner).

A number of authors (Bisang 1992, Lord 1993) have described a subclass of serial verbs that function as prepositions in some of languages. Lord quotes Clark’s (unpublished) dissertation entitled “Coverbs and Case in Vietnamese” (1975, University of Hawaii). Clark identified a number of motion verbs with prepositional function in Khmer, Thai and Vietnamese. Bisang (1992) extended the research, including also Mandarin Chinese and Hmong. Coverbs are not restricted to the Southeast Asian linguistic area, nor are they to motion verbs, although motion verbs are very common among the coverbs. Typical examples of coverbs can be found in Thai, including \( \text{yu} \) ‘stay; LOC’, \( \text{pay} \) ‘go; ALL’, \( \text{ca} \) ‘leave; ABL’, \( \text{hay} \) ‘give; DAT’, etc.

In Mon there are a few verbs that can be used in the function of prepositions, although the phenomenon is less prominent in Mon than in Thai and other central and eastern Southeast Asian languages. The directionals \( \text{ʔa} \) ‘go’ and \( \text{klŋ} \) ‘come’ may in some contexts be analysed as coverbs, while the stationary directional \( \text{mŋ} \) never seems to have this function, the locative case being regularly expressed by the preposition \( \text{də} \) ‘in, at, to’. Possible uses as prepositions/coverbs will be described under the respective headings in chapter 6.

In the Role and Reference Grammar model, serial verbs are one among different construction types that can be used to link “nuclei”, “cores” or “clauses”. The nucleus is the main predicative element of a sentence, usually the verb. The core consists of the nucleus and the “core arguments”, i.e. subject and object(s) of (di-)transitive verbs. The core together with the “periphery” (non-core arguments, adverbials) forms the clause (s. Van Valin 1997, ch. 2, 8, 9). In “nuclear juncture” two verbs with common arguments (subject and object) are joined, forming the predicate of the clause. This type
of verb serialisation occurs mostly with aspectual markers and directionals, although other functions are found too.

\[ \text{NP}_1 = \text{S of } V_1 \text{ and } V_2, \text{ NP}_2 = \text{O of } V_1 \text{ and } V_2 \]  

or

\[ \text{NP}_1 = \text{S of } V_1, \text{ NP}_2 = \text{O of } V_1, V_2 = \text{ASP/DIR} \]

In “core juncture” the joined verbs share at least one of their arguments, the most common types being

\[ \text{NP}_1 = \text{S of } V_1, \text{ NP}_2 = \text{O of } V_1 = \text{S of } V_2 \]

and

\[ \text{NP}_1 = \text{S of } V_1 \text{ and } V_2, \text{ NP}_3 = \text{O of preceding } V \]

“Clause juncture” involves two potentially independent events with no shared arguments. Clause juncture most often involves an overt linkage marker, i.e. a coordinator or subordinator. Serial verb constructions most frequently occur on the level of nuclear and core junctures, although heavily serialising languages allow serial verbs in clause juncture, too. As coordinators and subordinators often originate in verbs, it is not always easy (or possible) to determine if a given construction involves an overt linkage marker or a serial verb. This is the case for example with the verb toə ‘finish’, which, among other functions, is used as sequential marker (s. 6.3.16).

### 3.1.1 Historical development

In all recorded stages of Mon sequences of verbs without overt linkage marker are frequent. These sequences belong to different types as outlined above. The following examples illustrate different serial verb constructions in OM.

(3.1) ñah pan tluû smān.
OM person four come ask
‘The four come to ask.’ (An166)

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79 More than two verbs may be involved in a serial verb construction in Mon. The formula can be extended accordingly.
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(3.2) mun han ’ba s’är mañ sīl.
OM announce LOC father PROSP:go observe precept
‘He announces to his father that he is going to keep the precepts.’
(An225)

In sentence (3.1), the subject of V₁ is also subject of V₂. V₂ is transitive and could possibly have an object, which would not be shared with V₁. In (3.2), the understood subject of V₁ is also subject of V₂ and V₃, while the prepositional object ‘han ’ba’ belongs only to V₁. The NP ‘sīl’ is object only of V₃, not of V₂ or V₁. The whole expression ‘s’är mañ sīl’ itself is a sentential complement of V₁. In the following sentence, the NP ‘sacchu’ ‘fruit’ is the object of both verbs. The subject is not expressed but understood to be identical for both verbs, too. The accompanying picture of this plaque shows two people plucking fruit from a tree and handing them over to two children.

(3.3) ḫas kil sacchu’.
OM pick give fruit
‘They pick fruit for them.’ (An305)

Sentence (3.4) is semantically similar to (3.3), but the construction is fundamentally different with the common object occurring after V₁ instead of V₂, which is marked for the prospective aspect:

(3.4) rañ birbeñ sikil.
OM bring alms.bowl PROSP:give
‘They bring the alms bowl and give it to him.’ (An64)

The picture of this plate shows two attendants of King Mahājanaka handing him an alms bowl. Both the position of the object and the aspect marker on the second verb suggest that the sentence (3.4) involves clause juncture rather than core or nuclear juncture as in (3.3). As seen above in sentence (3.2), only the first verb of a series takes the prospective prefix ‘s-’, the following verbs being unmarked. As no arguments have to be overtly expressed in Mon, the verb ‘sikil’ alone can constitute a complete clause.

In (3.5) V₂ expresses the result of V₁:

(3.5) smiñ tluñ cip.
OM king come arrive
‘The king arrives.’ (An371)
(3.6) expresses two subsequent events with shared subject and object, both not overtly expressed:

(3.6) **yok rusāl.**
OM   lift  lay.down
‘He lifts up [her head] and lays it on his lap.’ (An360)

The picture of An360 shows Vessantara with Maddī’s head on his lap, whom he believes to be dead.

The use of serial verbs in MM is illustrated in the following sentence.

(3.7a) **deh ta’ ket nañ kuïw ku kyāk-tray.**
MM   3   PL take CAUS:COME give OBL Buddha
‘They bring it to offer it to the Lord Buddha.’ (SDGa50)

The second verb, ‹nañ› functions as causative directional modifying the verb ‹ket›, while ‹kuïw› introduces a clause of its own, similar to the OM example in (3.4). In SM the same sentence would most naturally be rendered as

(3.7b) **deh toʔ ket nəŋ kp kyac-krə.**
SM   3   PL take CAUS:COME GIVE Buddha

In SM the MM verb ‹kuïw› ‘give’ and the preposition ‹ku› merged in kp, which takes over the function of both, marking benefactive and oblique objects in general. The expression kp kyac-krə is not necessarily (but possibly) a clause in SM, but may be considered an adjunct in this context.

Increasing grammaticalization of serial verbs can be observed in newer stages of Mon in general, as the next section shows.

### 3.1.2 Serial verbs in modern Mon

Strings of verbs without overt linkage marker are common in both LM and SM. Usually the semantics and the context determine the relationship between the different verbs or verb phrases, although there are instances of ambiguous readings. In many cases one or more of the verbs involved have undergone grammaticalization to a degree that their verbal character has all but disappeared. These grammaticalized serial verbs mostly function as aspect operators or directionals; some have taken the function of prepositions. In certain contexts, directionals have aspectual function, as will be shown in detail in chapter 6.

A verb series can express a single event, as in (3.8), where the use of five different verbs puts emphasis on the task of writing:
(3.8)  khyū khnaṁ badah dhāmāk patit rup-rau mān roñ.  
LM  write build  CAUS:be CAUS:appear CAUS:exit image WIN ASRT  
‘I shall be able to write and shape the image [of the story].’ (DC:2)

A more literal translation would be ‘I shall succeed in writing, thus build and create the image, make it appear and emerge.’ In this sentence, all verbs share the (understood) subject ‘I’ as well as the overt object <rup-rau> ‘image, shape’ and the modal operator <mān> ‘win > be able, capable’. The shared object regularly occurs after the last verb. In the next sentence, only the subject is common to all verbs, the objects are different. In the original sentence no objects are overtly expressed. The objects retrievable from the context are inserted here in square brackets to show their position.

(3.9)  poy rɔ̀ kwan krip tet [nù kwan] prê [δey-kyya].  
SM  1pl companion village run EXIT [ABL village] watch [ship-wind]  
‘We villagers ran out [of the village] to see [the aeroplane].’ (KD)

The object of V₁ becomes subject of V₂ in (3.10) and (3.11).

(3.10)  prê δey-kyya, prê hayaʔ têh tao rao huʔ tao kəh...  
SM  watch ship-wind watch think HIT burn TOP NEG burn TOP  
‘We watched that aeroplane and thought it must burn, but it did not burn...’ (KD)

(3.11)  dẽh ket hanûh kəh dẽh pək kəʔ ṗət ʔa.  
SM  3s take lance TOP 3s cut.off neck break.off GO  
‘He took the lance and he cut off its head.’ (WK)

The indirect object (recipient) of V₁ in sentence (3.12) becomes subject of V₂.

(3.12)  ḥamèy dẽh kp ḥyə ɲêh ʧiʔ.  
SM  mother 3s give rice person eat  
‘His mother gave him rice to eat.’ (WK)

In some instances the verbs in a string have different subjects. This does not have to be overtly marked, as in (3.13).

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80 The use of the 3rd person pronouns in this sentence is inconsistent. If dẽh refers to the son, we would expect the same pronoun in the second part of the sentence. dẽh may refer to ḥamèy, but as ḥyə is the higher honorific form, ḥyə should correctly be used to refer to the mother and dẽh to the son.
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(3.13)  həmèə  ton  kləŋ  phəc  dəh  rəp  kỳʔ.

SM  Burmese  move.up  COME  fear  3s  catch  GET

‘The Burmese came up and we were afraid that they would catch us.’ (KD)

This is an instance of two joined independent clauses (clause juncture) without overt linkage marker, not uncommon in SM. There is no audible intonational pause between kləŋ and phəc in the audio recording. The second clause itself consists of the verb phəc and the sentential complement dəh rəp kỳʔ.

The verb kỳʔ ‘get’ is used as full verb in sentence (3.14), but grammaticalized as potential marker in (3.15). The difference of grammaticalization is evident from the position of the direct object, which occurs after the last transitive verb, but before the modal operator.

(3.14) ʔa  rəp  kỳʔ ʔηŋkələc.

SM  go  catch  get  English

‘They went to catch (and caught) the English.’ (KD)

(3.15) ʔuə ʔa  rän  kaʔ  hūʔ  kỳʔ.

SM  1s  go  buy  fish  NEG  GET

‘I cannot go to buy fish.’

An intermediate stage is shown in sentence (3.16), where the first instance of kỳʔ functions syntactically as part of a serial verb before the object, but semantically has the meaning of the modal ‘can’.

(3.16) ʔa  təʔ  pəy  spʔ  kỳʔ  prət  mǔənəŋ,  kỳʔ  hloə  mǔ  mət.

SM  time  that  1pl  sell  GET  banana  one  bunch  get  copper  one  10,000

‘Back then we could sell one bunch of bananas for 10,000 Kyat.’

(KD)

The verbs of orientation such as ʔa ‘go’ and kləŋ ‘come’ can combine with verbs indicating a manner of movement to express a directed movement, with the goal appearing as unmarked object.

(3.17)  dəh  krip  ʔa  phəə.

SM  3s  run  GΟ  school

‘He ran to school.’

In this sentence the semantics of ʔa are still intact, as the subject physically moves away from the point of reference. In (3.18), on the other hand, ʔa is further grammaticalized as pure directional. The subject remains stationary.
The verb *th*ə? ‘throw (away), discard’ can be understood in its original meaning in sentence (3.19), although its grammaticalized meaning as marker of an impulsive, undeliberate, often irreversible action shows through as well.

(3.19)  həmèə pən həcət thə? rəə kwan poy kɔʰ.
SM Burmese shoot CAUS:die throw companion village 1pl TOP
‘The Burmese shot (and got rid of) the people in our village.’ (KD)

In (3.20), on the other hand, *th*ə? can only be understood as manner-aspect operator.

(3.20)  ket thə? kəpəc thə raʔ.
SM take THROW half only FOC
‘You just take fifty Kyat!’ (KN)

As the subject receives some money, *th*ə? certainly does not mean ‘throw away’ in this context. It rather indicates that he should take the fifty Kyat and leave it at that, not considering any further action (i.e. ask for more).

As a full verb *toə* means ‘finish, be finished’. When it occurs in a serial verb construction of the form V$_A$ *toə* V$_B$, it usually indicates that action/event A has been finished and action/event B follows. This is clearly the case in (3.21).

(3.21)  kyəc hənɔk həm kəpəh ?əhmək, kəpəh toə ?ət
SM holy big speak gather rubbish gather FINISH all
kələ thə? nə raʔ.
discard THROW CAUS:GO FOC
‘The abbot said, “Collect the rubbish and then take it all away!”.’
(KN)

In many instances, the verb preceding *toə* does not express an action that can naturally be finished. In this case, *toə* merely indicates that event B follows event A, i.e. it has been grammaticalized as sequential marker, as illustrated in sentence (3.22).
In other contexts, the two events occur simultaneously, or even in reverse order, as in (3.23), where the mother certainly first puts the poison into the rice and then wraps it, not the other way round.

(3.23) ʔəmɛ́y ɗɛ́h kwì lɔ̀ pyŋ Ɂoɔ cut Ɂb Ɂɛʔuy.
SM    m o t h e r   3    w r a p    K E E P    r i c e    F I N I S H    p u t    K E E P    m e d i c i n e    ‘H i s    m o t h e r    p u t    p o i s o n    i n t o    t h e    r i c e    a n d    t h e n    w r a p p e d    i t.’    (WK)

The semantics and grammaticalization of the most common serial verbs turned operators/auxiliaries will be discussed in detail in chapter 6.

3.2 Voice

OM has a special marker for the passive voice, viz. ‹nin›. The original meaning of this word is not clear. Shorto (DMI:133) suggests a connection with Theng _ŋən ‘receive, accept, collect’, Riang-Lang _nən ‘bear, endure’ and Vietnamese nhấn ‘receive’. Shorto explains ‹nin› as a “passive auxiliary, marking subject as goal of action denoted by v[erb].” (DMI:132). Examples of its use are given below in (3.25) through (3.28)

(3.24) ɗináŋ̬ thar ma ŋin cincon ku ᵐat.
OM   m i r r o r   g o l d   R E L   P A S S   b e . s e t   O B L   g e m
‘A golden mirror that is set with gems’ (SSKc6)

The verb ‘cincon‘ in (3.24) has itself passive semantics (‘be set, decorated’), so that the overt passive marker is superfluous. The passive marker is omitted in (3.25) and (3.26), which come from the same source as (3.24), viz. the Shweizigon Inscription, but appears in (3.27) and (3.28), in the latter with atypical VS word order.

(3.25) ma rap ci[rcú]n dewatāw ma tmuy na bajra
OM   R E L   c a t c h   s t a f f   s t a f f   R E L   A T T R : f i n i s h   I N S T R   d i a m o n d
‘who takes hold of the staff of the gods, which is decorated with diamonds’ (SSKb18)
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(3.26) kon lwūt smīn guṁloṁ ma gni na rat
OM child virgin king ATTR:many REL be.adorned INSTR gem
ma kaḥ moy prakār.
REL NEG one kind
‘the daughters of the king, who were adorned with many kinds of gemstones’ (SSKc10)

(3.27) yaḥ piṭak trey pi wo’ma liṅ ’ār goḥ ŋin
OM EMPH Piṭaka three three this REL be.destroyed GOTOP PASS
tūn pkom juṁwan cu’āh tūn.
again CAUS:associate literary.text CAUS:separate again
‘The Tipiṭaka, which had become scattered and obscured, was collected again and the texts purified.’ (DMI:132)

(3.28) ... goḥ-ma ŋin dumōṅ rūp kyek thar moy.
OM ... then PASS CAUS:stay image Lord gold one
‘Then a Buddha image of gold was installed.’ (DMI:132f.)

Generally speaking, two reasons account for a speaker to choose the passive voice if his language provides this possibility. The first is what Van Valin (1997:294f) calls “PSA [privileged syntactic argument] modulation” and the second “argument modulation”. According to Van Valin, “these two features of voice alternations [...] are logically independent of each other and [...] they do not always occur together.” (ibid.) In PSA modulation, a non-privileged argument is promoted to privileged status, i.e. a semantic object functions as a syntactic subject in accusative languages. PSA modulation is mostly used to put emphasis on a nominal which is not the semantic subject (actor) of the sentence.

In argument modulation, the actor appears as peripheral object or is omitted all together. Thus argument modulation is mainly used when the actor is not known or the speaker does not want to mention him.

PSA modulation is important in languages with relatively fixed word order which do not allow the movement of elements for emphasis. Argument modulation plays a role especially in languages that do not allow the subject to be omitted. In pro-drop languages, where there is no need for the subject to be overtly expressed, no need for argument modulation passive constructions arises. This does not mean that pro-drop languages with free word order do not have passive constructions. Historical change and foreign influence can result in pleonastic constructions, as seen in sentence (3.25) above. In the case of Mon, it can be expected that the overtly marked passive arose under the influence of Pali (as did some other grammatical categories such as aorist and cases), but it probably was never part of the actual spoken language. As we have seen in previous sections, non-actor nominals may be freely moved
into prominent sentence initial position as topic or focus, and arguments do not have to be overtly expressed in a sentence. This makes the passive construction in Mon superfluous.

There exist in modern Mon ways to express the passive, though. One common construction involves the auxiliary _IO ‘hit (a mark), be affected by’, which has also developed other grammatical functions (s. 6.3.14). This passive construction usually has a negative connotation (adversative), i.e. the subject undergoes an unpleasant experience, as in (3.29).

(3.29a) ɲə yəh  tə? pəh _IO tek ra?.
SM    day morning that 2 HIT beat FOC
     ‘Tomorrow you’ll be beaten up.’ (KKP)

The secondary subject (actor of the main verb) may be overtly expressed and remains in its usual position in front of the main verb, as seen in (3.29b).

(3.29b) ɲə yəh  tə? pəh _IO ?apa tek ra?.
SM    day morning that 2 HIT father beat FOC
     ‘Tomorrow you’ll be beaten up by your father.’

The structure of passive constructions in Mon is thus

S₁_IO S₂ V

where S₁ is the semantic undergoer and S₂ the actor of V, which in most cases describes an unpleasant experience for S₁.

The adversative meaning in (3.30) is not obvious, but the broader context makes it clear that the speaker, at the time of the event a young temple boy, was not really happy about being invited to a far away village, having to walk the long way there.

(3.30) _IO niʔmən ᵍɔ mësəli tə?.
SM    HIT invite    LOC Mesali that
     ‘We were invited to Mesali.’ (KN)

Neutral or positive experiences are expressed by IO ‘receive’, although this too can involve negative experiences, as in (3.31).

(3.31) ?a IO tek pəʔ ?ødən.
SM    go RECEIVE beat three instance
     ‘We went and we were hit three times.’ (KN)
The use of \( t\acute{\eta} \) instead of \( t\acute{\epsilon}h \) in (3.31) suggests that the speaker was ready (though probably not happy) to go and get his punishment. Unlike \( t\acute{\epsilon}h \), the verb \( t\acute{\eta} \) involves control of the subject over the event.

In (3.32) and (3.33), the experience expressed by the “passive” is positive. It is noticeable that these sentences are from LM. The use of the passive construction for positive experiences in SM is very rare.

(3.32) \( \text{thek } du\acute{n} \text{ spa } p\ddot{u}jau \text{ mnih dewartau } \text{in } \text{bruim} \)

LM worthy RECEIVE PROSP:do worship man god Indra Brahma
gamlui\(\acute{n} \) tuy.
ATTR:many FINISH
‘He was worthy to be worshipped by man and gods, Indra and Brahma.’ (DC:33)

(3.33) \( su\acute{i}m \text{ kuw } du\acute{n} \text{ } \text{\textquotesingle}a\text{thui\textquotesingle}-\text{\textquotesingle}a\text{sa\textquotesingle}\text{\textquotesingle}h\text{\textquotesingle}h \text{ jnok } \text{bok } \text{pn\textquotesingle}n.} \)

LM INCL OBL RECEIVE NML:praise person big group soldier
‘He was praised by the elders and by the soldiers.’ (DC:38)

The main verb in (3.33) appears in nominalized form, so that the sentence is more literally rendered as ‘he received praise from the elders and the soldiers’.

The passive voice in Mon, as in other Southeast Asian languages, plays a marginal role. The only genuine passive construction is the adversative with the auxiliary \( t\acute{\epsilon}h \), expressing unpleasant experiences.

3.3 Attributive and relative

The notions of attributive and relative are closely related. Both are used to modify (qualify or restrict) a noun phrase. In many languages the attributive is either a special form of a verb (participle) or an adjective, while relative constructions typically involve whole clauses. We have seen above that what usually are adjectives in European languages in Mon form a subgroup of verbs, and that a single verb can form a whole clause or sentence. This means that the formal difference between attributive and relative expressions in Mon is rather small. Where there is no morphological (infixed) attributive form of a verb, it is often impossible to decide whether a given expression is attributive or relative, as in the frequent expression OM \( \text{\textquoteright}ma himo\ldots\)’, LM \( \text{\textquoteright}ma ymu \ldots\) ‘(who is) called ...’.

OM has a particle \( \text{\textquoteright}mun\textquoteright\) (variants \( \text{\textquoteright}man\textquoteright, \text{\textquoteright}min\)), \( ^{81} \) which “connect[s] relative cl[ause] to n[oun] denoting goal, locus, etc. of action” (DMI:297). Another

\( ^{81} \) Old Khmer has \( \text{\textquoteright}man\textquoteright\) ‘particule à valeur conjonctive: que, qui’ (Long Seam 2000:453f)
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particle ‹ma, ma› marks the attributive and “connect[s] relative cl[ause] to n[oun] (a) denoting agent, [...] (b) denoting goal of action [...] (c) denoting locus etc. of action” (DMI:281). The attributive form of verbs is often morphologically marked with the infix ‹-m›, which “is equivalent to the construction with the clause-subordinating particle ma [...] and is used chiefly when the verb has no object or other extension; thus especially when it translates an English adjective.” (DMI:xxiii)

All three morphemes may be related to each other and ultimately to the interrogative OM ‹mu, mo› ‘what’, weak form OM ‹ma› (DMI:296). Shorto states that “ma + v. is sometimes used interchangeably with the attr. form” (DMI:282), as in thar ma yās and thar yimās ‘shining gold’, both attested in the same Pagān era inscription (Kyansitthâ’s Palace inscription), ma nom sīl and lmom sīl ‘virtuous; lit. having virtue’, both from the Myazedi inscription. Diffloth (1984:264ff) tentatively makes a distinction between the attributive /-m-/ infix, which turns “Stative Verbs into Attributive Adjectives” and “another -m- affix, which turns Transitive Verbs into Agent Nouns”. The former is infixed in roots with double or triple initial and in some cases prefixed to single initial verbs, while the latter is always infixed. Diffloth concludes, however, that “actually, both the Agentive /-m-/ Infix and the Attributive /m/ Infixed/Prefix may well have a common historical origin, but only at a period far more ancient than Dvaravati-Old-Mon”. In a footnote (op.cit. p. 349) Diffloth ventures to relate the Mon affixes to the functionally and phonologically strikingly similar Austronesian affixes found in Tagalog as ma- (prefix of stative verbs) and -um- (infix of agent focus verbs). Evidence from Mon itself, however, seems hardly sufficient to postulate two different affixes. An agentive like LM ‹damā› ‘smith’ (‘one who beats iron’) from the root ‹dā› ‘beat out’ is formally not different from an attributive like ‹gmān› ‘soldier, brave man’ (‘one who is brave’) from ‹gān› ‘be brave’.

The word order for relative constructions in OM appears to be consistently

N ma RELATIVE CLAUSE

as in

(3.34) glīk ma ḍeḥ sīl jeyyalekha goh
OM cloth REL 3 write auspicious.letter TOP
‘cloth on which they had written auspicious letters’
(Kyansitthâ F8-9)

The attributive and relative markers sometimes co-occur pleonastically in OM:

110
(3.35) \textbf{ma dmas kʰaŋ juŋnok}  
\text{OM REL ATTR:be ship ATTR:big}  
\text{‘which was (like) a big ship’ (SSKd40f)}

In other instances the attributive is unmarked, as in (3.36), where we would expect the attributive form of \textit{jnok} ‘be big’.

(3.36) ŋāŋ \textit{jnok} guŋlōŋ  
\text{OM person big ATTR:many}  
\text{‘the many senior men’ (SSKh40)}

The attributive infix is also attached to words of foreign origin, such as the Pali loan \textit{duk} (P. \textit{dukkha} ‘suffering, unsatisfactoriness’).

(3.37) manus \textit{dmuk} ma sjiŋ na sgo’ pūŋ gliŋ kuŋ  
\text{OM man ATTR:suffer REL difficult INSTR PROSP:get rice cloth too}  
\text{‘also poor people who can hardly get food and clothes’ (SSKd47f)}

Sentence (3.37) shows the use of the infixed attributive \textit{dmuk} and the periphrastic relative \textit{ma sjiŋ}. The former is preferred with objectless, simple verbs, while the latter occurs regularly with extended verb expressions.

In MM, the relative marker is sometimes prefixed directly to the verb, a word order which seems to become more frequent in LM as in (3.38) and (3.39).

(3.38) \textit{atuŋ} payyaŋ-duih kyāk \textit{ma} kuŋ law  
\text{LM according NML:prophesy Buddha REL give KEEP}  
\text{‘according to the prophecy which the Lord Buddha made’ (DC:6)}

(3.39) \textit{atuŋ} kasap jaku \textit{ma} khyap law  
\text{LM according NML:think body REL think KEEP}  
\text{‘according to the thought he had himself’ (DC:21)}

This word order brings the relative construction closer to the attributive, which is always marked on the verb itself, either by adding the prefix (or proclitic) \textit{ma} or the infix \textit{-m-}: \textit{ma jnok} \textit{~} \textit{jamnok} ‘big’, \textit{ma gluiŋ} \textit{~} \textit{gamluiŋ} ‘many, much’, etc.

In some cases the infixed form has developed special semantics, differentiating it from the prefixed attributive form. These lexicalised attributives have often survived in SM, while other attributives have been all but lost. The word \textit{hənok} still exists with the meaning ‘chief, senior person’.
The attributive of *hnòk* remains unmarked: *hɔʔ hnòk* ‘a big house’ or ‘the house is big’.

In SM and in newer texts of LM, both relative and attributive usually remain unmarked, apart from a few set expressions, usually adverbials with the head *pùə* ‘manner’, e.g. *pùə mə-klàŋ* ‘a lot’, *pùə mə-lòn* ‘exceedingly’.

Some speakers retain the relative marker in SM, usually weakened to [mə] or even [m], which is prefixed to the main verb. Most often this remnant of the relative subordinator seems to occur in expressions with sentence initial interrogative pronouns, such as (3.40) and (3.41).

(3.40) ʔə̀ də̀ (m) ?a?
**SM**  where  3  (REL) go
‘Where did he go?’

(3.41) múʔ  də̀ (m) hə̀m?
**SM**  what  3  (REL) speak
‘What did he say?’

This vocalic nasal is barely audible and for most speakers non-existent. Most naturally both relative and attributive expressions are simply attached to the noun phrase they modify, without any overt marker. Often the topic marker *kə̀* is attached to the whole expression, marking it as a (nominal) unit, though not obligatorily.

(3.42) mə̀nìh kləŋ ɕiʔə̀ prə̀ kə̀h
**SM**  man  come  eat  rice  TOP
‘the one who came for dinner’ (KKP)

(3.43) kon mòn klòn mə̀ŋ kə̀lə̀n dɔ̀ ɗə̀ŋ ə̀m kə̀h
**SM**  child Mon  do  STAY  NML:do  LOC  country  Thai  TOP
‘the Mon people working in Thailand’

(3.44) klon  gah smâŋ rãːn  khâdák  nwarə̀  dmân jaren  gah ra.
**LM**  python  TOP  ask  LOOK  crow  exist  STAY  vicinity  TOP  FOC
‘The python asked a crow that was nearby.’ (LPM:10)

The second instance of ɬə̀g in (3.44) is deictic (ɬareŋ ɬə̀g ‘that vicinity, there’) and does not mark the NP modified by the relative clause as in (3.42) and (3.43).

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82 One learned informant, NOP, obviously tends to add the relative marker in transcriptions of life recordings where no distinct nasal sound can be heard in the recording. It is difficult or impossible in many contexts to detect the weak [m], especially in nasal contexts.
If the attributive expresses a quality (“adjective”), the verb is often reduplicated in LM and SM. Sentence (3.45) shows an activity verb as well as a quality verb functioning as attributive in postnominal position. The former remains unmarked, while the latter is reduplicated.

(3.45) ḍẹʔ ḅẹŋ-kya ḍatum ƙhoh-ƙhohmu ƙoh
SM  PREF aeroplane fall.down good-RDP one TOP
‘a good aeroplane that crashed’ (KD)

In (3.46), the verb ‘big’ is not reduplicated in attributive position.

(3.46) mhāther jnok tak law thapuiy gah.
LM monk big beat KEEP novice TOP
‘The senior monk beat the novice.’ (LPM:14)

In more formal contexts such as newspaper articles, a genre which is especially prone to foreign influence and calques, the relative/attributive marker ○ma○ is regularly used with non-restrictive relative clauses, as in (3.47).

(3.47) Mohammed Atef ○ma○ dah ’adhika thakuip pnän ...
LM M.A. REL be prime head army ...
‘Mohammed Atef, who is the commander-in-chief,...’
(Guiding Star 28:10)

Other frequent constructions using the relative/attributive marker are the rather formal ○ma ptair nū ...○ ‘beginning with ...’ and the nominalizer ○dadah ma V○ ‘V-ing, -tion’, which in Nai Tun Way’s dictionary (Tun Way 2000:559-593) covers almost forty pages. Both constructions are rarely used in SM apart from formal speech.

SM can be said to be a language without productive overt relative or attributive formation. Like the lack of real productive nominalizing devices, this obviously poses no communicative problem.

4. Causatives
4.1. Introduction

Causatives are verb forms that increase the argument structure of base verbs by one, the causer. The subject of the base verb becomes the syntactic object (causee) in the causative construction. The causer causes, i.e. allows, forces,
or act in such a way that the causee performs the act or assumes the state described by the base verb.

All causatives are by definition transitive, while the base verb can be either transitive or intransitive. There is no restriction in Mon as to the semantic scope of the base verbs to be used in causative constructions. Any verb can be causativized, although the morphological causative is not always available, sometimes due to loss of the form through the development of the language. Causatives can be formed from verbs describing events or states, as well as from resultative compounds.

Once a morphological causative is formed, it can function as secondary base for derivation, especially nominalization:

\[ lɛm \text{ ‘be twisted’} - \text{plam ‘twist around, train (vine plants)’} - pəlam \text{ ‘trellis for climbing plants’}. \]

Recursive causativization is possible in Mon with one morphological and one periphrastic form (with \(kd\ ‘GIVE’, \text{s. 6.3.11}):\]

\[(4.1a) \text{ hə} \text{ə? l}ɛm ?a.} \]
\[ \text{SM house be.destroyed GO} \]
\[ \text{‘The house was destroyed.’} \]

\[(4.1b) dəh pəlam na hə?}. \]
\[ \text{SM 3 CAUS: destroyed CAUS:GO house} \]
\[ \text{‘He destroyed the house.’} \]

\[(4.1c) nəh-kəh kp dəh pəlam na hə?.} \]
\[ \text{SM who GIVE 3 CAUS:destroyed CAUS:GO house} \]
\[ \text{‘Who let/made him destroy the house?’} \]

\[(4.2) ‘ak kuiw ptiɛm nəy ’akəy snehha} \]
\[ \text{LM father GIVE CAUS:know master exceedingly beloved} \]
\[ \text{‘[Your] father made [me] inform [you], my dearest lord.’ (SGD:77)} \]

4.2 Historical overview

The OM language had an elaborate system of causative formation, making use of both prefixes and infixes. To verbs with a single initial consonant, \(p\)- was prefixed, resulting in a cluster where phonologically possible. In other cases, a short vowel sound \([ə]\) was inserted. The \(p\)- prefix is well attested in the Austroasiatic language family (Shorto 1971:218) and is also found to the Austronesian stock, where the prefix \(pa\)- forms causatives (Dahl 1976:119ff.). Verbs with initial consonant clusters usually form the causative by means of the vocalic \(-u\)- infix in OM, although there are a few exceptions, which will be discussed below. Diffloth (1984:268ff) postulates also a prefix \(k\)- for Mon.

\[85\] The verb \(lɛm\) is not attested in older stages of Mon; the reconstructed forms in OM would be \(*ləm\), \(*pləm\), and \(*pləlm\).
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(or Monic), mainly based on evidence from Nyah Kur, where this prefix usually replaces the more common \textit{p-} prefix of Mon. The only instance of \textit{k-} in Mon proper seems to be OM \textit{tir} ‘rise’ - \textit{ktir} ‘have arise in one’. The causative meaning of the prefix is not entirely clear, and the MM and LM usage suggests a translation ‘arise’ rather than ‘have arise in one’. A regular causative is formed by infixing \textit{-u-}: \textit{kutir} ‘rouse, bring into being’. If there is actually a causative \textit{k-} prefix, this might ultimately be connected to OM \textit{kil}, \textit{keb}, SM \textit{kp} ‘give, let’, used in modern Mon to form periphrastic causatives.

4.2.1 Verbs with single initial (non-labial)

The prefix \textit{p-} probably had an allophone \textit{pə-} (spelt \textit{p-}) already in OM in front of nasals and stops. While the first three examples in (4.3) were pronounced with an initial cluster /ploŋ, plɔp, phum/, the last four probably had an epenthetic short vowel between the prefix and the initial consonants /pət, pətirm, pəʔət, pəʔər/.\footnote{OM phonetic reconstruction according to Shorto 1971.}

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textbf{(4.3)} OM/MM
\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{pliñ} - \textit{pliñ} ‘be destroyed’ - ‘destroy’ (SM \textit{ləŋ} - pləŋ)
\item \textit{pləp} - \textit{pləp} ‘go in’ - ‘insert’ (SM lūp - pləp)
\item \textit{pləhum, phum} ‘take a bath’ - ‘bathe so.’ (SM hum - phum)
\item \textit{plət} - \textit{plət} ‘be all’ - ‘use up’ (SM ?ət - həʔət)
\item \textit{pləjər} - \textit{pləjər} ‘go’ - ‘carry out, practice’ (SM ?ə - na)
\item \textit{ptit} - \textit{ptit} ‘go out’ - ‘take out’ (SM tət - pətət)
\item \textit{ptim} - \textit{ptim} ‘know’ - ‘inform’ (SM tem - pətem)
\end{itemize}
\item \textbf{(4.4)} OM/MM
\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{pliñ} ‘arimaddanapūr goḥ ci kāl satru bunırūk goḥ dəh
\item \textbf{OM} town Arimaddanapura that EMPH time enemy hostile TOP 3
\item \textbf{spliñ} wel...
\item \textbf{PROS:CAUS:destroyed also}
\item ‘When hostile foes ravage the kingdom of Arimaddanapura...’
\item \textbf{(SSKb24)}
\end{itemize}
\item \textbf{(4.5)} OM/MM
\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{ptit} jrum han pən trus moy.
\item \textbf{OM} 3 CAUS:exit snakeLOC mouth man one
\item ‘He extracted a snake from a man via his mouth.’ (Ku202)
\end{itemize}
\item \textbf{(4.6)} OM/MM
\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{ptit} ma \textbf{sp-hum}\footnote{The spelling \textit{sp-hum} indicates an OM cluster \textit{p-h} instead of the simple aspirate \textit{ph}, which is used in modern LM.} jiņjuñ
\item \textbf{OM} water REL PROS:CAUS:bathe post
\item ‘water with which to bathe the posts’ (Kyansittha K17)
\end{itemize}
\end{enumerate}

\footnote{OM phonetic reconstruction according to Shorto 1971.}
Verbs beginning with a palatal stop c-, j- or s- regularly formed the causative by prefixing p-, with the resulting clusters *pc-, *ps- being changed into phy- in MM.

(4.7) OM/MM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OM</th>
<th>MM</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‹cau›</td>
<td>‹phyau›</td>
<td>‘return’ - ‘take, bring back’ (SM cao - phyao)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‹cuih›</td>
<td>‹phyuih›</td>
<td>‘go down’ - ‘take, bring down’ (SM ceh - phyeh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‹chuy›</td>
<td>‹phyuy›</td>
<td>‘move away’ - ‘move away sth.’ (SM chuy - phyuy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‹suk›</td>
<td>‹psuk›</td>
<td>‘be happy’ - ‘make happy’ (SM sak - phyak)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‹suŋ›</td>
<td>‹psuŋ›</td>
<td>‘drink’ - ‘cause to drink’ (SM sŋŋ - phyŋŋ)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples of the OM and MM forms are given in the following sentences.

(4.8) ket dhāt swok turau phyau thān damān jaku tuy...
MM take relic hair six CAUS:return place NML:stay body FINISH ‘Taking the six hair relics and bearing them away to their dwelling-places...’ (DMI:256)

(4.9) pṣuk ’ut mahājan guṅluñ
OM CAUS:happy all people ATTR:many ‘made all the people happy’ (Myakan A18f)

(4.10) guṅ ‘tir moy tǐŋju ca gris deh pṣuŋ chim kṣeŋh.
OM monk one worm eat entrails 3 CAUS:drink blood horse ‘He made a monk whose entrails were being eaten by worms drink the blood of a horse.’ (Ku201)

The last two items on the list (4.7) were later changed to ‹phyuk› and ‹phyuŋ› resp. in MM. The verb ‹suk› is a Pali loan (sukha ‘happiness’), here with a Mon causative.

There are some verbs with initial c- that went a different way. For ‹ca› ‘eat’ the attested causative form in MM is ‹baca›, which Shorto (DMI:258) traces back to an earlier, unattested form *‹pi ñca›, the frequentative causative with p- CAUS and -iñ- FREQ affixes.

(4.11) dleŋ ’oh baca mi.
MM carry.on.yoke firewood CAUS:eat mother ‘[He] carried loads of firewood to provide food for his mother.’ (DMI:258)

In SM the form varies between hačiŋʔ, where ha- is the regular reflex of MM ‹ba›, and pačiŋʔ, pfiŋʔ, pčiŋʔ, phyiŋʔ (LM ‹bca, baca›).

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88 This verb is attested only in LM and SM, not in MM and OM. The expected causative from an OM root *‹chuy› would be an infixed form, the aspirated initials in OM being regarded as clusters.
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SM Japanese CAUS:eat STAY eat NEG be.full EMPH
‘The Japanese fed them, but they could not eat their fill.’ (KD)

SM 3 CAUS:eat along village
‘He fed the whole village.’ (WK)

*pj- was changed into *bj- > by-. This initial cluster is rare and its status in SM is not sure. All attested examples are MM, but cf. OM 〈pju, pju’〉 > LM 〈byu〉, SM pyù ‘be old’ with the same development of the initial cluster.

(4.14) MM
〈juiw〉 - 〈byuiw〉 ‘fight’ - ‘cause to fight, incite enmity’ (SM cə - pyə ~ həcə)

(4.15) byuiw ciŋ kuiw smiŋ ekarät man.
MM CAUS:fight elephant OBL lord king Mon
‘[He] set his elephant at the Mon king’s.’ (DMI:274)

4.2.2 Verbs with labial initial

The causative of verbs with initial p- or b- is formed with the prefix pu-, which in MM is voiced to ba-, as in

(4.16) OM/MM
〈piŋ〉 - 〈pupiŋ〉 > 〈bapeŋ〉 ‘be full’ - ‘fill’ (SM pəŋ - həpəŋ)
〈bir, bar〉 - 〈pubar〉 > 〈babuiw〉 ‘look’ - ‘show’ (SM pəŋ - həpəŋ)

In early MM, p- before voiced initials is changed into b-, except where p- is bound in a real cluster. Thus, the causative of 〈guir〉 ‘shine’ is 〈bguir〉, which was probably pronounced [bəgər] or [bəgow] with an epenthetic vowel.

There is one case of an apparently irregular causative, attested only in MM, viz. 〈bru〉, ‘make a noise’. This looks like the causative of LM 〈ru〉, ‘be loud, sound’, which is not attested in MM, but frequent in LM. If we are in fact dealing here with a causative, the voiced prefix requires an explanation. Furthermore, there is a regular causative of 〈bru〉, viz. 〈buru〉 ‘cause to sound’. The root itself is widespread in MK languages (s. DMI:276), but rare in SM. The triplet in LM and SM reads:

(4.17) LM/SM
〈ru〉 rũ ‘be loud’ - 〈bru〉 prũ ‘make a noise’ 89 - 〈bara〉 hərũ ‘cause to sound’

89 In some Mon dialects of Thailand, the verb prũ ‘means ‘speak, say’ and replaces the common Mon root həm with the same meaning. (This use of prũ is recorded for the Mon dialect of Baang Khan Khan Maak in Lopburi Province.)
A comparable case might be LM ‹blin›, SM plin ‘divert, turn aside’, which according to Bauer has a (not otherwise attested) “de-causative” form, viz. LM ‹dalìn, galìn›, SM həlin ‘be out of order’. As there are no other cases known of de-causativization with the vocalic infix, an alternative explanation along the lines of ‹bru› above is maybe more convincing. From a hypothetical base *‹lin› meaning ‘be out of order’ a causative could be formed, viz. ‹blin› with the same irregular voicing of the prefix as ‹bru›. The non-causative form həlin could be explained as containing another prefix, the identity of which cannot at the moment be established. Notice that the LM spelling does not give any indication as to the origin of the prefix and is a mere representation of the SM prefix hə- without change of register in the main syllable. The expected form *‹balin› is not attested.

4.2.3 Verbs with initial consonant cluster

OM verbs beginning with a consonant cluster form the causative by infixing -u- between the initial consonants.

(4.18) OM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>Final</th>
<th>Causative</th>
<th>Non-causative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‹blah›</td>
<td>‹bulaḥ›</td>
<td>‘be free’</td>
<td>‘set free,’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‹jnok›</td>
<td>‹junoḵ›</td>
<td>‘big’</td>
<td>‘increase’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‹grañ›</td>
<td>‹gurañ›</td>
<td>‘know’</td>
<td>‘inform’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‹tlûn›</td>
<td>‹tulûn›</td>
<td>‘come’</td>
<td>‘bring’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‹kya›</td>
<td>‹kuya›</td>
<td>‘lose, be defeated’</td>
<td>‘defeat’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‹ksīw›</td>
<td>‹kusīw›</td>
<td>‘be shaken, tremble’</td>
<td>‘shake’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‹phic›</td>
<td>‹buhic›</td>
<td>‘be afraid’</td>
<td>‘scare’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After ‹ksīw› ‘tremble’ had become ‹khyi› in late MM or early Modern Mon, the old causative was replaced with the more transparent form ‹pakhyi›, although the older ‹kasī› can still be found in LM and in some contexts in SM, e.g. kəsəcyə́khə́ ‘move one’s legs’.

(4.19) ey pəkhyi hənə? teh pənka hətaʔ tyʔ khyi.
SM eh CAUS:move like.this COND rotor front that move
‘Eh, if you moved it like this, the front rotor moved.’ (KD)

The old causative of phəč has been replaced by phəʔ in SM, the form ‹bahek› pəhəč with the causative meaning being restricted to archaic and classical LM. The nominalized form of the same verb survives in SM as pəhəč from *‹birhıc›. ‹buhic› seems to show voicing of the initial labial in the infixed form already in OM. Another possibility might be that in pre-OM the cluster *bh- was devoiced to ph- but the original voiced labial was retained when separated from the voiceless h. Similar cases can be seen in OM ‹that(ta)› ‘be strong’, ‹dirhat› ‘strength’, in SM thə́ ə~ sə́hə́/sə́hə́ and in OM ‹chān› ‘have compassion’, jirhān, ‘loving kindness’ with the nominalizing
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infix and voiced initial, SM chan ‘love’, sèʔhàn/sohàn ‘love’, both with irregular register in the second syllable. Originally voiced initials *‹bh-, dh-, jh› for ‹phic›, ‹that›, and ‹chān› would explain the unexpected second register in the derivates.

4.2.4 Irregular causatives

There are a few instances where p- is prefixed to stems with an initial consonant cluster. The traces of the initial cluster, that was lost already in MM, can still be seen in SM by the absence of initial clusters in the causatives in some cases, e.g. pələm (*pləm) ‘destroy’.

(4.20) OM
〈rəm〉 - 〈*parlim, paluim〉 ‘be corrupted’ - ‘corrupt’  (SM làrm - pələm)
〈rək〉 - 〈*parlək, palək〉 ‘be in ruins’ - ‘ruin’  (SM làc - paləc, plac)
〈rəy〉 - 〈*parləy, paləy〉 ‘come loose’ - ‘make loose, melt’  (SM lày - pəlay, play)

For these verbs, the causative is not attested in OM, but the MM formation with 〈pa-〉 indicates that they were in use before the initial cluster rl- was reduced to l-. No causative is attested for OM 〈rləy〉 until LM, where both 〈paləy〉 and 〈pləy〉 occur, obviously without semantic difference. For 〈palək〉, there is a more common alternative form in SM plac, which goes back to an unattested MM *〈plək〉. It remains to be explained why these verbs took the prefix rather than the infix usually found with initial clusters. The initial cluster 〈rl-〉 was maybe pronounced [ɾl-] with a slightly vocalic r, which would explain the prefix instead of the infix.

There is some counter-evidence, though, to this explanation. Another verb with a r- cluster, OM 〈rbin〉 ‘be firm’ has the regular causative 〈rubin〉. In SM the couple is pən ‘be firm, secure’ and hapən ‘secure, fix’ (LM 〈buin〉 - 〈labuin, gabuin, dabuin, thabuin〉). If r- as first element in a cluster was really spoken syllabically, we would expect here a form *〈parbuin〉 > *〈babuin〉.

This would result in SM in the same form hapən, but with different orthography in LM (notice that the expected form *〈babuin〉 is not found in LM). A parallel case is OM 〈mięn〉 ‘hear’, of which no causative is attested in OM and MM. In LM, the verb ‘announce, make hear’ is 〈mięn, kamięn, lamęn〉, SM kəməpf. The LM spelling 〈lamięn〉 seems to represent the expected (regular) form *〈rumięn〉, but the light register of the causative in SM suggests 〈pmięn〉 or 〈kamięn〉 to be the actual source of the SM form. Another possible explanation here is that the causative was formed later in MM (or early LM) when the p- prefix was fully productive. LM 〈pmięn〉 would then represent the original form, which was later changed to kəməpf due to dissimilation of the labials p-m. Alternatively, we might be dealing with another instance of the rare k- causative (s. above, 4.2).

LM 〈shay, sňoy, jńay, jńoy〉 ‘be far away, distant’ has a causative 〈pašňay, pasňoy〉 ‘push away’ (SM húə - pəhua). The OM and MM glosses are not attested, but the corresponding verb in Nyah Kur confirms the antiquity of the word in Mon. The reconstructed form in Dvāravaṭī Mon is *jiňoy (Diffloth
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1984:248), which would regularly form the causative with the vocalic infix as *juïy (LM *jaïy, SM *kahï). Tun Way (2000:1240) lists the derivate “jïøy [jaðôa?] v. to push away” under the entry “snïøy [søðôa?] v. to be far, distant, far away.” On p. 735, Tun Way gives the more common causative “pa, snïøy (sic!) [pã søñôa?] v. to put off, to postpone, to put away from one.”

