VERB CONCATENATION IN KACHIN

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For
LaRaw Maran
Duwa
Partner and Friend

Foreword

During the summer of 1963, after my first year as a graduate student in the Berkeley linguistics department, it was my good fortune to work for several months with LaRaw Maran, then a graduate student in anthropology at the University of Arizona, on a grammatical analysis of the Kachin language (now usually called Jinghpaw or Jingpho), which is his native tongue. LaRaw, now a professor of linguistics at the University of Indiana, was, technically speaking, my "informant", as I attempted to put into practice for the first time the principles of field linguistics I was absorbing from my teachers. needless to say, LaRaw was no passive purveyor of information, but rather a fully active partner and co-worker in our joint enterprise of exploring his language. We spent endless happy hours together doing things like translating Y.R. Chao's Mandarin Primer into Kachin. LaRaw's casual intellectual brilliance and cheerful physical stamina hooked me for life on Southeast Asian linguistics and indeed on field linguistics in general.

Fate decreed that I could not do fieldwork on Kachin in Burma, and I settled for Lahu in Thailand. But the work LaRaw and I had done together on Kachin turned out to be excellent preparation for my encounter with the grammars of other Tibeto-Burman languages. In particular, the study of Kachin first brought me face to face with a phenomenon which was to preoccupy me later: verb concatenation (serial verbs, verbs in series). This paper was written sometime during the academic year 1963-64, and formed the basis for a talk I presented in March 1964 to the Western Branch of the American Oriental Society. Otherwise, it has languished half-forgotten in a file-folder ever since.
The analysis here is naturally not pushed anywhere near as far as it is in "Verb concatenation in Lahu: the syntax and semantics of 'simple' juxtaposition" [Acta Linguistica Hafniensia 12.1, 1969] or in The Grammar of Lahu, pp. 199-265. In particular, I did not try to deal with "multiversatile concatenations" involving more than one non-head verb (except for a little in the section on "hyperversatile verbs of motion", 2.27 below). I was still groping for terminology to discuss these matters. Anyway, not much has been written on Kachin grammar in the past ten years, and I have left the manuscript substantially as it originally was, transcription and all.2

Serial verbs are attracting wider attention nowadays, both in Southeast Asian studies and in general linguistics. There was a panel on verbs in series at the Sixth Sino-Tibetan Conference (San Diego, 1973) at which papers were presented by Nguyễn Đình Hòa (Vietnamese), John Hou (Chinese), Rosa Needleman (Thai) and W. Warutamasintop (Thai). Li and Thompson (1973) have produced an interesting article on serial verbs in Mandarin. Trần Trọng Hải (Cornell) and Chris Smeall (Berkeley) are carrying on research into Vietnamese and Burmese verb concatenation, respectively.

Eventually it will be fascinating to compare serial verb constructions of the East Asian type with those to be found elsewhere in the world (like Africa). For now, however, let me just lay this modest offering on the altar of concatenatory scholarship.

Transcription of Kachin phonemes.

(a) tones: mid (unmarked) /ban/ ; high (') /bán/ ; low ("') /bàn/ ; falling ("') /bân/ ; high-stopped ('+p, -t, -k, -q) /bát, báq/ ; low-stopped ('+p, -t, -k, -q) /bò, bòt/.

(b) glottal stop: written "q"; occurs finally /náq/, initially before vowel /qel0/, and in combination with initial resonants /qrat, qyép, qwâ/.

(c) syllabic nasal: written m- before labials, and n- otherwise, though the different positions of articulation are non-distinctive. Syllabic nasals are fully tonal in Kachin: /ntâ, mbuŋ, ňyeng/.

(d) aspirated stops: written "hp, ht, hk" instead of "ph, th, kh". This is just traditional orthography, and does not imply any fancy kind of "pre-aspiration."

(e) palatal consonants: the digraphs "sy, cy, zy" are used for the unit phonemes /s, tš, dž/, respectively. Kachin lacks a voiced palatal spirant, and has no aspirated palatal affricate.

(f) shwa: the unstressed toneless vowel is written with /a/, not with an a-breve (ã) as in Hanson.
1.0 Introduction: Kachin form-classes. Kachin morphemes may be grouped into three superclasses: heads, postpositives, and preformatives. Heads include nouns (N) and verbs (V). Postpositives include nominal particles (P_n), verbal particles (P_v), and clause markers (M_c). Preformatives include nominal bound prefixes (B_n) and verbal bound prefixes (B_v).

In a "minimal head-phrase", the head may be preceded by a preformative, or followed by a postpositive, or both, or neither.

We shall not undertake a comprehensive analysis of Kachin phrase-structure, but will merely outline the criteria for assigning a particular morpheme to one or another of the above seven classes, briefly mentioning some of the more interesting formal and semantic subclasses into which they may be further divided.

1.1 Nouns: diagnostic environments and subclasses. Nouns are defined as those morphemes which may be followed by a nominal particle. Thus the "diagnostic environment" for a Kachin noun is ______P_n. Other environments (within a minimal NP) in which a noun may occur are: ______N and ______N. That is, a noun may appear "in apposition with" another noun.3,4

Subclasses.

Common nouns: mésyà 'person', hpún 'tree', syéró 'tiger'.

Pronouns (N_prop) behave very much like common nouns: nai 'I', syí 'he, she, it', gán 'we two'.

Interrogative nouns (N_intq) include words like konìy ~ gənìy 'how?', godé 'how much?', kədái 'who?'.

Introductory nouns (N_intd) may occur sentence-initially and followed by pause: syə-loi 'then, thereupon', mòi 'long ago'.

Limited or post-verbal nouns (N_lim) may not occur phrase-initially, but must always appear after a verb: V____. In this respect they are like verbal particles, but their nounhood is proved by the fact that they may be followed by a nominal particle. Thus the verb syá 'eat' may precede the N_lim yaŋ 'if' (syá yaŋ 'if one eats'). Adding the P_n go 'topicalizer', we get: syá yaŋ go 'in the case that one eats; as for the possibility of one's eating'.

Appositive nouns (N_app) characteristically occur before or after another noun. There are a large number of special subtypes of N_app:

(a) The two determiners (N_det): dai 'that (one)', ñdái 'this (one)' [ndái syéró 'this tiger', dai mésyà 'that person'].

(b) Numerals (N_num): syéró l-khōy 'two tigers', mésyà məsum 'three people'.

(c) Quantity-nouns (N_q): syéró nlan 'all tigers', mésyà nkau 'some people'.

(d) Auxiliary numerals or counters (N_aux): gə hkö mì 'a single word' [gə (N) 'word', hkö 'N aux for words', mì (P_n) 'one'].

(e) Locational nouns (N_loc): syéró ñtsa 'over the tiger', mésyà mhpan 'at the foot of the person'.
(f) Adjectival nouns \( (N_{\text{adj}}) \): \( \text{ńtā} \) ɨman 'a new house', \( \text{ńtā} \) ɨsā 'an old house'.

1.2 Verbs: diagnostic environments and subclasses. Verbs occur in the diagnostic environments: \( P_v \) and \( B_v \). The most important bound verbal prefix (\( B_v \)) is the negative morpheme, underlyingly \( n³n \). In addition, all verbs may occur before or after some other verb: \( V \) or \( V \). Some verbs are concatenated in this manner more freely than others, and this phenomenon is the principal topic of the present paper [section 2, below].

Verbs may also begin a sentence, occurring in \( # \). Such sentences lack overt noun-phrases, and may be termed "minor sentences."

Subclasses

Action verbs \( (V_{\text{act}}) \): \( \text{lūq} \) 'drink', \( \text{hkuı̂} \) 'hunt', \( \text{kəbāı̂} \) 'cirow'.

Quality verbs or adjectives \( (V_{\text{adj}}) \): \( \text{yāk} \) 'be difficult', \( \text{kezya} \) 'be good', \( \text{tsan} \) 'be far'.

There is little reason for distinguishing \( V_{\text{act}} \)'s from \( V_{\text{adj}} \)'s, outside of certain relatively minor selectional properties. For example, \( V_{\text{adj}} \)'s are often concatenated with verbs of degree like \( \text{grāı̂} \) 'be very' and \( \text{nāu} \) 'be too'.

The copula \( (V_{\text{cop}}) \) \( \text{rāı̂} \) 'be'. This verb is a study in itself. It has many selectional and distributional idiosyncrasies: e.g., it never occurs in \( V \), but often occurs in \( # \) (that is, with no \( P_v \) following).