The causative of jïøy was probably formed when the vocalic infix had lost its productivity or the initial cluster *jï- had already become hï-. There is no simple way in LM to write initial hï- in heavy register words, hï- being the most common spelling for these words. The attributive and nominalized forms of the same word are attested in OM and MM as jamïay, jirïey > jïayyay, LM jamïayay, jïayay, which merge in SM in kəhù ‘distance, distant place’. The SM reflexes with the irregular rhyme -uə instead of the expected -iə for MM -ayy are probably due to the velar nasal initial y. A similar phonetic development can be seen in SM nəñ ‘sun, day’ from MM tïayy.

4.2.5 Causatives of directionals

The directionals ‘go’, ‘enter’, and ‘exit’ have alternative causative forms in OM and MM, viz. compounds of raï ‘take away, bring’ and the non-causative base. In late OM the first element was weakened to rin-, functioning like a regular prefix (s. DMI:312). Only the reflex of rin’är has survived into LM and SM as ñã and na resp. via MM n’ã.

(4.21) OM/MM
<çïr> - <raï çïr> > <rin’ïr> ‘go’ - ‘take away, bring’ (LM ñã, SM na)
<tit> - <raï ñït> > <rintit> ‘exit’ - ‘take out’
<lop> - <raï lop> > <rinlop> ‘enter’ - ‘introduce, bring in’

The causative of OM ðuk ‘be complete’ (SM ðak) is ðiïuk (LM ðanuk, SM ðanûk), which looks like a parallel construction. The expected *raïðuk as original form is not attested, though. The form ðiïuk appears in inscriptions of the 11th century (DMI:319).

4.2.6 Affix syncretism in MM

In MM and early LM, the vowels and finals of weak presyllables were reduced to a, so that many forms merged, a phenomenon that Bauer calls “Affix-Synkretismus”, i.e. ‘affix syncretism’ (Bauer 1982:156ff.). Old distinctions between attributives, frequentatives, nominalizations and causatives could not longer be made. This merger caused spelling irregularities and gave rise to new prefixes through reanalysis of old ones. The following examples illustrate the merger of prefixes:

90 But compare also LM ç’ay, SM ḍa ‘(instead of the expected, but not attested *ʔa) ‘I’. 120
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>gloss</th>
<th>form</th>
<th>OM</th>
<th>MM</th>
<th>LM</th>
<th>SM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>be big</td>
<td>BASE</td>
<td>‹jnok›</td>
<td>‹jnok›</td>
<td>‹jnok›</td>
<td>hñòk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(big) size</td>
<td>NML</td>
<td>‹jirnok›</td>
<td>‹janok›</td>
<td>‹janok›</td>
<td>hñòk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to increase</td>
<td>CAUS</td>
<td>‹junok›</td>
<td>‹janok›</td>
<td>‹janok›</td>
<td>hñòk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chief, adult</td>
<td>ATTR</td>
<td>‹juynok›</td>
<td>‹jamnok›</td>
<td>‹jamnok›</td>
<td>hñòk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to dance</td>
<td>BASE</td>
<td>*‹rleh›</td>
<td>‹leh›</td>
<td>‹leh›</td>
<td>lèh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a dance</td>
<td>NML</td>
<td>‹rinleh›</td>
<td>*‹raleh›</td>
<td>‹galeh›</td>
<td>həlèh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to dance</td>
<td>FREQ</td>
<td>‹rinleh›</td>
<td>*‹raleh›</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>let dance</td>
<td>CAUS</td>
<td>*‹rleh›</td>
<td>‹raleh›</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1: Affix merger in LM and SM

4.3 The situation in modern Mon

As the old system of prefixes and infixes collapsed in SM, with only a restricted number of prefixes and only one infix between initial consonants, viz. the vowel -ə-, surviving, the causative system of the language underwent some changes as well. The present system cannot be analyzed without taking into consideration the older stages of the language and the orthography, which reflects much of MM usage.

There are in SM five ways to form causatives, only two or three of them still productive, including the periphrastic formation. The old forms seem to be largely lexicalized, their semantics often not being recognizable as causatives of the corresponding root verbs. Where the old causative was not understood as such anymore, a new form could arise, resulting in different causatives of the same verb in the spoken language, in some cases as many as four:

(4.22) SM

ləc ‘break down’          klə? ‘cross over’          BASE
I.  plac ‘break down sth.’       p- prefix
II.  pəlac ‘tear down’          pə- prefix
III.  hələc ‘blast away’         həkləʔ? ‘take across’        ha- prefix
IV.  kəhəʔ ‘take across’          -ə- infix
V.  paʔ (kə) ləc ‘make break down’  paʔ kəkləʔ ‘make cross over’ PERIPHRASTIC

4.3.1 Productivity of the p-/pə- prefix

The causatives with pə- are still productive, to some extent at least, as recent loans from Burmese show. The phonological shape of ḟvr and tuʔ indicate that they are recent loans from Burmese,91 hardly older than 100-200 years, i.e. they belong to the modern Mon period, not MM.

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91 The initial /ʃ/ is used almost exclusively in Burmese loans. The rhyme /uʔ/ in light register syllables is usually changed to /-əʔ/ in inherited words in SM (except after c and ch).
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(4.23) SM

ți - 폑త ‘be fake’ - ‘fake’
ﬁรก -  vinden ‘be confused’ - ‘confuse, disturb, interrupt’

are from Burmese ți ‘be fake’ and Highlighted text ‘be confused’ respectively, both without corresponding causative. ﬁรก is often used without overt causative marking in causative contexts in SM, e.g.

(4.24a)   ေက်ိုန်း မားကြား ပီးက်  က ‘be fake’ and Highlighted text ‘be confused’ respectively, both without corresponding causative. က is often used without overt causative marking in causative contexts in SM, e.g.

(4.24b)   ဗောလ်း လ်း နေိုင်း လိုး မိုး-    ‘be confused’ ‘be fake’ and Highlighted text ‘be confused’ respectively, both without corresponding causative.    is often used without overt causative marking in causative contexts in SM, e.g.

This apparently inconsistent use can easily be explained by the fact that the corresponding verbs in both Burmese and Thai are used in causative contexts without overt marking:

(4.24b)   ဗောလ်း လ်း နေိုင်း လိုး မိုး-   

B 1s NML:do do STAY REAL come NEG- disturb PROH

Another Burmese loan with a real Mon causative formation is

(4.25) SM

prey -    ‘be smooth’ - ‘smooth’

from Burmese pyei, spelt ‘pre’, with the Burmese causative form hpyei, ‘phre’. This verb operates with the vocalic infix commonly used with initial clusters in OM and obviously still alive in MM. This verb is not attested in OM and MM or early LM. See below (sentence 4.27) for the same Burmese loan with its Burmese causative.

4.3.2 The  - and  - prefixes

Newer loans from Burmese form the causative with the prefix  -, as in

(4.26)   ဗောလ်း ပြည်                         

SM INTJ pupil temple CAUS:fall.off THROW shop 1pl all FOC Q

‘Hey you temple students, are you going to ruin my whole shop?’

(KN)

92 Thai, unlike Burmese and Mon, does not make use of morphological processes such as causativisation at all.

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where $py\text{rk} > hapy\text{rk}$ ‘fall off, be ruined’ > ‘ruin’ is from Burmese $pyou'$, spelt $prut$, causative $hpyou'$, $phrut$. The initial cluster $py$- for Burmese $pr-$ in colloquial SM shows that this is a recent loan.

In the following sentence, the same Burmese verb as in (4.25) above is used with Burmese causative morphology in Mon. Here the initial cluster $phy$- for Burmese $phr-$ suggests a recent date of this loan, unlike pre in (4.25).

(4.27) $mənìh \, hno\!k-h\!\!k\, \text{ nó h} \, \text{phy\!n\!-phy\!\!y,\, th\\?}$.  
SM man big-RDP person CAUS:solved THROW  
‘The big men (leaders) solved the problem.’ (KD)

The causative prefix $hə$- is the result of at least two independent processes in MM. One is infixation with regular change of the initial consonant to $hə$- in SM, if it was a voiced or aspirated stop or the fricative $s$. This process can be seen in the development of OM $\langle$blah$\rangle$ - $\langle$bulah$\rangle$ ‘be free’ - ‘set free, release’ above in (4.18). The MM opposition $\langle$bla$\rangle$ - $\langle$balah$\rangle$ regularly becomes $plèh$ - $halèh$ in SM. The other source of the SM $hə$- causative prefix is the voicing that happened in MM of the $p$- prefix in certain contexts (see above).

Once $hə$- was established as causative prefix, among others, it came to serve as universal means to form causatives, sometimes leading to pleonastic formations, as in

(4.28) SM  
lùp - plop - həplup ‘enter’ - ‘insert, put in’ - ‘insert, put in’

The form $haplup$ is commonly heard in colloquial SM and has made its way into the written language of modern publications such as newspapers and journals. It is still considered substandard or incorrect by educated speakers though.

In many cases, $hə$- replaces the older $pa$- prefix:

(4.29) SM  
tn - patn ~ hätən ‘go up’ - ‘bring up, elevate’  
tet - petit ~ hatet ‘go out’ - ‘take out, issue’  
ŋəh - pənəh ~ həŋəh ‘wake up’ - ‘wake up so., arouse’ ~ ‘wake up so.’

(4.30) $lèy-thì \, ceh \, ?ey \, ëh \, ëh \, pən \, hət\!n$ na.  
SM parachute move.downèh PREF 3 shoot CAUS:UP CAUS:GO  
‘The parachutes came down and they shot up (their guns in the air).’ (KD)

There is apparently no difference in meaning between the two alternative forms, apart from the one with $hə$- being more colloquial. In the case of $ŋəh,$
only ɦəŋ is commonly used in SM as semantic causative of ɣəh, although Shorto (1962:91, 143) lists only ɣəəoh. The vowel change from -uh to -aoh is regular in the light register. In colloquial Mon, ɣəəoh is used only in the meaning ‘arouse (interest, etc.).’

In other cases, the ɣə- prefix is retained, as in

(4.31)  nàc kòh ɲətup tho’ manih.
SM Naga TOP CAUS:same THROW human
‘That Naga took on human shape.’ (WK)

A few verbs that are expected to take the originally voiced ɦə- prefix (ɣə- in SM) show alternative forms with ɣə-, probably due to analogy:

(4.32)
LM ɺdah ‘touch, hit’ SM têh - ɦafêh ~ ɲatêh ‘bring into contact’
LM ɺdah ‘be’ SM têh - ɦafêh ~ ɲatêh ‘arrange, organize’

Others take only the ɣə- prefix, even though their initial consonant is voiced in MM:

(4.33)
LM ɺgåï ‘be brave’ SM ɺkəŋ - ɲakəŋ ‘embolden, make brave
LM ɺget ‘revolve’ SM kət - ɲakət ‘turn around, rotate’

4.3.3 The vocalic infix

Verbs with an initial consonant cluster retain the causative with vowel infix, which is always realized as -ə- in SM:

(4.34) SM
kləʔ - ɺkələʔ ‘cross over’ - ‘take across’
klah - ɺkələh ‘be clear’ - ‘explain’
plən - ɲələn ‘do again’ - ‘return’

In some cases the causative was lost in SM, e.g. OM *(tmi) (MM tami) ‘be new’ - tumi ‘renew’, of which only the non-causative survived into the modern language: kəməʔ, LM tmi, tami ‘be new’. The reflex of the causative would have merged in SM (which obviously was no reason to replace the causative in other instances, as the example of həəon ‘learn, teach’ shows, s. below) and was replaced by the periphrastic construction, paʔ kəməʔ, paʔ kəpəkəməʔ.

If the first consonant of the cluster was a voiced or aspirated stop or a fricative, it is regularly changed to ɦ- in SM:
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(4.35) SM
khyipt - həcɛt ‘die’ - ‘kill’  (OM 〈kciht - 〈kuciti〉 > LM 〈gacuít〉)
klɔŋ - həlɔŋ ‘be long’ - ‘lengthen’  (LM 〈jli~, gliŋ〉 - 〈jaliŋ〉)
klæŋ - həlæŋ ‘be much’ - ‘increase’  (LM 〈gluiŋ〉 - 〈galuiŋ〉)
hlɔɔ - həlɔɔ ‘be wide’ - ‘widen’  (LM 〈slay〉 - 〈phalhay〉 for *〈salay〉)
hlɔŋ - həłɔŋ ‘be much’ - ‘increase’  (LM 〈gacuit〉 - 〈kucit〉 > LM 〈gacuít〉)

The spelling with 〈pha-〉 indicates the reanalysis of the infix as causative prefix, the labial quality of which (p-, pa-, ba-, pha-) is intuitively understood by literate speakers.

(4.36) kyac hnɔk həlɛh na ʔakùn nàŋ.
SM holy.being big CAUS:free CAUS:GO monk Naing
‘The abbot let the monk Naing go.’ (KN)

(4.37) kon poy pɔm lə həcɛt.
SM child 1pl manner which CAUS:die
‘How can we kill our son?’ (WK)

Some of the old infixed causatives have been replaced or supplemented by prefixed forms, e.g. instead of the above mentioned kəlɔŋ? ‘take across’, one hears həklɔŋ? ‘id.’ at least in some areas:

(4.38) nɛh  həklɔŋ? kə ʔakùn tɔɔ ɬak ʔa phèə kəh.
SM person CAUS:cross.OverOBL monk FINISH arrive GO monastery TOP
‘He took the monk across [the river] and he arrived at that monastery.’
(KN)

This use is considered substandard or incorrect by some speakers and seems not to be used in the southern areas at all.

4.3.4 The 〈p- prefix in clusters〉

Where the 〈p- prefix resulted in an initial consonant cluster of the type pr-, pl-, ph- or phy- this cluster was usually retained in SM, together with the change of register where applicable:

(4.39) tɔɔ teh cərey kəh plɔŋ nɛŋ dəŋ sem ɲəʔ.
SM FINISH COND secretary TOP CAUS:exceed CAUS:COME land Thai this
‘And then that secretary brought him over here to Thailand.’ (KD)
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(4.40) ṭöméy dëh cøŋ na khytu ṭa toə
SM mother 3 burn CAUS:die go FINISH
ṭöméy phi na ko phaŋ.
mother CAUS:float CAUS:GO OBL raft
‘His mother burnt him and when he was dead she let him float away on a raft.’ (WK)

(4.41) dëh phyeə wän toə ti? ɲëh-hakoʔ.
SM 3 CAUS:down rink FINISH attack each other
‘He brought [the bulls] down into the rink and they attacked each other.’ (WK)

In other cases, the newer form with ḥa- is found:

(4.42) ṭøa ḥacək na ko ɬənûh ṭøa mûc toə ɬənëh raʔ.
SM 1s CAUS:collide CAUS:GO OBL lance 1s one hand win FOC
‘I will pierce it with my lance just once and it will win.’ (WK)

The form with p- prefix, phyrx is also attested with no perceptible difference in meaning, but rarely used in colloquial SM.

The development of ‘pj-’ > ‘bj’ > ‘by-’ is less clear and examples are hard to find. The newer form always seems to be available, and the status of the older form is not certain. The only examples in the recorded data show the newer form with ḥa-:

(4.43) ket bëʔ kḥə ḥacəm poy.
SM take PREF TOP CAUS:collide 1pl
‘He took that thing to hit us [make it collide with us].’ (KN)

The expected causative *pyəm is not attested in SM or LM, and the base verb ‘juim’ is not found in OM or MM.

4.3.5 Irregular developments

In the cases where an OM cluster required an epenthetic vowel after p-, as in the case of ‘rlim’, ‘rləʔ’, and ‘rlək’ (s. 4.2.4), the form is retained in SM as pə-:

(4.44) dëh ket dëh paləm paləc kram ṭøt ṭə con.
SM 3 take 3 CAUS:destroyed CAUS:ruined nasty all indeed
‘Whoever they took, they ruined them; they were really very nasty.’
(KD)

There are alternative forms for paləc and palay, viz. plac and play resp., but not for paləm (*pləm). SM paləy, play has a related form, viz. kəlay, LM
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〈talāy, kalāy, calāy〉, ‘come loose, hang down; unbind, let down’, i.e. with both non-causative and causative meaning. This form cannot be derived directly from 〈rlāy〉 or *〈rulāy〉, which in SM would have resulted in *kəlāy with heavy register. The OM form corresponding to SM kəlāy is 〈tulāy〉 ‘hang down’. This looks like the causative of an unattested verb *〈tlāy〉, in spite of its non-causative meaning in OM. This might be a case of affix confusion, not uncommon in Mon at least since MM.

No ha- prefixed form is attested in SM or LM for 〈lāy〉, as is the case for both 〈rlim〉 and 〈rlāk〉, i.e. LM 〈baluim〉, SM hələm and LM 〈balāk〉, SM hələc respectively. The three similar OM verbs therefore exhibit different patterns in LM and SM:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>OM</th>
<th>SM</th>
<th>CAUS I</th>
<th>CAUS II</th>
<th>CAUS III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘be ruined’</td>
<td>rlim</td>
<td>fəm</td>
<td>pələm</td>
<td>hələm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘fall to pieces’</td>
<td>rlāk</td>
<td>lāc</td>
<td>plac</td>
<td>polac</td>
<td>hələc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘be dissolved’</td>
<td>rlāy</td>
<td>lāy</td>
<td>play</td>
<td>polay</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2: Causatives of OM rl- clusters

The verb lūp ‘enter, go in’ has a regular causative plop, plup ‘insert, bring in’, as seen above, besides a more recent colloquial variant həplup. Less frequent is the form pəlup ‘introduce, bring in’:

(4.45)  pəh-kə həplup pəh də həkom rəo.
SM   who   CAUS:enter 2   LOC society  QREL
    ‘Who introduced you to the society?’ (DSM:149)

In MM there is an additional form 〈rinlop〉 ‘take into’, a compound of 〈raï〉 ‘bring’ and 〈lop〉 ‘enter’. This form obviously has been lost in LM and SM without leaving any traces. It cannot be the source of any of the modern forms.

4.3.6 The periphrastic construction

In SM the periphrastic construction with paʔ ‘do’, paʔ kə ‘do + GIVE > CAUS’ or simply kə ‘GIVE > CAUS’ is available for virtually all verbs. The periphrastic construction is mainly used when there is stronger focus on the causation, which can be permission or an order, among others. In (4.47), it is clear from the broader context that the speaker was not really happy with his mother’s decision to put him in Mon monastery school, as he would have preferred to go back to the Burmese school. In (4.46) the circumstances are more neutral; therefore the morphological causative is used.
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(4.46) 'amät khnaǐ knā jnok mway tuy damān law 'arhan ta'.
LM minister build hall big one FINISH CAUS:stay KEEP saint PL
‘The minister built a big hall and accommodated the saints there.’
(Rājāwaṁsakathā:14)

SM mother 3 GIVE stay monasteryMon get age eight year
‘My mother let/had me stay at the Mon monastery school when I
was eight years old.’ (KN)

The periphrastic construction exhibits syntactic structures clearly different
from sentences with morphological causatives, as the following sentences
illustrate.

(4.48a) ḫɔŋ? ᵃ m ʔa.
SM house destroyed GO
‘The house was destroyed.’

(4.48b) déh pəlpm na ḫɔŋ?.
SM 3 CAUS: destroyed CAUS:GO house
‘He destroyed the house.’

4.48c) déh hɔlɔm na ḫɔŋ?.
SM 3 CAUS: destroyed CAUS:GO house
‘He destroyed the house.’

(4.48d) déh pəʔ ᵃ ʔm ʔa.
SM 3 do house destroyed GO
‘He destroyed the house.’

The English translations of sentences (4.48a-d) are identical. There is no
difference in meaning according to native speakers between the second and
third sentences, while the last one sounds odd out of context. It implies a
more active destruction or a deliberate action that lead to the house being
destroyed, i.e. stronger focus on the cause.

While morphological causatives take the causative directional na, which
stands before the object, the periphrastic construction takes the non-causative
directional ʔa after the object. The morphological causatives are seen as
single clauses, the periphrastic formation at least originally consists of two
separate clauses. The same can be seen in the following sentence, were the
morphological causative could have been chosen instead of the serial
construction without difference in meaning:

(4.49a) déh pəc kɔʔ ʔpt ʔa.
SM 3 cut.down neck break.off GO (WK)
for

(4.49b) déh pāc hapọt na kəʔ.
SM 3 cut.down CAUS:break.off CAUS:GO neck
   ‘He cut off [the bird’s] neck so that it broke off.’

In some cases where the morphological causative was lost (or never existed), only the periphrastic construction is available in LM and SM, as in the case of kəʔməʔ ‘be new’ (s. above 4.3.3). The word khəh ‘be good’ is not attested in older stages of Mon and cannot be reconstructed to Dvāravatī Mon. Its origin is not clear at present. It probably never formed a causative, presumably because the regular processes were not available anymore when it entered the language (or when it received its present meaning?). The only available causative today is therefore the periphrastic paʔ khəh.

As seen above, periphrastic causative constructions consist of two clauses, while morphological causatives consist of a single clause. This is also evident from the reference of həkəʔ ‘body, self’ in the following sentences, which can only take the subject of the clause as its antecedant.

(4.50a) nãy kaʔi kok phyao na nãy khaʔi cao həʔʔ déh_i,j
SM Mr. A call CAUS:return CAUS:GO Mr. B return house 3
   ‘Mr. A took Mr. B back to his_i,j house.’

(4.50b) nãy kaʔi kok phyao na nãy khaʔi cao
SM Mr. A call CAUS:return CAUS:GO Mr. B return
   həʔʔ həkəʔ_i,
   house self
   ‘Mr. A took Mr. B back to his_i house.’

(4.50c) nãy kaʔi kəp nãy khaʔi cao ʔa həʔʔ déh_i,j
SM Mr. A GIVE Mr. B return GO house 3
   ‘Mr. A let Mr. B go back to his_i,j house.’

(4.50d) nãy kaʔi kəp nãy khaʔi cao ʔa həʔʔ həkəʔ_j
SM Mr. A GIVE Mr. B return GO house self
   ‘Mr. A let Mr. B go back to his_j house.’

4.3.7 Verbs without morphological causative

A number of verbs can be used with a causative meaning without being overtly marked as such either:

(4.51) SM
mat ‘be closed’ - ‘close sth.’
pək ‘be open’ - ‘open sth.’
hətən ‘learn’ - ‘teach’
The first verb is not attested in OM or MM, but its phonetic shape does not suggest a foreign origin. *mat is spelt ‹kmā†, the expected causative of which would be *kamat *kmā†. The expected causative of *pəkmā†, which in SM has an obscene meaning (among others) and is therefore avoided in polite speech. This form seems to be new, though, and can hardly be seen as an original causative which was lost due to taboo restrictions. There is no causative of *pəkmā† attested in OM, MM or LM.

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It is remarkable that the same verbs ‘open’, ‘close’, and ‘learn, teach’ do not have overt causative marking in spoken Burmese:

(4.52) B

\( \text{pei'} \) ‘be closed’ - ‘close sth.’
\( \text{hpwin} \) ‘be open’ - ‘open sth.’
\( \text{thin} \) ‘learn’ - ‘teach’

The second verb, *hpwin, is formally a causative, which in the spoken language has taken over the meaning of the root verb as well. The non-causative *pwín survives in the meaning ‘bloom, blossom’.

In OM there is a verb *‹bton› with the meaning ‘learn’. The frequentative is *‹binton›, the causative *‹baton› in MM, leaving a single form for ‘learn’ and ‘teach < let learn’. There is already in OM some inconsistency in use of the frequentative and causative forms of this verb. In SSKe11-12, the compound *‹dindu binton› ‘instruct-learn’ obviously means ‘instruct’, *‹binton› having causative meaning, not frequentative. It is likely that Burmese usage with *thin meaning both ‘learn’ and ‘teach’ has at least facilitated the semantic development of Mon *‹bton› and its derivates. In SM sentences out of context are often ambiguous, as in

(4.53) \( \text{kəx səri dəh haton pa? lù-pyiək.} \)
\( \text{SM} \) o.brother Sawri 3 learn/teach do clown

‘Your brother Sawri taught [you] how to act as a clown?’ (KN)

Only the extra-linguistic context determines the meaning of the verb *haton in this sentence. The reading ‘Your brother learns how to act as a clown’ would in another context be possible.

4.3.8 Suppletive stems

A few verbs in Mon have a causative counterpart completely independent of the root verb. One example is *ph.ə ‘be afraid, fear’ and *phèt ‘frighten, scare’, which has taken the place of the regular causative *pəh.ə/pəh.ə. Another

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Footnote: 93 This verb, spelt ‹pib›, looks very similar to the corresponding Thai verb, *pib ′close, closed’. The presence of the verb in Old Burmese as well as the cognate archaic Chinese *pjēd, Luce1985:Y114) confirm the form to be Sino-Tibetan, i.e. Thai is the borrower rather than Burmese.

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unrelated pair is tao ‘burn’ and cŋ ‘burn sth.’. The causative of klŋŋ ‘come’ is either the regular infixed form kalŋŋ or the suppletive nŋ. The former in SM means ‘welcome, receive so.’, while the latter is used mainly as a directional with the meaning ‘bring here, hither’. OM 〈rinār〉 ‘take away, convey’, according to Shorto a contraction of 〈raŋ ‘ār〉 ‘bring + go’ (DMI:318), merged in LM with the MM postverbal particle 〈nā ‘away’ in 〈nā〉, which today is the normal causative of 〈ā ‘go’. Though historically connected, the two forms are not generally understood as such and must therefore be considered suppletive stems.

In some cases there seems to be base-causative relationship, although the semantics are rather far apart. In SM lút means ‘commit a fault, sin’, the regular causative derivate plút is ‘slander, malign, traduce’ i.e. not ‘cause to sin’ but rather ‘cause to look like a sinner’, a kind of conative causative.

4.4 Causatives with directionals

Causatives naturally combine with the causative directionals na ‘(take) away’ and nŋ ‘(bring) hither’ rather than with ʔa ‘go, away’ and klŋŋ ‘come, hither’.

(4.54) kyac hnòk hālēh na ʔakùn nāŋ. SM holy.being big CAUS:free CAUS:GO monk Naing ‘The abbot let the monk Naing go.’ (KN)

(4.55) bèʔ phyao kēʔ teh phyao na hōʔdt. SM 2 CAUS:return GET COND CAUS:return CAUS:GO ADV:all ‘If you can take it back, take it back all.’ (WK)

(4.56) ʔua hācërk na kā hānùh ʔua mū ʔsā hānēh raʔ. SM 1s CAUS:collide CAUS:GO OBL lance 1s one hand win FOC ‘I will pierce it with my lance just once and it will win.’ (WK)

(4.57) sĕn-kyet plao na hākaoʔ. SM Soing-Kyet CAUS:roll CAUS:GO body ‘Soing Kyet rolled over [his body].’ (KD)

There are, however, instances where a causative takes the non-causative directional, usually with a difference in meaning. Compare the following two sentences:

(4.58) dēh hācēt nōŋ klō mùō. SM 3 CAUS:die CAUS:COME dog one ‘He killed a dog [the body of the dog is here now].’ (NOP)
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(4.59)  deh ᵇɛɛt  klụŋ  klọ  mùọ.
SM  3  CAUS:die  COME  dog  one
   ‘He killed a dog [it is not known/important where the body
   of the dog is] .’  (NOP)

The same opposition can be observed in non-causative transitive verbs, as in
the following sentence, where the use of the intransitive directional indicates
that the subject walked off with the fruit he got, away from the speaker who
did not find any:

(4.60) kyàn  kụ?  ?a  sọt  pi  pọn.
SM  Kyan  get  GO  fruit  bael  four
   ‘Kyan got four bael fruits [and I didn’t find any].’  (KN)

In a few cases there is apparently illogical use of a non-causative verb with
the causative directional.

(4.61) kyap an  klọ?  na  dọn  tak  tụ?.
SM  Japanese cross.over  CAUS:GO  path  walking  that
   ‘The Japanese crossed that foot-path there.’  (KD)

It remains to be explained why the causative na was chosen here instead of
the expected ?a.

The use of directionals is explained in detail in the respective sections of
chapter 6.

4.5 Semantics of causative derivates

Causatives in Mon are not restricted to direct causation of the initiator of the
action, as can be seen in the following sentence:

(4.62)  ?amẹy  deh  kwi  ló  pyŋ  too  cut  ló  ha?uy
SM  mother 3  wrap  KEEP  rice  FINISH  put  KEEP  medicine
   ?amẹy  deh  ᵇɛɛt  deh
   mother 3  CAUS:die  3
   ‘His mother wrapped cooked rice for him and then put in poison.
   His mother [wanted to] kill him.’  (WK)

The mother is only the indirect cause of the killing (the poison being the
immediate one). The object in this case does not die, because he finds out in
time. The causative can be used even if there is no result. The context
dependent conative notion of active verbs without overt marking seems to be
widespread in Southeast Asia. Another example of a causative without result
can be seen in the following sentences:
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(4.63) ḫuin ḫaḥ gruih ’uit gacuit ’agniŋ, hwa’ khyuit
LM though person cruel most CAUS:die ?? NEG die
gyuŋ tao.
live STAND
‘Even though the cruel people did [try to] kill him, he did not die
and is still alive.’ (SGD:164)

(4.64) plẽn ḫaḥ hwa’ leŋ, puiy leŋ ’uit-s’aŋ
LM CAUS:ruined person NEG ruined 1pl ruined completely
‘We tried to destroy him, but he was not destroyed.
It is us who are completely destroyed.’ (SGD:161)

Causatives in Mon can also have the meaning of reflexives, although this use seems to be rare and restricted to a few verbs. Sometimes the reflexive ḫokaoʔ ‘body, self’ is used as a dummy object in these constructions, as in sentence (4.65) below.

(4.65) sop-kyet plao na ḫokaoʔ.
SM Soing Kyet CAUS:roll CAUS:GO body
‘Soing Kyet rolled over [his body].’ (KD)

In other instances, the reflexive causative does not seem to increase the argument structure and function like intransitive verbs, which is contrary to the statement in the introduction of this chapter that all causatives are transitive. One example is plam ‘twine, creep’, said of plants and snakes. This is formally the causative of ḫem ‘grow by putting out tendrils, twine round, palpate, crawl’ (the change of vowel is regular with the change of register). The meaning of the causative here is reflexive (and intransitive) and the directional used with plam in this sense usually is ḫa ‘go’, not the causative directional na. The same form plam can also be used in a real causative meaning, i.e. ‘train (a gourd by twining it around a support)’. In this case, the directional most naturally used is na ‘make go, take along; CAUS:GO’.

(4.66) nɔm ḫem ḫa.
SM plant twist GO
‘The plant creeps.’

(4.67) sûm plam ḫa.
SM snake CAUS:twist GO
‘The snake wriggled along.’ (DSM:141)

(4.68) ðeh plam na ḫë:
SM 3 CAUS:twist CAUS:GO gourd
‘He trained the gourd.’
Compare the semantically and phonetically very similar (and probably related) verb *lim* ‘twist, be twisted, be deceitful, deceive, cheat’ with the regular causative *plem* ‘twist together, cross (arms, legs)’.

As was pointed out above, many old causatives are lexicalized in SM with no direct obvious semantic connection to the base. In these cases, a new causative form usually has taken the place of the old one. This can be seen in *cỳ* ‘fight’, the old causative of which, *pyỳ* has taken the meaning ‘incite enmity’, while the newer formation *hacỳ* means ‘set to fight, let fight’. Another example is *njìh* ‘wake up’, the old causative of which, *pyoah*, is today only used in the meaning ‘arouse’. For transitive ‘wake up’ the only expression in common use is *hənjìh*. In both cases the form as well the semantics of the original form are less transparent than of the newer derivate. In *pyỳ*, the initial was changed from *c-* to *y-* which formed a cluster with the prefix *p-*, while *pyoah* underwent a change of register and vowel (u > ao). Where the phonological and semantic development obscured the old connection base - derivate, newer forms took over, both in semantics and phonetic shape. Formal opacity here obviously goes hand in hand with semantic opacity.

In the case of *klỳŋ* ‘come’, the original infixed causative, *kəlỳŋ*, shifted in meaning to ‘welcome, receive so.’, while the OM ‹raï› ‘bring’ has taken the place of ‘cause to come’, resulting in LM ‹naï›, SM *nëy*. This shows the opposite development, i.e. the morphologically related and transparent form has developed semantically further away from the base verb, while the suppletive stem has filled the empty semantic slot.

The prefixes available for new causatives were (or in some cases still are) *pə* and *hə*. The former combines with roots beginning with an aspirate or plain non-labial stop, the latter with all other verbs.

### 4.6 Orthography of causatives

There are no fixed orthographic rules for writing causatives in LM, but the following seems to be an accepted ‘standard’ (cf. Wedagu 2001):

\[(4.69)\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SM</th>
<th>LM</th>
<th>Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>pə-</em></td>
<td>‹pa-›</td>
<td><em>(p-) with some initials)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>pə-</em></td>
<td>‹ba-›</td>
<td><em>(sometimes pa-)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>hə-</em></td>
<td>‹pha-›</td>
<td><em>(other spellings also common, esp. ‹tha›-)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>hə-</em></td>
<td>‹ba-›</td>
<td><em>(also other spellings, e.g. ‹da-, ga›-)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notice that LM ‹ba-› can represent SM *pə-* or *hə-*.

The OM causative infix ‹u› has been weakened to ‹a› in LM (ə in SM). In the orthography this is usually represented by using two full initial consonants in sequence rather than the subscript forms, which regularly represent true clusters. The pronunciation in most cases is *kə* or *pə* in light register words and *hə* in heavy register words. Sometimes only the (correct)
orthography reveals the connection between the causative and its base, as in the following example.

(4.70)
LM: 〈sra〉 - 〈sara〉
SM:  saʔ -  həraʔ
‘be wounded, scarred’ - ‘break up the surface, scratch’

4.7 Summary of causatives in SM

Causative formation is one of the few morphological processes surviving in SM that are still productive (others are to some extent nominalization and adverbialization, both with the new ‘universal’ prefix ʰha-). The situation in SM is far from clear though, with regular phonetic development and analogy having led to a number of causative forms that are not obviously related to their base verbs. LM in most cases retains the connection, although spurious spellings abound, especially in newer texts, reflecting the merger of affixes in the spoken language.

The following table summarizes the different processes available in SM to form causatives. It has to be noted that in many cases several alternative forms are available for one base verb, sometimes involving different semantic developments, which are explained in the preceding text. The translation is given only for the base verb. Not listed are the periphrastic constructions, which are technically available for all verbs in appropriate contexts.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>base</th>
<th>p-</th>
<th>pə-</th>
<th>hə-</th>
<th>-ə-</th>
<th>unmkd.</th>
<th>suppl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘float’</td>
<td>hi</td>
<td>phi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘go down’</td>
<td>ceh</td>
<td>phyeh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘eat’</td>
<td>ciəʔ</td>
<td>pəciəʔ</td>
<td>pəciəʔ</td>
<td>həciəʔ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘awake’</td>
<td>ṭuŋh</td>
<td>poŋaoh</td>
<td>həŋuŋh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘fight’</td>
<td>cəʔ</td>
<td>pyəʔ</td>
<td>həcəʔ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘be lost’</td>
<td>ḥəŋ</td>
<td>pləŋŋ</td>
<td>hələŋŋ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘be dissolved’</td>
<td>ḥəy</td>
<td>play</td>
<td>pəlay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘fall to pieces’</td>
<td>lac</td>
<td>plac</td>
<td>pəlac</td>
<td>hələc</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘be ruined’</td>
<td>ṭəm</td>
<td>pəlmn</td>
<td>hələm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘go up’</td>
<td>ṭən</td>
<td>pəton</td>
<td>həton</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘be same’</td>
<td>tup</td>
<td>pətup</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘enter’</td>
<td>ṭuŋ̇</td>
<td>plopen</td>
<td>pəlup</td>
<td>həplopen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘receive’</td>
<td>təŋ̇</td>
<td>hətəŋ̇</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘be all’</td>
<td>ŋət</td>
<td>həʔət</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>‘escape, be free’</td>
<td>pləh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>hələh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘be much’</td>
<td>kləŋ</td>
<td>hələŋ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘lose’</td>
<td>kyaʔ</td>
<td>kəyaʔ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘move, shake’</td>
<td>khyi</td>
<td>pəkhi</td>
<td>kəspa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘die’</td>
<td>khynt</td>
<td>həknt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘cross over’</td>
<td>kləʔ</td>
<td>həkəłəʔ</td>
<td>kələʔ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘confused’</td>
<td>jəŋk</td>
<td>pəjəŋk</td>
<td>jəŋk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘learn’</td>
<td>hətəŋ</td>
<td>hətəŋ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘close’</td>
<td>mat</td>
<td>mat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘open’</td>
<td>pək</td>
<td>(həpək)</td>
<td>pək</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘be afraid’</td>
<td>phəc</td>
<td>(&lt;baheko&gt;)</td>
<td>phəʔ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘come’</td>
<td>kəŋŋ</td>
<td>kəŋŋŋ</td>
<td>nəŋŋ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘go’</td>
<td>ŋə</td>
<td>(&lt;paŋə&gt;)</td>
<td>na</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘burn’</td>
<td>təo</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3: Summary of causatives in SM
5. The focal and assertive particles, <ra> ra? and <roŋ> noŋ
5.1 Description

The two particles ra? and noŋ deserve some more detailed investigation, although they are not part of the verbal system per se. Earlier descriptions of Mon place the two particles at least close to the verbal complex, which requires some explanation. Of the two, ra? occurs more frequently, as it can stand in virtually any sentence in clause (or phrase) final position. The use of noŋ is more restricted, as we will see. The analysis of the two particles under discussion here is different in the few sources written about Mon. Let us first take a look at definitions given by earlier authors for ra? and noŋ.

(1) ra?

Haswell (LM) (1902/2002):

2. Verbal Affixes. (a.) Assertive Affixes. [...] ra as an assertive affix, when combined with tuy, always follows it, when combined with hā in the direct question, it stands before it [...] It sometimes adds strength to the verb [...] (implying past recall).

(c.) Imperative Affixes. [...] ra is used [in] the imperative when the speaker assumes superiority over the person addressed.

(g.) Closing Affixes. ra is often used simply to close a sentence. It seems also to supply the place of the verb to be in predicating a quality. (pp. 29ff)

Halliday (LM) (1955):

Accidents of Verbs. The accidents of verbs are expressed by words coming before or going after, sometimes called prefixes and affixes. [...] Affixes [...] Ra, assertive; emphatic; imperative. (p. xx-xxi)

Ra v.a. [verbal affix] assertive, closing the sentence, in questions it preceeds [sic!] the interrogative particle, also used with the imperative. (p.377)

Shorto (SM) (1962):

ra’ ps. [sentence particle] Particle of unqualified assertion. [...] In emphatic use sometimes follows word or phrase in initial prominence position. (p. 175)

Shorto (OM, MM) (1971):

da¹, rarely da’ ps. & ns. Predicative particle, (1) in verbal sents., perfective, usy. final. [...] (2) in nominal sents., usy. followed by attr p. [...] (3) otherwise following n., emphatic. [...] Perh. orig. w[ek] f[orm] /da/ of das ‘be’, the modern vocalism developing under (secondary) stress in final posn. (p. 184f)
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(2) noŋ

Haswell (LM) (1902/2002):

(roŋ) v.a. of the future tense. (p. 348)
Frequently the future is shown only by the connection [...] It is also denoted by
(roŋ). (p.28)
(roŋ) is sometimes merely assertive. (p. 30)

Halliday (LM) (1955):
Nong, adv. certainly. Oa ā nong, I shall certainly go. (p. 179)
Rong, v.a. of the future tense, assertive, emphatic. (p. 384)

Shorto (SM) (1962):
noŋ ps. Particle of future, inferential or limited assertion. (p. 129)

Shorto (OM, MM) (1971):
rwon, rarely roŋ /roŋ/ ps. (MM.) particle closing (esp. final cl. of complex)
sent., marking sequential, consequential, or inferential character of assertion;
such a cl. is usy. nominalized by the inclusion of ma. (p. 326)

Bauer (SM) (1982) lists ra’ and noŋ as “Group-I sentence particles”,
together with the “completive-perfect” marker toɔ ‘FINISH’:

This group comprises modal and tense particles, ra’, noŋ, and toɔ. noŋ and toɔ
might be interpreted both as tense particles, future and past respectively, but ra’
may co-occur only with toɔ and not with noŋ (with which it commutes in its
position). Although noŋ conveys the idea of future events or actions (and this is
one of the reasons why it does not collocate with toɔ), its scope is similar to
Khmer ṇrRates (not a cognate!) in that it includes eventuality or hypothetical events
as well (“would, might”). [...] A further reason for linking ra’ and noŋ to the
same set is that both cannot co-occur with the negative particle hû’, and are
complementary in statements like ’a ra’ ha ‘are you going?’- ’a noŋ ‘yes, I will’.
noŋ may not occur in relative or absolute questions. [...] toɔ and noŋ share the
tense-designating function of past and future/hypothetical, respectively, noŋ and
ra’ the assertive function limited/unqualified, and toɔ and ’i’ combined with ra’
an aspectual colouring ‘perfective’. [...] ra’ assigns an assertive, unqualified
value to a statement, and it is very difficult to render in(to) English; [...] It may
also have an aspectual colouring, nài noŋ ’a dāŋ ra’ ‘Nai Nop has gone to town’,
nài noŋ ’a dāŋ ‘Nai Nop is going/is about to go to town’. [...] That ra’ and noŋ
are exclusively marking aspects can be seen in the behaviour of verbal
complexes: klɔŋ cɔŋ nù lè phun ‘he has arrived from Lamphun’ [...] klɔŋ cɔŋ nù
lè phun ra’ ‘he has just arrived ...’, klɔŋ cɔŋ nù lè phun ’i’ra’ ‘??’, klɔŋ cɔŋ nù
lè phun toɔ ‘he arrived from Lamphun’. The perfective meaning of the arrival is

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marked in all cases rather by the second position-verb \(c\) than by the particle \(ra\); only where \(t\) occurs, \(ra\) marks it as an aspectual sequence. \(t\) and ‘i’ may not co-occur. [...] \(ra\) cannot fulfill a hortatory function which, in Burma, is ‘\(pi\’) (and also sentence-final in position). (pp. 435ff)

In the Mon grammar sketch of his *Mon-Myanma Abhidhan*, Nai Htun Thein (1980) in most cases uses Burmese *thi* (i.e. the literary variant of colloquial *te ‘REALIS’, s. Okell 1969:424ff) to translate Mon ‘\(ra\)’, though he leaves it untranslated in some sentences while in others Burmese *thi* is present where Mon has no SFP. Mon ‘\(ro\)’ is consistently rendered in Burmese as *léin-myi*, which according to the *Myanmar-English Dictionary* is a “postpositional marker suffixed to verbs to indicate probable future occurrence (equivalent in usage to auxiliary verb ‘will’)” (Myanmar Language Commission 1993:458). Okell and Allott (2001:220f) translate *léin-me/léin-myi* as “probably will V, possibly will V, will no doubt V; will V imminently”. The *Myanmar Pocket Dictionary* (Myanmar Language Commission 1999:242,301) explains both *myi* and *léin* as “postverbal future tense markers” (ānaga’ kalā pyā kāriya nau’ hse’ sākā lōun). Other ways to express the same notion in Mon are according to Htun Thein (1980:12) ‘\(krak\)’ and ‘\(s\)’, which may not co-occur with ‘\(ro\)’, but only with ‘\(ra\)’.

5.2 Historical development

Both ‘\(ra\)’ and ‘\(no\)’ are the results of irregular developments from OM/MM. The modern reflex of OM ‘\(da\)’ would be *\(t\)*, a form that is not attested anywhere in modern Mon. For MM ‘\(ro\)’ ‘\(ro\)’, one would expect a form *\(rō\hbar\) in SM, again not attested in the dialects. The shift from OM ‘\(d\)’ to SM ‘\(r\)’ has no parallel, while OM/MM ‘\(r\)’ > modern ‘\(n\)’ is also found in the causative directional OM ‘\(ra\)’, LM ‘\(nā\)’ ‘(bring) hither’. The light register value of both forms is irregular, too, as OM and MM show voiced initials in both cases, which regularly give rise to heavy register in SM. In LM, ‘\(ra\)’ is written ‘\(ra\), ‘\(no\)’ is usually spelt ‘\(ro\)’. The more phonetic spelling ‘\(ro\)’ is becoming more popular in modern texts, though. Halliday, who first published his dictionary in 1922, lists rong and nong as different words, as does Tun Way (2000).

In the first known Mon inscriptions, dating back to the 6th and 7th centuries, in Thailand, the word ‘\(da\)’ does not occur. This may be a coincidence, as the oldest Dvāravatī Mon inscriptions are rather short and not very numerous. The text of the Lopburi inscription shows complete sentences, though, which could, and probably would, end in ‘\(da\)’ in classical OM. The oldest inscriptions of Thaton (the Trāp and Paññit inscriptions, 11th c.), which were probably written before the Burmese invasion of Thaton, equally do not make

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94 The shift from t > d > r is found in colloquial Burmese in intervocalic position.
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use of ‹da›. That no trace of ‹da› is found in the earliest inscriptions is of some importance, as these texts are the only ones in which Burmese influence can be excluded.

Shorto (1971:185) states that OM ‹da› is perhaps a weak form of the verb ‹das› ‘be’. There are no phonological or semantic obstacles to this etymology, especially given the fact that clauses ending with ‹da› are usually followed by the attributive/relative marker ‹ma› as illustrated in (5.1a).

(5.1a) risi bìnū goh kuṁ da ma skandaṁ kom ku kuṁ.
OM hermit Vishnu that EMPH FOC ATTR PROS:build associate OBL 2s
‘It is the hermit Vishnu who is going to build it with you.’
(‘The hermit Vishnu is [the one] who ...’) (SSKa41f)

More problematic is the syntactical structure of a sentence like (5.1b), taken from the same inscription, if we take ‹da› to be a weak form of ‹das›.

(5.1b) kyāk buddha tarley ’ār nibbān ḍey ḍūn kusinār da.
OM holy Buddha lord go Nirvana LOC town Kusinara FOC
‘The Lord Buddha attained Nirvana at Kusinara.’ (SSKb1f)

In Mon, predicate nouns appear after the copula ‹das, dah› t.ḥ ‘be’. If ‹da› originates in the OM verb ‹das›, we have to account for its sentence-final position. According to Mon syntax we would expect in the above sentence ²’das kyāk buddha tarley...’ ‘it was that the Lord Buddha ...’ or ³’dā ḍey ḍūn kusinār ...’ ‘it was as Kusinara that ...’, instead of ‹da› in the sentence final position. The sentence-final position is probably an indication that already in OM ‹da› was not understood as verb anymore, but had developed into a particle.