Versatile verbs \( (VV) \) are those which usually or characteristically occur before or after another verb. This other verb is the head of the VP. Two subtypes of \( VV \)'s may be distinguished:

Adverbia\(l \) verbs \( (V_{\text{adv}}) \) are those which usually occur before the main verb; complementary verbs \( (V_{\text{comp}}) \) are those which usually occur after the main verb.

1.3 Nominal particles \( (P_n) \) occur in only three environments: \( N \), \( P_n \), \( P_n \); that is, after a noun, or before or after another nominal particle.

Several subtypes may be distinguished on a semantic basis: relational, locative, numerative, etc. A few examples: \( \text{syərə} \) \( 𝕤sockopt \)'as for the tiger' (topic), \( \text{syərə} \) \( ｶｶ触动 \)'the tiger' (object), \( \text{syərə} \) \( ｎｎ触动 \)'tigers' (plural), \( \text{syərə} \) \( ｶｶ触动 \)'with the tiger' (instrumental).

We cannot go into the interesting question of permissible sequences of two or more \( P_n \)'s within a single NP.

1.4 Verbal particles \( (P_v) \) occur in only three environments: \( V \), \( P_v \), \( P_v \); that is, after a verb, or before or after another verbal particle.

\( P_v \)'s may be divided and cross-classified into subtypes on a semantic basis (aspectual, temporal, modal, etc.), or on formal grounds (in-
variant for all persons and numbers vs. paradigmatically variant; dependent vs. independent; occur with a genitivized subject vs. not so occurrent, etc.). All in all, the P_v's present the most complicated and interesting problems in Kachin grammar.

1.5 Clause markers (M_c) are morphemes which occur at the end of a nounphrase or verb-phrase. They may appear after members of any of the four classes described above: N___, V___, P_n___, P_v___.

Semantically, they color the meaning of the preceding phrase as a whole, contributing to it notions like 'interjectory', 'interrogative', or 'imperative.' Exs: nan kún 'You?' (nan [N pron] 'you', kún 'interrogative'); nan hpéq kún 'To you?' (hpéq 'object'); nan rái kún 'Is it you?'; nan rái N P M N V cop M V cop na kún 'Will it be you?' (na 'future').

1.6 Nominal bound prefixes (B_n) occur only in the environment ___+N (where + means 'close juncture'). A B_n may be atonal with shwa vocalism, or else fully tonal with a normal stressed vowel, or else a fully tonal syllabic nasal.

Most B_n's of the shape Co- have no definite or consistent meaning in particular cases (motu 'end, point', matsat 'eight', mayuq 'the throat'). The same may be said of the syllabic-nasal prefix n-~ n-~ n- (nhtu 'sword', nsam 'color', nhpye 'haversack').

In some cases, however, a fairly obvious meaning may be attached to a non-canonical B_n: 9

1~ - 'one', as in laññi 'one day', laññaq 'one night', laññal 'one';
2~ - 'hand/arm', as in laññaq 'hand', laññan 'palm', laññkrā 'righthand';
3~ - 'ester-, last', as in manñi 'last year', manñi 'yesterday';
4~ - 'your (poss.)', as in n-wol 'your grandmother'.

Some B_n's have a canonical phonological shape, but no determinable meaning: syiñ-~ sylu-~ sylu-, as in syiñi 'rope', syiñnoq 'corner', sylujel 'tongue', sylujel 'shadow', syljna 'stick, cane'.

The largely meaningless "preformatives", both nominal and verbal, in which Kachin abounds, seem to function basically as devices to add phonological bulk or reduce homophony, always a problem in a language where morphemes are monosyllabic.

1.7 Verbal bound prefixes (B_v) occur in the environment ___+V.

Many of the most important and meaningful B_v's are non-canonical in their phonological shape:

1~ - 'negative', as in ni-sya 'not eat' ni-ngyen 'not lean', n-sa 'not go'; qo- 'iterative', as in qo-10 'always have', qo-sa 'often go', qo-vak 'be always difficult'; syo- ~ zyo- 'causative'10 as in syoñut 'cause to finish', zyoñkrut 'frighten', syoñoi 'cause to float'; mo- 'generalizer', as in li muy-10 'all who have, whoever has', sa mo-sa 'all who go, whoever goes'.

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9 The numbers 1~ to 4~ correspond to the tones of Kachin.
10 The number 10 is the tense number.
On the other hand, hundreds of Kachin verbs begin with a prefix of the form Ca- to which it is not possible to assign any definite meaning. There is no way to predict which verb-root will be preceded by which of these Bv's.

Some Bv's are meaningless even though they are fully canonical in phonological shape, e.g. gûm- in verbs like gûmhpûk 'tap gently', gûmhtûn 'jump down', gûmlâû 'cause trouble'.

2.0 Verb concatenation. Verbs may be strung together in two ways. Sometimes the concatenation is "mediated" by an intervening verbal particle: \( V_1 + P_v + V_2 \).

hnû: By far the most frequently used particle for this purpose is hnû, a very general concatenative particle comparable in function to the Japanese "TE-form" or the Sanskrit gerund.\[hnû\] is often best translated simply as 'and'. Exs: mûcûûq 'be sick', si 'die', mûcûûq hûn si 'be sick and die', grâu 'be more, exceed', yak 'be difficult', grâu hnû yak 'be more difficult'. Most Kachin non-versatile verbs may be linked together by hnû in this way, provided that the two verbal concepts involved are semantically congruent.

na: The \( P_v \) na 'future, hypothetical' is used to link verbs with \( V_2 \)'s whose meanings are somehow oriented toward the future, like mûlûp 'forget', yû 'plan', gûûi 'dare', mû 'intend', bûyûf 'request': sâa na mûlûp 'forget to eat', mû na mû 'intend to see', sa-wâ na gûûi 'dare to go'. The most natural English translation of a \( V_1 + na + V_2 \) phrase usually involves a complementary infinitive, as in the above examples.

Certain other particles are used "idiomatically" before particular verbs. For example, hûkû, a \( P_v \) meaning roughly 'until', is used before sâûqû 'be careful': dûm hûkû sâûqû 'be careful to remember'.

Very often, however, verbs are concatenated by simple juxtaposition: \( V_1 + V_2 \). The remainder of this paper will be devoted to categorizing the various types of juxtapositional verb concatenation, and to listing several examples of verbs of each subtype.

It is perhaps well to stress at this point that we are here concerned only with versatile verbs that characteristically occur in juxtaposition with non-versatile verbs. We thus ignore instances of "nonce-juxtaposition"\[12\] such as mûtûq syû 'eat by licking' (mûtûq 'lick', syû 'eat'), since neither of these verbs occurs regularly in juxtaposition with anything but versatile verbs. A nonce-juxtaposition of this sort may be regarded as an elliptical version of \( V_1 + hnû + V_2 \) (mûtûq hnû syû). As we have seen, the chief syntactic dichotomy that can be applied to versatile verbs is the simple before-or-after one: "adverbal" \( VV \)'s occur before the main verb, while "complementary" \( VV \)'s occur after the main verb. In what follows, we have further subdivided these two large syntactic categories on a semantic basis. These semantic categorizations ('temporal', 'extensive', 'attitudinal', etc.) are intended merely as convenient labels, and are not necessarily mutually exclusive.\[13\]
2.1 Adverbial verbs [= Pre-head versatile verbs].

2.11 Temporal.

(1) bái + V 'to V again; to V back' bái hkrúm 'meet again', bái zyoq 'give back'

When used alone, bái means 'to repeat'.

(2) mył + V 'to have V'ed a while ago, to have V'ed some time ago'

mył lái 'passed by a while ago'
mył hkrúm 'met a while ago'

(3) nínan + nínan + V 'to have recently V'ed; to be newly V'ed'
nínan prát 'be newly born'
nínan sa 'to have gone recently'

nínan is also a N of the adjectival type, meaning 'a new N' (úta nínan 'a new house'). See note 6.

(4) nóq + V 'to still V; to yet be V'ing'
nóq sýa 'still be eating'
nóq lu 'still have'

(5) syon + V 'to V first; to be the first to V'
syon metsa 'be the first to curse'
syon sýa 'eat first'

(6) tút + V 'to always V; to V constantly'
tút sýa 'always eat'
tút metsa 'always curse'

As a main verb, tút means 'to join, to be joined'.