Already in the Pagán inscriptions we find ‹da› in imperative and prohibitive contexts, as in the following two examples:

(5.1c) smiṅ dewatau kuṁ rmiṅ da!
OM king god 2s hear FOC
‘Hear, king of gods!’ (SSKb5)

(5.1d) laḥ sandeḥ gamā da!
OM PROH doubt more FOC
‘Don’t doubt anymore!’ (SSKh43)

The wide range of functions of ‹da› shows that ‹da› was grammaticalized to a large extent already in the early Pagán period.
The attested word order with final ‘da’ seems to exhibit Burmese SOV influence. Pagan of the 11th and 12th centuries, where classical OM was at its height, was clearly a Burmese state, although Mon still was the main literary language. We may expect increasing pressure on the Mon language from Burmese, which certainly was the language of the majority. Clause-final verbs with particle function are common in modern Mon (and have been so since MM times). These particle-verbs include the (regular) modern reflex of OM ‘das’, viz. tòh ‘be’, as well as núm ‘exist, be somewhere, have’.

If raʔ originates in OM ‘das’, we might here have early evidence of a structural Burmanism in Mon. The intonational pattern of Mon is iambic, which means that stress increases towards the end of a clause or phrase. In this position the secondary strengthening of the weak form ‘da’ /də/ to raʔ is not uncommon. What remains to be explained is the irregular development of the initial and register, and the weakening of the particle in sentence final position in the first place.

The other particle under discussion here, noŋ, is not attested until MM. According to Bauer noŋ has taken the place of the OM aspectual prefix ‘s-’:

This [that noŋ includes eventuality or hypothetical events] conforms well with the historical evidence from OM and EMM [early MM] where its corresponding role was taken by the inflectional prefix ‘s-’ marking the hypothetical (OM ‘ar/ ‘to go’, /s’ar/ ‘shall go’, /ket/ ‘to take’, /sket/ ‘shall take’). SM noŋ, LMM/LM /ron/ (LM roŋ ~ noŋ) emerged later, taking up that function, even if LM shows still the starred [i.e. frozen] prefix ‘s-’ (co-occurrence of this prefix and noŋ in classical texts is still to be examined). (1982:436)

Nothing can be said at the time being about the etymology and original semantics of noŋ. It does share some characteristics with OM ‘s-’, but as noŋ seems to have pragmatic rather than strictly syntactic functions, comparison with evidence from OM inscriptions has to be done with care. OM ‘s-’ has indeed been lost in modern Mon (SM as well as LM), but classical LM seems to make correct use of the prefix at least to some extent, while noŋ is already well established in the language. In SM there are other means to express future or prospective events, especially auxiliaries, which can be used together with noŋ.

As mentioned above, Mon has been influenced to some degree by Burmese and later Thai. As most Mon today are (and for centuries have been) bilingual speakers of Mon and Burmese and/or Thai, the foreign influence was not only in the vocabulary, but also on a deeper structural level. Mon raʔ may have been influenced by the Burmese sentence particle te (REALIS), the focal and aspectual particle tò, and the nominal predicate marker pè (s. Okell 1969:424ff, 441ff, 294ff; Okell and Allott 2001:94ff, 77ff, 121f). This does
not mean that \textit{ra}? is derived from or modelled on a particular Burmese particle, but rather that the Burmese sentence structure (‘the urge to end a clause with something’) may have influenced the structure of Mon.

On a more concrete level, \textit{noŋ} appears to be modelled on the Burmese sentence particle \textit{me} (\textsc{irrealis}), with which it shares many functions, and of which it is a standard translation (Okell 1969:354ff; Okell and Allott 2001:157ff). There are important differences, though, such as the incompatibility of the Burmese particle with nominal predicates, where Mon \textit{noŋ} is common, and the incompatibility of Mon \textit{noŋ} with interrogatives.

Besides regular contact between Mon and Thai since at least the 13\textsuperscript{th} century, the later Mon population in Thailand has been under linguistic pressure from their hosts for two hundred years and more. Many Thaiisms can be seen in contemporary Thai-Mon (Rāman) on all levels of the language. It is not implausible therefore that the Thai aspect marker for “new situation” (\textsc{nsit}, s. Jenny 2001:124ff) has influenced the use of Mon \textit{ra}? which today serves as standard translation of Thai \textsc{le}w3 ‘\textsc{nsit}’ in most contexts.\footnote{See also section 6.3.17 on the new \textsc{nsit} marker \textsc{ya}?} 

5.3 Modern Mon

Let us now consider more extensive language data from modern Mon, showing the functions of \textit{ra}? and \textit{noŋ}. We will see that the earlier descriptions of \textit{ra}? as ‘assertive’ particle can not be sustained, nor can Bauer’s statements about the ‘aspectual colouring’ and restrictions concerning co-occurrence of \textit{ra}? and \textit{noŋ} with each other and with the negative marker \textit{hū}. It will be seen that \textit{ra}? can be analysed as a particle marking focus. Where \textit{ra}? seems to exhibit aspectual or temporal values, this can be explained as either implicature or as a result of influence from the dominant neighbouring languages Burmese and Thai. \textit{noŋ} does not inherently express futurity (though this may be implicated in many contexts), but rather puts emphasis on the truth of the statement. There seems to be an undertone of uncertainty in \textit{noŋ}, which may be an implicature rather than the primary function of the particle. Actually \textit{noŋ} may be said to override the uncertainty of the statement. Based on the linguistic data examined, I take \textit{noŋ} to be an assertive particle.

5.3.1 The focal particle \textit{ra}?

The focal particle \textit{ra}? can occur in a wide range of clauses, and it is very frequent in sentence final position. In this case, the whole sentence is marked as focal.

\footnote{See also section 6.3.17 on the new \textsc{nsit} marker \textsc{ya}?.}
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(5.2) mòtòka yatha krip mòŋ ?atóo kòh raʔ.
SM motorcar train run STAY on.top TOP FOC
‘Cars and trains run up there.’ (KD)

This sentence was uttered talking about Japan, which the speaker describes as a big island where cars and trains are running. raʔ here marks the whole sentence as FOCUS, contradicting the expectation that “there are no cars and trains on an island”. The focus marker here has, to some degree at least, counter-expectative function.

(5.3) ṇuo-yeʔ tʰiʔ pèh tèh tèk raʔ.
SM tomorrow that 2 HIT beat FOC
‘Tomorrow you’ll be beaten up.’ (KN)

Sentence (5.3) is about a nightly excursion from the temple where the speaker was living as a temple boy. The kids are caught and the above threat is uttered by the one who found them. The sentence clearly has future time reference, as can be seen from the use of the temporal expression ṇuo-yeʔ ‘tomorrow’. The use of raʔ in this context stresses the inevitability of the (future) event.

That raʔ is not inherently a marker of ‘new situation’ is demonstrated in the following sentence.

(5.4) tʰi mòŋ plày raʔ lèj.
SM be STAY young.man FOC EMPH
‘We were (still) young men back then, that’s it.’ (KD)

The speaker, a 76 year old man, talks about their lives when they were still young. In this context the contrast is clearly ‘then – now’ (young man – old man), not ‘earlier – then’ (child – young man). The expression tʰi mòŋ plày raʔ in another context may very well be understood as ‘he has grown into a young man’, indicating a NSIT reading.

The use of raʔ in questions excludes its definition as ‘assertive particle’.

(5.5) lakʔòh pèh pakom het-het raʔ ha?
SM then person CAUS:associate quiet-RDP FOC Q
‘Did they assemble all quietly at that time?’ (KD)

The use of raʔ here indicates sentence focus with a counter-expectative connotation. It is unexpected that at the time of the Burmese re-occupation (after the British and Japanese had left in 1948) the Mon could assemble
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without the enemy knowing about it.

In negative contexts, *ra?* often seems to have an undertone of NSIT (‘not anymore’). This is clearly the case in (5.6a) and (to a lesser degree) in (5.7a).

SM village 1pl there NEG one 3 speak
‘Our village (country, home) over there does not exist anymore, they said.’ (KD)

The Japanese in Monland complain about the destruction of their country by the nuclear bombs. Clearly they used to have their “village” there (in Japan) before, but at the time of utterance their home has been destroyed. *ra?* here puts more emphasis on the statement, giving it more importance. The NSIT connotation is implicative, although one might think of Burmese influence. The Burmese standard translation of (5.6a) is given below. Notice the use of the focus marker *tó* to mark NSIT in negative contexts. The proper NSIT marker *pyi* does not occur in negative contexts in colloquial Burmese (Okell 1969:385).

(5.6b) hou-hma tóu-yé ywa mā-hyi *tó/*pyi hpu, thu-tóoupə te.
B that-LOC 1pl-POSS village NEG-exist NSIT NEG 3-PL speak REAL

(5.7a) ɗeh hù? kə hayəh ra?.
SM 3 NEG give sing 3 FOC
‘He didn’t allow us to sing anymore.’ (KN)

The translation of (5.7a) is natural, but it implicates that he (in this context the abbot of the temple) allowed the boys to sing before, which is not the case. True is that the boys did actually sing before they were caught, and now they cannot anymore. The Burmese translation in this case would most naturally include *tó*, as in (5.6a):

(5.7b) thu pèi mā-hsou *tó* hpu.
B 3 GIVE NEG-sing NSIT NEG

In sentence (5.8), taken from the historical novel about King Dhammaceti, Queen Mi Cao Pu had been abducted by the Burmese king of Pagán, and her foster son, the monk Pitakadhara, brought her back to Pegu. They waited outside the town until everything was ready for the big reception of the queen.

96 Burmese *tó* may actually be related to Mon *ra?*, i.e. it may be derived from OM *da*. In connected speech, *tó* is usually pronounced *rò*, approaching the Mon form also phonetically.
This example clearly demonstrates that ‹ra› also in negative contexts has no inherent NSIT meaning. The presence of the persistive marker ‹niêm› ‘yet’ (s. 6.3.18), definitely excludes a reading as ‘new situation’. Notice that in the Burmese translation of this sentence the use of ‹tó› is impossible, as ‹tó› can not co-occur with the persistive marker ‹thèi›.

(5.8)  
\[ hwa’ \text{ lup } ðun \text{ prah-prah nими } \text{ ra}. \]

LM  NEG enter town early-RDP PERS FOC

\[ \text{B thu-tóu myóu htè-kou myan-myan mă-win } thèi \text{ hpù}. \]

3-PL town inside-GOAL fast-RDP NEG-enter PERS NEG

‘They were not in a hurry to enter the town yet.’ (DC:25)

The focus marker ‹ra›? can be used to form strong imperatives that do not allow contradiction. Sentence (5.9a) is from the temple boy’s narrative again. The boys are playing and the senior monk sends out another monk to call them. The use of the familiar 2nd person pronoun ‹bèi?› together with ‹ra›? reinforces the urgency of the order.

(5.9a)  
\[ ?a$kùn \text{ kok mđŋ, } \text{ ?a } \text{ ra? bèi? } tò?! \]

SM  monk call STAY go FOC 2fam PL

‘The monk is calling you; go now!’ (KN)

The situational context of (5.10a) implies NSIT reading of the prohibitive. The monks were out on an extended alms round and the accompanying temple boys who had to carry the donations back to the temple get their share of pocket money. The speaker got only 100 Kyat and asks for more.

(5.10a)  
\[ bèi? \text{ pa? } \text{ ket } \text{ ra? } \text{ lèy!} \]

SM 2fam PROH take FOC EMPH

‘Don’t take anymore!’ (KN)

As the boy has already got his 100 Kyat, the meaning is clearly that he must not ask for more, not that he must not ask for money at all. In both (5.9b) and (5.10b) the Burmese translation includes ‹tó›:

(5.9b)  
\[ \text{hpùnc} \text{ hko nei te, thin-tóu thwà } \text{ tó } \text{ lei!} \]

B monk call STAY REAL 2-PL go FOC EMPH

(5.10b)  
\[ \text{thin mă-yu } \text{né } \text{ tó!} \]

B 2 NEG-take PROH NSIT

Without verb, ‹ra›? can mark a noun/noun phrase as predicate. In the next
sentence, the speaker is talking about a pagoda the Japanese built near Thanbyuzayat during the occupation of southern Burma.

(5.11a) kyac kʰh mūʔ kyac hūʔ tem, kyac kyᵀpan raʔ.  
SM pagoda TOP what pagoda NEG know pagoda Japan FOC  
‘I don’t know what pagoda that was, just a Japanese pagoda.’ (KD)

Sentence (5.11) would be ungrammatical without raʔ, as would be (5.12a), the answer to ‘What aeroplane was it that crashed at Ko’ Dot?’:

(5.12a) ñen-kyā ?enkaloc raʔ.  
SM ship-wind England FOC  
‘It was an English aeroplane.’ (KD)

The narrow focal function of raʔ is illustrated in (5.13a). Having finished his story, the speaker asks if it was OK, as he didn’t know anything else to tell. Notice the use of raʔ after the initial adverbial and after the verbal complex of the sentence.

(5.13a) ?akhak noʔ raʔ, lēa kʰʔ raʔ.  
SM manner this FOC tell GET FOC  
‘That’s it, that’s how I can tell stories.’ (KN)

The most common Burmese translations of sentences (5.11a) – (5.13a) involve the use of the particle pè, which marks nominal predicates and focal elements (often translated as ‘just, only’):

(5.11b) hou hpāyā ba hpāyā lē mā-thí hpū, cāpan hpāyā pè.  
B that pagoda what pagodaQ NEG-knowNEG Japan pagoda FOC

(5.12b) ingālei’ lei-yin pè.  
B England wind-vehicle pè FOC

(5.13b) di-lou myōu pè pyō ta’ te.  
B this-ADV kind pè pyō ta’ te FOC speak be.able REAL

Summary of raʔ

Since at least the 11th century, the particle da/ra was used in Mon in a wide range of functions. Already in the early inscriptions do we encounter the particle in statements as well as imperative and prohibitive contexts. In OM, da does not seem to occur in negated sentences, a restriction that is not found in the modern language and may be due to the limited data available of
earlier stages of the language. In LM and SM da is always clause/phrase final and fully stressed, usually receiving high pitch and sometimes lengthening of the vowel. Bauer (1982:438f) states that “in no instance ever does ra’ lose its final glottal stop, an important prosodic feature for the delimitation of clauses and sentences (Grenzsignal)”. The analysis of ra’ as focus marker is consistent with its being in direct opposition with the topic marker kɔḥ.  

This opposition is illustrated in sentences (5.12c) and (5.13c), in which the focus marker of the original (5.12a) and (5.13a) has been replaced by the topic marker. Notice that the replacements results in a phrase that cannot in itself constitute a sentence. Unlike ra’, the topic marker is not usually stressed, even in sentence final position, receiving low pitch.

(5.12c) ɓẹŋ-kyə ʔẹŋkələc kɔh
SM ship-wind England TOP
‘as for that English aeroplane, ...’

(5.13c) ʔəkhak nɔ? kɔh lɛə kɔya ra?.
SM manner this TOP tell GET FOC
‘Well, I can tell stories like that.’

Besides the functions listed above, ra’ appears in a few idiomatic expressions, all usually in clause initial position: yɔra?’if’, ɓən ra?’though’ (usually with kɔm lɛy at the end of the clause), hɔtɔh ra?’thus, this being the case’.

In combination with the prefix ʔə, ra? developed aspectual value (s. section 6.3.17 on ʔə-ra’/ ʔəya’ NSIT marker).

5.3.2 The assertive particle 〈roŋ> noŋ

The use of noŋ is much more restricted than that of ra’ in the modern language, both in SM and LM. noŋ can mark a statement as definitive, as in (5.14). The speaker reinforces a statement made by his wife about the medicine of the English, which “would defeat all diseases.”

(5.14) hɔʔuy ɗẹh kɔŋh mɔŋ noŋ.
SM medicine 3 good STAY ASRT
‘Their medicine was definitely good.’ (KD)

Clearly there is no future or irrealis connotation in this statement. The same is true for (5.15), with the LM spelling 〈roŋ> for SM noŋ. The sentence is from

97 kɔh is the modern reflex of the OM deictic/topic marker goh, goh ‘that, the afore mentioned’ (DMI:82f).
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the cover of a religious text printed in Moulmein in 1989.

(5.15) gakoṁ rāmañadhammācariya ’aluṁ desa ṛaḥ man
LM association R. whole province state Mon
phan-phak tuy ma Ṗduiw buĩm ṛak
arrange FINISH ATTR press likeness machine
tak ṛaḥ ptit ṛoṅ.
beat spread CAUS:OUT ASRT
‘Compiled, printed, published and distributed by the Ramanya Dhammacariya association of Monland.’

This and similar sentences appear often on the cover of printed Mon books. One could possibly construe a prospective reading for the second part of the sentence, which temporally follows the first part ending in ‘tuy’, along the lines ‘after compiling, the association will publish’, but the sentence as a whole certainly does not have future reference.

In the next sentence, habitual reading is the most natural interpretation, given the subject ‘everyone’. That the habitual is not in the meaning of noŋ (though it is compatible with it) is evident from the possibility of omitting noŋ or replacing it with ra?. The sentence is part of the description of a beautiful but cunning young girl.

(5.16) ’arew cnāy kon-ṅāk brau ma huǐn Ṉā, jmāp ŏṅā
LM speech deceit child female ATTR speak CAUS:go every person
ma mīṅ pateh tau ṛoṅ.
ATTR hear believe STAND ASRT
‘Everyone who heard the deceitful words of that girl believed her.’
(MKP:05)

Both (5.15) and (5.16) allow an interpretation of noŋ describing an event that follows another event, apparently giving relative temporal value to the particle. The next sentence seems to support this interpretation. The speaker describes his journey from Monland to Thailand. Here it is made explicit by the use of toə teh ‘and then’ that the walking followed a prior action/event, in this case riding a boat. Clearly the absolute time reference of the utterance is past, as the speaker already is in Thailand at the time.

(5.17) toə teh ʔuo kwac klỹn noŋ.
SM FINISH COND 1s walk COME ASRT
‘And then I walked here.’ (KKP)

Although noŋ is compatible with and in some cases leads to an inference of
relative future, relative tense is not part of the semantics of *noŋ*. In the next example, it merely reinforces the certainty (or overrides the uncertainty) of the speaker that it really was the temple boys who had stolen and eaten the Bael fruit.

(5.18) kwah phə̀ ta? klət čiə? məŋ haʔət *noŋ*.
SM pupil temple PL steal eat STAY ADV:all ASRT
‘The temple boys stole and ate them all (I’m sure).’ (KN)

In (5.19), the non-success of the intended action is not implied by the use of *noŋ* but rather by the broader context. Even if *noŋ* was replaced by *raʔ* in the same sentence, the meaning would remain unchanged.

SM CAUS:stop car 3 that ASRT car 3 NEG CAUS:stop GIVE
‘We tried to stop their car, but they wouldn’t stop their car (for us).’
(KKP)

In connection with the preverbal modal *təh* ‘HIT; must; PASSIVE’, *noŋ* is often used to reinforce the modal reading ‘must’, although it does not exclude the passive reading (s. sections 3.2 and 6.3.14). The use of *təh* ... *noŋ* ‘must’ seems to be influenced by the parallel Burmese construction *yá me* ‘must’, which includes the irrealis marker *me* (s. Okell 1969:456f; Okell and Allott 2001:178f) While in Burmese *me* is used to get the ‘must’ reading (cf. *yá te* with realis marker ‘can, possible’), this is not necessary in Mon.

The following sentence is from the introduction of the historical novel about Dhammaceti:

(5.20) dah khyū jan chak ’ā gata te’ *roň*.
LM HIT write compose continue GO front that ASRT
‘I do have to go on writing and composing.’ (DC:2)

Sentence (5.21) reports the advice of an officer at a meeting with the Mon leaders, telling them to separate from the Burmese if they were really interested in gaining independence. The first part of the sentence shows a rare occurrence *noŋ* in a conditional context.

(5.21) lūp lɔ̀ cət *noŋ* teh təh pac thəʔ? *noŋ*.
SM enter KEEP heart ASRT COND HIT separate THROW ASRT
‘If you are really interested, you have to separate for good.’ (KD)

The co-occurrence of *raʔ* and *noŋ* is rare, but not ungrammatical, as the following examples illustrate. In (5.22) the speaker is not quite sure about the
correctness of his interpretation and therefore uses noŋ to give more weight to his statement. In sentence (5.23), too, a slight dubitative undertone may be heard, which is not expressed by noŋ itself; noŋ rather serves to override this dubitative undertone.

(5.22) yəmùʔ kyəpan kəh chan teh hnɔk raʔ noŋ, ʔaʔ hayaiʔ rɔŋ.
SM name Japan TOP chan COND big FOC ASRT Is think LOOK ‘The Japanese, if they had a chan\(^98\) attached to their names, they were important people, I think.’ (KD)

(5.23) kyac hætem lɔ raʔ noŋ.
SM monk remember KEEP FOC ASRT ‘The monk still remembers me, I’m sure/I think.’ (KD)

With nominal predicates, the function of noŋ seems to be very close to raʔ. The only difference is that it perhaps puts more emphasis on the (asserted) truth of the statement. (5.24) is the answer to the question if it was the Japanese guards who scattered the rice of the English prisoners.

(5.24) həʔeh, ɓɛʔ kəh ?eŋkələc noŋ.
SM no PREF TOP English ASRT ‘No, it was the English (themselves who did it).’ (KD)

In (5.25) the speaker is talking about a man who remained in Monland after the war. The previous assertion was that there was a Japanese man still living in the area.

(5.25) kryk noŋ, ʔey ʔiʔkəh kəh.
SM Chinese ASRT eh NML:TOP TOP ‘That is a Chinese (not a Japanese), that one.’ (KD)

Apparently noŋ is incompatible with imperative and interrogative contexts, adding weight to its analysis as assertive marker.

There are a few instances in my data of noŋ in negated sentences, e.g. in the MM Shwedagon inscription. The passage is not very clear and the reading less than sure. The general context has past tense reference, speaking of monks in former times when they did not receive any alms on their rounds.

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\(^{98}\) It is not clear which Japanese word the speaker is talking about. Having only learnt a few words and expressions during the Japanese occupation over fifty years ago, his knowledge of Japanese is far from perfect. Probably he is referring to the suffix 様 -san ‘Mr., Mrs., Ms.’.
Other examples of *noŋ* in negated contexts are (5.27) and (5.28), both taken from a Mon newspaper published in 2002.

(5.27) mu katuiw dah ku ŋaŋ ta’ ro gah puiy hwa’ gwa’
LM what arise be OBL person PL Q REL top 1pl NEG get
‘We cannot ourselves know for sure what happened to them.’
(Guiding Star Nr. 35, July 2002, p. 12)

(5.28) yaw ra smān kon ṭuŋ yūrop ta’ man gah mu ro
LM if FOC ask child county Europe PL Mon top what Q REL
mgaŋ ŋaŋ ta’hwa’ ṭiṅ roŋ.
ATTR:SAY person PL NEG know ASRT
‘If you ask Europeans “What are the Mon?” they don’t know it.’
(Guiding Star Nr. 35, July 2002, p. 12)

The use of *noŋ* in negated sentences in SM is illustrated in (5.29), a spontaneous statement of the abbot of a monastery at the Thai-Burmese border about a rope he just made out of a plastic bag to carry heavy bunches of bananas. Reverend Mahe is obviously very certain about the strength of his rope (and equally proud of it) and his statement is an answer to doubtful looks from the person who received the bananas.

(5.29) dëŋ ḥuʔ pot noŋ.
SM 3 NEG break ASRT
‘It is not going to break for sure!’

The particle *noŋ* shares the clause final slot with the interrogative markers *ha* and *rao*, and the common imperative/politeness marker *piʔ* ‘a little bit’ with which it cannot co-occur. This indicates that *noŋ* is best analysed as a marker of illocutionary force, namely of ‘assertion’. In this function, *noŋ* can occur in both verbal and nominal clauses. Like the other IF markers, *noŋ* is usually fully stressed, and often receives vowel lengthening and high pitch.

5.4 Conclusion

The clause particles *raʔ* and *noŋ* were described by earlier authors in different ways. They were usually taken to be mutually exclusive, occupying
the same slot in a sentence. Most authors analysed raʔ and noŋ as sentence particles indicating different degrees of assertion with aspecto-temporal connotations. I have shown in this chapter that neither are the two morphemes mutually exclusive, nor do they have inherent aspectual or temporal (or modal) value. The particle raʔ is analysed here as a focal particle, the use of which may have been influenced by neighbouring languages. The particles raʔ and noŋ serve as standard translations for a number of Burmese and Thai morphemes that cover similar (but in neither case identical) functions. The influence must be seen on a more abstract structural level rather than as direct ‘loan translations’ or calques. In a largely bilingual society ‘standard translations’, however accurate or inaccurate, arise easily and become part of common language usage also in monolingual contexts.  

While raʔ and noŋ do influence the verbal system of Mon through pragmatic inference and implicatures, they are not part of the verbal system proper. The actual value of raʔ and noŋ in a given clause/sentence mainly depends on the (pragmatic) interpretation of the broader context, both linguistic and extra-linguistic. Both particles under discussion here are the results of irregular developments from OM and MM, a fact that concurs with their unstable semantics. 

The only instance where raʔ and noŋ do appear to share the same syntactical slot is in nominal predicates, which can end in either of the two particles. This is also the only case where the use of either raʔ or noŋ is compulsory. The use of raʔ in nominal predicates usually leads to a neutral, the use of noŋ to a more emphatic or dubitative reading. This can be explained by the fact that raʔ is much more frequent than noŋ, which makes the latter a more powerful marker than the former.

### 6. TAM markers and other verbal operators

The categories of tense, aspect, and modality are not obligatorily expressed in Mon. The notion of tense is only marginally present in SM. Temporality is mostly expressed by adverbials such as hənuːh ‘now’, kla ʔəʔ ‘back then, before’, toə teh ‘then, later’, and others. Bauer (1982:435f) analyses noŋ and toə as “tense particles, future and past respectively”. The same particles are used by Talanon (2000) to translate English future and past forms respectively. As we have seen above, and will see in more detail below, toə ‘finish’ can serve as sequential marker and as an operator describing situations with perfect-like interpretation, while noŋ is an assertive clause

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99 Asked about the meaning of noŋ, which one informant used unusually often in elicited sentences, he stated that in Burmese one “uses noŋ a lot”, although not all Burmese sample sentences included the Burmese irrealis marker me.
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particle (ch. 5). Both may induce a temporal reading in some contexts, but the notion of future and past is implicated rather than an inherent part of their semantics.

OM, MM, and classical LM texts use a particle ‹cin› ~ ‹cuin› to translate Pali aorist (DMI:99) while the old prefix ‹s› is still used to some extent in older LM to translate Pali future, besides the formal particle ‹krak›. No trace of this (imported) tense system is found in SM. SM occasionally uses a preverbal operator kyan to indicate future tense, but this operator seems to express prospective aspect rather than future tense, similar to the Thai operator caʔ (cf. Jenny 2001:133f). It is not found in LM (and therefore not used in indigenous grammar textbooks) and not used very frequently in SM, which makes an analysis at the present impossible. ¹⁰⁰

The categories of aspect and modality, too, are not obligatorily overtly expressed in a sentence in Mon. When marked, both aspect and modality usually make use of grammaticalized verbs, although clause particles may take over aspectual and modal functions as well, besides adverbials and other devices such as reduplication. In many cases no clear-cut distinction can be made between aspect/aktionsart and manner, as many verbs functioning as aspect operators add more to the meaning of the verbal expression than just (temporal) aspect. We may take the word ‘aspect’ in Mon to have a broader meaning than the one commonly used as “different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation” (Comrie 1995:3). An obvious example of such an aspect-manner operator in Mon is thʔ ‘throw (away)’, which occurs in postverbal position to express a completed event with a connotation of undeliberateness, sometimes definiteness or irreversability. Another one is the verb turned operator tɛh ‘hit (a mark)’, which in postverbal position expresses a completed event with the connotation of involuntariness/inadvertence. The verbal operators in Mon can be said to express aspect-like distinctions (in many cases not readily distinguishable from aktionsart) and add a ‘point of view’ of the speaker, i.e. they express the manner in which the event is viewed and presented by the speaker.

(6.1)   dɛh ɕiʔ thatʔ  haʔbt.
SM   3  eat  THROW ADV:all
     ‘He (just) ate it all.’

(6.2)   dɛh ɕiʔ təh  haʔbt.
SM   3  eat  HIT ADV:all
     ‘He happened to eat it all (without intention).’

In other cases, the category of aspect is intermingled with the category of directionals. In (6.3), the verb ʔa ‘go’ expresses a completed event as well as

¹⁰⁰ kyan is obviously a recent loan from B. can ‹krah› ‘think, consider’.
the movement away from the point of reference (and towards the goal of the
movement), while in (6.4) it rather describes an ongoing activity operator.

(6.3)  deh cao ?a dγη.
SM  3   return  GO  town
   ‘He returned to his town.’

(6.4)  kat bton ‘a suik-suik ra.
LM  study learn  GO  gradually  FOC
   ‘He went on studying gradually.’ (DC:8)

The same operator in (6.5) focusses on the beginning of the situation.

(6.5)  tòh ?a læk’h léy.
SM  be  GO  then  EMPH
   ‘It happened at that time.’ (KD)

The difference in interpretation of the verbal operators apparently depends
on the semantics of the main verb, as well as the broader context of the
expression.

6.1 Iterative and continuous events

The iterative or frequentative is an “aspectual form expressing repetition of
an action and constituting a subtype of imperfective aspect.” (Trask
1996:149) OM has a morphological frequentative, mostly formed with the
infixes ‹-in› and ‹-uŋ›. Shorto states that “frequentatives are rarely found
contrasting with simple forms, but they contain roots which may be
recognized in corresponding causative formations, and generally denote
continuous or repeated action.” (DMI:xxiv) Of the examples given by Shorto,
one are semantically clearly frequentative:
‹dindar› ‘be shaded’ (‹pdar› ‘shade’), ‹rinleŋ› ‘dance’ (‹raleŋ› ‘make dance›),
‹kùŋpar› ‘go round, encircle’ (‹kupar› ‘put round’) (ibid.).

No trace of this formation is left in LM and SM. The main device to express
repeated events in the modern language is by means of reduplication, usually
of the main verb, less frequently of the object as in (6.9). The repeated verb
may or may not be accompanied by the directionals ʔa ‘go’ and klŋ ‘come’.

(6.6)  ʔaca yap kòñh pèh ʔa-ʔa klŋ-klŋ léy.
SM  teacher Yap  TOP  person  go-RDP come-RDP  EMPH
   ‘Mr. Yap kept coming and going.’ (KD)
(6.7) deh phyeh wàŋ toə tiʔ nèh-həkəʔ,
SM 3 CAUS:descend ring FINISH attack each.other
klèə tiʔ tiʔ tiʔ tiʔ tiʔ kəh.
cow attack attack attack attack attack TOP
‘He led the bull down into the ring and they attacked each other
again and again.’ (WK)

(6.8) dadan dnäy ᵇə ma kwäk klo’ ä klo’ klyəʔ dmän ruih
LM bridge place person REL walk cross GO cross COME STAY every
dadah tənay gah ra
NML:be day TOP FOC
‘It was a bridge which people used to walk across every day.’
(DC:32)

(6.9) kələʔ kyəc kyəc kyəc toə ...
SM worship Buddha Buddha Buddha FINISH
‘We worshipped all the Buddha images and then …’ (KN)

Other possibilities to express iterative or repeated actions are by combining
the quantifier cəməp ‘each, every’ directly with the verb, as in cəməp ʔə
‘every time I go’, or by adverbial expressions, which usually involve
reduplication or repetition of some kind, as in the following sentences.

(6.10) rao sək wəwə’ dagut hui’m ται dmän plun-plun 102 ra.
LM manner kind this haggle speak STAY AGAIN-RDP FOC
‘In this manner she spoke and tried to beat down the price again and
again.’ (MKP:27)

(6.11) dagut hui’m dmän thap 103 kuiw thap ra.
LM haggle speak STAY PILE OBL PILE FOC
‘She beat down the price again and again.’ (MKP:27)

(6.12) ?arè mǐʔ-yəy həkən, həm toə həm plən.
SM speech mother instruct speak FINISH speak again
‘The words that mother told me, she said them again and again.’
(Lyrics of cəma cjaʔ krəʔ by Hongchan, 1999)

101 This parallels Burmese usage with V-täin ‘every time one Vs’ and N-täin ‘every N’ (s.
Okell 1969:420; Okell and Allott 2001:83)
83 plun-plun is obviously a variant of plan, [plən] ‘return, do again’.
10 The verb thap (from B ʔata ‘id.’) means ‘add on top, pile up, superimpose’. It is used in
Mon as in Burmese in preverbal position to mark a repeated action. (cf. Okell 1969:309; Okell
and Allott 2001:103)
Continuous activities are usually expressed by verbal operators, most commonly ʔa ‘go’, chek ‘join, connect; continue’, and the imperfective markers mə and tao, which are explained in detail below. Repetition of the verb or verbal operator, or both, can also be used to denote continuous actions, as shown in (6.13) to (6.16).

(6.13)  poy cao həʔ hùʔ têh raʔ, poy kwac ʔa ʔa ʔa.
SM  1pl return houseNEG HIT FOC 1pl walk GO GO GO
‘We didn’t know the way back home, so we kept on walking.’ (KN)

(6.14) ʔuə cao thəʔ, cao cao cao kəlokpheʔ ʔuə.
SM  1s return THROW return return return ghost scare 1s
‘I went straight back, and as I was going back a ghost scared me.’ (KN)

(6.15) dəh kwac kwac kwac kwac kwac ʔa kəh
SM  3 walk walk walk walk walk GO TOP
‘He walked and walked and walked.’ (WK)

(6.16) hət kəh raʔ ʔa ʔa ʔa kwac kwac kwac.
SM  reason TOP FOC go go go walk walk walk
‘Therefore we went on and walked on and on.’ (KN)

In (6.17), the directional is repeated and the vowel of the repeated verb lengthened to emphasise the extended duration of the action.

(6.17) dəh kwac ʔa ʔaaaaa.
SM  3 walk GO GO
‘He kept walking for a long time.’ (WK)

6.2 Conative reading

The conative denotes an attempted action, the result of which is not certain or not included in the verbal expression. In English the conative is usually translated by ‘try to V’. The conative can be said to be a subcategory of the atelic aktionsart, in that it emphasises the action without respect to the result/outcome. As in other Southeast Asian languages, most verbs can have conative reading in an appropriate context, i.e. the simple unmarked verb may express the attempt to do something rather than the actual performing of the activity itself.104 This also holds for verbs which in other languages or other contexts usually are considered telic, like hæc ‘kill’ in (6.18). The

104 Cf. Jenny (2001:107) for the same phenomenon Thai.
broader context of this sentence makes it clear that the one who “was killed” did not actually die, i.e. the attempt was unsuccessful.

(6.18) ?amèy deh həcət deh.
SM mother 3 CAUS:die 3
‘His mother tried to kill him.’ (WK)

In (6.19), the speaker tries to stop a passing car, but no one would stop for him.

SM CAUS:stop car 3 that ASRT car 3 NEG CAUS:stop GIVE
‘We tried to stop their cars, but they wouldn’t stop for us.’ (KKP)

The conative reading is frequent in conditional and purposive contexts, as in the following two sentences.

(6.20) puə noŋ lèh hù? toə pùh teh, cao ?a teh
SM performance this dance NEG finish NEG COND return GO COND
?a ca tə həlah ?əkhəŋ hə?
teacher theatre CAUS:free permission Q
‘If this performance (season) is not over yet, if you (want to) go home, will the manager of the theatre allow it?’ (KN)

(6.21) ŋə kluŋ rən, ’ay kluŋ rən, maŋ-bləŋ duik-gat
LM person come buy 1s come buy young.man poor
hwa’ gwa’ swa’ ra.
NEG GET sell FOC
‘Everyone came to buy (his products), but the poor young man did not sell them anything.’ (LPM:3)

The possibility of conative reading greatly increases the context dependence of most sentences in Mon, both spoken and written. In many cases only the context, whether linguistic or other, can decide if an act was actually carried out or if it was only attempted.

6.3 Predicate operators

I now turn to the most common predicate operators. Most of these are originally full verbs which have developed grammatical functions, some since the beginning of the recorded language, some at a later stage. Most of the operators still have full verbal function today. Two points concerning the verbal operators have to be kept in mind. First, many of them do not denote a
single aspectual or modal category, but have different values in different contexts, mainly but not solely depending on the semantics of the main verb of the expression. Second, the common aspectual and modal categories (cf. Comrie 1976, Palmer 1995) can be expressed by different operators in Mon, usually with different connotations.

Some operators occur directly after the main verb, i.e. before the object, but other positions are possible, including preverbal (between subject and main verb), especially for modals, and clause final position. Some operators can occur in different positions with different meanings/functions. These differences will be illustrated in the respective sections below.

In the following sections, the main predicate operators are described in detail, for the above mentioned reasons arranged according to operators rather than to grammatical categories.

The operators are arranged in loose semantic groups, starting with the stationary verb *mɔŋ*, followed by the directionals, disposers, benefactives, indicators of success, and finally operators with more general TAM functions. Each section begins with a general description, including an overview of earlier treatments (where available) and the historical development. Then the functions of the operator in different positions are explained and illustrated. It has to be kept in mind that a single operator can fulfil different functions, making the groups overlapping to some extent.

A. Stationary verb

6.3.1 *måŋ* and *tao* ‘STAY’, ‘STAND’

The DMI entry for OM *tāw* (MM, LM *tau*, SM *tao*) gives the following translations:

To remain, be stationary, stand, stay, dwell, , be (located), be steadfast, to endure. [...] rarely foll. v., implying habitual action. [...] (MM.) to dwell, live, be located. [...] esp. as va. foll. v., implying continuous, habitual, or recurring action, or sometimes continuous result of action. (DMI:147f)

With this compare the semantically similar lexeme OM *dmåŋ*, MM, LM *dmåŋ*, SM *mɔŋ*:

To stay, remain, be (located), sit, take station, reside esp. temporarily, lodge. [...] *dmåŋ tāw* to remain, be. [...] (MM.) foll. verbal expression, to remain, continue [in posture, state]. [...] hence, and by extension of phrasal use [...] as va. implying continuous action. (DMI:203)
In SM and LM mːŋ can occur with a location as direct object, as in mːŋ phɛː ‘stay at school’. Alternatively the locative object may be marked with the locative preposition dɔː ‘in, at’. In spite of the possibility to occur with an unmarked locative object, mːŋ has not developed prepositional use like the corresponding lexemes in other Southeast Asian languages such as Thai, Khmer, and Vietnamese (s. Bisang 1992).

Bauer lists mːŋ as progressive aspect marker developed from the full verb meaning ‘be (situated) at, reside’, which “may occur with stative verbs as well as operative verbs. It is the translation equivalent of English progressive tense /-iŋ/ and indicates ongoing action or a process which is not complete(d) yet.” (1982:393, 397)

Both mːŋ and tao are stationary verbs, denoting a position in space, which by extension of use includes the temporal dimension. While mːŋ in older stages of the language involves volition and thus requires an animated subject, tao does not have this restriction. In SM, tao has been all but obliterated by mːŋ, which no longer requires its subject to be necessarily animated, although it usually is. The non-volitional counterpart of mːŋ which is commonly used with inanimate subjects is the existential verb nùm described in section 2.5.4.3. The verb mːŋ can be described as a verb indicating zero movement, ‘remain at point of reference’, as opposed to ʔa ‘move away from point of reference’ and klːŋ ‘move towards point of reference’. There is thus a direct opposition between mːŋ on one side and ʔa/klːŋ on the other. In spite of this opposition, mːŋ as an aspect marker is perfectly compatible with both of its semantic “opposites”, ʔa mːŋ usually meaning ‘is going, is on his way there’ and klːŋ mːŋ ‘is coming, is on his way here’. This indicates the high degree of grammaticalization of mːŋ. On the other hand, both ʔa and klːŋ can function as verbal operators and co-occur with mːŋ as full verb (s. the following two sections). Unlike the orientation verbs, mːŋ does not have a direct causative counterpart. The morpheme closest to that function is probably lːŋ ‘keep’, frequently used as a verbal operator (s. 6.3.7 below).

The development from a full verb meaning ‘stay’ or ‘stand’ into an aspectual morpheme denoting the imperfective aspect (or a subcategory of it such as continuous/durative/progressive) is well attested in the world’s languages (see e.g. Foley 1986:144f; Heine and Kuteva 2002:255f, 280; Jenny 2001:113ff). Heine and Kuteva (2002:282) state that “CONTINUOUS markers may further develop into HABITUAL markers.” A further step in the development is the complete bleaching of the continuous form through a general imperfective into an aspectually unmarked neutral form.
As aspect operators $m\dot{\&}y$ and $tao$ always occur after the main verb and before the object.\(^{105}\) This is also true for fixed idiomatic expressions such as tek ($m\dot{\&}y$) $kya$ ‘chat, talk’ (lit. ‘beat wind’), mìp ($m\dot{\&}y$) $c\&t$ ‘be happy’ (lit. ‘happy heart’), etc. Bauer (1982:389ff) states that word order differences occur with neologisms such as the formal expression SM $pa\dot{\&}h\&tao$ ‘reside’ with the aspect operator $m\dot{\&}y$ following the object $h\&tao$ (a nominalized form of the verb $tao$). Other expressions are, according to Bauer, ambiguous as to word order, such as $h\dot{\&}m\ &br\&e$ ‘speak (a language)’, where some aspect operators occupy the postverbal position, while others stand after the object. The word order for the first is indeed $pa\dot{\&} h\&tao\ m\dot{\&}y...$, with the location following the whole verbal expression. This suggests an analysis of $m\dot{\&}y$ not as operator, but rather as serial verb (‘take residence staying at...’). There would therefore be no violation of the regular word order in this case. As for the expression $h\dot{\&}m\ &br\&e\ m\dot{\&}y$ ‘he is speaking’ quoted by Bauer (1982:390), this is not accepted by native speakers from Burma, who use $h\dot{\&}m\ m\dot{\&}y\ &br\&e$, as expected. Perhaps Bauer’s informants, who are mostly Thai-Mon, show structural influence from Thai, where verbal operators consistently occur after the whole VP, including the object. Another apparent deviation from the regular word order is found in the expression $\&io\ &ka\ (m\dot{\&}y)$ ‘use, send on an errand’.\(^{106}\) Popular etymology explains $\&io\ &ka$ as compound of $\&io\ &e$ ‘eat’ and $\&ka$ ‘work, act’.\(^{107}\) A compound of this form would require the aspect operator $m\dot{\&}y$ to occur between $\&io\ &e$ and $\&ka$. The expression $\&io\ &e\ m\dot{\&}y\ \&ka$ is in fact perfectly grammatical in SM, but semantically absurd with the meaning ‘he is eating a car’.\(^{108}\) In OM there is a word $\&cu(k\&l)$ ‘depute’, the causative of $\&ck\&l$ ‘receive’. The reading of the OM text (6th century) is not certain, but the form has survived in MM as $\&cak\&l$, making the connection rather secure (s. DMI:103, 109). The popular etymological connection has resulted in irregular phonetic development of the first syllable of the word (one would expect $*\&oka/t\&oka$ in SM from MM $\&cak\&l$), but not of its syntactic structure, $\&io\ &e\ \&ka$ being a simple verb with the operator following it.

In spite of the intonational pattern of Mon, which increases stress towards the end of a clause or sentence, $m\dot{\&}y$ as aspect operator is weakened in postverbal position, becoming barely audible in some instances. There is no loss of phonetic material, but the word is usually pronounced at a low pitch and with less force than the main verb.

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\(^{85}\) Where $m\dot{\&}y$ occurs before the main verb, the interpretation is purposive: ‘stay in order to V’.
\(^{106}\) The status of this word is being competed by the more recent Burmese loan $s\&ny\-cu\&$ (B. $\&sun\-cwai$, $\&hou\&m\-sw\&$).
\(^{107}\) From Pali $k\&ra\&a\&$.
\(^{108}\) With $\&ka$ is in this case understood as a loan from English $car$. 

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Historical development

In OM 〈tāw〉 is mostly used as a full verb as in (6.22):

(6.22) row tney ma tāw kum.
OM manner sun REL stand even
‘Just like the sun standing [in the sky].’ (SSKc21f)

When it follows a verb, the preferred interpretation is still as full verb:

(6.23) lop tāw boy krow cin yān.
OM enter stand ADV behind elephant vehicle
‘He entered and stood behind the riding elephant.’ (Kyansittha F16f)

In MM, 〈tau〉 is increasingly used as aspect marker, sometimes apparently pleonastically together with 〈dmān〉:

(6.24) [ka]jo’ dmān tau ra.
MM sit STAY STAND FOC
‘He was sitting.’ (SDGb10f)

Its grade of grammaticalization can be seen in its extended use with verbs that do not denote a position.

(6.25) krau wwo’ smiṃ ma nwom tau ku saddhā
MM after this king REL exist STAND OBL faith
ma pa tīla raḥ rman ta gah.
REL do lord country Mon PL TOP
‘the faithful kings who ruled over the Mon Country after that.’
(SDGb22)

The expression 〈ma nwom tau ku saddhā〉 literally translates as ‘who had faith’.
As aspect operator, 〈tau〉 can co-occur with the full verb 〈tau〉:

(6.26) smiṃ nāk mwoy ma himu jayasena ma tau tau
MM king Nāga one REL name Jayasena REL dwell STAND
pday bhūmindha[ra]nā(gahbow)
LOC subterranean.Nāga.world
‘a Nāga king who dwelt in the subterranean Nāga world’ (SDGb1)
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Modern Mon

Of the two OM and MM lexemes, only ‘dmān’ is in current use in SM, both as full verb and as aspect operator. LM uses both ‘dmān’ and ‘tau’, apparently with the same meaning, although as full verb ‘dmān’ is more common. As seen above in (6.24), the two forms may co-occur, a situation that still holds in LM. Examples of ‘tau’ as aspectual marker in LM are abundant. In some contexts, ‘tau’ can be interpreted as a marker of habitual or continuous aspect, while in other contexts this analysis is more difficult to sustain, as the following examples illustrate.

(6.27) ga’ī ta’gah sat tau bway ma lon ra.
LM gourdPL TOP bear.fruit STAND ADV REL exceed FOC
‘The gourds bore much fruit every year.’ (MKP:3)

It is clear from the broader context of this sentence that the gourds did not only bear fruit on this occasion, but regularly did so. Thus ‘tau’ in this sentence denotes a habitual event.

Where ‘tau’ occurs with stative verbal expressions as in (6.28) and (6.29), a continuous or habitual reading is more difficult to get, as these verbs do not usually occur with continuous/habitual marking.

(6.28) tla ūñā thau kyew gow chāy
LM lord person Banya Thao beautiful comely handsome
tau bway ma lon.
STAND ADV REL exceed
‘Queen Banya Thao was exceedingly beautiful.’ (DC:14)

(6.29) ekarāj brau tla ūñā bañā thau ma cuin dah tau kon
LM king womanlord.person Banya Thao REL AOR be STAND child
wút tla ūñā rājādhirāj gaḥ
maidenlord person Rajadhiraj TOP
‘Queen Banya Thao (who) was the daughter of King Rajadhiraj’
(DC:10)

The verb ‘dah’ ‘be’ in (6.29) is doubly marked, once with the aorist marker ‘cuin’, which is mainly used in translations from Pali, and once with ‘tau’, which in this context can simply mark the imperfective aspect, as in the previous example.

In other contexts, ‘tau’ occurs where the situation requires an inceptive reading:

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(6.30) mi kon pliən lew kluŋ cuip bhā tuy smān tau huit-phuil
LM MiKonPlim TOP come arrive temple FINISH ask STAND reason
ku lakyāk jnok 'ācā ra.
OBL monk big teacher FOC
‘Mi Kon Plim then came to the temple and asked the senior monk about the reason (for calling her).’ (MKP:24)

Other contexts suggest a perfective (completive) reading of the verbal expression marked with ‹tau›:

(6.31) ja’a tau kle’ gyi ta’ gah ni hwa’ kuiw
LM vomit STAND lose poison PL TOP little NEG give
seh pṭay jaku ra.
remain LOC body FOC
‘He spat out all the poison, not leaving a bit in his body.’ (LPM:11)

The perfective interpretation of this sentence is reinforced by the use of ‹kle’› ‘LOSE’, which is the LM correspondent of SM thdiʔ ‘throw (away), abandon, discard’ in its use as aspect operator denoting a perfective event with a connotation of undeliberateness and irreversibility (s. 6.3.8 below).

Like LM ‹tau›, SM məŋ can denote continuous events:

(6.32) həmū h kə məŋ kə sərī dēh kəh mūʔ klon məŋ?
SM now follow STAY o.brother Sawri 3 TOP what do STAY
‘Now you are following your brother Sawri. What are you doing?’ (KN)

The answer to (6.32) is given in (6.33):

(6.33) lūp məŋ cât, pāʔ məŋ lū-pyiək.
SM enter STAY theatre do STAY clown
‘I am in the theatre, I act as a clown.’ (KN)

The first part of (6.34) suggests a reading as ‘actual’, rather than continuous:

(6.34) nəh təʔ tem məŋ nūm məŋ ?əhmə kəh.
SM person that know STAY exist STAY under TOP
‘He knew they were down there.’ (KD)

The habitual reading is illustrated in (6.35).
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(6.35) nêh kôngh klōp palp mêg ʔəpot sot-chuí tânʔ.
SM person other come send STAY stuff fruit PL.this
‘The other people kept coming and bringing stuff and fruit and the
like.’ (WK)

Again as LM ʔtau, SM mêg can occur with verbs denoting qualities
(statives):

(6.36) kyəpansə-sə mêg, ʔəŋkaləc hnôk-hnôk hləŋ-hləŋ mêg.
SM Japan low-RDP STAY English big-RDP tall-RDP STAY
‘The Japanese were rather short, and the English were really big and
tall.’ (KD)

Where mêg occurs with ISTA verbs with prominent initial point, it denotes a
continuous state after the event. An example of this can be seen in the first
part of sentence (6.33) above, where lüp ‘enter’ is a punctual event, but the
result is ongoing (‘be in the theatre, work with the theatre’). At least for some
speakers there is a difference between the expressions in (6.37a) and (6.37b),
the former indicating that the dead body is in sight while the later leaving it
open whether the body is in sight or not.

(6.37a) dêh khyut mêg yaʔ.
SM 3 die STAY NSIT
‘He is dead.’ (NOP)

(6.37b) dêh khyutʔa yaʔ.
SM 3 die GO NSIT
‘He (has) died.’ (NOP)

In some contexts mêg has a persistive connotation, usually combined with
nəm ‘still’ or phryʔ ‘still, yet’.

(6.38) pyû? ʔọt yaʔ, nûm mêg phryʔ.
SM old all NSIT exist STAY still
‘They are all old now, but there are still some around.’ (KD)

In combination with nəm, mêg often has a connotation of ‘in spite of other
orders’, as is the case in (6.38). The monk who caught the temple pupils
sneaking out of the temple and watch TV at a nearby shop asks them if they
still intended to disobey his orders in the future. This special use of the
persistive might be labelled ‘insistive’.

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The combination $m\ddot{a}j$ $nem$ is often contracted to $manem$ in SM, which in turn can occur with $m\ddot{a}j$, resulting in redundant double marking with $m\ddot{a}j$, as in (6.40).

(6.40) $\text{ʔenkaloc} \text{ʔi? nùm} \text{m\ddot{a}j manem} \text{noŋ.}$

SM English TOP exist STAY STAY:still ASRT

‘There are also some English left, I’m sure.’ (KD)

The operator $m\ddot{a}j$ is compatible with notions of the perfect, such as action continuing up to the present (6.41) and experiential (6.42).

(6.41) $\text{ch\text{ān tuy pàn} man kluî nî-nî-să-să.}$

LM love FINISH associate STAY COME harmoniously-RDP

‘We loved each other and have been living together harmoniously.’ (MKP:7)

(6.42) $\text{ʔa\text{lyŋ k\text{ôh qaпа k}ien m\ddot{a}j m\ddot{a}j?}$

SM Aploun TOP father EXPER stay STAY

‘Have you ever stayed at Aploun, father?’ (KD)

Sentence (6.42) also shows the co-occurrence of $m\ddot{a}j$ as full verb and as aspect operator, a sign of its degree of grammaticalization.

In all examples given so far, $m\ddot{a}j$ can be interpreted as imperfective marker, including the sub-categories habitual and continuous. The imperfective reading is more difficult to sustain where the action is described as completed, which suggests perfective rather than imperfective, as in the following examples.

(6.43) $\text{nù klej kyac hnȫk hman m\ddot{a}j.}$

SM ABL moment.ago monk big ask STAY

‘The abbot just asked (a moment ago).’ (KD)

(6.44) $\text{puə rao hù? təh m\ddot{a}j ra?}$

SM performance TOP NEG be STAY FOC

‘There is no show anymore.’ (KN)

The combination of negation and the focus marker $ra?$ in (6.44) often implicates a negated NSIT reading ‘not anymore’ (cf. ch. 5).
The use of ʰəʔ ‘all, completely’ in (6.45) reinforces the perfective-completive reading of the sentence, in spite of the presence of ʰɑŋ. The sentence is a report to the abbot by a villager who found out that some of the temple boys had stolen and eaten all the fruit he had given to the abbot.

(6.45) kwah phèə təʔ kłaʔ ɕiʔ məŋ haʔət nəŋ.
SM pupil temple pl steal eat STAY ADV:all ASRT
‘The temple pupils have stolen and eaten them all!’ (KN)

We have seen above that the natural interpretation of ʰɑŋ combined with ista verbs is as ‘continuous state after the event’. This reading is also present in (6.46). The broader context of the sentence suggests that there was a single volcano eruption, so that an iterative reading is not available. The point here is obviously the long-time damage that the volcano erruption caused on the island.

(6.46) bəʔ jɔt-mi-tâŋ ʰətph məŋ.
SM PREF volcano burst STAY
‘That volcano erupted.’ (KD)

Sentence (6.47) suggests an ingressive reading of ʰɛm ‘know’ (‘find out, realise’), which we would expect to be marked with a the directional ʔə rather than ʰɑŋ.

(6.47) kon nëh təʔ ʰɛm məŋ təp pək cao kîŋ ləkəh.
SM child person that know STAY FINISH follow return COME then
‘The children realised (that they had been left behind in the forest) and followed (their father) back home.’ (KKP)

Summary

The operators ʰəo and ʰɑŋ originally denoted the imperfective aspect with the subcategories habitual, continuous/progressive, and persistive. Extended use led to bleaching of the syntactic meaning, which in turn lead to the combinability of the two operators with a wider range of situations, including typical domains of the perfective such as inceptive/ingressive and completive. Of the two forms, ʰəo is chiefly used in LM, alongside with ʰɑŋ, while the latter is the common marker used in SM. LM sometimes seems to make a functional difference between ʰmå and ʰəo, the former having imperfective and the latter perfective reading.
This difference is spurious, as shown by numerous counter-examples of ‹tau› having imperfective value.

Unlike the other directionals, tao and m.ȝ, indicating zero movement, are used as operators mainly in the temporal dimension. The function as real (spatial) directional is restricted to expressions denoting posture such as h ¢ y ¢ m.ȝ ‘is sitting’, h ¢ tao m.ȝ ‘is standing’, etc. Also unlike the other directionals, tao and m.ȝ did not develop prepositional function.

Heine and Kuteva (2002:254f; 280ff; 324f) list two common grammaticalized functions each for the verbs meaning ‘remain’ (Mon m.ȝ) and ‘stand’ (Mon tao). The functions of the former, durative and habitual, are both in common use in Mon. ‘Stand’ according to Heine and Kuteva occurs as continuous marker, also found in Mon, and as copula (absent in Mon).

B. Directionals

6.3.2 ‹ā› ʔa ‘GO’ and ‹õā› na ‘CAUS:GO’

The verb ʔa (OM ‹ār›) generally expresses a movement away from the point of reference, which by default is the speaker.109 The point of reference may be changed by an appropriate context. The goal of the movement may or may not be expressed and usually remains unmarked, i.e. it appears as direct object: ʔa phèa ‘go to school, go to the temple’. As second element in a verbal concatenation, ʔa is used to add a direction to a verb of movement, thus the label ‘directional’ or ‘orientation’ verb. As ʔa also introduces a goal object to the verbal expression, it can be labelled coverb (cf. Bisang 1992), although the distinction between directional and coverb is not clear-cut:

(6.49a) ɗèh kwac ʔa phèa.
SM 3 walk GO school
‘He is walking to school.’ ‘He walked (off) to school.’

(6.49b) *ɗèh kwac phèa.
SM 3 walk school

In (6.49a), ʔa has different functions. Firstly it adds a direction/orientation to the motion verb kwac ‘walk’. Secondly it introduces a goal as object. On the

109 Heine and Kuteva (2002:155) use the label “andative” or “centrifugal” for this directional.
aspectual level, ʔa can express an ongoing action (‘is walking on’) or a completed action (‘has walked off’), depending on the context. This ambiguity arises from the competing notions of space and time. The spatial notion favours the reading as completive, while the temporal notion favours the continuous interpretation. The use of ʔa leaves open the question whether the goal has been reached or not. The addition of an overtly expressed NP denoting the goal does not necessarily make the expression telic, although this is the most natural interpretation.

The temporal point of reference is by default the present, ‘now’. As the use of ʔa is extended from the spatial to the temporal dimension, it can be used to denote an ongoing action/event, i.e. an event that ‘moves away from the present to the future’. We have seen above that the stationary verb mɔŋ can be used to express a continuous or progressive event. The same is true for ʔa, but with a dynamic connotation. Therefore ʔa is rarely used as continuous aspect operator with stative (quality) verbs.

When functioning as operator, ʔa occurs in postverbal position before the object. When it occurs before another verb, ʔa denotes a purposive action, as in (6.50) and (6.51).

(6.50) mun ’ba s’ār man ści.
OM inform fatherPROSP:go watch precept
‘He informs his father that he is going (to the forest) to keep the precepts.’ (An225)

(6.51) ʔa rōp ka? kʰm co?.
SM go catch fish too ADH
‘Let’s go fishing!’ (WK)

**Postverbal ʔa 1: directional**

The use of ʔa as postverbal directional, with or without overtly expressed goal, is frequent in all stages of Mon.

(6.52) ’in cow t’ār.
OM Indra return GO
‘Indra returns.’ (An368)

(6.53) tin t’ār tāwatiṅ.
OM ascend GO Tavatiṅsa
‘He ascends to Tavatiṅsa Heaven.’ (SSKa52)
In (6.54) the use of ‘â’ is not necessary to introduce the goal-object, as ‘cau’ can take an object: ‘cau sî’ ‘return home’. The function of ‘â’ in this sentence is thus directional (i.e. her home is farther away from the point of reference than her initial position) and aspectual (either continuous or completive). As the act of returning is further modified by the adverbial ‘suiû lak-don’, the continuous reading is here preferred.

Both verbs followed by ßa in (6.55) are verbs expressing a motion. Where this is not the case, ßa has purely aspectual value, sometimes with a manner connotation (‘away from centre of interest’).

Postverbal ßa 2: Aspect and manner

The aspectual (and manner) use of the directional is rarely attested in the OM corpus, but increasingly frequent in MM and fully established at latest by classical LM times. The aspect expressed by ßa varies according to the context.

In (6.56), the notion is that of continuous, reinforced by the repetition of the main verb:

With a punctual event like tëh pûn ‘be hit by a bomb’, the natural reading is that of completive, with a manner connotation of ‘adversative event; not in the speakers sphere of influence or interest’.

110 ‘dak-don’ in the original text should be corrected to ‘lak-don’. The word ‘dak-don’ (pronounced in many dialects the same as ‘dak-don’, /tɛk- tôm/) means ‘mourn’, which does not fit in the contexts of the sentence, as the subject is angry, not sad, about having been cheated by Mi Kon Plim.
The completive reading is also available with verbs, such as *tao* ‘burn’ and *kyaʔ* ‘lose’.

\[(6.58)\] \(ləmâŋ \ tao \ ?a \ hû? \ ?on.\)

SM Lamaing burn GO NEG little

‘Lamaing was damaged a lot by the fire.’ (KD)

The completive reading can be reinforced by the completive marker *toə* ‘finish’ or the NSIT marker *yaʔ* (LM ‹ira›).

\[(6.59)\] \(ləmâŋ \ tao \ ?a \ toə.\)

SM Lamaing burn GO FINISH

‘Lamaing was burnt down.’ (KD)

\[(6.60)\] \(klèa \ ?a \ kyaʔ \ ?a \ yaʔ.\)

SM bull 1s lose GO NSIT

‘My bull has already been defeated.’ (WK)

With quality verbs, *ʔa* can denote an increasing degree, sometimes combined with the completive marker *toə*.

\[(6.61)\] \(dadah \ 'ay \ mi \ byu \ jărā \ 'ā \ tuy \ ra.\)

LM NML:be 1s mother old old GO FINISH FOC

‘I have reached an old age now, my son.’ (DC:36)

In some contexts, *ʔa* is used to focus on the inception of a state or situation event. This is especially common in connection with the main verb *tûh* ‘be’, giving a reading ‘become, happen, come to be’, as well as with ISTA verbs expressing qualities.

\[(6.62)\] \(tûh \ ?a \ ləkôh \ lèy.\)

SM be GO thus EMPH

‘Well, this is how it happened/turned out to be.’ (KD)

\[(6.63)\] \(dēh \ thōə \ tûh \ ?a \ kṛyŋ \ ləkôh.\)

SM 3 plough be GO brook thus

‘(The aeroplane) ploughed (the ground) and a brook came into being.’ (KD)

\[(6.64)\] \(?u \ phûr \ ?aŋ \ tɔʔ \ liuə \ ?a \ ləkôh \ lèy.\)

SM U Hpou Aung PL easy GO then EMPH

‘Now this is when U Hpou Aung and his family got rich.’ (KD)

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Causative directional *na*

When the main verb is transitive and its object is put in motion as direct result of the activity expressed by it, the directional takes the causative form *na*, LM *ńā*. This is an irregular development, possibly the merger of different forms, from OM *ńō*, described by Shorto as verb particle, suffixed to verbs and meaning ‘away’ (DMI:211). OM *ńō‘*take away, carry off*, a pseudo-causative formation of *ńā* was shortened to *ńā* in MM and later merged with *ńā*, resulting in LM *ńā*, SM *na*. This lexeme is rarely used as full verb in the modern language and functions mainly as causative directional in postverbal position.

OM uses *ńō* in expressions like *kil nō* ‘gives away’ (An277), while the simple (non-causative) form is used in other contexts where the modern language would require the causative, as in *culo‘* ‘bring across’ (DMI:16). The form *culo* is the causative of *clo* ‘cross over’, after which we would expect a causative directional.

In MM, the use of the causative directionals is more consistent, as shown in (6.65).

(6.65) ket *phyeh* nā lar pendān jaku.

MM  take CAUS:DOWN CAUS:GO KEEP loc  place body

‘They took it down to their own place.’ (SDGb2)

This sentence is paralleled in the SM sentence (6.66).

(6.66) ket *na* lē mit.

SM  take CAUS:GO KEEP turmeric

‘They took along turmeric.’ (KKP)

In LM and SM, *na* is consistently used when the object is involved in the movement. There are rare instances of *na* in sentences where the object is stationary, as in (6.67).

(6.67) kyōpan *klō* *na* dān tak trā?

SM  Japanese cross CAUS:GO road walking that

‘The Japanese crossed that path.’ (KD)

Although the verb *klō* ‘cross’ is transitive, its object is not involved in the movement, unlike the causative *klō‘*‘bring across’. We would therefore expect (and usually get) the simple directional *ā* after *klō*. Why in this particular instance the causative is used remains to be explained.
Where there is no actual physical movement involved, na, like ʔa, denotes an act that is outside the sphere of influence or interest of the speaker:

(6.68) arew cnāy kon-nāk brau ma huin nā gah
LM speech deceit child woman REL speak CAUS:GO TOP
‘the deceitful words that the girl spoke.’ (MKP:5)

Unlike ʔa, na does not have aspectual value. Its use is restricted to the spatial dimension and, as stated above, to the manner notion ‘away from the centre of interest or influence’. There is a difference in meaning whether the simple directional ʔa or its causative form na is used. Compare the following sentences:

(6.69a) dēh hpm ʔa.
SM 3 speak GO
‘He kept speaking, he speaks on.’

(6.69b) dēh hpm na.
SM 3 speak CAUS:GO
‘He said it (but I don’t care).’

(6.70a) dēh kъʔ ʔa.
SM 3 GET go
‘He had a chance to go, he went.’

(6.70b) dēh kъʔ na.
SM 3 get CAUS:GO
‘He got it.’

While the most natural interpretation of (6.70a) is with kъʔ as auxiliary and ʔa as main verb, other readings are possible in an appropriate context, as in (6.70c). The speaker clearly indicates that the event is classified as adversative and beyond his influence (though presumably not beyond his interest). The use of na in this context would be less strong in making this point.

(6.70c) kyān kъʔ ʔa sōt pi mōn mēʔ toə.
SM Kyan get GO fruit Bael four CL FINISH
‘Kyan got four bael fruit (and I didn’t get anything).’ (KN)
Summary

The full verb ‘ār’ in OM had already developed directional function in postverbal position. This was extended to aspectual use in OM and increasingly in MM and LM. The causative form became firmly established in MM and LM, where the two original forms ‘nā’ ‘away’ and ‘rin’ār ‘bring away’ merged into ‘nā, nā’, which retains its verbal character only in a few contexts and is chiefly used as postverbal directional with manner connotations in some contexts, especially indicating an event outside the sphere of influence or interest of the speaker (or in some cases of the subject).

Heine and Kuteva (2002:155ff; 321) list a large number of grammaticalizations of the verb meaning ‘go (to)’ found in languages around the world, including ‘andative’, ‘change of state’, ‘continuous’, among others. Most of them are also present in Mon. The grammaticalized uses of ā in Mon fit very well into the general picture of languages around the world as surveyed by Heine and Kuteva. Additional functions such as the completive have developed in Mon from the aspectualization of the spatial dimension (‘away from me and here’ → ‘completed’, ‘towards a goal’ → ‘reach the goal’).

6.3.3 ‘kluŋ klŋ ‘COME’ and ‘nāŋ nŋ ‘CAUS:COME’

The verb OM ‘tluŋ, tluŋ, LM ‘kluŋ, SM klŋ ‘come’ is the conceptual opposite of ā ‘go’. While the latter can be described as andative or centrifugal, the former is venitive or centripetal. It describes a motion towards the centre of interest, usually the speaker in the spatial dimension and, by extension, the present or ‘now’ in the temporal dimension. In the temporal dimension, postverbal klŋ denotes the perfect aspect in that it describes an event that develops towards the present moment. The interpretation can be either as perfect continuous (‘has been V-ing’) or as completive (‘has V-ed’), depending on the context. In preverbal position klŋ usually has purposive reading ‘come to V’; in connection with the ablative preposition nù it denotes a kind of recent past or past event with present relevance. Standing alone or at the beginning, less frequently at the end, of a sentence, klŋ has hortative meaning, in this case often weakened to [klŋ] or [klyŋ] in SM. After verbs of motion, klŋ, like ā, not only adds a direction (orientation), but it also functions as coverb, i.e. it opens the possibility to add a goal as object. The goal of the movement is closer to the point of reference than the origin. When the object is directly involved in the movement, i.e. when the act expressed by the main verb causes the object to move, the suppletive causative form nŋ is used. The regular morphological causative, OM ‘tluŋ, LM ‘tluŋ, SM kəlŋ is used in the modern language with the meaning ‘welcome’, usually in combination with tŋ ‘receive’ as tŋ kəlŋ.
Historical development

Since OM, 〈tlūn〉 is found as sole verb or as first or second member of verb concatenations:

(6.71)  tlūn han 'bo'.
OM  come LOC mother
‘He comes to his mother.’ (An287)

(6.72)  smiŋ tlūn cip.
OM  king come arrive
‘The king arrives.’ (An371)

(6.73a)  smiŋ goh (pi)ndoŋ tlūn 'āc cinū.
OM  king TOP send come ask.for elephant
‘The king sent them hither to ask for elephants.’ (Ku217)

The word order of (6.72) in LM and SM can be either as in the OM sentence or reversed to 〈cuip kluŋ〉. This latter word order is far more common in the modern language and almost exclusively used when the goal is overtly expressed.

(6.74)  pəʔ kləm cəh kəh poy cip  kləŋ kəʔ əʔ yaʔ.
SM  three hundred ten TOP 1pl arrive COME Ko’ Dot NSIT
‘By 1310 [1948] we had already arrived in Ko’ Dot.’ (KD)

In modern Mon, the sentence corresponding to (6.73a) requires the use of the causative form of kləŋ, viz. nēŋ:

(6.73b)  hmoŋ kəh pələŋ nēŋ ʔat əŋp.
SM  king TOP send CAUS:COME ask.for elephant

The function of 〈tlūn〉 in (6.75) is ambiguous. It may function as directional of the expression 〈jak cuih〉 ‘march down’, or it may be linked to the second verbal expression 〈dok phån〉 ‘ride a raft’. Probably both interpretations are correct and 〈tlūn〉 here has a twofold function. The gloss should in this case be 〈COME/come〉, indicating the use as a grammaticalized element (directional) and as a full verb ‘come to V’.
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(6.75) suirn priwāra ma gluīn jak cuih twuŋ dok phān thaw.
MM INCL retinue REL many march DOWN come ride raft gold
‘Together with a big retinue he marched down and embarked on his golden raft.’ (Bayinnaung’s Bell Inscription 18f, Pagán 1557)

Preverbal klŋŋ

Sentences (6.73a) and (6.76) - (6.78) illustrate the use of preverbal ‘twuŋ’ in OM, LM, and SM with purposive meaning. This use is widespread in all stages of Mon, and may be considered the origin of the adhortative meaning of klŋŋ in SM.

(6.76) ūnāh pan twuŋ smān.
OM person four come ask
‘The four of them come to ask.’ (An166)

(6.77) tā ūnāh tām dadah gna-kyāk yā ‘ā tuy kuīw
LM lord person know NML:be queen be.sick GO FINISH GIVE
‘cā saw mahā-saw ū twuŋ lwī-parā ra.
teacher medicine big-medicine PL come look.after FOC
‘The king learned that the queen had fallen ill and ordered the doctors and big healers to come and cure her.’ (DC:17)

(6.78) dēh klŋŋ khay nēh hm.
SM 3 come dig person speak
‘They came to dig, people say.’ (KD)

In sentence initial position, klŋŋ can have imperative or adhortative value, often phonetically reduced to [klŋ] or [klŋʔ].

(6.79a) klŋ, ciʔ pγŋ!
SM COME eat rice
‘Come on, let’s eat!’

The degree of desemanticalisation is illustrated by its co-occurrence with ‘a ‘go’.

(6.80a) klŋ, ‘a wāŋ coʔ!
SM COME go play ADH
‘Come on, let’s go out (for fun).’

The word order can be reversed, with klŋŋ in sentence final position. No difference in meaning is involved in the change of word order.
(6.79b) ɕiaʔ pəŋ, kiŋ!
(6.80b) ?a wəŋ coʔ, kiŋ!

Postverbal klŋ 1: Directional

In LM and SM, klŋ in postverbal position is frequent and covers a number of functions, some parallel to the use of its opposite, ʔa ‘go’. The most basic function, found at least since MM, is as directional or orientation verb, indicating that the main verb expresses a movement towards the centre of interest. The goal of the movement may or may not be overtly expressed.

(6.81) krip cao klŋ kwan pəŋaʔ.
SM run return COME village Panga
‘He came running back to Panga.’ (KD)

(6.82) ʔəŋkəlo ʔak klŋ la.
SM English ride COME mule
‘The English came riding on mules.’ (KD)

Postverbal klŋ 2: Aspect and manner

When there is no physical movement involved, klŋ usually has perfect reading, i.e. past event with present relevance, either continuous or completive, according to the context.

(6.83) kon-ŋaŋ mʊətao klŋ kəmoʊt.
SM child one burn COME fire
‘A child had suffered burns.’ (KD)

(6.84) brau mway truŋ bə gah hwa’ mway klʊɨŋ ra.
LM woman one man two TOP NEG one COME FOC
‘There has never been a case of one woman and two men (living together as husbands and wife).’ (MKP:28)

When klŋ is used in perfect continuous contexts, it may co-occur with mɨŋ or tao ‘STAY’.

(6.85) mâŋ tau klʊɨŋ gruip gluɨŋ kuiw snām.
LM stay STAND COME forest many OBL year
‘We have been living in the forest for many years.’ (MKP:7)
The use of ‘kluñ’ in (6.85) implies past tense reading of the sentence. With ‘la’ ‘go’ instead of ‘klwη’, the sentence is temporally neutral, the continuous aspect of the event being emphasised.

Although the co-occurrence of tao and ‘klwη’ suggests perfect continuous interpretation, this is not necessarily the only possible reading. The verbal expression in sentence (6.86) has completive, rather than continuous value.

(6.86) kāla peñ tau kluñ dacit gitu.
LM time be.full STAND COME nine moon
‘The time came when nine months had passed.’ (MKP:6)

Like ‘la’, ‘klwη’ can denote a change of state or an ingressive event. This is exemplified in (6.87). The use of ‘klwη’ instead of ‘la’ here indicates that the speaker is directly affected by the event, i.e. it is a change towards or within the sphere of interest of the speaker, though the event is adversative. The speaker has to stay in the house, even if it has become so dilapidated that it hardly inhabitable anymore, as stated in the context. The use of ‘la’ in the same sentence would implicate that the speaker is ready to move out of the old house.

(6.87) sī puiy plan lew byu kluñ ra.
LM house 1pl again TOP old COME FOC
‘Our house, too, has become old.’ (MKP:11)

_Causative directional nêη_

Where the object is directly put in motion by the event expressed in the main verb, the causative form of ‘klwη’, viz. nêη is used in LM and SM. This suppletive stem is the result of an irregular development from OM, MM ‘raï’ ‘bring’. This OM verb combines with both ‘ār’ ‘go’ and ‘tluñ’ ‘come’ to indicate the direction of the ‘bringing’: ‘raï ’ār’ ‘bring thither’, ‘raï tluñ’ ‘bring hither’.

Already in MM a secondary form ‘nañ’ came to be used in postverbal position, besides the expression ‘nañ chaŋ’ ‘bring down’ with preverbal ‘nañ’ (DMI:312). In LM ‘rañ’ is still used with the meaning ‘bring’, while SM rêη means ‘conduct’. The form LM ‘nañ’, SM nêη is chiefly used as postverbal directional, although it can still be found as full verb. As illustrated in (6.82) above, the conditioning factor for the choice of nêη or ‘klwη’ is not the transitivity of the main verb, but its denoting the cause for the movement of the object. This means that after a causative main verb, nêη is always the natural choice, while after non-causative transitive verbs, both forms are possible, with differences in meaning.
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(6.88) mənìh pyʊʔ-pyʊʔ kəh dəh ɾuy hotmail nèŋ.
SM man old-RDP TOP 3 choose CAUS:UP CAUS:COME
‘They chose the old people.’ (KD)

In sentence (6.89) the use of nèŋ indicates that the deceitful words of the Japanese were the cause of the Burmese coming down to Monland. Although the verb lim ‘deceive’ does not in itself involve a movement, it is the cause of the movement, licensing the use of the causative directional. The use of the non-causative kl rèŋ in the same sentence carries no implication of (but does not exclude) the Burmese moving anywhere and has purely temporal notion.

(6.89) kyəpan plup lə cət teh lim nèŋ
SM JapaneseCAUS:enter KEEP heart COND deceive CAUS:COME
hamə kəh.
BurmeseTOP
‘The Japanese made them interested\(^\text{112}\) and thus deceived the Burmese into coming here.’ (KD)

A similar case is the use of nèŋ and kl rèŋ with the verb həm ‘speak’. The directional kl rèŋ here indicates that someone has spoken, while nèŋ indicates that someone has spoken (or will speak) to the speaker, i.e. the centre of interest.

Completely different readings result from the use of kl rèŋ and nèŋ with the verbs kəʔ ‘get’ and kə ‘give’, both of which may be interpreted either as full verb or as auxiliary:

(6.90a) dəh kə/kəʔ kl rèŋ.
SM 3 GIVE/GET come
‘He let (me) go.’ / ‘He had a chance to go.’

(6.90b) dəh kə/kəʔ gəŋ.
SM 3 give/get CAUS:COME
‘He gave (it to) me.’ / ‘He got it.’

Notice that the English sentence ‘He got it.’ can be rendered in Mon either as dəh kəʔ nèŋ or as dəh kəʔ na, depending on whether the object he received moved closer to the speaker (not the recipient!) or farther away from him. The sentence dəh kə na (instead of dəh kə nèŋ) implies that he gave the object to someone else, not the speaker, while dəh kə nèŋ may be interpreted

\(^{111}\) hotmail is colloquial for the regular causative pətən.

\(^{112}\) ləp cət, lit. ‘enter the heart’ means ‘be interested’, probably calqued on B. sei’ win sà ‘id.’. The regular causative is pləp cət ‘make interested, arouse interest’.

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as ‘He gave it to her.’ if she is closer to me (physically or mentally) than the subject.

Summary

The full verb OM 〈tlūn, tlūn〉 has developed into a postverbal directional already in OM. At least since MM, its use has been extended to the temporal dimension, resulting in aspectual value, in some cases with a temporal (past) and/or manner connotation (towards or within the sphere of speaker’s interest).

Heine and Kuteva (2002:68ff; 318f) list 11 different paths of grammaticalization under the headings COME, COME FROM and COME TO. Some of the listed grammaticalized functions are found in Mon, while some others present in Mon are not in Heine and Kuteva’s list. like the prepositional meaning as allative (not ablative), used when the goal is closer to the point of reference than the origin.

6.3.4 〈tuin〉 〈t̂uin〉 ‘MOVE.UP’ and 〈ptuin〉 〈p̂tuin〉 ‘CAUS:UP’

Historical development

The verb 〈tin〉 in OM means ‘move up, go up, come up, ascend’. It is used as main verb, as in 〈tin tmo’〉 ‘(he) goes up the hill’ (An88), or as directional in postverbal position, as in 〈scās tin〉 ‘(they) shall go up against (the water)’ (SSKb28). The word order of 〈tin〉 combined with an orientation verb is fixed: 〈tin ‘ār〉 ‘go up’ (*〈’ār tin〉). The use of 〈’ār〉 to indicate a goal is possible, as in 〈tin ‘ār tāwatiŋ〉 ‘go up to Tavati-sa heaven’, but it is not obligatory, as seen in the expressions 〈tin tmo’〉 ‘go up a hill’ and 〈tin prāsād〉 ‘enter the palace’ (An51).

Shorto’s translation of the expression 〈drep tin〉 (DMI:150) as ‘speed up’ (lit. ‘run UP’) out of context might lead to an interpretation of 〈tin〉 as grammaticalized into an operator indicating ‘increasing degree’ already in OM. The whole sentence in the inscription reads

OM NML:shinetwo TOP 3 run UP arrive Brahmaloka completely
‘The two rays went up all the way to the Brahmaloka.’
(Myakan Inscription B11-12, Pagān)

113 In the glosses I use ‘move.up’ and ‘CAUS:UP’ for 〈t̂uin〉 and 〈p̂tuin〉 resp. as full verbs and ‘UP’ and ‘CAUS:UP’ when they appear in grammaticalized functions.
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The verb ‘tin’ in this sentence is used as directional, not indicating an increase in degree (of the speed), a use common in the modern language as we will see below.

No causative form of ‘tin’ is attested in OM. This may be due to the limitedness of the inscriptive data and further inscriptions may well reveal the expected OM form *‘ptin’.

The functions of MM ‘tuin’ parallel OM ‘tin’ as full verb, with or without additional directional/orientation verb, and as directional in postverbal position. In addition, MM ‘tuin’ is used to indicate a change of state, in particular an increased degree, as in ‘jnok tuin’ ‘grew bigger, became bigger’.

MM has a causative form ‘ptuin’, used both as a full verb and as directional. There are instances in MM where the simple form is used where modern Mon would require the use of the causative, as in ‘bar reñ dùn tuin’ ‘heap up, build a platform’ and ‘dak tuin’ ‘build up’.

(6.92) tma’ lwān kalo’-kalo’ gah bar [reñ dùn] tuintuy
MM stone laterite hard-RDP TOP heap.up arrange receive UP FINISH
mañah ðeh ma kuïw dak tuin l’it.
outside 3 REL GIVE build UP brick
‘They heaped up hard laterite blocks, arranged them so that they would support (the pagoda) and then had bricks built up on the outside.’ (SDGb35)

The Burmese translation of the inscription (U Hkyit Thein 1965:II 80) has si te’ sei ‘made build up’ (lit. ‘arrange UP CAUS’) for both ‘bar reñ dùn tuin’ and ‘dak tuin’. The verb/directional te’ ‘move up’ in Burmese does not have a causative form, i.e. it is used in both non-causative and causative contexts. In the 15th century, when the Shwedagon Inscription was written, the Mon (and their language) had been exposed to Burmese influence for at least four centuries and many Mon, especially the educated elite, were bilingual with Burmese. This may have led to insensitivity to grammatical distinctions in some contexts when these distinctions were not made in Burmese. Alternatively one might suspect that the causative system was not yet fully developed in MM. This hypothesis is supported by OM data, but not by further Mon-Khmer comparison.

Modern Mon

In modern Mon, both LM and SM, tØn is used as full verb and as operator. Its aspactual function has been extended, covering not only a change of state (increased degree), but also inceptive events with a manner connotation of surprise and suddenness.
As a full verb, \textit{t\text{n}} occurs alone or in connection with a directional. It can have an unmarked object indicating either the path or the goal, as in \textit{t\text{n} t\text{y}} ‘go up the hill’ and \textit{t\text{n} phè} ‘go to school’. In preverbal position \textit{t\text{n}} can be used to indicate a purpose, ‘go up and V, go up to V’.

The word order in (6.93) is atypical; we would expect the directional \textit{ʔa} to occur after \textit{t\text{n}}. This seems to be an instance of verb serialization without grammaticalization, i.e. \textit{ʔa} and \textit{t\text{n}} function as full verbs in sequence.

(6.93) \[ \text{ʔa t\text{n} m̀\text{g} thō? dɔ̀ nôn kdm.} \]
\textsc{sm} go move up stay throw loc palace too
‘He went and ascended to the palace to live there.’ (WK)

The use of \textit{t\text{n}} as postverbal directional is illustrated in the following sentence.

(6.94) \[ \text{krip t\text{n} rō? ʔa phè} \text{kə?-kyac tyy}. \]
\textsc{sm} run up look go temple Ko’-Kyaik that
‘We ran (up the hill) and looked over to Ko’ Kyaik monastery.’ (KN)

A change of state is expressed in (6.95) and (6.96).

(6.95) \[ \text{mùōpan kərəo-coh, cā? lèt-ʔu tyy? pōn-coh, dēh \textit{py} t\text{n}.} \]
\textsc{sm} one glass six-ty begin beginning that four-ty 3 add up
‘One glass was sixty Kyat; in the beginning it was forty, but they increased the price.’ (KN)

(6.96) \[ \text{tō} \text{ə kon dēh hnōk t\text{n}.} \]
\textsc{sm} finish child 3 big up
‘And then his children grew up.’ (KKP)

Postverbal \textit{t\text{n}} can express a sudden event, usually with a connotation of surprise. This is exemplified in (6.97) to (6.99).

(6.97) \[ \text{tla ŋah thap smāntuı̈n sāk ᵉa’ plan ra.} \]
\textsc{lm} lord person pile ask up manner this again foc
‘The king asked like this again.’ (DC:33)

(6.98) \[ \text{khaya} \text{yə ket kamlat klat tuı̈n sat pnah.} \]
\textsc{lm} think take attr:steal steal up fruit jackfruit
‘He thought that a thief had stolen the jackfruit.’ (MKP:23)
The causative form *paton*\(^{114}\) can be used as main verb or as directional if the activity expressed by the main verb causes the object to move upwards. The causative form, whether as full verb or as operator, usually requires an additional directional to occur in the causative form, too. If causative *paton* occurs with a non-causative directional such as *ʔə* ‘go’, the latter is interpreted as aspectual operator rather than directional: *paton ʔə* ‘keep setting up’, *‘has set up’. There are instances of non-causative *tn* in contexts where one would expect the causative form in SM, as in (6.100). In this sentence *tn* obviously does not function as a directional, but rather as an inceptive aspectual operator.\(^{115}\)

(6.100) soŋ kyet həlɛh ʔon na.
SM  Soing  Kyet CAUS:free UP CAUS:GO
‘Soing Kyet suddenly fired (his gun).’ (KD)

When used as directional in the same context, the causative form is used, as in sentence (6.101) from the same text as (6.100).

(6.101) dēh pong ḥattn na.
SM  3 shoot CAUS:UP CAUS:GO
‘They shot up.’ (KD)

The use of *ḥattn* here indicates that the men who shot were actually located lower than their target. In another context the same sentence could be translated as ‘he shot into the air’. The upwards movement may be abstract rather than real, as in (6.102).

(6.102) ȵah  knah huin thuĩn-saḥ patuin ca guŋ jaku mān gah.
LM  person other speak praise CAUS:UP EAT merit body ABLE TOP
‘Other people may be able to praise their own merit.’ (DC:2)

**Summary**

The lexeme *tn* has been grammaticalized as postverbal directional at least since OM. At least since MM the function as aspect operator indicating a

\(^{114}\) The colloquial variant *ḥattn* is gaining popularity among Mon speakers, adding to the extended use of the universal prefix *ḥo*- in SM.

\(^{115}\) One might suspect here the colloquial variant *ḥattn* as in sentence (6.101), but the audio recording does not reveal a presyllable. It is possible, though, that the inaudibility here is due to the preceding aspirate final (*həlɛh ḥattn > həlɛhatology > həlɛh ḥtn*).
change of state or increase in degree is attested. In the modern language the aspectual value as inceptive (with a connotation of unexpected event, surprise) has become increasingly important. In all stages of Mon, both the simple form and the causative can function as full verb or as operator. In both functions they may combine with the directionals ʔa ‘go’ and klŋ ‘come’ (or their causative counterparts) in the fixed word order V (pə)tn ʔa (na)/klŋ (nèŋ). The lexeme tdn licenses an unmarked object, expressing either path or goal, while its causative counterpart pətn takes the theme as object. In combination with verbs denoting manner of motion like kwac ‘walk’, which do not allow unmarked objects, tdn also has the function to add an object, i.e. it may be labelled a coverb in this context.

The grammaticalized uses of Mon tdn are well attested in Southeast Asian languages, e.g. Thai khvн2 ‘move up’ covers almost the same functions as the modern Mon lexeme. Some of the functions of Mon tdn are also reflected in the use of the English adverb ‘up’ in expressions like ‘speak up’, corresponding to Mon htn tdn ‘speak up’ and ‘grow up’, Mon hnòk tdn ‘big up’.

6.3.5 ‹ceh› ceh ‘MOVE DOWN’ and ‹phye› phye ‘CAUS:DOWN’

Historical Development

The semantic opposite of tdn is OM ‹cis›, MM ‹cuih›, LM ‹ceh›, SM ceh ‘move down’. It is used in OM as full verb, with the allative object unmarked or marked by the preposition ‹han›, and the ablative object marked by the preposition ‹nor› ‘from’.

\[(6.103)\] cis tūn han manussalok.
OM move.down return ALL world.of.man
‘He came back down to the world of man.’ (SSKf29)

\[(6.104)\] smiï in cis nor tāwatiñ.
OM king Indra move.down ABL Tavatirôsa
‘Lord Indra came down from Tavatirôsa Heaven.’ (SSKg39)

In postverbal position, ‹cis› denotes a downward movement, as in ‹drep cis› ‘run down’, ‹scuti cis› ‘will be born in a lower sphere, e.g. a god will be reborn as a human’. OM does not seem to make use of a causative form of ‹cis›, which is attested in later stages of Mon. The verb ‹lābor› ‘droop, put down’ in (6.105) is intransitive, although the translation suggests a transitive reading. The corresponding verb in SM kemô can be used both in transitive

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116 Heine and Kuteva (2001) do not list a verb with the meaning ‘go up, move up’ in their paths of grammaticalization.
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and intransitive contexts, choosing the respective form of the directional, *ceh* or *phyeh*.

\[(6.105)\]  yal nom sanor chu ñeh lanibor cis
OM COND exist heritage wood 3 put.down.branches DOWN
row dlañ ’akuñ.
manner chamber even
‘If it has the heritage of a tree, it puts down branches like a chamber.’ (Ku92)

Occurring before another verb, *cis*, like the other directionals, denotes a purpose:

\[(6.106)\]  (kaleñ) tin han tul ’ākās pa prātihār blañ
OM float UP ALL above air do miracle SEQ
cis lhñor kyāk buddha tarley.
mov down pay respect holy Buddha lord:1s
‘He floated up into the sky and performed a miracle, then he came down to pay respect to the Lord Buddha.’ (DMI:102)

In MM, *cuih* as a full verb regularly occurs with the directionals *’ā* ‘go’ and *’klú* ‘come’, always in the order *cis ’ā* and *cis klú*. There is one apparent exception to this word order in the Shwedagon inscription, but according to the U Hkyit Thein (1965:156) the word *’ā* in the sentence in question is unreadable or at least not clear.

\[(6.107)\]  ... (ma) himu siwathe kuīw [’ā] cuih ket dhāt swok.
MM ... REL name Sivathera GIVE go move.down take relic hair
‘... who is called Sivathera let him go down and take the hair relic.’
(SDGb5)

After verbs of motion, *cuih* denotes a downward movement, optionally modified by a second directional *’ā* or *’klú*. The goal of the movement may further be introduced by the verb *cuip* ‘arrive’. The order is fixed as

\[V_{motion} cuih DIR cuip GOAL.\]

In causative contexts MM uses the causative form *phyuih*, which goes back to an unattested OM form *(pcis)*. MM *phyuih*, later *phyih*, occurs both as full verb and as postverbal directional.
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Modern Mon

In modern Mon, *ceh*\(^{117}\) occurs as full verb denoting a movement from a higher place to a lower one. The relative altitude may be physically real or abstract. The unmarked object of *ceh* indicates either the goal (allative) as in (6.108), or the origin (ablative) as in (6.109), of the movement, depending on the context. Usually the ablative object is marked by the preposition *nù*, while the allative is introduced by a directional (*ʔa* or *klŋ*).

(6.108) \(\text{dēצ ceh} \quad \text{dāc.}\)
SM 3 move.down water
‘He went into the water.’

(6.109) \(ʔeyeకరาצ ceh \quad \text{nān.}\)
SM king move.down palace
‘The king left the palace.’ (KKP)

As in MM, *ceh* in SM and LM is used as postverbal directional to indicate a downward movement, either concrete or abstract.

(6.110) \(ʔakīn \, \text{t̥yk kwac, kwac lōt ceh} \quad \text{dā} \, \text{pān kāŋj}.\)
SM monk Touk walk walk fall DOWN LOC mouth door
‘The reverend Touk walked, and as he walked he fell down at the door.’ (KN)

The movement of *kyo* ‘look, glance’ is less concrete, as it applies only to the activity itself, not the actor:

(6.111) \(t̥akph-kōh \, \text{kyō ceh} \quad \text{ʔa}.\)
SM ogre TOP look DOWN GO
‘The ogre looked down.’ (KKP)

The verb *ruih* ‘count’ in (6.112) does not involve a physical movement. The directional *ceh* and *ʔā* are used in an abstract sense in this context.

(6.112) \(kālēn \, \text{ruih ceh} \quad \text{ʔā} \, \text{kali lon kluŋ pwuiŋ masun kłāŋ}\)
LM return count DOWN GOpas exceed COME extent five hundred snāŋ prān-prān te’ gah
year more than-RDP that TOP
‘Counting back (down) it is more than five hundred years.’ (DC1)

\(^{117}\) For some speakers the pronunciation is *cih* rather than *ceh.*
The use of \textless ceh\textgreater{} in (6.113) is even more abstract, indicating a decrease in degree rather than a movement. This is the logical opposite of \textit{in} ‘move up’, which is used to denote a increase in degree.

(6.113) \textit{tā-lyuí=new sā ceh ’ā ’uit.}  
LM duty TOP light DOWN GO all  
‘The burden of her duties had all become lighter.’ (DC:37)

Although \textit{ceh} may be (and usually is) used to introduce a goal, it is not obligatory. Some verbs of movement may take an unmarked goal as object, as in the following sentence, where \textit{ceh} could be inserted between \textit{hatom} and \textit{kəʔəʔ} without changing the meaning.

(6.114) \textit{laʔ ɓeŋ-kyə hatom kəʔəʔ kəʔəʔ kəh.}  
SM when ship-wind fall Ko’ Dot TOP  
‘When that aeroplane crashed at Ko’ Dot.’ (KD)

With some verbs, \textit{ceh} may be used as resultative, as in the combination \textit{cəʔəʔ-huʔ-čeh ‘cannot eat’, lit. ‘eat not move down’. This expression denotes a physical or mental state of anxiety which prevents one from eating. The use of \textit{ceh} in RVCs is restricted to a small set of verbs and may be considered lexicalised rather than productive.

The causative form LM \textless phye\textgreater{}h, SM \textit{phyeh} (for some speakers \textit{phyih}) is used as full verb meaning ‘take down, bring down’ and as postverbal directional to denote a downward movement. Like the simple form, the causative can be applied to concrete and abstract movements.

**Summary**

The verb \textit{ceh} ‘move down’ has developed less grammatical functions than the other directionals. Its use as postverbal directional has been extended from concrete movements to increasingly abstract movements, resulting in \textit{ceh} denoting a decrease in degree with verbs of quality. As resultative verb, \textit{ceh} has restricted use occurring with a few verbs indicating the result of the action expressed by the main verb.

Heine and Kuteva (2002:117; 320) list the grammaticalization path DESCEND → DOWN, which is found in languages of Africa, Oceania and Asia. This corresponds to the use of \textit{ceh} as postverbal directional in Mon.
6.3.6 Other directionals: \( \text{tit/tpt} \) \( \text{tə/tət} \) ‘EXIT’
\( \text{lup/plop} \) \( \text{l̄ūp/plop} \) ‘ENTER’
\( \text{cuip/bacuip} \) \( \text{c̄ūp/h̄ēc̄ūp} \) ‘ARRIVE’
\( \text{cau/phyau, kaleñ, plan} \) \( \text{cao/phyao, k̄ālīŋ, plən} \)
‘RETURN’

\( \text{t̄ēt} \) and \( \text{l̄ūp} \)

The directionals \( \text{t̄ēt/p̄ēt} \) ‘exit, move out’/‘take out, bring out’ and \( \text{l̄ūp/plop} \) ‘enter, move in’/‘insert, put in’ are used as full verbs and as postverbal directionals in all recorded stages of Mon. The unmarked object of both \( \text{t̄ēt} \) and \( \text{l̄ūp} \) usually denotes the goal, the source of the movement being marked by the ablative preposition \( \text{n}ù\).