(7) gerałq + n- + V 'to be not yet V'ed; to have not V'ed yet'
gerałq n-dó 'has not yet arrived'
gerałq n-10 'does not have yet'

gerałq generally occurs before a main verb with negative prefix attached. It is also used before the negative imperative V hkom (#21 below) plus main verb, forming a string of three verbs, as follows:

gerałq hkom sýa! 'Don't eat yet!'

v V Vh

.12 Extensive.

(8) gráı + V 'to be very V; to V very much'
gráı yák 'be very difficult'
gráı lu 'have very much'

Before verbs of quality, gráı is best translated 'very'; before verbs of action, the natural English translation is 'very much'.

(9) hkrák + V 'to be exactly V; to V perfectly'
hkrák bün 'resemble exactly'
hkrák eye 'know perfectly'

As a main verb, hkrák means 'be good, be O.K.' In its capacity as main verb it may of course itself be preceded by a versatile adverbial verb: gráı hkrák 'be very good', tús hkrák 'be exactly right'

gráı V Vh
hkrák Vh
(10)  lég + V₁ ... lég + V₂  'the more V₁... the more V₂'
    lég zyo’htau  'the more one screams'
    lég syá  'the more one eats'

In lég constructions, the main verb is usually followed by the Vₐ and lég (§57 below), forming a string of three verbs:
    lég zyo’htau lég  'the more one screams'
Vₐ  Vₐ  Vₐ

(11)  nágcyin + V  'to be extremely V; to V exceedingly'
    nágcyin tsóraq  'love exceedingly'
    nágcyin yák  'be awfully difficult'

nágcyin is more intense than grá (§8 above).

(12)  náu + V  'to be too V; to V too much'
    náu lu  'have too much'
    náu yák  'be too difficult'

(13)  slyóm + V  'to V less; to be less V'
    slyóm syá  'talk less'
    slyóm yák  'be less difficult'

As a main verb, slyóm means 'to reduce, decrease'.

(14)  túp + V  'to be truly V; to V completely'
    túp mai  'be completely proper'
    túp hkrák  'be exactly right'

As a main verb, túp means 'be equal, be whole, be complete; be just right'. It is very similar in meaning to hkrák (§9 above).

(15)  gánoi + V  'to be almost V; to nearly V'
    gánoi hprin  'be almost full'
    gánoi hkrák  'almost hit'

(16)  kocyí + V  'to be somewhat V; to V a little'
    kocyí bún  'resemble slightly'
    kocyí syá  'eat a little'
    kocyí yák  'be somewhat difficult'

(17)  mórén + V  'to be equally V; to be just as V; to V just as much as'
    mórén kábá  'be equally large'
    mórén syá  'eat just as much as'

13  Attitudinal.

18)  dínsa + V  'to V on purpose; be V on purpose'
    dínsa zyo’htau  'scream on purpose'
    dínsa yák  'be difficult on purpose'

dínsa also functions as a complementary verb, with a different meaning. See §73 below.

19)  kam + V  'to be willing to V'
    kam galo  'be willing to do'
    kam cyim  'be willing to taste'

The complementary verb hkróq has a similar meaning. See §39 below.

20)  hkap + V  'to anticipate V'ing; to wait for and V'
    hkap mů  'catch sight of' (lit. "wait for and see")
As a main verb, hkàp means 'to way-lay, intercept, catch on the way'.
It is sometimes hard to find a neat English translation for a sequence of hkàp + V.

21. hkùm + V  'do not V!; it is forbidden to V!'  
   hkùm syàga 'don't talk!'  
   hkùm syà 'don't eat!'

As a main verb, hkùm means 'to prohibit, prevent, hinder.'

22. mèq + V  'maybe V; could it be that V?'
   mèq ñ-hkràk 'maybe it's not all right!'
   mèq lù 'perhaps one has'

23. syèq + V  'do V!; V indeed; really V'
   syèq syà 'do eat!'
   syèq lù 'really has; has indeed'

When the complementary verb dînsa (#73 below) appears after syèq + main verb, the resultant 3-verb string may be translated 'so long as V':

syèq syà dînsa 'so long as one eats'
   v  v  v

24. tìq + V  'would that V!; I hope that V; may V!'
   tìq syà 'may you eat!'
   tìq sì 'I hope you die!'