(6.115) \( \text{tit} \) \text{bihār} \text{r̄men dhar.} 
OM exit monastery hear Dhamma
‘He goes out to the monastery to hear the Dhamma.’ (Ku115)

(6.116) \( \text{tit} \) \text{nor ummañ.} 
OM exit ABL tunnel
‘He comes out of the tunnel.’ (An196)

The causative forms come into regular use in MM and are consistently used in causative contexts in LM and SM.

(6.116) \( \text{dēh tek pət} \) \( \text{l̄okd̄h ra'?} \). 
SM 3 beat CAUS:EXIT thus FOC
‘He beat it out like this.’ (KD)

(6.117) \( \text{kuiw thapuiy pan yuik plop n̄a kaḷā jnok mway.} \)
LM GIVE novice four lift CAUS:ENTER CAUS:GO chest big one
‘He had the four novices carry a big chest (into the palace).’
(DC:23)

The forms \( \text{t̄ēt} \) and \( \text{l̄ūp} \) have not developed extended grammatical functions beyond the use as directionals. They may be used as second elements in resultative verb compounds, e.g. \( \text{ku (hù?) t̄ēt} \) ‘can(not) think of it’, lit. ‘think (not) exit’, but this use is restricted to a few set compounds and does not seem to be productive (yet?).

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OM ‘cup, cip, cap’ ‘arrive at, come to’ is used as full verb with the goal as unmarked object, as in ‘cip ’assamapit’ ‘he arrives at the hermitage’ (An326). In combination with verbs of motion, ‘cup, cip’ occupies the last place in the sequence: ‘klu ci’ ‘come to, arrive’, ‘tit ’ar cip’ ‘go out to’. No causative form is attested in OM.

In MM the reversed word order is found, i.e. ‘cuip ’ā’, besides the older ‘ā cuip’ ‘arrive at’. The causative form ‘bacuip’ is a new formation in MM. If OM had a causative of this verb, the form should be *pcip’, which would result in MM *phyuip’ (cf. MM phuih ‘move down’, from the root OM cis, MM cuih ‘move down’).

In SM both word orders are possible, apparently without difference in meaning. The following two sentences are from the same speaker, exhibiting both word orders.

(6.118) kyapan tān ?a cup kṛṇa kṛṇ kōḥ.
SM Japanese move.up GO ARRIVE river Kang TOP
‘The Japanese went up to Kroeng Kang River.’ (KD)

(6.119) cup ?a kyac sen-lān.
SM arrive GO pagoda Thanlan
‘They arrived at Kyaik Thanlan Pagoda.’ (KD)

The causative həcup is regularly used in causative contexts in SM, sometimes in combination with the simple form:

(6.120) kala? kōḥ deh ?a phalā həcup na cup
SM time TOP 3 go send CAUS:ARRIVE CAUS:GO ARRIVE
hōs? ?ykkōtha?.
house president
‘At that time they brought him to the house of the president.’ (KD)

Sometimes the simple form is used instead of the expected causative. This might be an indication of the degree of grammaticalization, i.e. development towards prepositional function of cup.

(6.121) l̄au ta’gah yuik phau cuip sñī.
LM sesame PL TOP lift CAUS:return ARRIVE house
‘She carried the sesame back to her house.’ (MKP:30)
Alternatively, though less likely, one might interpret the sentence as containing consecutive events: ‘Carrying back the sesame she arrived home.’

Like *tet* and *lip*, *çöp* may be used in a few resultative constructions but has not developed extended grammaticalized functions in Mon. It may be used as coverb, introducing the goal of the motion, a function which has been extended to the temporal dimension (‘until’) in some contexts. All functions of *çöp* are still clearly related to its original semantics ‘arrive at, come to’.

There are three different lexemes expressing the notion of ‘return, go back’, viz. *cao*, *kəliŋ*, and *plən*. They have reached different degrees of grammaticalization in the modern language, *plən* now being used almost exclusively as adverb. Only the first of the lexemes is attested in OM, the latter two appearing only in MM and modern Mon. Another OM verb, *tūn* ‘return, go back’ has developed into a particle denoting emphasis or topicality in LM.

**cao, kəliŋ, and plən**

The word OM *cow*, MM, LM *cau*, SM *cao* is used as full verb, with or without an unmarked object indicating the goal of the movement, or as postverbal directional. In combination with other verbs of motion and directionals, the word order is fixed (optional elements are in parentheses):

\[(S) \text{V}_{\text{motion}} \text{cao} (ʔa/kləŋ) (çöp) (\text{GOAL})\]

e.g.

\[(6.122) \text{krip cao kəliŋ kwan pəŋa?}\]

SM run RETURN COME village Panga

‘He came running back to Panga.’ (KD)

Since MM the causative *phyau* ‘bring back, take back’ is attested. Its form suggests that it goes back to an (unattested) OM form *pcow* (cf. *cuip* - *bacuip* vs. *cuih* - *phyuih* above).

Apart from its use as directional, which may in some contexts be extended to abstract senses, *cao* has not developed grammatical functions.

The verb *kaleŋ* is attested since MM and occurs chiefly in combination with *cau* as *kaleŋ cau* ‘return’. In the modern language, *kaleŋ*, *kəliŋ* is mainly used in preverbal position to express the notion of ‘go back to V-ing’ or a backward motion, both concrete and abstract, e.g. *kəliŋ hom* ‘answer, reply’, *kəliŋ kəp* ‘give back’. When used as full verb it does not license an unmarked goal object, unlike *cao*. If *kəliŋ* occurs with a direct object, this is
interpreted as THEME, not as goal, as in *kəliəŋ hloə* ‘return the money’. One may therefore say that *kəliəŋ* has inherent causative meaning (‘bring back, give back’), though this is not the case where it occurs as an intransitive verb. The auxiliary function of preverbal *kəliəŋ* is illustrated in the following sentences.

(6.123) **kaleŋ ruih ceh ţã.**
LM RETURN count DOWN GO
‘Counting backwards.’ (DC:1)

(6.124) ?ua hım ?ua kəliəŋ màŋ phèə həmêə plən nọŋ.
SM 1s speak 1s RETURN stay school Burmese again ASRT
‘I said I am going back to study at the Burmese school.’ (KN)

The word *plan, plon* is used as verb as well as adverb in MM. It is not attested in OM and its origin is unclear. There is a connection with Old Burmese *plan*, modern *pyan* ‘return, turn, do again’. According to Shorto (DMI:252) this might be a Mon causative formation of the Burmese root *lan* ‘be turned up’, of which there is also a regular Burmese causative, viz. *hlan* ‘change position, turn inside out’. Mon has a secondary causative *palan* ‘restore, give back’.

In MM, *plan* is used as full verb, often followed by a directional, as in *plan ’ā* ‘go back’. In postverbal position, *plan* is translated as ‘again, in turn, re-V’, as in the expressions *dak plan* ‘rebuild’, *huim plan* ‘reply’, *jnah plan* ‘defeat in turn’ (DMI:252).

In SM, *plən* is used almost exclusively as adverb with the meaning ‘again, in turn’. Shorto (1962:142) lists *plən* also as verb ‘repeat, do again, turn around’, but gives no example sentences. All LM and SM instances of *plən* in my data are adverbia and best translated as ‘again’.

(6.125) **khyū thɔh kuiw plan roñ.**
LM write show GIVE again ASRT
‘I am going to write it down again (for everyone to read).’ (DC:4)

(6.126) **kəliəŋ ?a plən, ?a toə pỸ højeh.**
SM return GO again go FINISH watch sing
‘We went back again, we went there and we watched them sing.’ (KN)

In colloquial SM, *plən* is also used with nominal elements, as in the frequent phrase *ʔuə plən* ‘Me again!’, used to show dissatisfaction with being called or talked about again.
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Heine and Kuteva (2002:259f; 325) list the grammaticalization of ‘return’ into an iterative marker. This also holds for the MM verb ‘plan’, which is used in modern Mon only in adverbial function, not as verb. Of the other lexemes denoting ‘return’, one, OM ‘cow’ has retained its value as full verb and has hardly undergone any grammaticalization apart from its function as directional, while the other, MM ‘kalœŋ’ has retained its full verb value and acquired some grammatical functions as well.

We thus have the following developments of verbs meaning ‘return’ in Mon:

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
\text{OM} & \text{MM} & \text{SM} \\
\text{‘cow’ ‘return’} & \rightarrow & \text{‘cau’ ‘return; DIR (BACKWARD)’} \\
& & \rightarrow \text{‘cao’ ‘return to; DIR’} \\
\text{‘kalœŋ’ ‘return; in turn, back’} & \rightarrow & \text{‘kalœŋ’ ‘return; in turn, back’} \\
\text{‘plan’ ‘return; again’} & \rightarrow & \text{‘plœn’ ‘again (ITER), REPET’} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[\text{cao: DO = GOAL}\\n\text{kalœŋ: DO = THEME}\]

C. Disposers

6.3.7 ‘law’ lâ ‘KEEP’

Historical Development

According to DMI, OM ‘lår’ is a verb meaning ‘deposit, place’, which is mainly used as a postverbal auxiliary “marking perfective aspect” (DMI:333). Examples given in DMI include the following sentences.

\[(6.127) \text{myil } ‘abhιpɾïy } ‘or (sûl) lår \text{ girluŋ guna jirku.}\\n\text{OM order royal.order command write KEEP NML:many virtue body}\\n\text{‘He gave orders that the sum of his virtues should be inscribed.’}\]

\[(6.128) \text{mankyåk \textit{buddha} tarley byådes lår.}\\n\text{OM REL holy Buddha lord:1s prophesy KEEP}\\n\text{‘Which the Lord Buddha foretold.’}\]

In OM, ‘lår’ is frequently used in the combination ‘reŋ lår’ ‘bring (and leave), make ready for (later) use’. The use of OM ‘lår’ suggests a relinquuitive or preparative function, rather than plain perfective aspect.

In MM, ‘lar, law, lor, low, låw’ has full verbal meaning as ‘deposit, place’. The phonological development from OM ‘lår’ to MM ‘lar, etc.’ is irregular. We would expect a MM form *‘lä’. There is already in OM a (weak?) form
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〈lar〉, which may be the source of the MM forms.\(^{118}\) The prospective (“hypothetical”) form 〈slar, slor〉, which is not found in the OM data, is attested in MM inscriptions.

The use as full verb in MM is illustrated in the following example from the Shwedagon Inscription. If 〈lar〉 was used as an auxiliary, the preceding verb in this sentence should be 〈ŋā〉 ‘bring’ instead of 〈čā〉 ‘go’.

\[(6.129)\] dhāṭ swok smiṅ nāk jayasena ma ’ā lar pday
MM relic hair king Nāga Jayasena REL go deposit LOC
bhūmindharanā(gabhow)
earth:hold.up:Nāga:world
‘the hair relics which the Nāga King Jayasena had gone to deposit in the world of the Nāgas who hold up the earth’ (SDGb5)

The regular reflex of the MM forms in modern Mon is LM 〈law〉, SM 〈lā〉 with the meaning ‘deposit, keep, leave at a place’. In the modern language the use as full verbs is rather restricted, 〈lā〉 being chiefly used as postverbal operator. The development from OM to MM and SM seems atypical, with the OM lexeme being chiefly a grammatical element turning into a full verb in MM and then back into a grammatical operator again in SM. The apparent circularity of the development may be spurious and the seeming lack of use as main verb in OM is probably due to the limited data available for this stage of Mon.

Modern Mon

The use of 〈lā〉 ‘deposit, leave, keep’ as V2 in SM and LM seems to be inflational, the original function as relinquitive or preparative operator not always being present. According to Shorto (1962:183) 〈lā〉 is used to mark “the perfective aspect”. Bauer (1982:396) states that 〈lā〉 denotes the “perfective aspect”, which “marks the conclusion of an act, and does not occur with stative verbs”. The operator 〈lā〉 does indeed not occur with verbs expressing qualities. It does occur with a wide range of verbs, including activities and ISTA with prominent initial point, and in a wide range of situations. In no instance does 〈lā〉 describe an ongoing situation itself, but rather the ongoing result of an event or act. In combination with temporal prepositions like 〈laʔ ‘when’, ʔəkho ‘when, while’, V+lā is to be translated as ‘when he had V-ed’, not ‘when he was V-ing’. There are contexts, though, that are incompatible with the use of 〈lā〉. This is due to the additional connotation of the operator,

\[^{118}\] If this is the case it remains to be explained why the weak form survived in MM in all functions, including the one as full verb, which seems to be extended in MM and later stages of the language. One would expect a phonetically full form in this function.
expressing ongoing interest in the event by either the subject of the sentence or by the speaker.

The relinquitive expresses the ongoing result or influence of an act. Such expressions may be paraphrased as ‘do and leave in a state’, as in (6.130) and (6.131).

(6.130)  hətəŋ  thəp  ?əhmɔ̀  dəh  pɔk  lò  ?ət  mɔ̀ŋ  raʔ?.
SM    window storey below 3  open  KEEP  all  STAY  FOC
‘They had opened (and left open) all the windows of the lower storeys.’ (KD)

(6.131) ʔəca ʔəŋ  thon  tɔʔ  pɔk  lò  tɔp  yaʔ?
SM    teacher Aung Htun  PL  open  KEEP  military.unit  NSIT
‘Aung Htun and his people had already set up their unit.’ (KD)

By the time the speaker is talking about, Aung Htun had set up an armed group and kept it in this state, i.e. the group was still fighting or ready to fight. This meaning is close to the preparative, expressed in (6.132). The preparative denotes an act that is done now for later use, to prepare something or someone for a later (possible) event. The subject of (6.132) are children who know that they are to be abandoned in the forest by their father and before leaving home take along turmeric powder with which they mark the way back. This is the Mon version of the popular ‘Hansel and Gretel’ theme.

(6.132)  ket  na  lò  mit.
SM    take  CAUS:GO  KEEP  turmeric
‘They took along turmeric.’ (KKP)

In (6.133) lɔ not only functions to express an ongoing result of the act (of remembering), it also distinguishes the volitional/controlled use of hätəm ‘remember’ from its involitional/uncontrolled use. The latter is commonly marked by the postverbal operator tɛh ‘HIT’ (s. 6.3.14). The context of (6.133a) would suggest an uncontrolled reading, but this is excluded by the use of lɔ

(6.133a) kyac  hätəm  lò  raʔ  noŋ.
SM    monk  remember  KEEP  FOC  ASRT
‘The monk can still remember me, I’m sure.’
(lit. ‘still keeps me in mind’) (KD)
The opposite of *hatem* is *wət* ‘forget’, which does not co-occur with *lə*. The act of forgetting is conceptualized in Mon as leading to a ‘non-state’, so there can be no ongoing result or future use to be denoted by *lə*.

(6.133b) *kyæ *wət lə raʔ noŋ.
SM monk forget KEEP FOC ASRT

This is not a case of interference of the original semantics ‘keep’ with the grammaticalized functions, as shown by combinations like *thət*lə ‘discard, throw away’ which are common in SM. The point seems to be that there must be a describable state of the object after the activity/event expressed by the main verb. If the object disappears completely, as is the case with ‘forget’, *lə* may not be used. There is a component of reversibility involved in *lə*, i.e. the state described is conceived as potentially prone to later change back to the original state or to some other state. This explains the impossibility of combinations like *khyær lə ‘die KEEP’. This connotation is not present in all occurrences of *lə*, though, as shown in the sentences below. Instead of ‘reversibility’ we may speak of ‘ongoing interest in the act/event’.

The result of the act may persist merely in an abstract sense, as in the next sentence. The speaker is a Nāga snake whose life was saved by a young man. Now the Nāga takes the young man to meet its mother and tells her about the incident. The result of helping the Nāga is that the Nāga now owes gratitude to the man (besides the fact that the snake is still alive, which is not the topic of this sentence).

(6.134) noʔ  raʔ mənɪ phàt lə ʔuə.
SM NML:this119 FOC man help KEEP 1s
‘This is the man who saved me.’ (KKP)

While in (6.134) there is still some visible result of the act, this is not the case in (6.135). Here the act lives on merely in the memory of the subject. This use brings *lə* close to the experiential, with which it co-occurs here.

(6.135) ʔuə kiəŋ ʔa lə bəŋkək.
SM 1s EXPER go KEEP Bangkok
‘I have been to Bangkok.’ (NOP)

Having been extended in use to experiential contexts, *lə* can also be used in purely past contexts, as in (6.136) where the speaker, Nai Cae’ talks about working on the Thailand-Burma Railway under the Japanese. The railway has long disappeared, at least the part Nai Cae’ was working on. There is therefore no remaining result of his act, besides his memory.

119 *fəʔ ‘this’ is an infixed form of LM -(i-na’), SM ʔənəʔ. See Jenny (2003:187f).
(6.136) ʔuə klon lə̀ lə́y.
SM 1s do KEEP EMPH
‘I did work there.’ (KD)

Another example of ʔə̀ apparently expressing past tense is given in the next sentence, here co-occurring with the negation marker.

(6.137) deh hùʔ klyŋ lə̀.
SM 3 NEG come KEEP
‘He didn’t come.’ (KD)

These examples seem to suggest a development of ʔə̀ from relinquitive (and/or preparative) to a general past tense marker in SM. Indeed most instances of ʔə̀ in the data are in past contexts, but this is due to the nature of the data - people generally talk more about the past than about the future - rather than the actual function of ʔə̀. The use of ʔə̀ is not restricted to past contexts, as shown by expressions like (6.138), which is temporally neutral.

(6.138) ʔu kəʔ mə̀ ʔuə səŋ ʔə̀ həʔ mə̀ mə̀ʔ.
SM 1s GET stay 1s build KEEP house one CL
‘I am building/have built a house to live in.’ (KKP)

Sentence (6.132) above could, in another context, be understood as a command ‘Take along some turmeric powder!’, i.e. with future reference.

Summary

The verb ʔə̀ ‘deposit, place’ was used as a perfective aspectual auxiliary at least since OM times. Its use as perfective (relinquitive, preparative) aspect marker was extended, probably already in MM, where ʔə̀r, etc. is used as full verb and auxiliary. In modern Mon the use was further extended and the semantics accordingly bleached. In SM ʔə̀ may be used in purely past contexts, leading some speakers to use it as a standard translation for English past tense. The use of ʔə̀ is not restricted to past contexts, though, and also occurs in future contexts. The development may have been influenced by the corresponding lexeme in Burmese htà ‘keep, deposit, leave at a place’ with similar grammaticalized functions (s. Okell 1969:308f; Okell and Allott 2001:99f).

An important part of the semantics of ʔə̀ is that of ‘ongoing interest in the act/event’, which excludes verbs denoting a definitive or irreversible event like khyə́t ‘die’ and wə́t ‘forget’ from occurring with ʔə̀. A situation that is
not reversible or an event that leads to a non-state is not the object (or worthy) of further interest.

6.3.8 〈tho〉 thdʔ ‘THROW (AWAY), DISCARD’

The other “aspectual verb” described as “perfective marker” by Bauer is thdʔ, which overlaps in use with lɔ. According to Bauer (1982:396) “[a]s yet, no distributional/precise account can be offered as to whether certain classes of autonomous verbs occur only with one particular aspectual verb.” Bauer goes on stating that some verbs may be used with both lɔ and thdʔ, while others occur only with one. According to Shorto (1962:120), thdʔ simply marks the “perfective aspect”.

As is the case with lɔ described above, thdʔ is a marker of manner or “subjective point of view of the speaker or subject” rather than of aspect/aktionsart. Whereas lɔ denotes ongoing interest in an event, the use of thdʔ indicates that either the subject or the speaker have no further interest in the event or its consequences. This lack of interest may be interpreted as undeliberate or impulsive act in some contexts (‘do something without considering the result or consequences’). Indicating no further interest in the event, thdʔ, unlike lɔ, occurs frequently with irreversible situations.

The verb thdʔ is not attested in OM, where its place as full verb and auxiliary is taken by 〈du’il, du’ol, du’ul〉 ‘cast off, abandon’. MM 〈tho〉 ‘throw away, abandon’ does not seem to occur as auxiliary, the function of which is covered by 〈kle’〉 ‘leave, forsake, deposit’ (in LM and SM also ‘be lost, out of sight, disappear’). According to Shorto, 〈kle’〉 is used “[e]xtensively as final element in v. cpds. with sense of removal, rejection” (1971:63)

In LM, 〈tho〉 and 〈kle’〉 both occur as postverbal perfective operator, with the former becoming increasingly popular. In SM, kleʔ is hardly used as operator and occurs chiefly as full verb meaning ‘be lost, disappear’, while thdʔ is used both as full verb meaning ‘throw (away), discard, abandon’ and as postverbal operator indicating ‘no further interest’ or impulsiveness. This is shown in the following sentences.

(6.139) kut thpʔ hatɔn, coŋ thpʔ hatɔn yaʔ.

SM cut THROWbridge burn THROWbridge NSIT

‘They just cut off the bridge, they burned the bridge (and that’s the end of it).’ (KD)
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(6.140) mani menìh khyt thoʔ bøt ma hə̀ləŋ klon dən kə̀h
SM man die THROW about extent NML:many do way TOP
tok ket teh.
count TAKE COND
‘Many people died working on that railway, if you count them.’
(KD)

The notion of ‘do without considering the consequences’ is illustrated in
(6.141).

(6.141) bèʔ toʔ kə̀h sioŋ rɔp thoʔ ?øt sioŋ, ?uə mùʔ ciəʔ mùʔ?
SM 2fam PL TOP right?catch THROW all right? 1s what eat what
‘You guys caught all (the fish) right? What (do you suppose)
am I going to eat now?’ (WK)

Besides denoting the undeliberateness/inconsiderateness of the subject’s act
of catching all the fish in the pond, the use of thoʔ also indicates that for the
speaker the situation is irreversible, i.e. there are no fish left for him to catch.
The use of lɔ in the same sentence (rɔp lɔ ?øt) would indicate that the speaker
has further interest in the fact that the other men have caught all the fish, i.e.
he hopes to get some from them. The combination of thoʔ with rɔp ‘catch’
also indicates the high degree of grammaticalization of this marker. This is
further demonstrated by its co-occurrence with thoʔ as full verb as in (6.142),
as well as the fact that postverbal thoʔ is often phonetically reduced to [hθ],
one of the few instances of phonetic reduction of an operator in Mon. 120

(6.142) ɗeʔ hùʔ ciəʔ, ɗeʔ thoʔ thɔʔ.
SM 3 NEG eat 3 throw.away THROW
‘He didn’t eat (poisoned rice), he threw it away.’ (WK)

Sentence (6.143) shows that thoʔ is primarily a marker of manner or point
of view, not of aspect. This sentence seems to suggest an imperfective
reading. The use of thoʔ in this contexts is licensed by the notion of
‘undeliberateness’ or ‘inconsiderateness’. Although the main verb mɔŋ
is modified by the temporal expression ma lɔʔ ‘for a long time’, the situation
is described as complete and its internal structure is not accessible to further
description, i.e. it is not possible to add an event that occurred during their
(the Japanese’) stay at Ko’ Dot village.

120 The other operator undergoing phonetic reduction (or rather weakening) in some contexts
is mɔŋ (s. 6.3.1).
The use of $th\dot{a}$? in imperative contexts denotes an order that does not allow or expect any contradiction or argument. The order is seen as irreversible. The speaker of (6.144) asked his mother for permission to ordain as a novice, but she plainly refuses his request, as he has not finished school yet. The second instance of $th\dot{a}$? occurs in a context that suggests continuous rather than perfective reading. Here again the manner connotation overrides the aspectual value.

In (6.145), the speaker requests her husband to abandon his children, because they are too poor to feed them. If he does not obey, she will leave him. The operator is reinforced by the addition of the directional/aspectual verb $\dot{a}$. 

Summary

The verb $th\dot{a}$? has been grammaticalized as postverbal operator, mostly indicating a point of view (manner) of ‘no further interest’, impulsiveness, undeliberateness, and inconsiderateness. In some contexts the use of $th\dot{a}$? leads to a perfective/completive reading, but this is probably due to contextual factors and implicature rather than an inherent function of this operator.

The development of $th\dot{a}$? has probably been influenced by the corresponding Burmese verb $pyi'$ ‘throw away, abandon’, which is used as verb modifier expressing “to V quickly, thoughtlessly, toss off V-ing” (Okell 1969:397; Okell and Allott 2001:125f), paralleling at least some of the functions of Mon $th\dot{a}$?.$^{121}$

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$^{121}$ Other functions of Mon $th\dot{a}$? are covered in Burmese by the verb $lai'$ (s. Okell 1969:30ff; Okell and Allott 2001:214ff)
Heine and Kuteva (2002:297f) describe the grammaticalization of **throw** into a **perfect** marker, which may further develop into a **past** marker. The process is attested in languages of Australia and Asia.

6.3.9 ‹ca› ɕiʔ ‘eat’

The verb ‹ca› (OM, MM, LM), ɕiʔ in SM, is a well established Mon-Khmer root with the meaning ‘eat’: OKhm ‹ca› (modern irregular sìʔ), Semang chi, (s. DMI:90), Katu caca, ca: (Costello and Khamluan 1993:4, 13). Burmese shows a similar root sà ɕaɓ, which in turn has broad Tibeto-Burman affiliation: Mru tsâlºd (Luce 1985:280), Tibetan 〈bza, za, zas〉 (Luce 1985:305), Limbu ca- (Ebert 1994:42). The details of the connection between the Mon-Khmer and Tibeto-Burman roots are not clear.

The causative 〈baca〉 ‘let eat, feed’ is attested since MM. SM ɕiʔ shows irregular phonetic development from MM ‹ca›, the expected form of which would be SM caʔ. This form is found in SM, but with the meaning ‘begin, start’, a recent loan from Burmese sá ‹ca›.

In SM ɕiʔ is a frequent postverbal marker, covering different functions, which are not easily definable. It is grouped here with the disposers because there are some similarities with both l̂ and thoʔ, although the exact connotation is not clear. Shorto (1962:92) lists ceʔ once as full verb meaning ‘eat, live on, govern, etc.’ and once as verb particle “denoting generic or habitual aspect”. Some of the examples given by Shorto do not fit his definition as generic or habitual, e.g. oa mòŋ hù ɕiʔ mìp ceʔ’eh122 ‘I am not very well’. Halliday (1955:xx) lists χi among the verbal affixes, “expressing usefulness or enjoyment”. Halliday does not give any examples of the use of this “affix”. Native speakers, when asked explicitly about the meaning of ɕiʔ, give different answers. Among the typical explanations are “the action is not really important”, “we use it to add emphasis to the verb”, and “we just say this, it does not mean anything special”. These are quite common utterances made by native speakers about abstract words in their language.

**Historical development**

Already in OM ‹ca› possibly had aspectual value. Shorto (DMI:90f) gives two separate entries, one for the full verb ‹ca› ‘eat’, the second for the verb particle ‹ca› “denoting constant or habitual character of action or permanence of its effect”.

Examples of the auxiliary use of ‹ca› in OM are given in the following sentences.

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122 Shorto’s original spelling. The same sentence in the adapted spelling used in this study would be ḡo mòŋ hù mìp ɕiʔ’eh.
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(6.146) ḍuñ midhil ma smiṇ wideharāja tāw ca wo’.
OM city MithilāREL king Videharāja dwell EAT this
‘This is the city of Mithilā, where King Videharāja lives.’ (Ku156)

(6.147) salī ma sac ca
OM rice REL bear.fruit EAT
‘rice which fruits constantly’ (Ku48)

Luce (1961:368; 385) translates (6.146) as ‘Mithila, dwelt in and ‘eaten’ by
king Vedeharāja’, i.e. he interprets ‹ca‖ as a full verb with the meaning ‘be
lord of, receive revenues, hold as fief’. This meaning is common in LM and
SM, but according to Shorto (DMI:90) it is not found prior to MM.123
Sentence (6.147) according to Luce is tentatively translated as ‘the rice which
fruits, they eat’. Luce adds a question mark to his translation, showing his
uncertainty of its correctness. The third example given in DMI appears to be
semantically less ambiguous:

(6.148) row ma tak ca tnak birsey pan...
OM manner REL fasten EAT NML:fasten iron four
‘As if it were anchored with four stakes of iron...’ (SSKc50)

The same sentence in EB (I/I, p.101) is given as
row [m]a ..... tak (na) [tn]a[k birsey p]an

The word (na), according to a footnote, “looks like ca”.

U Hkyit Thein (1965:I 20) gives the same sentence as

‘row ma . . tak [na] tnak birsey pan

In OM (as in MM and LM) ‹na‖ is a preposition marking the instrumental.
If this is indeed the correct reading, we are left without certain instances of
‹ca‖ as aspectual marker in OM.

The situation is different in MM, where there is a row of unambiguous
occurrences of postverbal ‹ca‖ showing its grammaticalized function. Among
the sentences given in DMI are the following two, where the original
semantics of ‹ca‖ as ‘eat’ has obviously been lost.

123 Cf. the corresponding expressions in Burmese and Thai, viz. myòu sà ‘govern; governor’
and kin mātāng ‘govern, be master of a city’ respectively, both lit. ‘eat a town/land’.

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(6.149) spa sor tuy smay ca yay ŋañh.
MM PROSP:do medicine FINISH PROSP:treat EAT illness person
‘He will practice medicine and treat people’s illnesses.’ (DMI:90)

While ‹ca› in this sentence may be interpreted as ‘do for a living’, a use of the verb meaning ‘eat’ also found in Burmese (lou’ sà ‘do eat’) and Thai (tham kin ‘do eat’), this interpretation is not available in (6.150).

(6.150) ptup ca ku thān te’ tuy.
MM CAUS:same EAT OBL place that FINISH
‘Making it a replica of the place there.’ (DMI:90)

Modern Mon

The use of postverbal ❁əʔ in modern Mon is frequent and seems to be increasing in SM. A development from a semantically full verbs into a postverbal operator can be seen in the following examples.

The original meaning of ❁əʔ as ‘eat’ is present in some contexts:

(6.151) khep ca sat khep daḥ tay.
LM cut eat areca.nut cut HIT hand
‘She cut areca nut (to eat) and inadvertently cut her finger.’
(RDR:178)

6.152) kəpə̀ kə̀ hlo pənəŋhəke ṭān ciəʔ ɓao.
SM collect get money five Kyat buy eat sugarcane
‘He got five Kyat and he bought sugarcane (to eat).’ (KKP)

In combination with wi ‘look after, cure, treat, raise, tend’, ❁əʔ has obviously lost its full verbal semantics, as it would otherwise occur in the causative form pəəciəʔ.

(6.153) təkəŋ kə̀ hwi ciəʔ dɔ̀ hɔəʔ.
SM ogre TOP tend EAT LOC house
‘The ogre fostered her in his house.’ (KKP)

Here ❁əʔ may have habitual reading. This is also the case in the combination kok ciəʔ ‘call, name’ (lit. ‘call eat’), where the use of ❁əʔ distinguishes the main verb from its use as ‘call, summon’.

201
(6.154) khu-meʔ  déh kok čiaʔ  haoʔ.
SM  kome  3  call  eat  uncooked.rice
‘They (the Japanese) called uncooked rice kome.’ 124 (KD)

No habitual notion is present in the combination lèə čia (sometimes with causative V2 lèə pačiaʔ) ‘tell, inform’. In this combination čiaʔ has some as yet undefined function. No information can be obtained from native speakers about the value of čiaʔ in the following sentences. Perhaps the notion of ‘usefulness’ as given by Halliday is relevant here.

(6.155) ʔua  lèə čiaʔ  koʔ  ʔəkùn  səməʔ  raʔ.
SM  1s  tell  eat  give  monk  Siri  foc
‘I told the monk Siri.’ (KN)

(6.156) ʔhə’dək  lau  bea  huit  parū-parā.
LM  crow  tell  caus:eat  reason  matter
‘The crow told (her) what had happened.’ (LPM:10)

The notion of ‘usefulness’ can also be seen in the following sentences.

(6.157) ʔətah  lòn  teh  kachəŋ čiaʔ  məʂ  teh...
SM  new.year  pass:cond  wash  eat  stay  cond
‘As the New Year’s festival was over and I was doing the laundry...’
(KD)

(6.158) ʔuə  klùʔ  poy ʔə  hlæy  čiaʔ  məʂ  ko  pəŋ-məŋə.
SM  sun  dark  1pl  go  change  eat  stay  obl  trousers
‘When it got dark we went to change into trousers.’ (KD)

Halliday’s ‘enjoyment’ is present in (6.159).

6.159) ʔəkəh kəh  klyŋ  ket  čiaʔ  ʔəmèy  déh  nəʔ.
SM  ogre  top  come  take  eat  mother  3  this
‘That ogre came and took his mother (for his wife).’ (WK)

In other contexts it is questionable if čiaʔ is used to express usefulness or enjoyment. The following sentence was uttered in a non-formal, real-life situation. When asked about its correctness later, many speakers denied that it can be used. Others accepted the sentence as correct, and many keep using it when not aware of being observed.

124 Jap. 米 kome ‘uncooked rice’.
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(6.160) ʔua lûp ɕioʔ høaʔ dac kla.
SM 1s enter EAT house water before
‘I am going to the toilet for a minute.’ (NOP)

Other contexts suggest neither usefulness/enjoyment nor habitual/generic aspect. This is the case in the combination kôp ɕioʔ, where ɕioʔ indicates a lasting result of the act of giving.

(6.161) kon wùt têh kôp ɕioʔ lâkâh.
SM child woman HIT give EAT thus
‘He thus had to hand over his daughter.’ (KKP)

The notion of lasting result can also be seen in contexts that clearly exclude usefulness and enjoyment, as in the next two sentences.

(6.162) ʔua wêt ɕioʔ yaʔ.
SM 1s forget EAT NSIT
‘I have forgotten it.’ (KD)

(6.163) thàt kløʔ mòŋ niʔ têh khûnt ɕioʔ ʔon niʔ.
SM element cross.over STAY little COND die EAT few little
‘If the body elements got through a little bit, not so many died.’ (KD)

Summary

The postverbal operator ɕioʔ ‘EAT’ covers a wide range of functions, some of which are difficult to define. The common notion of ɕioʔ seems to be immediate or permanent result of the act, in some cases with a connotation of usefulness and/or enjoyment. The habitual reading assigned to this operator by Shorto is probably an implicature of either ‘permanent result’ as in kok ɕioʔ ‘call (a/by name)’ or ‘usefulness’ as in klon ɕioʔ ‘do (for a living)’.

The corresponding verb in Burmese has some of the grammaticalized functions it has in Mon, but to a much smaller extent. Okell and Allott (2001:50) list sà as postverb meaning ‘consume, to V with relish, to savour V-ing, V permanently’.
D. Benefactives

6.3.10 ‹ket› ket ‘TAKE’

The verb ket ‘take’ remained unchanged in form and meaning from OM through MM up to LM and SM. Being an active, volitional verb ket is often used in a conative sense, leading to a translation as ‘want’ rather than ‘take’. Already in OM ‹ket› is used as second element in verb compounds such as ‹pkom ket› ‘assemble, bring together’, ‹dūn ket› ‘receive’, ‹rap ket› ‘seize, capture’ (DMI:51). The meaning ‘take’ is still intact in these combinations.

At least since MM, the use of ‹ket› as postverbal operator “implying action for one’s own benefit or purpose” (ibid.) is attested. In this function the original verbal semantics have been lost, i.e. ‹ket› is fully grammaticalized. This grammaticalized use of ‹ket› is illustrated in (6.164) and (6.165), both from Dhammaceṭṭi’s inscription at Kalyāṇi Thein in Pegu. Shorto’s analysis as “action for one’s own benefit or purpose” is valid only for the former sentence, the latter expressing not ‘self-benefit’ but rather a ‘self-initiated, spontaneous’ event.

(6.164) ey ler spa ket kam saran tanoh ra.
MM 1s TOP PROSP:do TAKE deed act separate FOC
‘I shall perform my ceremonies separately.’ (KLYa51)

(6.165) (h)ē dah ket ’aluir de(h)
MM 3 be TAKE volition 3
‘It arises spontaneously.’ (KLYc14)

In the modern language, ket is a very frequent postverbal operator, indicating that the act is performed either for one’s own benefit (‘egoistic’) or of one’s own accord, without external impulse such as permission or command from another person. In some instances ket co-occurs with non-volitional verbs of perception such as mòja ‘hear’ and mət ‘see’. Its function in these contexts is less clear, but there is always the notion of ‘egocentricity’ involved in the use of ket.

The following sentences illustrate the ‘self-benefactive’ function of ket.

(6.166) dhēh klon ket dən kəh.
SM 3 do TAKE way TOP
‘They (the Japanese) built that railway for their own purpose.’ (KD)

125 ‘subject-centricity’ would be more accurate.
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(6.167) thapuiy piṭakadhara gah kok ket kwah jaku kharah pan.
LM novice Piṭakadhara TOP call TAKE pupil body layman four
‘The novice Piṭakadhara called four of his lay pupils (to come and assist him).’ (DC:22)

In the following sentence, ket indicates that the act is done spontaneously.

(6.167) ṭey tat deth ko deth ley deth mogn ket ley.
SM eh camp126 3 OBL 3 EMPH 3 stay TAKE EMPH
‘Well, in their camps, they just stayed there (without further asking for permission).’ (KD)

The function of ket in the next sentences is very similar. Here it indicates that the act is performed by subject himself, without help from another person or without letting anyone else perform the act. The English translation equivalent in this function is ‘V x-self’.

(6.168) klon mogn honay kôh kôh deth klon ket.
SM do STAY place TOP TOP127 3 do TAKE
‘When it came to working at that (strategic) place, they (the Japanese) did the work themselves.’ (KD)

(6.169) makyâl cao teh cao ket.
SM DESID return COND return TAKE
‘If you want to go back, you (find a way to) go back yourself.’ (KD)

SM image Buddha TOP thus FOC 3 do TAKE ASRT
‘This Buddha image, now, they (the Japanese) made it themselves.’ (KD)

Where the main verb denotes an non-volitional act, which is by definition spontaneous and not directly initiated by the subject, the use of ket merely marks a general ‘egocentricity’ of the act. This use is attested since MM, where ket occurs in combination with tim ‘know’. Postverbal ket may have inceptive value in combination with verbs of perception. Whether this is actually part of the grammaticalized semantics of ket remains to be investigated. The following examples seem to suggest an inceptive function.

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126 tat is a loan from Burmese ta’ tap ‘army, armed forces’. The meaning in Mon was shifted from ‘army’ to ‘army camp’. The Burmese word itself is an earlier loan from Mon dâp ‘stockade, fence; armed forces, army unit’.
127 The first topic marker has scope only over honay ‘that (afore mentioned) place’, while the second instance of kôh covers the whole phrase klon mogn honay kôh ‘as for working there’. Recursive topics are commonplace in SM and LM.
(6.171) bodhisat ɾăñ ț́ım ket kalok.
LM Bodhisatta look know TAKE ghost
‘The Bodhisatta looked (at him) and knew (realised) that he was a ghost.’ (Jat:22)

(6.172) mi ma ƅā sg’ā ńāt ket muk kon blāy.
LM mother father two PROSP:GET see TAKE face child young man
‘The parents saw the face of their baby boy.’ (DC:6)

(6.173) mi ƚi̋n cnāy ƚe̋w sg’ā ܡி̋n ket tuy
LM Mi Lim Canay TOP PROSP:GET hear TAKE FINISH
mip mrah cuît bway ma lon ra.
  happy merry heart ADV REL exceed FOC
  ‘Mi Lim Canay heard (the news) and was very happy about it.’
  (MKP:7)

As the main verb is in most instances preceded by the preverbal operator ƙ̀y ‘get’ (which see below), it is not clear if the inceptive meaning is conveyed by ket or by ƙ̀y( or by both).

Summary

The verb ket ‘take’ developed from its use in verbal compounds like tɤŋ ket ‘receive take’, rɔp ket ‘catch take’ and others into a postverbal marker indicating an act performed for the subject’s own benefit. In a further extension of the grammatical function ket came to cover acts (spontaneously) performed by the subject of his own accord. In this function ket is the only common translation equivalent of English ‘V x-self’ in Mon. In combination with verbs of perception, ket may have an inceptive aspectual connotation, although the main component remains that of ‘egocentricity’. The verb ket may be described as operator expressing an ‘egoistic, egocentric act’.

The development of ket parallels that of the corresponding Burmese verb yu rather than its Thai counterpart ʔaw. The former is used as postverbal marker expressing “V and take, V for oneself” (Okell and Allott 2001:176), while the latter has acquired prepositional value, introducing an object or an instrument in preverbal position (Jagacinski 1992:118ff; cf. also Heine and Kuteva 2002:288f). Thai ʔaw is also used as second element in verbal compounds, but its use is much more restricted than in Mon and Burmese, with the verbal semantics ‘take’ always dominant (Jagacinski op. cit.).

Of the grammaticalization paths of the verb ‘take’ to a morpheme marking CAUSATIVE, COMITATIVE, COMPLETIVE, FUTURE, INSTRUMENT, PATIENT, and H-POSSESSIVE given by Heine and Kuteva (2002:325), none is found in Mon.
The possible aspectual value of ket, if present at all, is inceptive rather than complective, although ket may occur in complective contexts. This does not assign complective function to ket though, but rather indicates that it is aspectually neutral.

6.3.11 ‹kuiw› kp ‘GIVE’

The modern Mon verb kp ‘give; OBLIQUE marker’ is a merger of two separate OM roots, viz. ‹kil, kul, kel, keil› ‘give’ and ‹ku, ku’, ko› ‘marker of DATIVE, OBLIQUE’. SM kp, LM ‹kuiw› is the regular reflex of OM ‹kil, etc.›, which represent phonetic [køl] (DMI:42). The old oblique preposition is still found in (formal) LM as ‹ku›, but has been replaced in SM by kp.128

Historical development

Already in OM ‹kil› occurs as preverbal and postverbal operator with different functions. In preverbal position ‹kil› expresses an indirect order or has causative/permissive value. In this function it stands in competition with ‹or› ‘cause, command’, which it completely replaces in SM. The causative/permissive function of preverbal ‹kil› in OM is illustrated in the following sentences. In (6.174) the original sense of ‹kil› ‘give’ is still present and the sentence may be translated as ‘he gave him emblic myrobalans fruit to eat’, a translation favoured by Luce (1961:374), as opposed to Shorto (DMI:42) who translates the same sentence as ‘has him eat emblic myrobalans’.

(6.174)  ... kil ca sac tarluy.
OM  ... give eat fruit wild.plum
‘... let him eat wild plums.’ (Ku102)

In (6.175) ‹kil› appears fully grammaticalized, denoting the (denied) permission for the heretics to enter the house of Upāli, the householder who went out to receive the Buddha. Here ‹kil› has purely permissive function.

6.175) tirta (t)o’ tluŋ sak ḍeḥ kil lop sñi.
OM  heretic129 PL come NEG 3 GIVE enter house
‘The heretics come but they don’t let them enter the house.’ (Ku116)

128 The SM form kaoʔ occurs, but its use is restricted to formal contexts. It is not found in colloquial SM.
129 Luce (1961:376) reads the first word as ‹tirta› ‘heretic’. Shorto (DMI:153) corrects this into ‹tir ta›, with ‹ta› as plural marker. As all instances of ‹tirta› in the Kubyauk-Gyi inscriptions are followed by the plural marker ‹ta›, Luce is probably right in reading ‹tirta›, which is derived from (Buddhist hybrid) Sanskrit tīrthya.
While ‘kil’ in preverbal position is used to express permission, the jussive in OM is preferably expressed by ‘or’, as illustrated in the next sentence, where both ‘kil’ and ‘or’ occur.

(6.176) or con pnañ çlow sak kul plit.
OM order burn candle lamp NEG GIVE be.extinguished
‘He orders them to light candles and not let them go out.’
(Shweïhsandaw A6)

The jussive value of ‘or’ is also dominant in (6.177). In SM, ‘or’ in both (6.176) and (6.177) would be replaced by kd.

(6.177) mahājan guñloñ ci ey s’or ma[ñ sí].
OM peopple ATTR:many EMPH 1s PROSP:order watch precepts
‘All the people I will have keep the precepts.’ (SSKg29f)

In postverbal position, ‘kil’ has benefactive function already in OM. The object of the benefactive expression is often, but not obligatorily introduced by the oblique preposition ‘ku’.

(6.178) tarley gawañpati gurañ kel smin in.
OM lord:1s Gavampati CAUS:know GIVE king Indra
‘The Lord Gavampati informs Indra.’ (SSKa53)

The meaning of the benefactive seems to have undergone some bleaching already in OM, with ‘kil’ expressing the goal of the action in general rather than a strictly benefactive notion.

(6.179) tarley gavañpati tin kiñkan kel ku smin in.
OM lord:1s Gavampati move.up instruct GIVE OBL king Indra
‘The Lord Gavampati ascends (to Tāvatiṣṭha Heaven) to instruct Indra.’ (SSKh30f)

The use of ‘kil’ in this sense is not obligatory, as is illustrated by sentence (6.180), taken from the same inscription.

(6.180) row goñ kyāk Buddha tarley kiñkan ku tarley gawañpati.
OM manner top holy Buddha lord:1s instruct OBL lord:1s Gavampati
‘Thus did the Lord Buddha instruct the Lord Gavampati.’ (SSKa50)

130 OM ‘or’ is also used as permissive, directly competing with ‘kil’ (s.DMI:24f).
131 Duroiselle (1960:164) translates this sentence as ‘in order to burn tapers that should never be allowed to go out.’
132 OM ‘tarley’ is a combination of ‘tirla’ ‘lord’ and ‘ey’ ‘I’, lit. ‘my lord’.

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The object of the benefactive may be left unexpressed. In this case 〈kil〉 simply indicates that the act is performed not for the subject himself, but for someone else. In this function, postverbal 〈kil〉 acts like the direct opposite of postverbal 〈ket〉 ‘take’, expressing an ‘altruistic’ mood. This use is very frequent in modern Mon, as will be shown below.

(6.181) kuṁ byāpār kel ut ku kāl.
OM 2s render.service GIVE all OBL time ‘You shall assist him at all times.’ (SSKa49f)

(6.182) baś kil sacchu.
OM pluck GIVE fruit ‘He plucks fruit (for them).’ (An305)

In MM the use of preverbal 〈kuiw〉 is extended from permissive contexts to cover also jussive function, taking the place of OM 〈or〉.

(6.183) smi sirimāsoka kuiw 〈ṇaḥ〉 tah kle’  ca[‘aḥ]  MM king Sirimāsoka GIVE clear clear DEPOSIT133 CAUS:clean jaṇaḥ kle’ dasuīw gruip tuy clear DEPOSIT bush forest FINISH ‘King Sirimāsoka ordered them to clear away the bush and wood.’ (SDGb20)

This extended use of 〈kuiw〉 in MM makes many expressions ambiguous. Only the broader context can decide whether 〈kuiw〉 in sentence (6.184) has permissive or jussive function. The religio-cultural and political context of 15th century Burma suggests that the king ordered rather than allowed the construction of Buddhist religious sites, favouring a jussive reading in this sentence. The same sentence uttered about sites of other religions would suggest a permissive reading.

(6.184) dlarīn dhāt ler kuiw kanām, buddha patimā ler kuiwkanām.  MM chamber relic TOP GIVE build Buddha image TOP GIVE build ‘Relic chambers he had constructed, as well as Buddha images.’ (SDGb3)

Postverbal 〈kuiw〉 is used in MM like in OM and modern Mon to indicate an action for the benefit of another person, i.e. an ‘altruistic’ act.

133 For the use of 〈kle’〉 as aspectual marker in MM, see section 6.3.8.
Modern Mon

With the loss of the preverbal jussive marker 〈or〉 and the oblique preposition 〈ku〉 merging with the reflex of 〈kil〉 in modern Mon, the use of LM 〈kuiw〉, SM 〈kd〉 is even further extended. In LM and SM, 〈kd〉 can occur in three positions, viz. preverbal, medial, and postverbal. Each position denotes one or more grammatical functions of 〈kd〉, which will be discussed below. In addition to the function as verbal operator, 〈kd〉 is also used as oblique preposition, marking a wide range of object functions such as DATIVE, COMITATIVE, INSTRUMENTAL, etc. The oblique marker can often not be distinguished from postverbal 〈kd〉, especially when marking a benefactive/dative object. I use the gloss OBL (oblique) where 〈kd〉 has clearly prepositional value and GIVE when its function is rather verbal, but it should be kept in mind that the choice is not always unequivocal and may seem rather arbitrary in some instances.

Preverbal 〈kd〉: Causative, jussive, permissive

Preverbal 〈kd〉 is used to express a causative, especially with permissive or jussive, sometimes optative meaning, but also where there is no morphological causative available (s. ch. 4). In some cases the periphrastic causative construction with 〈kd〉 has replaced an older morphological form, e.g. OM 〈dumon〉 ‘install, make stay’ is replaced in SM by 〈kd m.ŋih〉 ‘let stay’. 134

The following sentences illustrate the permissive and jussive use respectively of preverbal 〈kd〉 in modern Mon.

(6.185) ṭèh 〈kd ak m.ŋha,ʔuə chan-dû ley.
SM person GIVE ride STAY Q 1s pity EMPH
‘They wouldn’t let them ride (the cart). I really pitied them.’ (KD)

(6.186) ʔuə 〈kp kapəh n.ŋə sət hmah.
SM 1s GIVE collect CAUS:COME fruit pure
‘I told you to collect only fruit (nothing else).’ (WK)

As in MM, only the context decides whether 〈kd〉 in SM has permissive or jussive value. This is the case in sentence (6.187), where both interpretations are possible.

134 SM 〈hm.ŋih〉 is formally used in the specialised sense ‘house, accommodate’.
An important function of preverbal (and medial) *kd* is the change of subject it indicates, a prominent notion of causative constructions. The use of preverbal *kd* always involves a superordinate and a subordinate subject, whether overtly expressed or not. The first occurs before the operator *kd*, the latter after it. In sentence (6.187) above, the subordinate subject (*mənìh prèəcəkəh*) appears in sentence initial topic position and is marked as such by *kãh*.

In some combinations the change of subject is the sole function of *kd*. This is especially obvious with the desiderative marker *məkəwʔ*, which is a contraction of ‹mik gwa’› ‘want get’. Compare the following sentences with and without preverbal *kd*.

(6.188a) ?uə *məkəwʔ* ?a *wən* bəŋkək.

SM 1s DES go play Bangkok

‘I would like to go to Bangkok (for fun).’

(1.188b) ?uə *məkəwʔ* *kd* ?a *wən* bęŋkək.

SM 1s DES GIVE go play Bangkok

‘I would like you/him/her to go to Bangkok.’

In constructions of the type *V₁* *kd* *V₂*, *kd* has purposive or jussive function. *V₁* denotes the act leading to the event expressed by *V₂*, with *kd* functioning as linker, comparable to English *to*, but also indicating a change of subject from *V₁* to *V₂*. In a very common instance of this construction type, *V₁* is *həm* ‘speak’, as in the following sentence.

(6.189) nəu *məu* kən *məməy* dəh *həm* *kd* tək-khe kən rəŋ təʔ.

SM day one₁³⁶ TOP mother 3 speak GIVE Tokkhae TOP look brother

‘One day his mother told Tokkhae to look after his younger brother.’¹³⁷ (WK)

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¹³⁵ The form *cək* is a contraction of *kə^2h* ‘NML:PL TOP’ (s. Jenny 2003:189f).

¹³⁶ The expression *nəu məa* ‘one day’ shows Thai influence, where the unstressed numeral *nəwij* ‘one’ follows the noun, functioning like an indefinite article. In Mon, numerals always precede nouns expressing quantities, to which expressions of time belong. We would therefore expect *məa nəu* for ‘one day’, which is the form commonly heard in Burmese Mon.

¹³⁷ *təʔ* means younger sibling. Kinship terms in Mon are gender neutral from EGO downwards (I, younger sibling, child, grandchild, niece/nephew) but show gender distinctions from ‘older brother’ (*ʔəkəw/ʔəwao*) and ‘older sister’ (*ʔəmaʔ/ʔədo*) upwards.
In other instances, the \( V_1 \) has more specific meaning, as in (6.190).

\[
\text{(6.190) } \text{tēh mōŋcāŋ dēh,ʔey mōŋcāŋ dēh cō kō dēh s}". \]

SM 
HIT stay foot 3 INTERJ stay foot 3 HIT pour GIVE 3 drink
‘They (the Mon girls) had to sit by their (the Japanese’s) feet, they had to sit by their feet and pour (wine) for them to drink.’ (KD)

\( V_1 \) may also be a combination of the existential verb \( nūm \) with a noun phrase, as in (6.191). Here the jussive value of the first instance of \( \text{〈kuiw〉} \) is made clear by the semantics of the preceding noun \( \text{〈'asa}'} \) ‘(royal) order, edict’. The second instance of \( \text{〈kuiw〉} \) has a more neutral causative notion.

\[
\text{(6.191) } \text{nwaín 'asaín kuiw niman kîn nañ khmī} \]

LM 
exist edict GIVE invite invite CAUS:COME monk pītakadhara pāy nan kuiw kluñ twāñ dwāñ ra. Pītakadhara LOC palace GIVE come preach doctrine FOC ‘The king issued the order that the monk Pītakadhara be invited to come to the palace in order to preach the Doctrine (Dhamma).’ (DC:16)

In (6.192) \( \text{〈kuiw〉} \) has purposive function (‘so/in order that it is adequate’). In English, the expression introduced by \( k\) may be translated as an adverb (‘well, thoroughly, adequately’).

\[
\text{(6.192) } \text{tla ti nāy brau khyap bçā gata krau} \]

LM 
lord earth master woman think consider front behind kuiw dāñ-rañ. GIVE adequate ‘The queen considered everything adequately.’ (DC:31)

There are instances of medial \( k\) that obviously do not involve a change of subject. This is the case especially in purposive constructions with the subject being actor of \( V_1 \) and undergoer of \( V_2 \). Many speakers of Burmese Mon prefer \( th\)'/\( th\) (from LM \( \text{〈duiw〉} 'until, up to’) over \( k\) in these expressions. The use of \( k\) here may be influenced by the parallel Thai construction \( V_1 \) \( h\)'\( V_2 'V_1 \) so that/in order to \( V_2 \). More detailed investigation into the regional distribution of the preferences might shed some light on this issue. In colloquial SM, both (6.193a) and (6.193b) are acceptable.\(^{138}\)

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\(^{138}\) The grammaticality of these sentences was checked with speakers of WK Mon, who are bilingual with Thai or trilingual with Thai and Burmese. Not all speakers accepted (6.191a), though.
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(6.193a) cíaʔ kpa phəə.
SM eat GIVE satisfied

(6.193b) cíaʔ thiyʔ phəə.
SM eat until satisfied

‘Eat your fill!’

**Postverbal kpa Benefactive**

In postverbal position, *kpa* expresses an altruistic act, like in OM and MM. In this function *kpa* is very frequent in SM, with the benefactee of the action overtly expressed or understood. Postverbal *kpa* is directly attached to the main verb, with the noun phrase following it acting either as direct object of the main verb, as in (6.194) and (6.195) or as benefactee of the whole verbal expression, as in (6.196) and (6.197).

(6.194) Ḟoh kpa kryk tho múəʔatən.
SM pluck GIVE mango gold one time

‘Get (me) a golden mango!’ (WK)

(6.195)ʔuʔ kpa cat kpa múə.
SM 1s GET contact GIVE one

‘I could contact one (a girlfriend) (for you).’ (KN)

(6.196)ʔuʔ makoʔ tem teh hdm kpa ʔuʔ kpaʔ ha?
SM 1s DES know COND speak GIVE 1s GET Q

‘If I want to know it, can you tell me about it?’ (KKP)

The first instance of *kuiw* in (6.197) is as preposition, here marking a direct object rather than an oblique. The second instance indicates that the act of answering and showing is done for the benefit of the novices who come to ask. Another conceivable interpretation is with *kuiw* as optative marker on *mān*, i.e. ‘let me be able to answer …’.

(6.197) jmāp-jmāp sāmanĩ ma smān kuiw ’ay gah sah thbhaŋ
LM every-RDP novice REL ask OBL 1s TOP answer show

kuiw mān ní.
GIVE able little
‘May I be able to answer and show everything that the novices ask me about.’ (LPM:15)

139 With this sentence compare the OM sentence in (6.182) above.
Very often no object (direct or benefactee) is overtly expressed in the sentence, leaving $kD$ to denote an ‘altruistic’ act in general.

$$ (6.198) \text{SM} \text{person arrive} \text{bank side} \text{that person CAUS:cross GIVE}$$

‘He arrived at the bank over there, he took (us) across (the river).’

(6.199) $\text{SM CAUS:stop} \text{car 3 that ASRT car 3 NEG CAUS:stop GIVE}$

‘We would (try and) stop their cars, but they wouldn’t stop (for us).’

As illustrated in (6.199), the negation particle stands before the main verb. Postverbal and (in most cases) medial $kD$ cannot be independently negated, unlike preverbal $kD$. This shows that $kD$ in postverbal and, to a lesser degree, medial position has lost its full verbal character and has developed into a (modal/manner) operator, like the grammaticalized verbs discussed in the preceding sections.

**Summary**

The verb $kD$ ‘give’ has undergone different paths of grammaticalization. Its main functions are as full verb (‘give’), as preverbal causative marker (usually permissive or jussive), as medial purposive marker involving a change of subject, and as postverbal ‘altruistic’ marker, indicating that the action is performed for the benefit or purpose of another person. In this last function $kD$ is the direct opposite of the ‘egoistic’ marker $ket$ discussed in the previous section.

The development of the grammaticalized functions of Mon $kD$ closely parallel the development of the same verbs in Thai ($hay^2$ ‘give’ covers almost exactly the same functions as Mon $kD$) and Burmese $pèi$ ‘give’. Burmese $pèi$ is exceptional as it occurs as preverbal operator indicating a causative (usually permissive) action. Verbal operators in Burmese in almost all cases follow the main verb, as is expected in a SOV language. This is also true for the competing morphemes $sei$ ‘make $V$, let $V$’ and $hkàin$ ‘make $V$, order to $V$’. In postverbal position, Burmese $pèi$ marks an act performed for the benefit of another person, as in Mon (s. Okell 1969:382; Okell and Allott 2001:120f).

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140 Maybe Mon influence can account for the irregularity in word order in Burmese $pèi-V$ constructions.
Heine and Kuteva list five grammaticalization paths for the verb ‘give’ (2002:149-55; 321), all of which are present in Mon in some way or another: BENEFACTIVE, CAUSATIVE, CONCERN, DATIVE, PURPOSE. The functions of concern and dative, to some extent also benefactive, are covered in OM and MM (partly also in LM) by the preposition ‘ku’, which merged in SM with the verb ‘give’.

The development of many of the grammaticalized functions of ‘give’ in Mon is also found in other Southeast Asian languages. See for example Matisoff (1991:427ff) and Bisang (1992, 1996). Iwasaki and Yap (2000:371ff) describe the relationship between benefactive and causative constructions in a row of languages, often expressed by a verb meaning ‘give’.

**E. Indicators of success**

6.3.12 〈gwa’〉 *kʔ*‘GET’

The verb meaning ‘get, acquire’ shows striking similarities in its grammaticalization paths among different Southeast Asian languages belonging to unrelated families. Enfield (2003) dedicates a full book-length study to the description and analysis of this lexeme in a sample of over 20 languages belonging to at least four language families, which exhibit an identical or similar development of the grammatical use of ‘get, acquire’. Among the main languages discussed by Enfield are the Mon-Khmer languages Vietnamese, Khmer, and Kmhmu Cwang. No mention is made of Mon itself, data for which are still not readily available to the Western linguist. Like Mon 〈ku〉 ‘give’, 〈kʔ〉 ‘get’ can occur in preverbal and postverbal position, with different (but in some cases overlapping) functions. As main verb, Mon 〈kʔ〉 is a non-agentive, non-volitional, non-controlled verb meaning ‘get, obtain, come to have, come into possession of’. It is also used to introduce adverbial expressions denoting a quality (〈V kʔ khPh 〈can〉 V get well’), lit. ‘V get good’) or a quantity (〈V kʔ 〈Ba Hua 〈have V-ed for two days’ lit. ‘V get two day’). The semantics of the main verb with the meaning ‘get, acquire’ in a row of non-related Southeast Asian languages is given in detail in Enfield 2003.

**Historical development**

OM 〈go〉 is attested since the 7th century with the verbal meaning ‘get possession of, obtain, receive, possess’ (DMI:80f). The verb 〈go〉 denotes a non-volitional, non-controlled act, which may or may not be the result of a preceding volitional act. In no recorded stage of Mon does 〈go〉 or the corresponding form occur in imperative or prohibitive contexts. Where 〈go〉
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is used in imperative or prohibitive contexts, the use of a causative (permissive, jussive) marker like OM 〈or〉, SM 〈rd〉 is required. This is illustrated in (6.200) from the Myazedi inscription at Pagan.

(6.200) yañ ṇirāc kyek tray mettey laḥ or ḍeh go'.
OM EMPH NML:see Buddha exalted Metteya PROH order 3 get
‘Don’t let him get/may he not get a sight of the exalted Buddha Metteya.’ (Myazedi 32f)

Already in OM 〈go’〉 appears to be used as a preverbal operator, according to Shorto “implying potentiality” (DMI:81). This is illustrated in the following sentence from the Myakan inscription at Pagan.

(6.201) [dñaḥ sarwwa satta guñ]lon 〈sgo’〉 suk sey
OM so.that all being ATTR:many PROSP:get happy happy
have.abundance
‘So that all beings may enjoy happiness, bliss, and plenty.’
(Myakan c29-d1)

According to the *Epigraphica Birmanica* (Vol.I, p.137) and Hkyit Thein 1965 (part 1, pp.71f) the reading of the beginning of the sentence, including the crucial verb 〈sgo’〉 is not clear. Apart from the uncertainty of the reading of the text, it is by no means sure that the words following 〈sgo’〉 ‘get, obtain’, viz. 〈suk〉, 〈sey〉, and 〈subhik〉, are in fact invariably verbs in OM usage. All three are loans from Pali, where they are used as nouns or adjectives, rather than verbs: 〈suk〉 from Pali sukha ‘agreeable, pleasant; happiness’, 〈sey〉 from Pali syya ‘better, excellent; happiness, well-being’, and 〈subhik〉 from Pali subhikkha ‘abundance of food’ (Davids and Stede 2003:716, 723, 504 resp.)

It is not uncommon to find Pali nouns used as verbs in Mon. The morphology of 〈suk〉 with the causative 〈psuk〉 ‘make happy’ and the nominalised form 〈sirsuk〉 ‘happiness’ and 〈subhik〉 with the prospective form 〈sisubhīk〉 attest their verbal use in OM. Mon is not always consistent in the assignment of a lexeme to a special word class, though, especially when it is a foreign loan.

The other two instances of preverbal 〈go’〉 expressing ‘potentiality’ given in DMI are not much clearer. One involves verb-medial 〈go’〉 rather than preverbal: 〈sak das go’ smoḥ〉 ‘no one is able to rival him’ (lit. ‘NEG be get be.like’). The other sentence is from the Kubyauk-Kyi inscriptions the reading of which is dubious (Luce 1991:401). With no more evidence from OM inscriptions, the use of 〈go’〉 as preverbal auxiliary is not certain for this stage of the language. No clear example of postverbal 〈go’〉 in its grammaticalized function as marker expressing ‘potentiality’, ‘possibility’ or ‘success’ is found in the OM inscriptions.
In MM, ‘go’ occurs as a full verb before nouns to express the concrete or abstract ‘coming into possession of’ something. In this sense ‘go’ can be used with personal referents, as in ‘go’ gayoñ ‘get a husband’ as well as with abstract nouns, as in ‘go’ ’akhwon ‘obtain permission’ or ‘go’ tradah kyák ‘attain Buddha-hood’ (‘get NML:be Buddha’).

In MM, ‘go’ appears frequently in preverbal (less commonly in postverbal) position with the meaning “to be able, to be enabled to, to get the opportunity of, to come to, sometimes to be omitted in translation, esp. in neg.” (DMI:81). The preverbal use is illustrated in the following sentence from the Kalyāṇi inscription. The function of the negated ‘go’ here is to express the general impossibility of the undertaking (of creating the light).

(6.202) (de)h dah ket ’aluir ðeḥ, ma mik kuir ṇaḥ
MM 3 be TAKE own.will 3 REL want GIVE person
mwoy mwoy ha go’ kanaĩbdah.
one one NEG GET build CAUS:be
‘It arises spontaneously; no one who wants to can create it.’
(KLYc14)

In the next sentence, preverbal ‘go’ denotes a successful outcome of the action expressed by the main verb. There is a connotation of past involved in its use here, though this is not part of the meaning of ‘go’ per se.

(6.203) dhar ma ey go’ grañ ket (wo’)
MM doctrine REL 1s GET comprehend TAKE this
‘this doctrine which I have come to comprehend’ (Ajapāla B4f)

In other contexts, ‘go’ is left untranslated in English, as stated by Shorto (s. above). The exact function and meaning of ‘go’ in these contexts remains a puzzling question, which will be discussed below. One example from MM is (6.204). Certainly the candles could have been gilded had the wish (or necessity) to do so arisen.

(6.204) pnāñ ma ha go’ (c)u(t) thar
MM candle REL NEG GET put gold
‘ungilded candles’ (KLYe16)

Postverbal ‘go’ is found in MM, although its use is not very frequent. The following sentence from the Shwedagon inscription illustrates the use of ‘go’ in both preverbal and postverbal position. Notice that in the first clause, preverbal ‘go’ refers to a situation that already exists (present rather than past), while the second clause uses negated ‘go’ in postverbal position. In the third clause, preverbal ‘go’, morphologically marked as prospective, has
future time (purposive) reference. This shows that the difference in tense is not an inherent part of the position of the operator.

(6.205) dhamma-rat saṅgha-rat puiy [dik] go’ liṅor
MM Dhamma-jewel monks.order-jewel 1pl slave get worship pūjau ra, buddha-ratana mwoy gah puiy[dik] mik
pay.respect FOC Buddha-jewel one TOP 1pl slave DES [liṅor]r pūjau ha go’ (swo’), dhāt kyāk tray
worship pay.respect NEG get EMPH relic holy.being exalted tu[y puiy] dik ma sgo’ phyih cujt buddha-rat.
FINISH 1pl slave REL PROSP:GET CAUS:down heart Buddha-jewel.
‘We can now worship and pay respect to the jewel of the Teaching (Dhamma) and the order of the monks (Sangha); we would like also to worship and pay respect to the jewel of the Buddha, but we cannot. In order that we may lay down our hearts to the jewel of the Buddha, (please arrange for us) a holy relic.’ (SDGb17f)

MM shows widespread use of ‘go’ as grammatical element in addition to its use as a full verb. Grammaticalized ‘go’ mostly occurs in preverbal position. The situation is changed again in modern Mon, where ‘gwa’ kŷʔ ‘get’ appears in preverbal position and in two postverbal positions, before or after the object, with different functions. I will first discuss the postverbal uses of kŷʔ, before turning to an attempt to describe and define its preverbal functions.

Modern Mon
Postverbal kŷʔ: resultative → modal operator

Postverbal kŷʔ occurs in two different positions in SM and LM, viz. directly after the verb or after the object of the main verb, i.e. after the VP (or in core-final position). The former seems to be more original, showing the development from a serial construction involving a controlled V₁ with an agentive subject and a non-controlled V₂ (kŷʔ) with a non-agentive subject, expressing the result of V₁. This can still be seen in expressions like the following, where kŷʔ retains its verbal semantics. Notice that hlo ‘money’ is logically the object of both verbs (kap:čh and kŷʔ), while the quantifier pas:čn hake ‘five Kyat’ is the object only of kŷʔ, as the exact amount of money was not fixed beforehand and is outside the sphere of control of the subject. Sentence (6.206) can be analysed as serial verb construction involving three separate clauses with a shared subject and separate objects.
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(6.206) kəpə̀ hloə  kɔʔʔ  pəsən  həkə  rən  ciaʔ  bao.
SM collect money get five Kyat buy eat sugar-cane
‘He collected (money and got) five Kyat and bought sugar-cane
(to eat).’ (KKP)

(6.207) ᥕə  rɔp  kɔʔʔ  ?ẹŋkələc.
SM go catch get English
‘They (the Japanese) went to catch (and got some) Englishmen.’
(KD)

(6.208) kləy  kɔʔʔ  kliŋə  mʊə.
SM look.for get boat one
‘He (looked for and) found a boat.’ (WK)

From expressions like the ones above, postverbal kɔʔʔ developed a more
grammatical function, expressing merely the successful result of the action
expressed by V₁. The position between V₁ and its object remains unchanged,
although the NP following kɔʔʔ cannot be considered the object of kɔʔʔ
anymore, as is still the case in sentences (6.206) - (6.208) above. A clear
example of this development is the first instance of kɔʔʔ in sentence (6.209),
where the subject does not come to possess the bananas, but quite the
opposite is the case.

(6.209) laʔ  təʔ  poy  səʔʔ  prət  mʊə  nɔŋ  kɔʔʔ  hloə  mʊə  knt.
SM timethat 1pl sell  GET banana one bunch get money one 10,000
‘At that time we could sell bananas; we got 10,000 Kyat for one
bunch.’ (KD)

After kɔʔʔ had become a fully grammaticalized marker indicating that ‘V is
carried out successfully’, its function was extended to mark potential
modality. While sentence (6.209) implies that the bananas were in fact sold,
the actual carrying out of the verb is not necessarily present in other contexts.
In this function kɔʔʔ is moved to the position after the object. This movement
is further evidence for the grammaticalization path taken by kɔʔʔ. In direct
postverbal position, kɔʔʔ functions either as serial verb expressing the
successful outcome of V₁, with the object shared by V₁ and kɔʔʔ, or it acts as
resultative marker, i.e. as an aspectual operator of V₁. As aspect markers are
considered “nuclear” operators, i.e. influencing the verb directly (s. Van
Valin 1997:40ff), we expect them to occur closer to the verb than other
operators. That this is in fact true in Mon has been shown with other
operators fulfilling chiefly aspectual (and directional) functions. With the
development into a potential marker, kɔʔʔ becomes a modal operator, which
acts on the core level (ibid.). The move to the position after the object (i.e.
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core-final) is therefore in line with Van Valin’s theory of operators and not unexpected. Compare the difference in meaning according to the position of $k\gamma?$ in the following sentences.

(6.210a) $\text{dēh } \text{rōp } k\gamma? \ \text{ka?}$.  
SM 3 catch get fish  
‘He caught (and got) some fish.’ (KKP)

(6.210b) $\text{dēh } \text{rōp } \text{ka? } k\gamma?$.  
SM 3 catch fish GET  
‘He can/may catch fish.’

While the resultative use of $k\gamma?$ in (6.210a) describes an actual action that was carried out successfully, the modal use in (6.210b) merely indicates that he can/may catch fish if he wants to, with no mention made of the actual performance and its outcome. This modal use of postverbal $k\gamma?$ is widespread in LM and SM. The grammaticalization is complete, i.e. $k\gamma?$ can occur after practically any verb, irrespective of its semantics. In both postverbal positions (i.e. postverbal and post-VP/core-final) $k\gamma?$ can be negated, again with very different meanings.

(6.210c) $\text{dēh } \text{rōp } \text{hù? } k\gamma? \ \text{ka?}$.  
SM 3 catch NEG get fish  
‘He did not get fish (he got something else while trying to catch fish).’

(6.210d) $\text{dēh } \text{rōp } \text{ka? } \text{hù? } k\gamma?$.  
SM 3 catch fish NEG GET  
‘He cannot/must not catch fish.’

While the modal operator $k\gamma?$ (post-VP) can be negated in all contexts, the negation of the (postverbal) resultative $k\gamma?$ is restricted to contexts where it retains its original verbal semantics. This excludes the negation of $k\gamma?$ in sentence (6.209) above.

Preverbal $k\gamma?$

While the development and function of postverbal $k\gamma?$ appears rather clear, the preverbal usage is much more puzzling. Although parallel developments of verbs meaning ‘get, obtain, acquire’ in both preverbal and postverbal positions are found in most Southeast Asian languages and a fair number of linguists and language teachers have attempted to explain the function of
preverbal ‘get’, no conclusively convincing explanation has been offered so far.

The definition of preverbal $k\hat{\gamma}\hat{\theta}$ in SM given by Shorto (1962:78) is the following: “To have the chance to, (occasionally combined with màn$^{141}$) to be able to, to do at one of a number of possible moments; to have to; in neg. often may [not], must [not].” The meaning ‘have to’, i.e. marking obligation or necessity, is rarely found in Mon and may be attributed to Burmese influence, where the corresponding verb yá ‘get’ is used as postverbal modal expressing general possibility, like post-NP $k\hat{\gamma}\hat{\theta}$ in Mon, or successful result, like postverbal $k\hat{\gamma}\hat{\theta}$ in Mon, when combined with the ‘realis’ marker te (V yá te ‘can/may V’, ‘V successfully’) and obligation when combined with the ‘irrealis’ marker me (V yá me ‘must V, have to V’).

Bisang (1996) describes the corresponding morphemes in Hmong, Thai and Khmer (tau, dây$^{2}$, and ban resp.) as preverbal TAM markers, denoting a combination of past and potential in Hmong and Thai, and past tense in Khmer. Thai dây$^{2}$ ‘get’ as preverbal auxiliary is indeed described as ‘past tense’ marker not only by Western linguists, but also by indigenous Thai grammarians, using Indian and English grammar models to describe Thai. The Dictionary of the Royal Thai Institute defines preverbal dây$^{2}$ in Thai as “verbal auxiliary indicating past tense” (Royal Institute 2003:419). This view is not accepted by more progressive Thai scholars, as the following statement by Chit Bhumisak, a well-known Thai scholar who was imprisoned and finally killed in the 1960s for holding communist views, illustrates.

The auxiliary dây$^{2}$ ['get'] is used in the following ways: 1. When used to stress the meaning, make the event more prominent, it is placed before the verb. [...] 3. When used sarcastically or insultingly, it is placed before the verb. [...] This use of auxiliaries as shown above is not described in Thai grammar textbooks. [...] On the contrary, Thai grammars teach us that dây$^{2}$ is used to indicate tense, i.e. the past. Honestly, I would like to ask whether the authors of those textbooks really speak for themselves. Never has dây$^{2}$ in Thai been used to indicate the past tense! (Bhumisak 2004:255f)

Bauer sticks to the ‘traditional’ view in respect to the Thai usage, which he suggests to have influenced SM. He states that

“some [Mon] speakers today use $k\ddot{\gamma}\ddot{\theta}$ in exactly the same way as Thai dây [...] preceding the main verb together with the negative particle mây to indicate past tense [...] Whenever preceding the main verb, hû? $k\ddot{\gamma}\ddot{\theta}$ may either indicate that the speaker or person talked to did not have the chance [...] - and in this sense it

$^{141}$ màn ‘win’ is another grammaticalized verb expressing ‘ability, possibility’, which will be described in the next section.
indicates an action which was not accomplished, but past (like Thai!), as a quasi-negative-perfective aspect - or that an action to be performed is prohibited.”

(Bauer 1982:402f)

Bauer does not discuss the non-negated use of preverbal kŷʔ at all.

Native Mon speakers, when asked about the function and meaning of preverbal kŷʔ, offer different, sometimes contradicting explanations. Although bilingual speakers of Wangka spontaneously link Mon kŷʔ with the corresponding Thai verb ตาย in most functions, they do not consider it as a ‘past tense marker’, as some native Thai speakers obviously do.

Starting the discussion of the function of preverbal daŋ‘get, acquire’ in Lao, Enfield makes clear that he uses a different approach and reaches different conclusions.

From the outset I would like to dismiss the view that preverbal daŋ is a ‘tense’ marker, as is routinely claimed. [...] It does, however, have aspectual properties related to successful attainment of actions/events [...], and a common ‘past tense’ interpretation can arise from this. (Enfield 2003:140)

Enfield goes on describing the “primary function of preverbal daŋ” as marking that the main predicate is the “result of some (unspecified) prior event” (p.141). He gives a number of examples to illustrate his definition and concludes that

Despite the appearance of an array of meanings in the translations [...], the semantic contribution of preverbal daŋ in each of these examples is unitary and consistent, and can be stated, precisely, as follows:

\[ \text{daŋ-V} \]
\[ V; \text{because of something else that happened before this} \quad (\text{p. 142}) \]

Enfield reaches the same conclusion for preverbal ‘get, acquire’ in all languages discussed in the book (Enfield 2003:290ff).

Taking up Enfield’s analysis, one is tempted to compare preverbal kŷʔ in Mon with it’s semantic opposite, kŋ ‘give’. As described above, preverbal kŋ has causative function:

\[ \text{NP₁ kŋ NP₂ V} \text{ means that ‘NP₁ causes NP₂ to V’}. \]

Compare this with the use of kŋ as full verb:
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$NP_1 \ k \theta \ NP_2 \ NP_3$ means ‘$NP_1$ gives $NP_3$ to $NP_2$’
or in other words ‘$NP_1$ causes $NP_2$ to have $NP_3$’

If we exchange the roles of the NPs we get (for the full verb $k \gamma \gamma$)

$NP_2 \ k \gamma \gamma \ NP_3$, i.e. ‘$NP_2$ gets $NP_3$ (from $NP_1$)’

and (for the preverbal auxiliary $k \theta$)

$NP_2 \ k \gamma \gamma \ V$, i.e. ‘$NP_2$ gets to $V$ (because of $NP_1$)’

$NP_1$ may be any nominal referent, not only personal, and it may not be present at all in the sentence. The following sentences illustrate this possible development in SM.

(6.211a) \[ \text{dểh kθ} \ ?uə lòc. \rightarrow ?uə kγγγ lòc. \]

SM \ 3 \ give \ 1s \ book \ \ 1s \ get \ book

‘He gave me a book.’ \ → \ ‘I got a book.’

(6.211b) \[ \text{dểh kθ} \ ?uə ?a. \rightarrow ?uə kγγγ ?a. \]

SM \ 3 \ GIVE \ 1s \ go \ \ 1s \ GET \ go

‘He let me go.’ \ → \ ‘I got to go.’ > ‘I could (and did) go.’

(6.212) \[ \text{kθ \ dểh ?a.} \rightarrow \ dểh kγγγ ?a. \]

SM \ GIVE \ 3 \ go \ \ 3 \ GET \ go

‘May he go.’ \ → \ ‘He got to go, he could (and did) go’

Preverbal $k \gamma \gamma$ in Mon may indeed originate in the development described above, but modern Mon usage does not suggest that $k \gamma \gamma + V$ marks ‘$V$ as result or consequence of a (unspecified) prior cause’ in all contexts, as will be shown below, unless we take this cause (or causing force) to be so abstract as to render the definition per se useless.\(^\text{143}\) It has been stated for other Southeast Asian languages (e.g. Clark 1974:80f on Vietnamese, quoted and commented by Enfield 2003:301) that the verb meaning ‘get’ in preverbal position denotes an event that is ‘pleasant’ or ‘good’ for the subject. That this is certainly not true for Mon will be seen in the examples below.

\(^\text{142}\) The ablative preposition $nù$ is used to indicate the source (e.g. of ‘get, receive’) as well as the cause (in the latter case in combination with the Pali loan $hetu \rightarrow h \theta \theta \ ‘reason’$: $h \theta \theta \ nù \ ‘because of’$)

\(^\text{143}\) Of course every event can be seen as consequence of some sort of a prior event, but if the connection between the two events is too abstract, there is no point in expressing this connection grammatically, much less to develop a special morpheme to express it.

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Another way of looking at preverbal *kʔʔ* is by comparing it with its postverbal counterpart. As shown above, postverbal *kʔʔ* denotes the successful conclusion of the action expressed by the main verb, i.e. it stresses the final (right) limit of the event. There is some evidence that suggests that preverbal *kʔʔ* stresses the initial (left) limit of the event. This is especially clear in sentences like the following, where postverbal *kʔʔ* indicates a successful result of the event, while preverbal *kʔʔ* merely indicates that the event could (and did) take place, without reference to its outcome.

(6.213a)  déh klày  kʔʔ ka?.
SM 2  look.for GET fish
‘He found some fish.’

(6.213b)  déh kʔʔ klày  ka?.
SM 3  GET look.for fish
‘He could (and did) look for fish.’

If this analysis is correct, we have an interesting case of syntactic/aspectual iconicity in Mon and other Southeast Asian languages. This view is held by Haiman, who explains the ‘migration’ of the corresponding Khmer auxiliary *baan* from postverbal to preverbal position as iconic:

It should be noted that in these examples, the order of ‘auxiliary’ and ‘main verb’ is iconic (the chance to do something occurs before one actually does it) so that the migration

V...baan > baan (...) V

is accounted for without invoking any independent formal principles.

(Haiman 1999:155)

In an answer to Haiman’s paper, Enfield questions the proposed development from postverbal to preverbal *baan* (Enfield 2001:117). The development of postverbal and preverbal *baan* in Khmer may have been simultaneous, or, in Enfield’s words:

Indeed, it may also have been the case that today’s pre-V *baan* appeared prior to post-V *baan*, which hypothesis, again, could be verified or falsified by empirical data. (ibid.)

This means that there was no ‘migration’ of the postverbal auxiliary into preverbal position as postulated by Haiman. In Mon, the linguistic evidence strongly suggests that the two auxiliaries arose independently from one another. While MM appears to have favoured preverbal ‘go’, LM and SM
make use of both the preverbal and postverbal form. Although Haiman’s conclusions about Khmer preverbal baan ‘get’ are dismissed by Enfield, Haiman offers some interesting thoughts. He gives ‘inchoative’ as one possible function of preverbal baan (Haiman 1999:157). This function may have developed independently from the full verb, without invoking a movement from postverbal position. The iconicity outlined above does not rely on such an (unlikely) movement. The inchoative/ingressive meaning is present in Mon in some contexts and may eventually be proved to be part of the semantics of this auxiliary.

There are instances in SM of preverbal kъʔ combined with a postverbal resultative, as in (6.214).

(6.214) mùʔ tŏh dēh kъʔ pon hǎcmt?
SM what be 3 GET shoot CAUS:die
‘Why did they (have to) shoot them dead?’ (KD)

Preverbal kъʔ here fits Enfield’s definition as ‘result/consequence of prior event’, this prior event here being asked about by mùʔ tŏh ‘why’. The verb pŏn (‘shoot (with the intention to kill)’) can also be seen as having overtly highlighted initial (kъʔ) and final (hǎcmt) limits, i.e. it is marked both as ‘ingressive’ and ‘egressive’.

Let us look at some more examples from SM illustrating the use of preverbal kъʔ.

(6.215a) dēh kъʔ hŏm ?ãrè mùʔ-ciʔ nādï?
SM 3 GET speak language how.much hour
‘How many hours were they allowed they speak?’ (KD)

(6.215b) nēh kŏ dēh hŏm ?ãrè múʔ-ciʔ nādï?
SM person GIVE 3 speak language how.much hour
‘How many hours did they allow them to speak?’

This sentence shows the event expressed by the main verb hŏm ?ãrè ‘speak’ as consequence of a preceding event, i.e. the permission given by the organisers of the discussion. This is also the case in the next sentence, with negated preverbal kъʔ.

(6.216) kyŏpān nēh múʔ hûʔ kъʔ tēm bāh l̕ ê klōc.
SM Japanese person one NEG GET know change KEEP waistcloth.
‘He changed into a (Mon) waistcloth so that no one would know that he was Japanese.’ (KD)
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The word order of this sentence shows some Burmese influence with the subordinate clause preceding the main clause, i.e. the event leading to ‘kṭʔ’ follows the kṭʔ expression. In this sentence, several functions can be attributed to kṭʔ, viz. ‘inchoative’ (‘get to know, find out’), ‘purposive’ (‘in order that, so that’), and ‘consequence of prior event’ (‘because he changed into a Mon waistcloth’). This illustrates the difficulty in extracting the inherent meaning of kṭʔ and separating it from contextually induced implications.

In other sentences, the connection to a prior event is very weak, if present at all.

(6.217) set-pṭ ḥlāŋ deh kṭʔ khydt kōh...
SM commander ATTR:many 3 GET die TOP
‘Many of their commanders died there...’ (KD)

The death of the (English) commanders was a consequence of their fighting the Japanese, but this is at best part of the very general context of the sentence. The direct connection is not the point of discussion here. Similarly, the going astray and being stuck is the result of the monks and his pupil leaving the temple at some point prior to the event, but this is not part of the actual context of the following sentence.

(6.218) kṭʔ yōŋ khek mōŋ ?īo raŋ?
SM GET go.astray be.stuck STAY where QREL
‘Where did you get stuck?’ (KN)

The preceding two sentences illustrate that the use of kṭʔ does not imply an event that is ‘pleasant’ or ‘good’ for the subject, as has been postulated for parallel constructions in other Southeast Asian languages (s. above). Obviously, dying or going astray and being stuck in the bush somewhere is neither pleasant nor good for anyone.

Sentence (6.219) seems neutral in terms of modality and tense or aspect. The connection to a prior event is even less concrete here than in the other sentences given above.

(6.219) mùʔ kṭʔ chēŋ kō ?uaʔ?
SM what GET concernedOBL 1s
‘What has that got to do with me?’ (WK)

This sentence was uttered by a Mon speaker of Wangka who is perfectly bilingual with Thai. It is noteworthy that the corresponding sentence in Thai does not contain the preverbal auxiliary ḏy² ‘get’. This indicates that the grammatical value of the Mon morpheme has become more bleached than its
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Thai counterpart and that Mon usage in this respect is not influenced by Thai (or Burmese) usage.

A past tense reading can be seen in (6.220) and (6.221), but (6.222), having future reference, proves this to be contextually induced and not part of the meaning of kỳʔ+V.

SM  GET arrive  Panga’ Ko’ Dot this
‘They arrived at Panga’ and here at Ko’ Dot.’ (KD)

(6.221) hʊʔ kỳʔ paʔ nępūh.
SM  NEG GET do  yet NEG
‘I haven’t done it yet.’ (KN)

(6.222) tʊʔ  teh kỳʔ čiʔ?
SM  FINISH COND GET eat
‘Then we can eat; we can eat in a minute.’ (WK)

Summary

The main verb kỳʔ ‘get, obtain, come to possess, acquire’ expresses a non-agentive, non-controlled event. It can not be used in imperative contexts or with controlled adverbs (‘carefully’). The non-agentivity of kỳʔ is also supported by its use in the fixed and phonetically eroded combination with mòc ‘want’ as məkỳʔ ‘want to, DESIDERATIVE’, which is discussed further below (section 6.3.15). As in other Southeast Asian languages, this lexeme underwent different grammaticalizing developments, most importantly as postverbal resultative marker, which came to denote a general possibility/potentiality, and as preverbal marker, the function of which is still elusive in most Southeast Asian languages, including Mon.

We can postulate two independent paths of grammaticalization for Mon, based on diachronic evidence. As second verb in combination with a main verb which expresses an intention to obtain, e.g. ‘catch’, ‘take’, ‘look for’, etc.,144 kỳʔ is used to denote the (successful) result of the action: ‘catch and get’, ‘take and get, obtain’, ‘look for and get, find’, etc. From this aspectual (perfective, resultative) use in direct postverbal position, a modal (potential) function developed. Modal operators tend to occur farther away from the main verb than aspect operators, as they operate on the core level, rather than on the nuclear level like aspect markers. Postverbal kỳʔ as modal operator, as

144 It has to be remembered that agentive verbs in Mon often have a conative connotation, i.e. the verb expresses ‘try to V’ rather than ‘actually V’. The result is thus not necessarily part of the verbal semantics and may be expressed separately by a V₂.
expected, occurs after the object of the main verb. While in its function as resultative marker \(k\hat{y}\hat{y}\) shares the object with the main verb, this is not the case with the modal operator \(k\hat{y}\hat{y}\). An intermediate stage is attested in SM (s. sentence (6.209)).

The other grammaticalization path was from full verb to a preverbal operator, which denotes a general possibility to do something in earlier stages of Mon. In this function \(k\hat{y}\hat{y}\) shares the preverbal slot with other auxiliaries denoting circumstances leading to \(V\), such as \(t\hat{e}h\) ‘must’ and \(m\hat{a}k\hat{y}\hat{y}\) ‘want to’. This suggests that preverbal \(k\hat{y}\hat{y}\) originally had modal function. This is supported by MM inscriptional evidence. The later development in LM and SM of preverbal \(k\hat{y}\hat{y}\) may have been influenced by different factors, including areal linguistic factors and parallelism with related morphemes, especially postverbal (egressive) \(k\hat{y}\hat{y}\) (leading to a possible ingressive reading) and preverbal \(k\hat{d}\) ‘give’, which is the semantic opposite of \(k\hat{y}\hat{y}\).

Only post-VP (core-final) \(k\hat{y}\hat{y}\) can form a one-word answer. Its preverbal counterpart must always be followed by a full verb.

Heine and Kuteva (2002:143ff; 321) list no less than nine grammaticalization paths for the verb ‘get’, namely ‘ability’, ‘change of state’, ‘obligation’, ‘passive’, ‘past’, permissive’, ‘H-possessive’ ‘possibility’ and ‘succeed’. Most functions are present in Mon, too, with the exception of ‘H-possessive’. Some correspondences may be due to implicature rather than inherent, as shown above.

6.3.13 \langlelep\rangle lèp ‘ABLE’ and \langlemān\rangle màn ‘WIN’

Two other verbs have developed into post-VP modal auxiliaries, partly competing in this position with \(k\hat{y}\hat{y}\). These are OM \langlelep\rangle ‘be skilled in, know how to do’ and MM \langlemān\rangle ‘be able to \(V\)’. The latter is used in MM as postverbal auxiliary and occurs only in negated contexts in the inscriptions (DMI:292). Another verb which has developed similar meaning as postverbal modal is SM \(t\hat{e}h\), which will be discussed in the following section.

lèp

In OM, \langlelep\rangle occurs before verbs and nouns (usually nominalized verbs). In MM its position is still before the main verb, denoting an ability or skill to do something.

In LM and SM, \(lèp\) occurs as full verb meaning ‘be skilled in, know’. It can take a direct object expressing the skill, as in \(lèp lòc mòn\) ‘know how to read and write Mon’ (lit. ‘be skilled in Mon writing’) or \(lèp \hat{d}vè \hat{d}gk\hat{d}lòc\) ‘know how to speak English’ (lit. ‘be skilled in the English language’). As a full verb, \(lèp\) may co-occur with the modal operator \(k\hat{y}\hat{y}\), as in the following
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sentence, which is the answer to the question about the speaker’s skills as a Mon theatre actor.

(6.223) \( \text{lèp k̀y? ni?-ni? thó ra?} \).
SM be.skilled GET little-RDP only FOC
‘I can act only a little bit.’ (KN)

In its function as modal operator, \( \text{lèp} \) usually occurs after the VP, in LM sometimes also between V and object. It expresses a skill or ability, usually acquired by learning, besides a more idiomatic meaning as ‘be given to V’.

(6.224) \( \text{pday kuw ŋåh ma \text{ bah lép lik } man láim gah ŋåh} \).
LM LÓC OBL person REL read ABLE writing Mon 1,000 TOP person mway gwa’ bah lép lik trein màn gah sjuïn san ra.
one GET read ABLE writing old WIN TOP heavy EMPH FOC
‘In one thousand people who are able to read Mon, it is extremely difficult to find one who can read old texts.’ (LPM:17)

In SM the word order \( \text{påh l góc lép} \) ‘can read’ (lit. ‘read writing able’) with post-VP \( \text{lèp} \) is preferred.

\( \text{màn} \)

The verb \( \text{màn} \) is not attested in OM, but the connection with Khmer \( \text{mĩz₃n} \) ‘have, possess’ (Lit. Khm. and Old Khm. \( \text{mān} \)) proves it to be an inherited root. The restriction in MM to negated contexts only is not found in the modern language and probably due to the scarcity of inscriptive data available. The same may be said for its absence as full verb in MM. In LM and SM \( \text{màn} \), \( \text{màn} \) means ‘win; be capable, able’. The semantics of Khmer \( \text{mĩz₃n} \) together with the meaning of \( \text{màn} \) in modern Mon suggests an original meaning ‘gain’ or similar. In the closest relative of Mon, Nyah Kur, the same verb means ‘be successful in gambling or hunting’ (Diffloth 1984:208).

As full verb, the most common meaning of \( \text{màn} \) is ‘win’. In this function it competes with the Burmese loan \( \text{ʔŋ}^{145} \) ‘win, be successful, pass (an exam)’ and the Mon-Khmer root \( \text{h₃n₇h₃}^{146} \) ‘win, be victorious’, the two of which are often combined as \( \text{ʔŋ-h₃n₇h₃} \).

As modal operator \( \text{màn} \) occurs after the VP and denotes a physical, circumstantial or mental capability or ability, as opposed to \( \text{lèp} \) which denotes an acquired or learned ability. Post-VP \( \text{màn} \) can also express a general possibility, competing with post-VP \( \text{k̀y?} \). The following sentences illustrate the different meanings of the modal \( \text{màn} \).

---

145 Burmese \text{aun} ‘succeed, pass an exam’.
146 LM \( \text{jn₃h₃} \), cf. Khmer \( \text{chn₇h₃} \) ‘win, be victorious’.
(6.225)  həcit ŋəə nə?  kəh kwac kləŋ màn.
SM    nine  day this TOP walk COME WIN
‘You could (were strong enough to) walk here for nine days.’ (KKP)

(6.226a)  kon pèh ʔuə phyiə?  hũʔ  màn pũh.
SM    son 2 1s CAUS:eat NEG WIN NEG
‘I am not able (don’t have enough food) to feed your children.’
(KKP)

The direct object in (6.226a) is moved to sentence initial topic position. The non-topicalized neutral word order of the same expression shows the position of màn after the VP

(6.226b) ʔuə phyiə?  kon pèh hũʔ  màn pũh.
1s CAUS:eat son 2 NEG WIN NEG

In the following sentence, the ability is mental rather than physical as in (6.225) or financial as in (6.226a).

(6.227)  p̓əh  kanə̑h kləŋ teh ʔuə möŋ hũʔ màn d̓ə̑n̓ h̓amə̑ə.
SM    person other come COND 1s stay NEG WIN country Burma
‘If others came (to Thailand) I could not stay there, in Burma.’
(KKP)

The next sentence expresses a general possibility rather than an individual ability or capability.