[tìq + V] is often followed by the optative clause-marker lè:

2.14 A sociative.

25. hkrài + V  'to V alone; to V by oneself'
   hkrài syà 'eat by oneself'
   hkrài sa-wà 'go alone'

hkrài is sometimes a nominal particle, meaning 'only N, just N, N alone.'

26. qyèp ~ yép + V  'to V together; to V in company'
   qyèp sa-wà 'go together'
   qyèp syà 'eat together'

As a main verb, qyèp means 'be close, adjacent, contiguous'.

27. ràu + V  'to V together; to V along with'
   ràu dá 'keep sthg together'
   ràu hkom 'walk along with'

28. zyöm + V  'to V together; to V unitedly; to join forces and V'
   zyöm hpai 'carry together'
   zyöm dlp 'press (on sthg) in unison'
2.15 Potential.

(29) dàn + V 'to be able to V; to have sufficient strength to V'
      dàn syāga 'be able to speak'
      dàn tsun  'be able to express
      (one's gratitude, etc.)'

As a main verb dàn means 'to conquer, win, overcome'.

(30) hkām + V 'to bear to V; to suffer through V'ing; to withstand V'ing'
      hkām hkom 'bear to walk'
      hkām syā 'suffer through eating
      (something nauseating, etc.)'

(31) kōq + V 'to succeed in V'ing; to manage to V'
      kōq pru 'manage to get out'
      kōq hpai 'succeed in carrying'

(32) lau + V 'to be on the verge of V; to be just about to V'
      lau dōq 'be on the verge of collaps-
      ing'
      lau si 'be just about to die'

2.16 Manner.

(33) kāzyōn ~ gāzyōn + V 'to V in fright; to V with a start'
      kāzyōn rōt 'wake up with a start'
      kāzyōn yu 'be startled! to see'

(34) lāgyīm + V 'to V in secret'
      lāgyīm yu 'watch in secret; observe
      on the sly'
      lāgyīm sa-wā 'go stealthily; prowl
      about'

(35) lāqnyān ~ lānyān + V 'to V slowly; to be slow in V'ing'
      lāqnyān hkom 'walk slowly'
      lāqnyān syā 'eat slowly'

(36) māyūn + V 'to V in secret, to V on the sly'
      māyūn yu 'spy upon, watch in secret'
      māyūn syā 'eat in secret'

māyūn is very similar in meaning to lāgyīm (#34 above).

2.2 Complementary Verbs [* Post-head versatile verbs].

2.21 Attitudinal.

(37) V + cyai 'to V for pleasure; to V for fun'
      tsun cyai 'have a chat' (lit. 'talk
      for pleasure')
      hkom cyai 'have a stroll' (lit. 'walk
      for pleasure')
      lūq cyai 'have a smoke (lit. 'smoke
      for pleasure')

(38) V + gūi 'to dare to V'
      syā gūi 'dare to eat'
The future particle na may optionally intervene between the main verb and gúi. See above, 2.0.

(39) V + hkróq 'to be willing to V'

syá hkróq 'willing to eat'
hkrá hkróq 'willing to touch'

The adverbial verb kam (#19 above) is similar in meaning.

(40) V + lù 'to be able to V'

syoga lù 'be able to speak'
mari lù 'be able to buy'

lù is one of the most important, versatile, and frequently occurring verbs in the language. When used as a main verb, it means 'to possess, have'.

(41) V + rà 'ought to V; need to V; desire to V'

sa rà 'should go, ought to go'
syá rà 'desire to eat'

rà implies more necessity than mayu (#47 below).

(42) V + syút 'to V by mistake; to V mistakenly'

kàm syút 'believe mistakenly' syá syút 'eat by mistake'

As a main verb, syút means 'to offend, sin'.

(43) V + wà 'to try to V'

kowá wà 'try to bite'
sat wà 'try to kill'

wà is doubtless related to the abstract complementary verb wà 'to become' (#76 below).