(6.228)  y̓ə  rə̀  kwan hũʔ  həcə̑k  ðəh tem màn ha?
SM  COND fellow village NEG CAUS:touch 3 know WIN Q
‘If the villagers hadn’t given them (the refugees) away, could they (the Japanese soldiers) possibly have known it?’ (KD)

Summary

The postverbal (chiefly post-VP) modal operators k̓əʔ, l̓əp, and màn all translate into English as ‘can V’, but they denote different aspects of the ability. While V+k̓əʔ denotes a general circumstantial possibility or ability, i.e. the absence of any obstacles for the subject to V (including ability, skill, permission, time to V, etc), l̓əp explicitly indicates that the subject has learned and acquired a certain skill and is therefore able to V. Postverbal màn indicates that the subject is physically, financially, mentally or otherwise capable of V-ing. Both k̓əʔ and especially màn have developed epistemic
modal functions (‘it is possible that...’), while lēp has only deontic value. The difference is illustrated in the following sentences.

(6.229a) ?uə hayèh kwèk hù? këy?
SM 1s sing song NEG GET
‘I cannot sing (e.g. because I don’t have the time).’

SM 1s sing song NEG ABLE
‘I cannot sing (because I haven’t learned it).’

(6.229c) ?uə hayèh kwèk hù? màn.
SM 1s sing song NEG WIN
‘I cannot sing (e.g. because I’m too tired/shy/etc.).’

The Mon usage so closely parallels the usage of the Burmese auxiliaries yá, taʔ and nain respectively that mutual influence is probable (s. Okell 1969:456f, 417f, 362f; Okell and Allott 2001:178f; 90; 109).

6.3.14 ‹dah› tēh ‘hit’

The OM verb ‹dah› is used in the sense ‘touch, be contiguous with’. Its meanings attested in MM are ‘touch, be or come in contact with, be exposed to, be fitting, right, befall, etc.’ as full verb and ‘have to, must’ as auxiliary (cf. DMI:200). Mon-Khmer cognates of this lexeme include Khmer tēh ‘slap’ and Stieng dāh ‘hit’. Nyah Kur has tàh and thàh (different dialects) with the meaning ‘hit, touch (tr. and it.), undergo (an undesirable action), reach (as postverb), correctly’ (Diffloth 1984:256).

In modern Mon, ‹dah›, tēh has a number of translations, including ‘hit (a mark, a target), touch, correct, cheap’ as a full verb, ‘have to, must; undergo, PASSIVE (ADVERSATIVE)’ as preverbal auxiliary, and ‘correctly, able; inadvertently, unintentionally’ as postverbal auxiliary. Unlike its Mon-Khmer relatives, Mon tēh denotes a non-agentive, non-controlled, non-volitional event. This semantic component is so important that tēh developed into a postverbal auxiliary indicating that an action is carried out without intention. Some of the functions of tēh have close parallels in other Southeast Asian languages, usually involving lexemes with the same general meaning as Mon tēh, while other developments are idiosyncratic. A few idiomatic expressions involve tēh, both as full verb and as auxiliary.
Full verb usage → passive

Used as a full verb, têh cannot be used in imperative and prohibitive contexts. A sentence like ‘Don’t touch it!’ is expressed in SM as

(6.230) paʔ  ko têh!
SM    PROH GIVE hit

which literally means ‘don’t let it touch’ or ‘don’t let it hit’. Other ways of expressing English ‘touch’ in agentive contexts involve verbs with similar semantics but lacking the non-agentive component of têh, such as rɔ̀ ‘catch, touch’ and tek ‘hit, beat’. When used as full verb, têh often means ‘undergo, suffer, be exposed to’. In this meaning it is in many cases translatable as passive (‘be hit by, be affected by’) and usually indicates that the experience is not a pleasant one (‘adversative’).

(6.231) têh lè tak-puə dɔə səŋkəpu.
SM    hit KEEP fighting LOC Singapore
‘They (the Japanese) were attacked in Singapore.’ (lit. ‘suffered an attack, fighting’) (NC)

(6.232) kv nɔ̀n hɔyətêh ?uə têh pʃəŋ khypt.
SM o.brother Nyein think HIT 1s hit bomb die
‘Brother Nyein thought that I was hit by a bomb and died.’ (NC)

Sentence (6.232) shows têh once as postverbal auxiliary and once as full verb. The full verb use illustrated in the preceding sentences, with undergoer-subject, led to the development of têh into a preverbal adversative passive marker. The only change involved in this development from full verb to auxiliary is the extension of its combinability with verbs or clauses instead of nouns. In other words, the direct object of têh may be either an NP or a clause.

(6.233) ŋuə ɣəh ɔyʔ pəh têh (?ɔəpa) tek raʔ.
SM    day tomorrow that 2 HIT (father) beat FOC
‘Tomorrow you will be beaten (by father).’ (KKP)

Especially in LM, the combination of ⟨daŋ⟩ with ⟨duŋ⟩ ‘receive, accept’ is common to express passive events.

147 I use the glosses ‘hit’ and ‘HIT’ for têh, but it must be kept in mind that têh is ‘hit’ only in its non-agentive reading. The English translation varies according to the context.

148 tak-puə is from B tɔi’-pwè ‘fight, attack’, which in turn is made up of two Mon words. The Mon word order is found in the variant puə-hɔtak ‘id.’

149 kv from B dɔkəu ‘older brother’ is a common prefix for personal names and, as in other languages of the area, does not necessarily indicate actual relatedness.
The queen was caught.' (DC:12)

See section 3.2 for a fuller discussion of passive expressions in Mon.

**Preverbal tēh: Obligation and necessity**

While the development from a full verb meaning ‘be unpleasantly affected by or suffer N’ into an auxiliary meaning ‘be unpleasantly affected by or suffer V/CLAUSE’ is rather clear and straightforward, the grammaticalization of the verb meaning ‘hit, touch, etc.’ into a preverbal modal marker indicating obligation or necessity is less obvious. This development is found not only in Mon, but also in Thai, where one of the verbs meaning ‘hit, touch’, viz. ต่อ, all but lost its full verb function and is used chiefly as preverbal modal meaning ‘have to, must’ (deontic as well as epistemic). The other verb with similar semantics in Thai, ทุก, developed into a preverbal passive marker, which is extending its function from adversative to neutral contexts, a result of increasing westernization of standard Thai.

In Mon, preverbal tēh is ambiguous, indicating either voice (passive) or modality (obligation, necessity). In another context sentence (6.233) above, without a secondary subject, could be interpreted as ‘tomorrow you’ll have to beat (them)’. Usually the context is clear enough to decide which reading is intended, especially as there is no restriction concerning the semantics of the verb following modal tēh, while passive tēh is always followed by a transitive and, for most speakers at least, unpleasant event. In the following sentences, it is clearly the modal function that is intended.

(6.235) มุ่? ตีห klon mdŋ nem.
SM what HIT do STAY PERS
‘What else do I have to do.’ (WK)

(6.236) kla hū? tēh ʔəp kēh dēh priŋ lb senat.
SM before NEG HIT hand.over TOP 3 prepare KEEP gun
‘Before they had to hand over (their weapons) they got the guns ready.’ (NC)

(6.237) daŋ hkyū jan chak ’ā gata te’ roŋ.
LM HIT write compose CONNECT GO front that ASRT
‘I have to go on writing and composing (the story).’ (DC:2)
In most contexts *tèh* expresses deontic ‘must’, i.e. an obligation to do something. There are instances of *tèh* with obviously epistemic meaning, i.e. the probability or certainty that something will happen. This is illustrated in the following sentence.

SM    watch  ship-wind watch  think  HIT  burn  TOP  NEG  burn  TOP
‘We watched that aeroplane, we watched it and we thought that it must certainly catch fire, but it didn’t.’ (NC)

Syntactic tests can unambiguously decide on the grammatical function of preverbal *tèh*. While the passive voice marker *tèh* can form a complete one-word expression, for example as an answer to the question ‘will he be beaten?’; the preverbal modal *tèh* is always followed by a full verb. The most common answer to *tèh* tek ha ‘Will he be/was he beaten?’ is simply *tèh* ‘Yes, he will be/was.’, but the same question intended as ‘Do I have to beat him?’ can only be answered by *tèh* tek ‘Yes, you have to’.

**Postverbal *tèh*: ‘Correctly’ or ‘inadvertently’**

As in preverbal position, *tèh* developed into two distinct postverbal operators. Firstly, it came to be used as V2 in verbal resultative compounds (RVC), indicating a successful or correct outcome of the action described by the main verb. In this function *tèh* competes with the semantically related generalized ‘success verbs’ *kỹʔ, lèp* and *mán* (which see above, sections 6.3.12, 6.3.13) and occurs after the VP. In English, post-VP *tèh* can often be translated as ‘V correctly’ or ‘can V’. It is frequently used in the idiomatic expression *ket hù? tèh* (often shortened to *hù? tèh*) ‘I don’t know’, lit. ‘take NEG HIT’. The following sentences illustrate post-VP *tèh*.

(6.239) poy cao ɻɔʔ? *hù? tèh* raʔ?
SM    1pl return  house NEG  HIT  FOC
‘We didn’t know the way back home.’ (KM)

(6.240) ʔǝgɤ ʔǝŋ san kla ɭyʔ *pɔh* (lɔc ɭypan)
SM    o.brother  Aung San before  that  read (writing Japan)
*tèh* mɔŋ ɭaʔt ət  nɔh.
HIT  STAY  ADV:all  EMPH
‘Back then brother Aung San could read it (Japanese) all.’ (NC)

In immediate postverbal position, *tèh* marks a non-volitional act. The subject is marked as non-agentive; the responsibility for the action described by the main verb is taken off his shoulders. In this function *tèh* is not
compatible with some inherently non-agentive, non-volitional verbs, such as *khy`t* ‘die’. It does occur with other non-agentive verbs, such as *ch`r* ‘see, find’, though. At this point of research it is not entirely clear what triggers the compatibility or incompatibility of postverbal *tēh*. The development probably started with *tēh* as serial verb, which can still be seen in the following sentences. The NP following *tēh* is the object of both *V₁* and *tēh* (6.241) or of *tēh* only (6.242), as is common in Mon verb serialization.

(6.241)  khep ca sat  **khep dah** tay.
LM   cut  eat  areca.nut cut  hit/HIT hand
‘She was cutting an areca nut and cut (hit) her finger.’ (RDR:178)

(6.242)  dɔ̞ɔ̞ kɔ̀ bi  nèh ty? **ʔa tēh** tūn.
SM  LOC OBL river person that go  hit  bamboo
‘Swimming in the river he hit a piece of bamboo.’ (KKP)

The use of postverbal *tēh* was extended to contexts where the following NP is not the object of *tēh*, as in the next sentence. The development is from serial verb to an aspectoid operator, expressing manner rather than temporal aspect.

(6.243)  dēh  **ch`r tēh** prep  ćeɔ? parəŋ.
SM   3  find HIT squirrel eat  marian.plum
‘He saw a squirrel eating a plum.’ (KM)

In this context, *tēh* seems to indicate that the subject was not actively looking for a squirrel, by saw it by chance. An approximate translation in English would be ‘he happened to see a squirrel’.

Sentence (6.244) is similar, although one might suspect that the people did actually intend to come and listen to the sermon of the famous novice monk. The use of *daŋ* here indicates that they were ‘hit, struck’ by his words.

(6.244)  mnih  **mii daŋ** dhaw  kon thapuiy ta’gah klǎh cuit.
LM  man hear HIT doctrine child novice  PL TOP clear heart
‘The people who came to hear the teaching of the young novice became clear in their hearts (i.e. understood everything).’ (DC:9)

In SM, postverbal *tēh* is very frequent after about any agentive verb, indicating that the subject did something without intention or by mistake, as in *ćeɔ? tēh* ‘happen to eat (what one was not supposed to eat)’, *ʔa tēh* ‘happen to go (where one was not supposed to go)’, *hım tēh* ‘happen to speak (what was to be kept secret)’, etc. This pattern comes in very handy whenever one needs an excuse for doing something that one was not supposed to do. It can
also indicate that the outcome of the action, rather than the action itself, was not intended.

(6.245) puiy tak dah tay lon 'ā tuy khyuit 'ā roñ.  
LM 1pl beat HIT hand exceed GO FINISH die GO ASRT  
‘We may have beaten him too much and he died.’ (MKP:23)

The beating up of a conceived thief in the temple by the temple boys was intended, but not the killing of the thief.  
In some complex sentences tēh seems to indicate that the subordinate event is not wanted/intended by the superordinate subject, as in the following sentence. The abbot of the temple tries to cover up the killing of the thief by his temple boys and is worried that someone might know about it. It is the abbot’s non-intention (to let anyone know about the incident) rather than the people’s (to find out about it).

(6.246) gwiñ phek ŋañ gamluñ tiñ dah.  
LM worry fear person ATTR:many know HIT  
‘He was worried and afraid that the people might find out.’  
(MKP:26)

As the direct object often remains unexpressed in Mon, the sequence V + tēh ambiguous. For example hom tēh can be translated either as ‘he inadvertently said it’ or ‘he speaks right’. As for preverbal tēh, a simple syntactic test can be applied to decide the function. The post-VP modifier can form a one-word sentence, while the postverbal aspectoid operator cannot.

Summary

The verb meaning ‘hit, touch, be or come in contact with’, which in LM and SM always takes a non-agentive undergoer-subject, developed four different grammatical functions.

1. Preverbal adversative passive voice marker:  
[NP₁ tēh NP₂ V] ‘NP₁ is V-ed by NP₂’

This development is an extension of the full verb with inherent passive meaning. It is also found in other Southeast Asian languages, e.g. Thai (thuuk ‘hit, touch > PASSIVE’). The original pattern

S tēh O  
‘S hits O unintentionally’, ‘S is affected/hit by O’

The situation is not clear in earlier stages of the language. The semantics of the corresponding verb in Nyah Kur suggest that OM <dañ> could be used in agentive contexts.
was changed into

\[
S \texttt{tēh} \ V/\text{CLAUSE} \quad \text{‘S is affected by/suffers V/CLAUSE’}. \]

In this position and function, \texttt{tēh} can form a one-word answer and can be negated.

2. Preverbal modal operator indicating obligation or necessity:

\[
[\text{NP}_{1} \texttt{tēh} \ V] \quad \text{‘NP}_{1} \text{ must } V' \]

This grammaticalization path is less clear than the passive voice marker. It found also in Thai (\texttt{tēh} \textasciitilde \texttt{ŋ2} ‘touch > must, have to’). The semantic idea behind this development seems to be that the subject is given no choice, i.e. is non-agentive. He acts because of some external force. In the modal function, \texttt{tēh} cannot form a one-word answer, but direct negation is possible.

3. Post-VP marker expressing the ability to perform \texttt{V} correctly:

\[
[\text{NP}_{1} \ V \ \text{NP}_{2} \texttt{tēh}] \quad \text{‘NP}_{1} \text{ knows how to } V \ \text{NP}_{2}' \]

This function corresponds to post-VP use of Thai \textit{thuuk\textsuperscript{l}}. Parallel developments of serial verbs into modals (modifiers) are found in other post-VP modals \texttt{k\textasciitilde\text{ʔ}}, \texttt{lēp}, and \texttt{mān}. The postverbal modifier can form a one-word answer and can be directly negated.

4. Postverbal marker of a non-volitional, unintended action, relieving the subject of his responsibility:

\[
[\text{NP}_{1} \ V \ \texttt{tēh} \ \text{NP}_{2}] \quad \text{‘NP}_{1} \ \text{V} \ \text{NP}_{2} \text{ unintentionally/by mistake’} \]

The semantic component ‘non-agentivity’ of the full verb \texttt{tēh} gained enough prominence to develop into an independent operator. This function does not allow \texttt{tēh} as a one-word answer or take direct negation. The grammaticalization path probably lead from a serial verb construction with \texttt{tēh} as \texttt{V}_{2} and a shared object (as in \texttt{p\textasciitilde\text{ʔn tēh həcem} ‘shoot and hit a bird’}) to a generalised use of \texttt{tēh}. The same grammaticalization is found in Burmese \textit{mī} ‘(manage to) catch \ V inadvertently, unintentionally, by mistake’ (Okell 1969:358f; Okell and Allott 2001:153, Myanmar Language Commission 1993:338). The presence of a Burmese morpheme expressing an involuntary, unintentional action may have influenced the development of Mon \texttt{tēh} on a structural level. It is not clear, though, in which direction the influence occurred.
Other TAM operators

6.3.15 ‹mik, mik-gwa’› mòc, mək ʔ ‘want (to) → DESIDERATIVE’

Historical Development

In OM ‹mic› ‘desire, want’ could be used as independent full verb and as preverbal modal operator. Its use as full verb is illustrated in (6.247).

(6.247)  wo’ kāl śmiṅ duṃpoḥ tluṅ biṅ duṅ bārānasī mic
OM this time king seven come surround city Benares desire
kuṅci-dnal śmiṅ kussarāja.
bride king Kussarāja
‘This is when seven kings come and besiege Benares, desiring
King Kussarāja’s bride.’ (DMI:293)

In the next sentence, ‹mic› occurs before a verb as modal:

(6.248) ’abhayo mic tit cinleh ku t(w)ar.
OM Abhaya desire exit fight OBL enemy
‘Abhaya wants to go out and fight with the enemy.’ (Ku99)

The modal does not necessarily have to be followed by a full verb, as illustrated in (6.249).

(6.249) ’ba ’ja ’or kmin ’ja sak mic.
OM father 3 command reign 3 NEG desire
‘His father bids him be king, but he does not want to.’ (DMI:293)

In MM, ‹mik› appears grammaticalized as preverbal modal with desiderative value. It has all but lost its function as full verb. As already in OM in certain contexts, MM ‹mik› is used interchangeably with its prospective form ‹smik›, obviously without difference in meaning (s. DMI:293). It often appears in combination with ‹go’› ‘GET’ in the pattern

S mik go’ V ‘S wants to V, would like to V’.

This pattern is becoming increasingly popular in LM and is the only one used in SM in affirmative contexts, as will be seen below.

(6.250) mik ka[nam] cetī tuy...
MM DES build pagoda FINISH
‘He wanted to build a pagoda and ...’ (SDGb3)
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(6.251) (dhāt swo)k kyāk tray smin mik go’ cut kwom tuy...
MM relic hair Buddha exalted king DES GET put together FINISH
‘The king wanted to enshrine the hair relic of the Lord Buddha,
too and ...’ (SDGb3f)

Modern Mon

In modern Mon, as in MM, ‹mik›, moc is used only as modal operator. The
full verb translation equivalent of English ‘want, desire’ in Mon is usually ket
‘take’. It should be kept in mind that agentive verbs in Mon have a conative
connotation, ket therefore being translatable as ‘try/want to take’. The
position of moc before the main verb is iconic in that the desire to do
something occurs before the actual act (cf. also tēh ‘HIT’ as preverbal modal
‘must, have’, section 6.3.14). In LM ‹mik› can occur as simple auxiliary or in
combination with ‹gwa› ‘GET’, without obvious difference in meaning.

(6.252) ’ay mik huim kuiw marājñī.
LM 1s DES speak OBL king LITTLE
‘I would like to speak with the king.’ (LPM:29)

(6.253) smik gwa’ tim dadah sjān ’ay āık
LM PROSP:DES GET know NML:be sword 1s servant
kuhih huwa’ kuih.
good NEG good
‘Your Majesty wants to know about my sword if it is good or not.’
(RDR:118)

Originally the addition of ‹gwa› may have had aspe ctual function, i.e.
stressing the ingressive/inchoative reading of the verb (s. secion 6.3.12 for a
discussion of preverbal ‹gwa›) which is inherently part of the desiderative.
One first has the desire to do something and then starts doing it. In most
natural contexts it does not make sense to express a wish about an ongoing
(or finished) action or state.

The following passage from the Jātaka tales with ‹mik› in two adjoining
sentences, once in the simple form and once in combination with ‹gwa›
suggests that at the time of writing the Jātakas (end of the 18th c.), there was
no conceivable difference between the two forms.
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(6.254) mnaḥ smik tiṁ dewadhaw hā?
LM  2  PROSP:DES know divine.doctrine Q
     'aisy smik gwa’ tiṁ bway ma lɔ̀n ra.
     1s PROPS:DES GET know ADV REL exceed FOC
     ‘Do you want to know/learn about the divine doctrine?’
     ‘I want to know about it very much.’ (Jat:22)

In SM the combination *mòc kɔ? is always shortened to məkɔ? in affirmative contexts.

(6.255a) ?at dāk kɔ̀h məkɔ? cao.
SM  ask.for ride cart TOP DES return
     ‘They asked for a ride on that cart, they wanted to go home.’ (KD)

Unlike OM usage, SM məkɔ? must always be followed by a verb, also if the verb is present in the immediate context.

(6.256a) məkɔ? a hā?
SM  DES go Q
     ‘Do you want to go?’

(6.256b) məkɔ? a. (*məkɔ?.)
SM  DES go
     ‘Yes.’

This parallels Burmese, but not Thai usage:

(6.256c) yaak¹ pay may⁴? yaak¹. (’yaak¹ pay.)
Th  DES go Q DES

(6.256d) thwà-hcin lā? thwà-hcin te. (*hcin te)
B  go-DES Q go-DES RL

In negative contexts SM uses the simple form mòc. Like məkɔ?, mòc must always be followed by a verb. The negated counterparts of the sentences (6.255) and (6.256) above are given below.

(6.255b) hù? mòc cao.
SM  NEG DES return
     ‘They didn’t want to go home.’
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(6.256e)  huhʔ mòcʔa pùh ha?  huhʔ mòcʔa pùh. (*huhʔmòc.)
SM  NEG DES go NEG Q  NEG DES go NEG
‘Don’t you want to go?’ ‘No.’

If the subject of the desiderative expression wants someone else to do something, the change of subject must be indicated by kp ‘GIVE’: makʔ? kD ʔa ‘I want (you/him/her/them) to go.’ (s. section 6.3.11 for details on kp).

Summary

In OM, ‹mic› occurs as full verb with a nominal object, meaning ‘want, desire’. MM ‹mik› is used almost exclusively with verbal objects, rapidly developing into a preverbal modal operator. This development is completed in LM and SM, where the simple form is replaced by the combination with kʔ? in affirmative contexts. There is in SM a perfect complementary distribution with makʔ? in affirmative and mòc in negative contexts. The full verb function of OM ‹mic› is taken over in modern Mon either by verbs expressing similar meanings, such as ket ‘take’ or by the combination makʔ? kʔʔ ‘want to get’. Apart from the complementary distribution pattern, Mon makʔ?mòc is structurally identical with its Burmese counterpart hcin ‘DESIDERATIVE’ in most functions (cf. Okell 1969:266f; Okell and Allott 2001:36).

6.3.16 ‹tuy› lado ‘FINISH’

Historical development

In OM, ‹tuy, tuy› is not found as an independent verb. No prospective form is attested in the inscriptions, but the causative ‹ptuy› ‘make ready’ occurs, as well as the attributive ‹tmuy›, which has developed irregular semantics as ‘be complete with’, and the nominalized form ‹tirtuy› ‘perfection’ (DMI:161f). According to Shorto, ‹tuy, tuy› functions as an adverbial “indicating completion or priority of action” and “esp. connecting statements of consecutive events” (ibid.). Later stages of Mon and derived forms in OM confirm the original verbal semantics of ‹tuy› as ‘finish, complete’. The fact that the OM lexeme is not found in this function may be due to coincidence rather than real absence from the language. Sentence (6.257) illustrates the former function of OM ‹tuy›, (6.258) the latter.

(6.257) kil dan (t)uy.
OM give donation FINISH
‘He has finished almsgiving.’ (An349)
In the function of a sequential marker, \(<\text{tu}<y>\) competes with \(<\text{bla}<h>\)\(^{151}\), which usually occurs in clause initial position, but is also found between two clauses to indicate that clause\(_2\) follows clause\(_1\), as in (6.259) below. It is not clear at the present stage of studies whether there is a difference in meaning between the two forms. One possible functional difference may be that \(<\text{tu}<y>\) expresses a closer link between the events than \(<\text{bla}<h>\). This is supported by the fact that after \(<\text{bla}<h>\) the subject of clause\(_2\) is often overtly expressed, even if it is identical with the subject of clause\(_1\), while after \(<\text{tu}<y>\) the subject of clause\(_2\) remains often unexpressed. This tendency may be due to the scarcity of inscriptional evidence, though, and more inscriptional data than is available at the present would be needed to reach a conclusion on this point. In MM, LM and SM, only the reflex of \(<\text{tu}<y>\) has survived, occurring both in clause initial and clause final position, as we will see below.

(6.259) \text{tarley gura}<n>\text{ kel smi}<n>\text{ in }\text{bla}<h>\text{ tarley cis}
OM \text{ lord:1s CAUS:know GIVE king Indra SEQ lord:1s move.down tūn jetawanamahāwihār. return Jeta.forest.great.monastery}
‘Our Lord informed the Lord Indra and then came back down to the great monastery at Jeta Forest.’ (SSKa53f)

In MM, \(<\text{tu}<y>\) is used as a full verb meaning ‘be finished’, as a verbal auxiliary marking a completed event or action, and as sequential marker linking two events in temporal sequence. As indicated above, I believe that the MM use as full verb is not an innovation or lexicalization of a grammatical element (a process that is rarely attested in the world’s languages), but that the lack of this use in OM is due to the scarcity of inscriptional material available. The full verb use in MM is illustrated in the following sentence.

(6.260) \text{’akhā kā wihā ma tuy gah...}
MM \text{ time work temple REL finish TOP}
‘When the work on the temple was finished...’ (Mahārāma 10)

\(^{151}\) One might suppose a connection of this morpheme with the OM verb \(<\text{bla}<h>\) ‘be relieved, come to an end’, but comparison with related languages suggest two separate roots. See DMI (p.279) for linguistic comparisons of OM \(<\text{bla}<h>\) ‘that which precedes or is finished’ and \(<\text{bla}<h>\)\(^2\) ‘be relieved, come to an end’. Perhaps the two roots are connected at some (much earlier) stage of the language.
The grammaticalized clause final form can occur with ‹tuy› as a full verb, as in (6.261), or with another verb describing an event that has a logical endpoint.

(6.261) dak plan tuy tuy heñ.
MM build RETURN finish FINISH EMPH
‘They had finished the rebuilding.’ (SDGb28)

(6.262) buddhapatimā gah thāpanā lar pday dlamuy.
MM Buddha.image TOP enshrine KEEP LOC chamber FINISH
‘He had enshrined the Buddha image in the relic chamber.’ (SDGb8)

The use of postverbal ‹tuy› to describe a completed event as in (6.261) and (6.262) led to a twofold extension of the function of ‹tuy›. Firstly it came to have a connotation of ‘past event’, as can be seen in the following sentence.

(6.263) ḍā klaṁ pi-cwos turau cnām gah kali lwon ‘ā tuy.
MM two hundred three-ty six year TOP elapse exceed GO FINISH
‘Two hundred thirty six years had elapsed.’ (SDGb16)

The other development, which was completed already in OM, is from ‘completed event’ to ‘event₁ is completed and event₂ follows’. Both developments were carried on into LM and SM, making LM ‹tuy›, SM ‹toʊ› a very frequent morpheme covering a wide range of functions, all of which can be drawn back to the original (and still present) verbal semantics ‘be finished, finish’.

**Modern Mon: Full verb → resultative → completive, experiential**

In modern Mon, ‹toʊ› is used as a full verb with both agentive and passive meaning, i.e. the subject can be either actor as in (6.264) or undergoer as in (6.265), similar to the use of English ‘be finished’.

(6.264) ʔuə toʊ kla ʔpt.
SM 1s finish before all
‘I finished first.’

(6.265) đūn hwa’ gatāp tuy ñirn.
LM city NEG catch.up finish yet
‘The (building of) city was not completed yet.’ (RDR:13)

As resultative verb in a serial construction, ‹toʊ› denotes the completion of the action and is negatable.
Constructions of this kind can be seen as the starting point for the development into a postverbal completive marker, which is already attested in OM and MM. While the resultative serial verb toə can be negated, as seen in the example above, the post-VP completive aspect operator cannot. The development in Mon went less far than the grammaticalization of the corresponding lexeme in Thai and Burmese (s. Jenny 2001:124ff for Thai, and Okell 1969:382ff; Okell and Allott 2001:128ff for Burmese). The use of toə for many speakers is still restricted to verbs which contain an obvious endpoint. With stative verbs describing qualities, the use of toə is not accepted by most native speakers. None of the informants interviewed accepted the expression *khøh toə ‘it is good already’.

There are instances, though, both in LM and SM where non-dynamic verbs occur with toə. Most, but not all speakers reject an expression like tem toə yaʔ? ‘know (already)’ while ciʔ? toə yaʔ? ‘have eaten (already)’ is accepted by all speakers. But compare the following sentences from LM.

(6.267) mnaʔ taʔtim män tuy ‘uit ra.
LM   2 PL know STAY FINISH all FOC
‘You already know it all.’ (DC:33)

(6.268) dadah ‘ay mi byu jarāʔa tuy ra.
LM    NML:be 1s mother old old GO FINISH FOC
‘I have grown old.’ (DC:36)

In SM, most speakers would probably not use toə in these sentences, but replace the sentence final focus marker with the ‘NEW SITUATION’ marker yaʔ? (NSIT, s. section 6.3.17 below). The ‘unnatural’ LM usage may have been influenced by the use of toə as standard translation equivalent of Pali past tense/aorist (s. for example Ketuma ti 1965:122) and/or by Burmese and Thai usage. As seen above, the development from ‘completive’ to ‘past tense’ marker can already be observed in MM, although SM usage suggests that this never became part of the everyday language. SM favours the completive reading where available and an experiential reading where the completive is not available or excluded by the context. When asked about the grammaticality of the expression khydi toə yaʔ? ‘has died’

native speakers take some time before they offer two opinions. Firstly, “for some speakers

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152 The corresponding Thai and Burmese expressions, dèi lêəw? and kàun pi resp., are perfectly grammatical.
153 This sentence is actually attested in the conversation KD.
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this sentence may be fine, but we would not put it this way”, and secondly, “this means that he has died before (and was reborn)”, i.e. they assign an experiential notion to *toə*. In the following sentence, the completive reading is possible, but the broader context suggests experiential reading. The speaker is talking about a hot spring that the Japanese soldiers discovered in southern Burma during WW II. She is proud that she has visited the place and taken a bath there.

(6.269) poy hum *toə* lèy.
SM 1pl bathe FINISH EMPH
‘We have (been there and) taken a bath.’ (KD)

Alternatively *toə* can co-occur with the experiential marker *kiŋ* (s. section 6.3.18):

(6.270) bə wəŋ ləŋ sı ra? ʔua *kiŋ* məŋ *toə*.
SM BaWaeng Loun Zi FOC 1s EXPER stay FINISH
‘It was at Ba Waeng Loun Zi that I stayed (at least) once.’ (KD)

As the experiential in Mon is restricted to past time reference, *toə* does have implied past tense notion in Mon, but not in a general sense as stated by Western (e.g. Bauer 1982:435ff, Haswell 2002:29) and some native grammarians (e.g. Ketumati 1965, Talanon 2000). In spite of its position after the VP (not directly after the verb), which would suggest it to be a modal or tense operator, *toə* is a resultative serial verb grammaticalized into a general completive marker, i.e. it has aspectual rather than temporal or modal value.

**Completive → sequential marker**

Apart from being used as completive marker, the other important function of *toə* in LM and SM, as in older stagers of the language, is as sequential marker, linking clauses or sentences in temporal order. The arrangement of events is almost always iconic, i.e. in the formulation event₁ *toə* event₂, event₁ precedes event₂. Simultaneous events are linked by the INCLUSIVE marker *sam* in the pattern ‘*sam* event₁ *sam* event₂’, rather than by *toə*.

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154 These statements were obtained from native speakers of WK Mon who are fully bilingual with Thai and have very good command of Burmese. The interview was conducted in Thai, which clearly distinguishes between NSIT/COMPLETIVE (*lən*) and EXPERIENTIAL (*khərey*).

155 This contrasts with Burmese usage, where the experiential marker *hpʊ* may have future reference, as in the expression thwà *hpʊ* hcin te ‘I would like to go there once’ (cf. Okell 1969:302; Okell and Allott 2001:135f).

156 See sentence (3.23) for an example of inversed order of events.
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(6.271a) syŋ bia toa ći? ʔpyŋ.
SM drink beer FINISH eat rice
‘First we drink beer and then we eat (rice).’

(6.271b) sm syŋ bia sm ći? ʔpyŋ.
SM INCL drink beer INCL eat rice
‘We drink beer and (at the same time) eat (rice).’

Apart from being temporally ordered, the sentences or clauses joined by toa are independent. They can have a shared subject as in (6.272) and (6.273) or different subjects as in (6.274) and (6.275), which may be overtly expressed or understood.

(6.272) deh cù toa yèh deh kyy? ʔa ra?.
SM 3 rest FINISH morning 3 GET go FOC
‘He took a rest and then next day he went on.’ (WK)

(6.273) tla ŋah tim dadah gna-kyāk yay ’ā tuy kuiv
LM lord person know NML:be queen sick GO FINISH GIVE
‘cā saw mahā-saw ta’ kluŋ lwī-parā ra’. teacher medicine big-medicine PL come treat FOC
‘The king learned about the queen having fallen sick and let the big doctors come and treat her.’ (DC:17)

Theoretically, 〈tuy〉 in this sentence could be taken to have scope over the expression 〈yay ’ā〉 ‘become sick’, but the context suggests it to have scope over the whole first clause.

(6.274) kyōpan dák kyy? toa ?ěŋkölèc lek ḳo ʔa?
SM Japanese ride GET FINISH English side which go
‘The Japanese were on top (i.e. had an advantage), so where could the British go?’ (KD)

(6.275) puiy tak dař tay lon ’ā tuy khyuit ’ā rōn.
LM 1pl beat HIT hand exceed GO FINISH die GO ASRT
‘We must have beaten him too hard and he has died.’ (MKP:23)

In SM, toa can occur in sentence initial position, indicating that an unmentioned event precedes the event expressed in the sentence.

(6.276) toa ?ömèy deh hakɔn ḳo deh kòh rōŋ tē?.
SM FINISH mother3 order KEEP GIVE 3 TOP look y.brother
‘Then his mother told him to look after his younger brother.’ (WK)
When used as a sequential marker, toə is often combined with the conditional marker teh (see section 1.4.3). The combination toə teh is usually shortened to təeh/toteh in colloquial Mon. This form occurs both in sentence medial and sentence initial position, with overt or understood subject.

(6.277) ʔuə hùʔ tem toə teh ʔuə cəə ʔəł nən.
SM 1s NEG know FINISH COND 1s hang KEEP waistcloth
‘I didn’t know about it and I hung the waistcloths to dry.’ (KD)

(6.278) toə teh kyəpan dəh kə cao.
SM FINISH COND Japanese 3 GIVE return
‘And then the Japanese let us go back.’ (KD)

Often toə teh is best translated into English as ‘and’. Although there is strictly speaking no temporal consecution in the following sentence, the fact that Ma Het is a friend of the speaker is a causal circumstance leading to her coming to talk with the speaker.

(6.279) məʔhet kəh təh məʔ ʔəł toə teh kəɲə tek
SM Ma Het TOP be STAY friend 1s FINISH COND come beat
kya kə ʔuə.
wind OBL 1s
‘Ma Het was a friend of mine and she came to chat with me.’ (KD)

Although the sequential marker toə (teh) is very frequent in SM, a sequence of events can be expressed by verb serialization without overt linker.

(6.280) ʔəŋ ənə tan tet thoʔ.
SM succeed four grade exit THROW
‘I finished grade four and then I left school.’ (KN)

Another way of marking a sequence of events is by the grammaticalized verb pək ‘follow’. This sequential marker indicates that the sequence of events is immediate. Its use is not very frequent both in LM and SM. An example is given in the following sentence.
In other contexts pêk as V2 means ‘V accordingly, V following the example’.

Summary

The verb ‹tuy› was grammaticalized already in OM as completive aspect marker and as sequential marker. While it is not attested as full verb in OM, later stages of the language use ‹tuy› as full verb meaning ‘be finished, complete(d)’. In most contexts, full verb ‹tuy› is used as non-agentive verb with undergoer subject, although SM allows an agentive reading with actor subject in some contexts.

The grammaticalization probably started with ‹tuy› as resultative serial verb, which is still in use in modern Mon. While the resultative verb ‹tuy› can be negated, the completive aspect operator cannot.

The development in modern Mon led to an extension of the use of ‹tuy› to not strictly completive contexts, giving the morpheme a more general perfective value. The acceptance of ‹toa› in non-completive contexts differs among speakers. There may be influence from Burmese and Thai, both of which have carried the development of the lexeme meaning ‘(be) finish(ed)’ on into a general marker for ‘new situations’. In some contexts, an experiential reading of ‹toa› is favoured in SM, which leads to a past time connotation (but does not indicate an inherent general past tense notion). Although native and Western scholars describe ‹toa› as ‘past tense marker’, this analysis is not supported by linguistic data from LM and SM.

The sequential marker is widely used in LM and SM, both in sentence medial and sentence initial position, although its use is not obligatory. The combination with the conditional marker ‹teh› is very frequent in SM.

The different functions of ‹toa› can be summarised as follows:

| VP ‹toa› | ‘resultative serial verb’ (negatable) |
| VP ‹toa› | ‘completive’ > ‘perfective’/‘experiential’ (not negatable) |
| VP ‹toa› VP | ‘sequential’ (› ‹toa› VP ‘afterwards’) |

The expression ‹hämë ‹up-khyup-yey› is a direct loan from Burmese ‹bāma ′ou′-hcou′-yèi› ‘Burma administer-NML’, including the Burmese word order modifier-modified.
Heine and Kuteva (2002:134ff, 320) list the following five grammaticalization paths of the verb meaning ‘finish’ commonly found in the world’s languages: 1. AFTER, 2. ALREADY, 3. COMPLETIVE, 4. CONSECUTIVE, 6. PERFECTIVE.

All of these functions are found (to some extent at least) in Mon. The meaning ‘already’ (respectively ‘new situation’, NSIT) is covered in SM by the recent morpheme *yaʔ* (see the next section). Most speakers do not accept purely NSIT readings for *toə*, although Burmese and Thai both have completed the development ‘finish’ > NSIT. This is one instance of Mon showing structural firmness against foreign influence, while in other respects the (structural) influence from Thai and Burmese is considerable.

6.3.17 ‹ira, yya› Ḣraʔ, yaʔ ‘NEW SITUATION, NSIT’

Shorto (1962:1) lists Ḣʔ as a verb particle which “is always followed by ra”’, indicating the “perfect” (tense/aspect). According to Bauer, “‘i’ combined with ra” has “an aspectual colouring ‘perfective’” and “may not co-occur” with toə (Bauer 1982:435ff). Shorto (DMI:312) gives the MM form 〈yra〉, a “perfect particle”. As there is only one example given in DMI, with 〈yra〉 in parentheses, indicating a dubious reading, its presence in MM is not certain, although the phonological development 〈yra〉 > 〈ira〉 is possible.

The form 〈ira〉 is rare in LM. It is found only in newer publications, not in classical LM such as the Jātaka tales by ‘Acā Hwo’. In SM, Ḣraith is almost always contracted to *yaʔ* (s. Jenny 2003:190f). Very recent publications, including newspapers, cartoons, and popular karaoke music videos, use the form 〈yya〉 also in the written language.

As the form is not attested in older stages of the language (apart from the rather dubious occurrence in MM mentioned above), the original meaning is unknown. One might suspect an innovative development involving the frequent prefix Ḣʔ and the focal marker raʔ. The prefix Ḣʔ is frequently used with female names and kinship terms. An extension of the use as onomastic prefix led to the use of Ḣʔ as pronominal prefix, as in Ḣʔ-kəh ‘that one, the mentioned one’ from the topic marker kəh, which in SM usually becomes cəh (s. Jenny 2003:188f). In the case of Ḣʔ-raʔ, the prefix probably only functions to reinforce the focal particle. This is supported by the fact that classical LM consistently uses 〈ra〉 where SM would have *yaʔ*.

The function of *yaʔ* in SM seems to be that of a ‘new situation’ marker, combining aspectual with status notions. NSIT describes a new (but expected) state, that has come into being and is opposed to a previous state, which no longer holds (cf. Ebert 2001:152ff and Jenny 2001:125ff for NSIT). It always

158 The spelling 〈yy〉 is conventionally used to represent light register words with initial /y-/; 〈yya〉 thus represents SM yaʔ.
occurs in sentence (or clause) final position as SFP. Although the clause final position of ya? suggests it to be a clause or sentence operator, ya? cannot occur with non-verbal predicates. This distinguishes ya? clearly from ra? in its distribution, although the former is derived from the latter. The necessity to have a morpheme expressing ‘new situation’ may have been influenced by Burmese and Thai usage, both of which have developed a ‘NSIT’ marker from the completive marker (s. above, section 6.3.16). SM ya? may combine with any verb and most verbal operators, indicating that the situation described by the main verb is a new one, i.e. there was a change of situation at some point, although that point is not in the centre of interest. The change of situation may be either the beginning or the end of an event, or it may be the arrival at some crucial intermediate point. The translation varies according to the semantics of the main verb and the context. The main verb does not contain new information in itself, the combination ‘V ya?’ rather expresses that a (previously expected) situation has arisen.

(6.282) .deb thío ya?.
SM 3 angry NSIT
‘He got angry; he is angry (now).’ (KD)

SM old all NSIT exist STAY still
‘They have all grown old, the ones that are still around.’ (KD)

SM three hundred ten TOP 1pl arrive COME Ko’ Dot NSIT
‘By 1310 (1949) we had already arrived at Ko’ Dot.’ (KD)

The time reference in (6.284) does not mean that the speaker and her husband arrived at Ko’ Dot in the year 1949, but that by that time they had already arrived there. In other words ya? describes a state that is the result of a change of state, not the change of state itself.

Opposite to Bauer’s statement that ʔ can not co-occur with toɔ (see above), the combination toɔ ya? is very frequent in SM, meaning ‘I have finished it; I am done with it; it is ready now; etc.’. Combinations with other verbal operators are also common, as shown in the following sentences.

With preverbal kɔʔ?

(6.285) həmùŋ kɔʔ chy kałon ya? ha kɔʔ klon?
SM now GET find NML:do NSIT Q GET do
‘Have you found a job yet?’ (KKP)
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With postverbal ɕəʔ?

\[(6.286)\] ʔuə wəɾt ɕəʔ yaʔ.
SM 1s forget EAT NSIT
‘I have forgotten it.’ (KD)

With postverbal thəʔ?

\[(6.287)\] kut thəʔ hətàn, cəŋ thəʔ hətàn yaʔ.
SM cut.off THROW bridge burn THROW bridge NSIT
‘They had cut off and burned the bridge.’ (KD)

With postverbal ʔa:

\[(6.288)\] ʔapa khyotʔa yaʔ.
SM father die GO NSIT
‘Father was already dead.’ (KKP)

With postverbal məŋ:

\[(6.289)\] dəh khyot məŋ yaʔ.
SM 3 die STAY NSIT
‘He is dead.’ (NOP)

With post-VP toə:

\[(6.290)\] kəʔ kəwəŋ toə yaʔ haʔ.
SM get NML:play FINISH NSIT Q
‘Have you already got a girlfriend?’ (KN)

Other combinations are possible, depending on the semantics of the main verb.
In negated contexts, yaʔ is always replaced by the focus marker raʔ, as illustrated in the following sentence, where the yaʔ occurs in the affirmative first clause while raʔ is used in the negative second one.

\[(6.291)\] pəcü toə yaʔ teh həcət hùʔ kəʔ raʔ.
SM CAUS:upright hand NSIT COND CAUS:die NEG GET FOC
‘If they have lifted their hands, you cannot kill them (anymore).’ (KD)
Summary

Modern Mon has developed a morpheme indicating a changed or new situation, with similar functions as the NSIT markers in Burmese (pi, s. Okell 1969:382ff; Okell and Allott 2001:128ff) and Thai (leev, s. Jenny 2001:125ff). Mon yaʔ can occur with any verb and most verbal operators, but not in negative and imperative/prohibitive contexts. The historical development of ʔraʔyaʔ is not clear, with only dubious presence in MM and no examples from older LM. The form is a prefixed (probably reinforced) variant of the focus marker, by which it is replaced in negative contexts. The urge to develop a NSIT marker probably stems from intimate (or internal) contact with Burmese and Thai of bilingual Mon speakers. The operator yaʔ cannot form a one-word answer nor can it be negated. This confirms its syntactic status as SFP rather than as verbal operator, although functionally it is closer to the latter.

6.3.18  ‹keï› kiəŋ ‘ever, EXPERIENTIAL’
       ‹klā› kla ‘BEFORE, PROVISIOARY’
       ‹nūm, phuìh› nəm, phəh ‘PERSISTIVE’

There are a few more verbs turned operators in Mon which have developed aspectual or aspectoid value. In this section I will briefly introduce four of these morphemes in common use in SM. Unlike other operators discussed in this chapter, the functional range of these four operators is rather restricted. The verbal origin of some is not certain and they may be classified as adverbs rather than verbal operators. This is especially true for the persistive markers nəm and phəh, which can both be translated as ‘yet’ or ‘still’ and occur as SFPs.

kiəŋ

The verbal character of kiəŋ ‘be accustomed, have had an occasion to, EXPERIENTIAL’ is clear from its derivations pəkiəŋ ‘accustom’ and ʔəkiəŋ ‘manner, custom’, although it is never used as a full verb in SM. This verb is not found in OM and MM, nor is there a related form in Nyah Kur, which makes it suspect of being a recent loan. There is possibly a connection with Burmese cin 〈kyáŋ〉 ‘practice, train, be accustomed’ (s. Myanmar Language Commission 1993:33) but the recentness of the word in Mon would suggest a form *kyiəŋ or *kyəŋ rather than kiəŋ for this Burmese lexeme.159

The experiential notion in Mon is in most natural contexts restricted to past events, which gives kiəŋ a past tense connotation. Having lost its full verbal

159 Cf. Mon khyiəŋ ‘Chin (people)’ from B. hcïn 〈khyàŋ〉 and Mon chəŋ ‘descend’ from B. hsïn 〈chàŋ〉.
character, *kiəŋ* cannot form a one word answer. It always occurs before a verb and may co-occur with other operators, such as *mən* ‘STAY’, *tɔə* ‘FINISH’, and *lə* ‘KEEP’, among others. Although the most common translation by native speakers is ‘used to V’, *kiəŋ* V does not imply a habitual or regular event. In fact, a single occurrence is enough to apply *kiəŋ*, and this may be even the prototypical use of the operator. The negated form *hùʔ kiəŋ* (resp. *hə-kwiəŋ* for some speakers) corresponds to English ‘never’ with past time reference.\(^\text{160}\)

The following sentences illustrate the use of *kiəŋ*.

(6.292) ‘apā kyāk hwa’ *keᵑ məh həʔ?*
LM father holy NEG exper hear Q
‘Have you never heard of this, revered father?’ (MKP:25)

(6.293) ?aŋŋəŋ kək həʔ apa *kiəŋ* mən məŋ.
SM Aploun TOP father exper stay STAY
‘I stayed at Aploun (for some time).’ (KD)

SM 1s exper go KEEP Bangkok
‘I have been to Bangkok.’ (NOP)

### kla

OM ‹tlār› has the full verb meaning ‘be anterior’, but according to Shorto (DMI:176) it is chiefly used as an adverb ‘formerly, first, before’. In modern Mon, the verbal character has been completely lost, leaving only traces in the attributive form LM ‹tamlā› ‘former, ancient’. In SM, *kla* is used as an adverb in pre-clausal or post-clausal position with different functions.