(44) V + ya 'to V for someone's benefit; to favor someone by V'ing; to V for someone'

syàp ya 'to lend'
syarín ya 'to teach'

ya is most often untranslatable by a simple English expression. It is very similar to Japanese benefactive verbs like kureru, ageru, yaru.16 ya is often used as a kind of ironic ethical dative with a nuance like the English for you in "I'll bash your head in for you": lagú ya 'steal it for you', i.e., "honor you by stealing it from you".

The complementary verb lá (#86 below) sometimes carries an idea of benefaction that is the reverse of ya, as in syàp lá 'to borrow', syarín lá 'to learn'.

(45) V + yu 'to try to V; to V and see; to have the experience of V'ing'

syoga yu 'try to speak'
cyím yu 'taste and see; test by tasting; have a taste'
hkai yu 'have had the experience of bearing young; have given birth in one's time (of animals)'

As a main verb, yu means simply 'to see'. In the function of 'to V and see', V+yu is very like the Japanese -TE MIRU construction17.
46) V + ʃəq 'to pretend to V; feign to V'
   ʃəq ʃəq 'feign sleep'
   ʃəq ʃəq 'pretend not to know;
   ʃəq ʃəq 'feign ignorance'
   ʃəq ʃəq 'pretend to eat, make
   a pretense of eating'

As a main verb, ʃəq means 'to tell a lie.'

47) V + ʃəq 'to want to V'
   ʃəq ʃəq 'want to eat'
   ʃəq ʃəq 'want to play'

ʃəq is the most general Kachin verb expressing volition.

22 Extensive or qualitative.

48) V + ʃəq 'to be damned V, to be deucedly V'
   ʃəq ʃəq 'be damned difficult'
   ʃəq ʃəq 'be bloody far'

As a main verb, ʃəq means 'to have a fever; to be hot with rage.'

49) V + ʃəq 'to be supremely V, to be most V'
   ʃəq ʃəq 'be perfectly beautiful'
   ʃəq ʃəq 'be supremely good'

ʃəq is more emotional than the superlative complementary verb
   ʃəq (#51 below). When used as a main verb it means 'to be
   fulfilled, carried into effect.'

50) V + ʃəq 'to be V and pretty; to be beautifully V'
   ʃəq ʃəq 'be black and pretty'
   ʃəq ʃəq 'be big and pretty'

51) V + ʃəq 'to be most V; to be the V'est'
   ʃəq ʃəq 'be the most difficult'
   ʃəq ʃəq 'be the blackest'

As a main verb, ʃəq means 'be terminated; be exhausted, used up'.

52) V + ʃəq 'to be very V; to V very much'
   ʃəq ʃəq 'be very much afraid;
   ʃəq ʃəq 'be very happy'

ʃəq is probably related to the homophonous complementary verb of
   completed action (#60 below).

53) V + ʃəq 'to be very V; to be too V; to V very much'
   ʃəq ʃəq 1. 'be very difficult'
   ʃəq ʃəq 2. 'too difficult'
   ʃəq ʃəq 'to like very much'

ʃəq is similar in meaning to the adverbial extensive verb ʃəq
   (#8 above), and in fact it is very common to encounter a three-
   verb string of the form: ʃəq + V + ʃəq
   ʃəq ʃəq ʃəq 'be very cold'.

54) V + ʃəq 'should V; be proper to V; be good to V; may well V'
   ʃəq ʃəq ʃəq 'should go; be fitting
   to go'
   ʃəq ʃəq ʃəq 'should return; ought
syá mai 'be proper to eat; may well eat'

An interesting variant of this construction involves adding the negative prefix to both the main verb and to mai:

í-syá m-mai 'must eat, had better eat, ought to eat';

literally this means "not eat not proper" or "if you don't eat it won't do".
This is exactly analogous to the Japanese V + nakereba naranai construction.

(55) V + pyò byo 'to V pleasantly; be glad to V; V with pleasure'
    galo pyò 'be glad to do'
    manam pyò 'smell good'
    katsi pyò 'be pleasantly cool'

(56) V + zyát 'to be V'er; to be more V; to V more'
    galù zyát 'be longer'
    syá zyát 'eat more'

As a main verb, zyát means 'to add, increase, augment'.

(57) V + mahan... V + mahan 'the more V... the more V'
    'the V'er... the more V'
    yàk mahan... 'the more difficult'
    møron mahan... 'the more one shouts'...