In pre-clausal position, *kla* is always followed by a negated main verb, meaning ‘before V’. Notice that the iconic order of events is reversed with the use of *kla*, i.e. the main clause expressing the (preceding) event usually follows the *kla*-clause (cf. sentence (6.236) above).

(6.295) *kla* poy *hùʔ kəʔ* cpŋ kək mʊəhnam...
SM before 1pl NEG GET arrive TOP one year
‘One year before we arrived there...’ (KD)

\(^{160}\) ‘Never’ with future reference is expressed in Mon as *chələʔ hmaʔ hùʔ V pih*, lit. ‘when CONN NEG V NEG’, an obvious loan translation of Burmese *betó hmá mə V bû* ‘id.’.
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(6.296) nū gayaḥ prah klā cān gwui’ grau ɲɨn...  
LM ABL morning early before cock NEG:get¹ sixty1 crow PERS  
‘Early in the morning before the cocks crowed...’ (MKP:24)

In post-clausal position, klā indicates either that the event occurs before another event, or that the subject performs the action before another subject. This use is attested already in OM. The former function led to a ‘provisory’ connotation of the combination ‘V klā’, indicating that the event expressed by V holds for the time being and is likely to change or followed by another event at some point in the future. In this use klā is very frequent in SM, though it is not the only possible reading of post-clausal klā.

SM mother 3 speak stay THROW school before  
‘My mother said that I should stay at school for the time being.’ (KN)

(6.298) dan deh l upholstery klā, wəə ?ənəŋ nəʔ...  
SM way 3 enter before Wae Anaing this  
‘The way they first entered here, at Wae Anaing...’ (KD)

(6.299) ?y poy kamə teh kala? həʔ hùʔ ciəʔ klā teh  
SM eh 1pl guest COND lord house NEG eat before COND  
poı kioʔ hùʔ khəŋ pūh.  
1pl eat NEG at.ease NEG  
‘If we are guests, if the house owner does not eat first, we do not feel at ease eating.’ (KD)

Having lost its verbal character, klā cannot form a one word answer or be preceded by the negation marker hùʔ. The common expression in SM hùʔ klā ‘don’t do it yet, wait’ is actually a weak form of təʔ klā ‘stop it for the time being’ and does not involve the negation marker hùʔ.

The functions of klā in modern Mon can be summed up as follows.

klā hùʔ + CLAUSE ‘before CLAUSE’  
CLAUSE klā ‘CLAUSE for the time being’  
‘S Vs before other S’, ‘S V₁s before he V₂s’  
‘CLAUSE for the first time’

The distribution and functions of klā correspond more closely to the Thai adverb kɔn¹ ‘before’ than to any Burmese morpheme. The four main

¹⁶¹ This is one of the rare occurrences of infixed negation in LM (s. section 2.3.1).
functions of Mon kla are expressed in Burmese by at least four different morphemes (mā V hkin, V oûn, àyin V, pāhtâmā V, cf. Okell 1969:278f, 372f, 466f; Okell and Allott 2001:28, 261f, 225 for the first three, Myanmar Language Commission 1993:250 for the fourth). Mon shares with Burmese the rule that pre-clausal kla must always occur with a negated verb.

**nəm and phəh**

Both nəm and phəh are attested only in MM (‹nîm, nîm›) and in the modern language (LM ‹nîm, phuí‖). They occur in clause or sentence final position as SFPs indicating an unchanged situation or intention to act, and may be labelled *pERSISTIVE* markers. Another function of nəm is as an additive marker, corresponding roughly to English ‘else, more’. In some contexts it may be used merely to put emphasis on the verb, similar to English ‘even’. The marker phəh is not very frequent and can be classified as an adverb putting emphasis on the unchanged character of the situation. It never occurs in negated contexts, in which it contrasts with nəm. When nəm and phəh co-occur in the same sentence, the word order is fixed as ‘V phəh nəm’. The originally imperfective marker mâŋ frequently occurs with both nəm and phəh, with the former in the close combination nəmən. The latter has developed into an independent particle, with ‹māŋ› further desemanticized. This can be seen from the position of mənem after the VP, while the aspectual ‹māŋ› always occurs within the VP, i.e. between V and O. The combination mənem thus originates in the combination of māŋ with nəm, but it is synchronically distinct from it. The distinction is obvious only with transitive verbs, and there seems to be no semantic difference.

(6.300a)  dēh əiʔ mən  prəŋ nəm.
SM 3 eat STAY rice PERS
‘He is still eating.’

(6.300b)  dēh əiʔ prəŋ mənəm.
SM 3 eat rice PERS
‘He is still eating.’

The different uses of nəm and phəh are illustrated in the following sentences.

(6.301)  nûm mən  bə  prəŋ nəm.
SM exist STAY two three PERS
‘There are two or three left.’ (KD)
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(6.302) bèʔ toʔ tò kərao prè mənem?
SM 2fam pl middle behind watch pers
‘Are you guys going to watch (videos) again (in spite of the order not to do so)?’ (KN)

(6.303) múʔ tèh klon mənem?
SM what hit do pers
‘What else do I have to do?’ (WK)

(6.304) həʔot hloə kłàn nù dák ka nem.
SM caus:all money much abl ride car pers
‘I spent more money (walking here) than I would have taking a bus.’ (KKP)

(6.305) ʔəmaʔ dót pèh hûʔ kûʔ təh məǹh nem ləkəh.
SM ol.sister small 2 neg get be man pers then
‘Your youngest older sister wasn’t born yet, back then.’ (KD)

Most instances of phəh in the data show co-occurrence with the aspect operator m̀h.

(6.306) nùm məŋ phəh, təh ʔa pəm mòn lèy.
SM exist stay pers be go manner mon emph
‘There are still some (Chinese) around; they’ve all become like Mon.’ (KD)

There is one instance in the data where phəh occurs without m̀h and is obviously used to put emphasis on the unexpected situation that a woman can succeed in deceiving four men.

(6.307) ɗəh dah məǹh brau phuih ɗəh lîm ca-kə puïy
LM 3 be man woman pers 3 deceive use 1pl
məǹh blāy pan gah.
man young.man four top
‘She is only a woman and still she can deceive and command us four young men!’ (MKP:14)

Neither nem nor phəh may be directly negated or occur as a one-word answer, which supports the analysis as adverbs or SFPs rather than verbs, although they may ultimately be verbal in origin. Without established cognates in other Mon-Khmer languages, this can at the present not be confirmed.
6.4 Summary of verbal and clausal operators

In the preceding sections we have seen that a number of full verbs developed grammatical functions in Mon. The grammaticalization of individual verbs took place at different times in the history of Mon and went along different paths. One common source of grammaticalized functions of verbs is the extension of serial verbs, involving a semantic bleaching. Some verbs have developed along different paths, leading to a number of distinct functions for the same original lexeme, as is the case for example with tēh ‘hit, touch’, which can occur in four different positions with four different functions.

The verbal operators are to be distinguished from the sentence final particles (SFP), which may express similar notions and which may overlap in use with verbal operators. Like verbal operators they may be derived from verbs, though they may have other origins as well.

Four positions are open to verbal operators, plus the sentence final position for SFPs, which may be summarized as follows. It should be noticed that any operator position may be occupied by more than one element. Operators of the same position may combine freely as long as their functions are not contradictory. The internal arrangement of operators occupying the same position is usually fixed and iconic where possible. The examples given in table 6.1 for each position are by no means exhaustive and serve merely to illustrate the different functions and positions available.162 For details refer to the respective sections above. A complete list of the operators and SFPs discussed in this study is given in appendix E.

The negation marker hùʔ can be placed in front of OP₁, OP₂, and OP₄, but not OP₃.163 One-word answers are possible only with OP₁ and OP₄. This can be clearly seen in the behaviour of tēh, for example. While the answer to tēh tek ha? ‘was he beaten?’ (‘HIT beat Q’) is tēh ‘yes’, the same question meaning ‘do I have to beat (him)?’ can only be answered by tēh tek ‘yes’, i.e. the main verb must be repeated if tēh occurs in OP₂ position. The same distribution can be observed with the two postverbal positions of tēh. Only the post-clausal modifier tēh can occur as a one-word answer (positive or negative), not the postverbal aspectoid-manner operator.

The impossibility of most operators to occur as one-word answers in Mon corresponds with Burmese usage and is in opposition to Thai, where also OP₂ position elements can occur as one-word answers. There is an interesting parallelism with Burmese in the syntactic distinction of homonymous operators. One obvious example of this phenomenon in Burmese is the

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162 (ASP/MDF) indicates that the operator has combines aspectual and manner (modifying) values.
163 Negation of OP₁ position is possible in restricted contexts, esp. where the whole expression is analysed as serial verb construction (cf. e.g. section 6.3.12).
auxiliary *yá* ‘GET’, which occurs in postverbal\(^{164}\) position denoting either a possibility or an obligation. If the question *thwà* *yá* *mà* *là*? (‘go GET IRR Q’) is intended to mean ‘do I have to go?’, the only correct answer is *thwà* *yá* *me* ‘yes’. The same question with the intended meaning ‘will I be able/allowed to go?’ is answered by *yá* *me* ‘yes’, i.e. the main verb is not repeated with the potential modal. The negative answers are *mà* *thwà* *yá* *bù* ‘you don’t have to go’ and (*thwà* *mà* *yá* *bù* ‘you will not be able/allowed to go’ respectively. More detailed investigation in the concerned languages is needed to establish the details of the areal diffusion of these syntactical features.\(^{165}\)

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Table 6.1 Summary of verbal and clausal operators

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\(^{164}\) In Burmese all operators occur after the main verb, the one striking exception being the preverbal causative/jussive/change-of-subject marker *pèi* ‘give’ (cf. section 6.3.11). \(^{165}\) Neither Okell (1969:456f) nor Okell and Allott (2001:178f) mention the different syntactic behaviour of the different functions of Burmese *yá*.
The position of Mon *tə* is not entirely clear. It seems to operate outside the normal framework given above in at least some respects. Unlike OP₁ elements it may not be negated or form a one word answer, although it appears in OP₁ position. This may be due to a more recent development from the intersentential sequential marker into a pre-clausal element. A similar case is pre-clausal *kla*, which does not function like an OP₁, although it appears in this position. Like *tə*, *kla* may not be negated or form a one word answer.

Both *tə* and *kla* probably belong to a different (pre-sentential) position, expressing a temporal ordering of events. In this function *kla* is exceptional in that it orders events in reverse order, i.e. the usual iconicity principle of Mon grammar is overridden.

Sentence final particles cover a wide range of functions, some with aspeclual notions, such as the nsit marker *yaʔ* and the persistive markers *nem* and *pʰən*. In some cases verbal operators are fused or closely linked with SFPs, as the combination *mənem* ‘still’ (‘mən niʔ ‘stay pers’) and *təyaʔ/təyaʔ* ‘already done, finished’ (‘tuy ira ‘finish nsit’). These were included in the discussion on verbal operators for their functional closeness to the verbal system. Other SFPs are discussed in section 1.4.

Future studies will hopefully reveal more aspects of the verb system of Mon, including the exact function of many of the operators which at present still seem elusive and not easily definable. Areal studies are promising, especially comparison with Thai and Burmese usage, and, to some extent, Karen. All of these languages have been in close contact with Mon over many centuries and mutual influence can be shown on many levels. An in depth study of the influence of Pali as main cultural language in Southeast Asia on the deeper structure of the local languages might equally prove fruitful.
APPENDICES

A. Maps of Mon speaking areas
B. Phonology tables of Mon dialect
C. Excerpt from Saddā Man ‘Mon Grammar’
D. Sample Texts (OM, MM, LM, SM)
E. Table of operators and SFPs
F. Text Sources
G. References
Appendix A: Maps showing Mon speaking areas
(adapted from www.mapquest.com)

Map 1: Central Southeast Asia

Map 2: Southern Burma
Map 3: Mon Dialect areas (locations approximate)

KN: Kanni, Karen State
KKP: Ko’ Kapoun, Mon State
KD: Ko’ Dot, Mon State
WK: Wangka (Sangkhlaburi), Thailand
# Appendix B: Phonology tables of Mon dialects

## Mon phonology: Standard

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Mon phonology: Wangka Dialect (węŋ ka?)

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264
### Mon phonology: Ko’ Dot Dialect (kə? dot)

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### Notes:

- In some speakers’ careful pronunciation, [œŋ] and [œŋʔ] are heard for /œŋ/ and /œŋʔ/.
- Some speakers pronounce /b/ as [o].
### Mon phonology: Kanni Dialect (kan ni)

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<td>n</td>
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<td>p</td>
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#### IV. Rhymes

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266
### Mon phonology: Ko’ Kapoun Dialect (ko? həɾˈʁəŋ)

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#### IV. Rhymes

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²⁶⁶ In some people’s pronunciation, final labials become dentals or velars (-n, -t/-ŋ, -k)
Mathias Jenny: The Verb System of Mon

**Written Mon**

### I. Initials

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## IV. Rhymes with examples (Mon script)

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<td>oh</td>
<td>ok</td>
<td>og</td>
<td>oc</td>
<td>ot, on, op, oy</td>
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<td>u?</td>
<td>uh</td>
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<td>ut, un, up, uy</td>
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<td>ao</td>
<td>aoh</td>
<td>ao?</td>
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<td>-V</td>
<td>-Və</td>
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<td>-հ</td>
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<td>-c</td>
<td>-ŋ</td>
<td>-t, n, m, p</td>
<td>-y</td>
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<td>i ḳhyi gwī</td>
<td>iə they rey</td>
<td>iʔ ci gi</td>
<td>ih phih mnih</td>
<td>iʌk pek parek</td>
<td>iəŋ sen ren</td>
<td>it, in, ip, im kit, 'in mit, mip</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>e ḳkew ʔarew</td>
<td>eə dau</td>
<td>eʔ pe’ de’</td>
<td>eh ceh beh</td>
<td>ek tak ʕarak</td>
<td>eŋ kɗaŋ maŋ</td>
<td>et, en, ep, em ket, pden bget, lep</td>
<td>γy le ʔame</td>
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<td>e kyew new</td>
<td>eə bhā</td>
<td>eʔ kle’ ma</td>
<td>eh deh daŋ</td>
<td>ak tuik duik</td>
<td>aŋ puŋ zuin</td>
<td>ac kyák bāk</td>
<td>aŋ cǎn rān</td>
<td>at, an, ap, am dāt, chān ŋāt, mān</td>
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<tr>
<td>a kā nawwemb ā</td>
<td>aʔ ka</td>
<td>ak kwāh</td>
<td>ak tuik duik</td>
<td>aŋ puŋ zuin</td>
<td>aŋ kyák bāk</td>
<td>aŋ cǎn rān</td>
<td>at, an, ap, am dāt, chān ŋāt, mān</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ɚ kuw</td>
<td>ɚə bti</td>
<td>ɚʔ tho’</td>
<td>ɚh khuih</td>
<td>ɚŋ puŋ buŋ</td>
<td>ɚŋ puŋ buŋ</td>
<td>ɚŋ puŋ buŋ</td>
<td>ɚt, en, ep, um suit, ɭuip, huin</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>ɣʔ te’ gwa’</td>
<td>ɣh phuih gruih</td>
<td>ɣk suk juk</td>
<td>ɣŋ puŋ buŋ</td>
<td>ɣŋ puŋ buŋ</td>
<td>ɣŋ puŋ buŋ</td>
<td>ɣt, en, ep, um that, plan jrahat, rap</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɔ kaw law</td>
<td>ɔə tay ray</td>
<td>ɔʔ ka’ la’</td>
<td>ɔh tah dah</td>
<td>ɔk pāk gāk</td>
<td>ɔŋ cǎn mān</td>
<td>ɔc phek bahek</td>
<td>ɔŋ pleŋ leŋ</td>
<td>ɔt, en, ep, om that, plan jrahat, rap</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o ktow dow</td>
<td>oə tuy</td>
<td>oʔ cui’</td>
<td>oh ‘oh roh</td>
<td>ok kok bok</td>
<td>oŋ soŋ gloŋ</td>
<td>oc stik glik</td>
<td>oŋ ciŋ riŋ</td>
<td>oṭ, en, ep, om dot, ‘on mat, lon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u kā gū</td>
<td>uə ‘ay mway</td>
<td>uʔ chu bru</td>
<td>uh duh nuh</td>
<td>uh duh nuh</td>
<td>uh duh nuh</td>
<td>uh duh nuh</td>
<td>ut, un, up, um chut, huin gut, bhuin</td>
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<td>aoŋ truŋ</td>
<td>aoʔ kusuiv</td>
<td>aoʔ sni</td>
<td>iaʔ ca</td>
<td>iaʔ ca</td>
<td>iaʔ ca</td>
<td>iaʔ ca</td>
<td>ọy puiy</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IV. Rhymes with examples (transliteration)

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Appendix C: Excerpt from Saddā Man (/sɔtːə mɔːn/ Mon Grammar)

Verbs (pp.7ff)

Words describing actions, states and existence are called verbs (kriyā), e.g. ‘ā ‘go’, klûn ‘come’, dun ‘cook’, thakaḥ ‘break’, cin ‘be cooked’, khuiṭ ‘die, be dead’, dah ‘be’, nwaṁ ‘exist, be at, have’, jnok ‘be big’, ḍot ‘be small’, khûih ‘be good’, kyew ‘be beautiful’.

(a) Verbs showing actions (pwa ma klon)
mi siri klûn nû kyāk. ‘Mi Siri comes from the market.’
nāy wārnsa dun mān puṅ. ‘Nai Wongsa is cooking rice.’
ñā ṣā kwān juiṅ kyāk. ‘He is going to Zingyaik village.’

klûn ‘come’, dun ‘cook’ and ṣā ‘go’ are verbs denoting actions.

(b) Verbs showing states (pwa ma dah)
dēñ gah dah kwaḥ bhā ra. ‘He is a student.’
mi campā khyuit ‘ā ra. ‘Mi Campa has died.’
puṅ cin mān ra. ‘The rice is cooked.’

dah ‘be’, khyuit ‘die, be dead’ and cin ‘be cooked’ are verbs denoting states.

(c) Verbs showing existence (pwa ma nwāṁ)
puṅ nwāṁ dmān ḍay thmāy ra. ‘There is rice in the pot.’
pḍay dēñ sran nwāṁ pi klaṅ ra. ‘He has three hundred (Kyats).’

nwāṁ ‘be at, exist, have’ is a verb denoting existence.

There are two further kinds of verbs:
(a) Intransitive verbs (kriyā suddha)
(b) Transitive verbs (kriyā kāraka)

(a) Verbs that can have complete meaning without object (kāṁ) are called intransitive verbs.
kon-nāk tik ra. ‘The child is sleeping.’
cma paluin sro’ ta’ khyuit ‘uit ra. ‘The bugs have destroyed the rice and it all died.’

tik ‘sleep’ and khyuit ‘die, be dead’ do not have to take an object to have complete meaning.

167 Translations of all examples added by the author.
(b) Verbs that need an object to have complete meaning are called transitive verbs.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \texttt{cā tak kwah bhā.} ‘The teacher hits the student.’
  \item \texttt{mi kyew Ḯun puñ.} ‘Mi Kye cooks rice.’
\end{itemize}

tak ‘hit’ and Ḯun ‘cook’ need the objects kwah bhā ‘student’ and puñ ‘rice’ respectively to have complete meaning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intransitive Verbs</th>
<th>Transitive Verbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>\texttt{khyuit} ‘die, be dead’</td>
<td>\texttt{gacuit} ‘kill’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\texttt{gyuin} ‘be alive’</td>
<td>\texttt{gayuin} ‘keep alive’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\texttt{gluin} ‘be much’</td>
<td>\texttt{galuin} ‘increase’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\texttt{kyew} ‘be beautiful’</td>
<td>\texttt{payyew} ‘make beautiful’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\texttt{to-tak} ‘improve’</td>
<td>\texttt{pato-patak} ‘improve sth.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Verbs - Nouns**

To change verbs into nouns, a consonant has to be added. In other cases a compound is used.

(1) \texttt{a-} is prefixed to the verb to form a verbal noun:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \texttt{cī-reï} ‘arrange’ \quad \texttt{’acī-’areï} ‘arrangement’
  \item \texttt{con-prāk} ‘be spotted’ \quad \texttt{’acon-’aprāk} ‘something spotted’
  \item \texttt{thuïn-sah} ‘praise v.’ \quad \texttt{’athuïn-’asah} ‘praise n.’
  \item \texttt{cân-tū} ‘be anxious’ \quad \texttt{’acân-’atū} ‘anxiousness’
  \item \texttt{kruiï} ‘shout, roar’ \quad \texttt{’akruiï} ‘acclamation’
\end{itemize}

(2) \texttt{la-} is put in front of the verb to form a verbal noun:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \texttt{ñāt} ‘see’ \quad \texttt{lañāt} ‘opinion, vision’
  \item \texttt{’ā} ‘go’ \quad \texttt{la’ā} ‘gait, pace’
  \item \texttt{huïn} ‘speak’ \quad \texttt{lahuïn} ‘speech, utterance’
  \item \texttt{’āt} ‘beg, ask for’ \quad \texttt{la’āt} ‘wish, desire’
  \item \texttt{leï} ‘be destroyed’ \quad \texttt{laleï} ‘destruction’
  \item \texttt{’en} ‘endure’ \quad \texttt{la’ên} ‘endurance’
\end{itemize}

(3) \texttt{da-}, \texttt{pwa ma} or \texttt{sjak} are put in front of the verb to form a verbal noun:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \texttt{dah} ‘be’ \quad \texttt{dadah} ‘being, state’
  \item \texttt{’ā} ‘go’ \quad \texttt{pwa ma ’ā} ‘going’
  \item \texttt{ca} ‘eat’ \quad \texttt{sjak ca} ‘food, sth. to eat.’
\end{itemize}

(4) \texttt{-am-} is infixed between two initial consonants to form a verbal noun:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \texttt{klon} ‘work, do’ \quad \texttt{kamlon} ‘(royal) attendant, servant’
  \item \texttt{jinok} ‘be big’ \quad \texttt{jannok} ‘chief, headman’
\end{itemize}
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\[ klat \ 'steal' \quad \text{kamlat \ 'thief'} \]

(5) -w- is infixed after the initial consonant to form a verbal noun:

- \( pāk \ 'open' \quad \text{pwāk \ 'opening, aperture'} \)
- \( yām \ 'cry, weep' \quad \text{ywām \ 'weeping'} \)
- \( yuim \ 'breathe' \quad \text{ywuiim \ 'breath'} \)

(6) \( \text{sam-} \) is put in front of the verb to form a verbal noun:

- \( \text{tiin} \ 'know' \quad \text{samtiim \ 'sense'} \)
- \( \text{duih} \ 'be fool' \quad \text{samduih \ 'fool'} \)
- \( \text{'uy} \ 'be fool' \quad \text{sam'uy \ 'putridity'} \)

Adjectives (pp.10f)

Words that specify the meaning of nouns (lit. ‘make nouns special’) are called adjectives (nāmawisesana), e.g. \( \text{kyew} \ 'be beautiful', \text{dot} \ 'be small', \text{khuih} \ 'be good', \text{dāt} \ 'be sweet', \text{bu} \ 'be white'.

Adjectives can be divided into four groups, according to their meaning:

(a) Verbal adjectives (nāmawisesana kriyā)
(b) Nominal adjectives (nāmawisesana nām)
(c) Deictic adjectives (nāmawisesana cnōn thḩah, lit. ‘pointing adjectives’)
(d) Numeral adjectives (nāmawisesana lmih sakhyā)

(a) Verbs that specify the meaning of nouns are called verbal adjectives:

\[ \text{kyew} \ 'be beautiful', \text{khuih} \ 'be good', \text{dot} \ 'be small', \text{bu} \ 'be white' \]

\[ \text{swa} \text{khuih} \text{gah ca 'uit gluin rōn.} \quad \text{‘A lot of the good curry will be eaten.’} \]

(The verb \text{khuih} \ 'be good’ specifies the meaning of \text{swa} \ ‘curry’.)

\[ \text{mi ḏēh yuik law kon-ńāk \text{dot} \text{gah ra.} \quad \text{‘His mother lifted up the small child.’} \]

(The verb \text{dot} \ ‘be small’ specifies the meaning of \text{kon-ńāk} \ ‘child’.)

\[ \text{glik} \text{bu} \text{gah cay law tuy ra.} \quad \text{‘The white longyi is already dry.’} \]

(The verb \text{bu} \ ‘be white’ specifies the meaning of \text{glik} \ ‘longyi’.)

(b) Nouns that specify the meaning of nouns are called nominal adjectives:

\[ \text{chu} \ 'wood', \text{sla} \ 'leaf', \text{pkau} \ 'flower' \]

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The nouns *chu* ‘wood’, *pkau* ‘flower’, *man* ‘Mon’, and *pmat* ‘fire’ specify the meaning of the nouns *sni* ‘house’, *kla* ‘garden’, *jrap* ‘rest house, pavilion’, and *kwí* ‘cart’.

(c) Words that point out [something] to specify the meaning of nouns are called deictic adjectives:

- *na’* ‘this’
- *gah* ‘the mentioned’
- *te’* ‘that’
- *wwa’* ‘this’
- *tnah* ‘other’

- *ceti na*’ ‘this pagoda’
- *duñ tnah* ‘other countries’
- *ekaraj gah* ‘the (mentioned) king’

The nouns *sni* ‘house’, *kla* ‘garden’, *jrap* ‘rest house, pavilion’, and *kwí* ‘cart’.

(d) Numerals that specify the meaning of nouns are called numeral adjectives:

- *masun* ‘five’, *kla* ‘hundred’, *luiw* ‘some’, *pha’uit* ‘all’

1. *pday nay kau de’ nwa’m pi ra.* ‘Nai Kao has three younger brothers and sisters.’

(*pi* ‘three’ specifies the meaning of *de’* ‘younger sibling’.)

2. *kwa’h bha* *luiw* pañā khuih ra. ‘Some students are intelligent.’

(*luiw* ‘some’ specifies the meaning of *kwa’h* ‘student’.)

3. *kham* *pha’uit* tuin màn lik ra. ‘All monks are reading their books.’

(*pha’uit* ‘all’ specifies the meaning of *kham* ‘monk’.)

4. *mai’n pkau thaw gwa’ lāp dutiya ra.* ‘Mem Kao Thaw got the second prize.’

(*dutiya* specifies the meaning of *lāp* ‘prize’.)

**Verb auxiliaries** (*’athåk kriyā* ‘verb support’) (p.22)
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(a) ēnah gāñ ḫī klo’ ḫī saṅ lon ra.
   ‘He dares to swim across the Salween river.’
   gāñ ‘dare’ in front of ḫī ‘swim’ specifies the meaning of the verb.

(b) khāmī ta’ kña klūn nū kwān bhā thaw ra.
   ‘The monks are coming from Phea Thaw village.’
   kña ‘invite’ in front of klūn ‘come’ specifies the meaning of the verb.

(c) ḫḷān Ṽu yay tuy mik-gwa’ ca Ṽnā phyaṭ-phyaṭ ra.
   ‘Having recovered from the illness I want to eat sour food.’
   mik-gwa’ ‘want to’ in front of ca ‘eat’ specifies the meaning of the verb.

(d) mån căn hwa’ ạř jñāh mgaṭ lep daḥ yay roṅ.
   ‘If the meat is not clean, one may easily become sick.’
   lep ‘be able, skilled’ in front of daḥ ‘be’ specifies the meaning of the verb.
Appendix D: Sample texts

1. Old Mon: Myazedi Inscription (Rājakumār Inscription), Pagán, 11.c.

(Complete text of the Mon face)

śrī namo buddhāya śrī sās kyek buddha tirley prosperous reverence Buddha.to prosperous religion holyBuddha lord:1s

kuli 'ār moy lānim turow klaś̄ār ēwar dīnčām cnām tūy last GO one thousand six hundred two ten eight year FINISH

ḵey  ḏuṇ 'ārimaladdanapuṟ wo' sμī śritribhuwanādītyadharmarāj das. LOC town Arimaddanapura this king Śritribhuanadityadharmaraja be
gna-kyek sμī goṛh moy trilokawatamsaṅkādēwī imo'. kon gna-kyek queen king that one Trilokawatangsaṅkadevi be.named son queen
goṛh rājakumār imo'. sμīn goṛh kīṇ tīḳ pi twān ku that Rajakumar be.named king that give slave three village OBL
gna-kyek goṛh.ḵāl gna-kyek goṛ cutī 'ār 'ut kiryā gna-kyek goṛh queen that time queen that die GO all regalia queen that

ku tīḳ pi twān goṛ sμīn tun kīl ku kon gna-kyek ma OBL slave three village that king return giveOBL son queen ATTR

imo' rājakumār goṛ.śμī goṛh kmin bār ēwar dīnčāmcnām tūy. be.named Rajakumar that king that reign two ten eight year FINISH

kāl sμīn goṛh 'jey ūn scutī kon gna-kyek ma imo' time king that sick near PROSP:die son queen ATTR be.named

rājakumār goṛ mirnas ēn ma sμīn iṅcim jirku. kindāṃ Rajakumar that remember merit ATTR king feed body/self build

kyek thar moy'ār tuřo jīt sμīn munās row wo': kyek thar holy.thing gold one go offer king inform manner this holy.thing gold

wo' ey pa raṃpo' tīrła. tīrła kīl ku ey goṛh ey this 1s do behalf lord slave three village ATTR lord giveOBL 1s that 1s

dīḳ kīl ku kyek wo'.tīrła 'anumodanā da'. kāl goṛ sμīn slave giveOBL holy.thing this lord approve FOC time that king

sīdīk-gap-pumas. thīc 'ār thīc 'ār sμīn pa sādhukār. kāl PROSP:be.well.pleased well GO well GO king do verbal.approval time
Translation

‘Prosperity! Reverence to the Buddha! Prosperity! When the religion of the Lord Buddha had lasted for one thousand six hundred twenty-eight years, in the land Arimaddanapura (Pagán), Śrī Tribhuvanādityadharmarāja (Kyansittha) became (king). One queen of that king was named Trilokavatārīṣakādevī. The son of this queen was named Rājakumar. The king gave three villages of slaves to the queen. When the queen died the king gave all the queen’s possessions together with the three villages of slaves to the son of the queen, whose name was Rājakumar.

The king had reigned for twenty-eight years when became sick. As he was approaching death, the queen’s son whose name was Rājakumar remembered
the favours with which the king had nourished him. He made a golden Buddha image and went to offer it to the king, saying: "This golden Buddha image I have made in behalf of my Lord. The three villages of slaves which my Lord has given to me, I will give to this Buddha image. May my Lord approve!"

The king was happy and well pleased. "Well done, well done", he expressed his approval. Then the king poured water onto the ground in the presence of the senior monk, the Venerable Muggaliputtatissa, the Venerable Sumedhapaññita, the Venerable Brahmapāla, the Venerable Brahmadiva, the Venerable Son, and the Venerable Saṅghasenapaññita.

After this, the queen’s son who was named Rājakumar, took the golden Buddha image and enshrined it, building this golden spired cave pagoda. When dedicating this Buddha image and cave-pagoda, the queen’s son brought the slaves of all three villages, Sakmunalon, Rapāy, and Nyah Gir'u'y. He poured water on (or for) the Buddha image that he had enshrined in this cave pagoda and prayed thus: "May this act of mine be a cause for the attainment of omniscience. Be it my children, my grandchildren, my kinsmen, be it any other person, if the do harm to the slaves that I have given to this Buddha image, may they not get sight of the exalted Buddha Metteya (the Buddha of the future)."

2. Middle Mon: Shwedagon Inscription, Rangoon, 15.c

(face B, lines 15-21)

nor cnām tila puiy kyāk tray ma pa parinibbān gah ṇā klanā pi
ABL year lord 1pl holy exalted REL do Nibbana TOP two hundred three
cwoh turau cnām gah kali lon ’ā tuy, tila puiy ’arahan ṇā ma
ten six year TOP pass exceed GO FINISH lord 1pl Arahant two REL
himu sonathē uttarathē gah kluṅ ptan sāsanā pday
name Sonathera Uttarathera TOP come CAUS:firm religion LOC
suwannabhumi FOC time religion REL firm FINISH monk male
gamī brau sāmaṇī truh sāmaṇī brau khā ma nwom tuy gah
monk female novice male novice female time REL exist FINISH TOP
khā gah smin sirimasoka gah gah ku tila puiy ṇā ra: yo’ tila ey,
time TOP king Sirimasoka TOP say OBL lord 1pl two FOC oh lord 1s
dhamma-rat saṅgha-rat gah puiy di k go’ liṅwor pūjav ru.
Dhamma-jewel Sangha-jewel TOP 1pl slave get worship respect FOC
buddha-ratana mwoy gah puiy di k mik loṅwor pūjav ha go’ swo’.
Buddha-jewel one TOP 1pl slave DES worship respect NEG GET EMPH
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dhāt kyāk tray tuy puiy dik ma sgo’ phyih cuit relic holy exalted FINISH 1pl slave REL PROSP:GET CAUS:down heart

buddha-rat puiy dik ma sgo’ liñwor pūjau ey-puray gah. Buddha-jewel 1pl slave REL PROSP:GET worship respect venerate TOP

tila ey ta’reñ ku puiy dik ñi. rau gah sñiñ pa lord 1s PL arrange OBL 1pl slave LITTLE manner TOP king do

’āyācanā ku tila puiy ra. khā gah tila puiy mahāthe ḫā gah request OBL lord 1pl FOc time TOP lord 1pl senior.monk two TOP

cetī dhāt swok kyāk tray min tapussa bhallika ma thāpanā lar pagoda relic hair holy exalted REL Tapussa Bhallika REL enshrine KEEP

pday latū kdip tmo’ tambagutta dasuiw grup ma grop badan lar LOC top head rock Tambagutta bush forest REL cover hide KEEP

tuy ma ūñā ha tim dnāy gah, tabaḥ kuīw ku sñiñ sirimāsoka FINISH REL person NEG know place TOP show GIVE OBL king Sirimasoka ra. khā gah sñiñ sirimāsoka kuīw ūñā taḷ kle’ ca’ḥ jñāḥ kle’ FOc time TOP king Sirimasoka GIVE clear clean LEAVE clear clean LEAVE

dasuiw grup tuy cetī kuīm lar prasāṭ ma dah guim bush forest FINISH pagoda also too pavilion REL be lamp(?)

cetīya- ghara kuīm lar kuīw kanaṁ tuy pa tau pūjau ra. pagoda-building also too GIVE build FINISH do STAND respect FOc

pa taiṅ nū gah kuīm ndā’uít ku ūñā ma tau pday thān do beginning ABL TOP also FOc all OBL person REL stand LOC place

raḥ rman wwo’ gah pabwoy rameṅ heṅ ma kluṅ country Mon this TOP ADV ATTR:arrange EMPH REL come

tau pūjau heṅ ra. STAND respect EMPH FOc

Translation

‘When two hundred thirty six years had elapsed after the Lord Buddha entered Nibbana, two Arahants called Soñathera and Uttarathera came to establish the religion in the land Suvannabhumi. When the religion was established and there were monks and nuns, male and female novices, King Sirimāsoka said to the two Arahants: “My lords, we now have the jewel of the Doctrine (Dhamma) and the jewel of the monks’ order (Saṅgha) to worship and pay respects to, but we would also like to, but cannot worship
and pay respect to the jewel of the Buddha. In order that we may lay down our hearts to the jewel of the Buddha, that we may worship and praise Him, please arrange and bring us a holy relic.” Thus made the king his request to the two holy men. Then the two Arahants showed King Sirimāsoka the pagoda in which Tapussa and Bhallika had enshrined the hair relic of the Lord on top of Tambagutta Hill, which was all covered with bush and wood, so that no one knew its place. Then King Sirimāsoka had the bush and wood cut away and the place cleared. The pagoda as well as the pavilion which was the building surrounding the pagoda he had (re-)built and he paid respect (to the relic) Since that time, all people living in the Mon Kingdom came in succession to worship (at this pagoda).’

3. Literary Mon: The story of King Dhammaceti (Palita 1985:15f)

(Context: The Mon queen Mi Cao Pu was kidnapped by the soldiers of the Burmese king and taken to Ava, where she lives as chief queen of King Min Yeswakyi. Her adopted son, the monk Piñakadhara, follows her to Ava. He stays at a local monastery, looking for an opportunity to see her in the king’s palace and make plans to bring her back to Haṁsavatī.)

bnat mway ñay kuìn lem cuî hwa’ mîp làh-la hô ra. buîm extent one day also too heart NEG happy at.all FOC likeness

luîw gwa’ pru-preñ cî-reñ tuy gwa’ duñ phyau which GET organise arrange FINISH GET receive CAUS:RETURN

nañ gah ro. ’ay gwa’ duñ phyau nañ CAUS:COME TOP QREL IS GET receive CAUS:RETURN CAUS:COME

mi ekarâj brau mi sāsanâ ’ay dâh glây nay-kay khuih ra. mother king female mother religion IS HIT look.for method good FOC

dmân tho’ bhuì-bhuì hwa’ tím guñ ñâḥ-ska’ gah hwa’ stay THROW calm-RDP NEG know merit each.other TOP NEG
dâh-ra hô ra. [...] ’agho dmân’á p’day bhâ tuik lik gah appropriate FOC while stay GO LOC monastery building book TOP

suîm kat lik bhâsā bmâ suîm twânh dhaw bhâsâ INCL study book language Burmese INCL preach Dhamma language

bmâ plan ra. kon ñâḥ duñ ’aînwa gamluîn sgo’ min Burmese again FOC child person city Ava ATTR:many PROSP:GET hear

ket rah dhaw khmî mañ mahâpitakadhara tuy ktiw dah TAKE taste Dhamma monk Mon Mahapitakadhara FINISH arise be
Mathias Jenny: The Verb System of Mon

dhaw saddhā lyuñ jruñ sëuik jnok kuiw jrahat 'uit ra. Dhamma faith bright clear pleasant big OBL NML:strong all FOC

nū gwa’ miñ rah dhaw Ḟuin dot jip-glīp mip pḏay katow ABL GET hear taste Dhamma soft small subtle pleasant LOC ear
gah tuy, kluñ bagin chak kwāy tmaỹ dhaw bway ma gluiñ, TOP FINISH come offer continue present gift Dhamma ADV REL much

pūjaw auh dhamma 'uit ra. [...] parū-parā dayah-tah galān rah dhaw respect Dhamma all FOC news fame word taste Dhamma
gah cuip 'ā tla ņaḥ mañ re-chhwā-gī tuy pmik cuıt ktuwiw TOP arrive GO lord person Min Yeswakyī FINISH NML:DES heart arise
dah mik-gwa’ kalaŋ pań-hmiŋ dhaw khmī mañ kon Ḟuṅ hamsāwatī be DES listen listen Dhamma monk Mon son city Pegu ra. huit nū gnup mik-gwa’ miñ dhaw jnok kuiw jrahat FOC reason ABL desire DES hear Dhamma big OBL NML:strong
gah tuy nwaṅ 'asaṁ kuiw niman kña naŋ khmī piṭakadhara TOP FINISH exist order GIVE invite invite CAUS:COME monk Piṭakadhara

pḏay nan kuiw kluñ twāṅ dhaw ra. 'cā dhamma LOC palace GIVE come preach Dhamma FOC teacher Dhamma
dyah-tamñaw lup cuip kluñ waṅ nan ekarāj tuy dṇāy famous enter arrive COME compound palace king FINISH place

thek kuiw kon kyāk ta’ gia’ pa datau gah nwaṅ 'asaṁ kuiw fit GIVE son holy PL sit do NML:stand TOP exist order give

'akhoṅ tuin gia’ latū pnaṅ ekarāj ra. khyuin khana gah permission move.up sit top throne king FOC time moment TOP
twāṅ dhaw pmiṅ dhammadesanā kuiw ekarāj kamlon preach Dhamma CAUS:hear Dhamma.sermon GIVE king ATTR:make

mon-ṃa Ḟik tla gamluĩn tuy tla ņaḥ miñ dah ramyān consort slave lord ATTR:many FINISH lord person hear HIT sound
dhaw spa 'asaw bway ma lon 'uih-tamuih mip cuıt Dhamma PROSP:do wonder ADV REL exceed pleased happy heart

bway ma lon tuy ninan law swak gwa’ twāṅ dhaw ADV REL exceed FINISH invite KEEP for GET preach Dhamma

pḏay waṅ nan lmuin kāla ron. LOC compound palace always time ASRT
Mathias Jenny: The Verb System of Mon

Translation

‘Not a single day was (Piṭakadhara) happy in his heart. “How can I arrange and organise to bring my mother, the queen, the mother of our religion back? I have to find a good way to bring her back. It is not appropriate for me to stay calm, not doing anything, ungrateful to each other.

While staying at the monastery, which had a library, he studied the Burmese texts and gave sermons in Burmese. The people of Ava heard the Dhamma sermons of the Mon monk Mahāpiṭakadhara and gained clear and bright faith in the Dhamma. After having heard his soft and subtle preachings, which was pleasant in the ear, they came to make religious offerings to him and pay respect to the Dhamma.

The news about the famous preacher got through to King Min Yeswakyi. A desire arose in him to hear the Mon monk, the son of the city of Pegu, preach the Dhamma. Because of his strong desire to hear a sermon, the king ordered (his ministers) to invite the monk Piṭakadhara to come to the palace and preach the Dhamma. When the famous Dhamma preacher arrived at the palace compound and looked for an appropriate place for a son of the Lord to sit and install himself, the king gave permission for him to ascend the royal throne and sit upon it. The the monk gave his sermon, he let the king and his attendants and consorts, together with the slaves and masters, hear the Dhamma. When the king heard the sound of the preaching, he was filled with great amazement. He was very happy and content at heart and extended an invitation (to Piṭakadhara) to regularly come to the palace and preach the Dhamma.’

4. Spoken Mon: Memories of a temple boy (Kanni dialect)

kyac hnök hălēh na ᵀᵉⁿMBEDH⁰⁰¹? sidewalk⁰⁰¹? eat, lit. ‘give merit’ is a term used only for monks.
Mathias Jenny: The Verb System of Mon

mətəə. sət pi, sət pi nəm mən kəh, dəh kloʔ? ?a nəm one hand fruitbael fruitbael exist STAY TOP 3 cross.over GO tree
sət pi kəh. kyən kəʔ? ?a sət pi pən məʔ? too poy toʔ fruit bael TOP Kyan get GO fruit bael four CL FINISH 1pl PL
khreʔ? cəh ?a, ceh ?a ?əhmə təʔ? təʔ. poy walk.proudly DOWN GO move.down GO beneath hill that 1pl
mənəo. ?a hum dəc dəʔ kwan kəɾiaŋ kəh, kloʔt mənəo “təkho, lemon go bathe water LOC village Karen TOP steal lemon thief
təkhoʔ” krip cəh ?a krip tən plən. krip tən rəʔ ?a phəʔ thief run DOWN GO run UP again run UP look GO monastery
koʔ?kyəʔ təʔ?, nət həʔt. rəʔ ?a phəʔ koʔ?kyəʔ nət KoʔKYəik that see ADV: all look GO monastery KoʔKYəik see
həʔt too [..] poy toʔ cao hũʔ təʔ ra. kwac ?a nə ADV: all FINISH 1pl PL return NEG HIT FOC walk GO ABL
ləʔ-kaʔmon nəʔ thtyʔ ləʔ seŋ kəpəctyʔ təʔ?, ləʔ nən too teʔ, Laung Kamon this GOAL reach shore side that that reach Nyan FINISH COND
nən too teʔ ?a ?aʔ, kwac kwac kwac뮤ə klũʔ? ?a kle məŋ Nyan FINISH COND go go go walk walk walk sun dark GO dirty STAY
həʔt. [..] kheʔ məŋ dəc rəʔ təʔ?, rəʔ həʔt? yəʔ-yəʔ. ?a ?aʔ a ADV: all stuck STAY LOC thicket that thicket thorn many-RDP go go go
nəʔ həm, węʔ jə̄n həm nəʔ həkloʔ? kəʔəkən tooʔ, person speak hey person speak person CAUS: cross.over GIVE monk FINISH
həkloʔ?, həkloʔ? too læc ?a phəʔ kəh, læc ?a CAUS: cross.over CAUS: cross.over FINISH reach GO monastery TOP reach GO
phəʔ, kyəʔ həʔkə thəʔ hloə. ?aʔ kəʔ? müə kəmə thə. monastery monk big give THROW money 1s get one hundred only
Translation

‘The abbot let Rev. Naing go. We were invited to Mesali. We went back to eat. It was about four o’clock, and the Karen shouted “O khon, o khon”, eat noodles, eat noodles. We ate the noodles, and when Rev. Naing had finished his meal, that guy came out, Kyan. Kyan and me, the two of us temple students, the son of old Kha’i, he saw a squirrel. He saw a squirrel eating wild plums. It ate all the flesh and the seed was hanging down. The seed was hanging down in one hand, and then there were bael fruit. It jumped over to that bael fruit tree. Kyan got away with four bael fruit, and we proudly walked down that hill. We went down that hill, and when we were at the foot of the hill we went stealing lemons. We went to take a bath in that Karen village and we stole some lemons. “Takho, takho!” (the Karen shouted) and we ran down and then we ran up again. We ran up and looked at Ko’ Kyaik monastery over there and we could see everything. We looked at Ko’ Kyaik monastery and we could see everything, and then we did not know the back anymore. We walked from Long Kamon all the way to the bank over there. We came to Nyan. we came  to Nyan and went on and on, we walked and walked and walked. It got dark and we were all dirty. We got stuck in a thicket, in a thicket with lots of thorns. We went on and on, until someone said “hey, I’ll take you over to the other side, Reverend”. He took us across the river and we reached the monastery. We reached the monastery and the abbot gave us some money. I got only one hundred (Kyat). Rev. Paing said “Don’t take any money! There is no more performance going on. OK, take half of it.” I had been on invitation tour quite some time, I don’t know how many tens of days. Well, he gave me half of the money and I went to buy something to eat.’

169 Karen ‘eat noodles’
170 B. thlhkòu ‘thief’
171 nimon from Pali nimanteti means ‘invite a monk, especially to offer him food at one’s house’.

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# Appendix E: Table of Operators and SFPs

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<td>OP₂</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>PURP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ṭa</td>
<td>go</td>
<td>OP₂</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>CONT, INCREASE, INGR, DIR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʔpp</td>
<td>arrive</td>
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<td>+</td>
<td>η+/−</td>
<td>DIR</td>
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<tr>
<td>cao</td>
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<td>OP₃</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>DIR</td>
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<tr>
<td>ceh</td>
<td>down</td>
<td>OP₂</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>PURP</td>
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<td>down</td>
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<td>DIR</td>
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<tr>
<td>ciaʔ</td>
<td>eat</td>
<td>OP₃</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>unimportant event, immediate result</td>
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<td>ha</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>+</td>
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<td>OP₃</td>
<td>+/−</td>
<td>+/−</td>
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<td>Mon newspaper</td>
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<td>Hkyit Thein 1965, Hpei Maung Tin 1957.</td>
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