As mentioned in connection with lèq (#10 above), the three-verb string lèq + V + mahan is quite common.
When not used correlative, mahan has a different, aspectual meaning. See #65 below.

2.23 Aspectual

(58) V + hkyén 'to prepare to V; to make ready to V'
    kawà hkyén 'prepare to bite'
    syá hkyén 'prepare to eat'

(59) V + hpan 'to begin to V'
    galo hpan 'begin to do; begin to work'
    hkràp hpan 'begin to weep'

(60) V + káu 'to V and be done with it; to V utterly'
    malàp káu 'clean forget'
    bo káu 'pull up by the roots'
    mògàp káu 'cover up completely'

No single formula can be given for the translation of a [V r káu] sequence. Often the best English rendering will include a complementary adverb like 'up, away, out', as in chew up, blow away, scour out, etc.
Káu as a main verb means 'to abandon, reject, do away with' or 'to miss, lose, err.'
As a complement, káu has much the same force as màt (#62 below).
V + màq  'to V completely; to V exhaustively'
    sì màq 'drop dead (lit. "die completely")'
syá màq 'eat up everything'

As a main verb, màq means 'to be finished, spent, exhausted, used up'.

V + màt  'to be V'ded completely; to V definitely or irretrievably'
gohkàn màt 'get all tangled up'
hkriń màt 'come to a dead stop'
hprin màt 'fill to the brim'

As a main verb, màt means 'be lost, disappear'.

As a complement it is quite similar in function to kau (#60 above).
The difference seems to be that kau stresses the act of fulfillment
while màt stresses the result or new situation obtaining due to
that fulfillment. Both kau and màt are characteristically followed
by the verbal particle sai, which indicates 'completion of action'
or 'new state due to a completed action'.

Occasionally both màt and màq occur in sequence after a main verb,
giving a phrase with extra emphatic force:
syá màt màq 'to eat up every
V h V V crumb'

V + nàn  'to continue V'ing; to keep on V'ing'
galo nàn 'keep on doing'
syá nàn 'keep on eating'

As a main verb, nàn means 'to be unchanged, to remain.'
nàn is characteristically followed by the continuative verbal
particle nà.

V + rút  'to finish V'ing'
syágà rút 'finish speaking'
syá rút 'finish eating'
rút is weak or neutral in force compared to kau, màq, or màt.

V + màgan  'to be at the point of V'ing; be just about to V'
dù màgan 'be about to arrive'
syágà màgan 'be about to speak'

màgan has somewhat less of a nuance of impending doom than lau
(#32 above). We have seen a special correlative use of this verb
above (#57). Still another use of màgan is described below, #78.

4 Interactive or associative.

V + hkick  'to V one another; to V each other'
gàp hkick 'shoot at each other'
ginsùp hkick 'play with each other'
hkick always implies mutual hostility or, at least, competitive
conflict.

V + lóm  'to V along with; to be included in V'ing'
you lóm 'be swept along with'
    (the current)'
sa lóm 'go along with'

V + syalóm  'to V (something) as well; to V (something) along with'
zép syalóm 'to cut along with
    to a cutting angle closer...
(69) V + syəñün  'to cause to V; to make (someone) V'
    sa syəñün  'cause to go'
    hkrup syəñün  'make someone weep'

    As a main verb, syəñün means 'to send'.

(70) V + syəzyàn  'to V respectively; to V severally; to V each in one's own way'
    syá syəzyàn  'to eat each in one's own way (or own house)
    syəñá syəzyàn  'to call from all directions' (each fr his own direction)
    gəlo syəzyàn  'to do respectively'

    Syəzyàn has another, more "abstract" meaning - see below, #79.

2.25 Abstract state.

(71) V + cye  'to be known to V; be apt to V, likely to V'
    hkrup cye  'be known to weep'
    lu cye  'be likely to have'

    As a main verb, cye means simply 'to know'.

(72) V + dəm  'to unfortunately be the case that V; to be forced to V, alas
    syá dam  'be obliged, unhappily, to eat'
    nə dam  'have to exist, unfortunatel

(73) V + dínə  'so long as V; as long as V is the case'
    qe-yák dínə  'so long as it is difficult'
    qe-mu dínə  'so long as one sees'

    When dínə occurs before the main verb it means 'on purpose' (see #18 above). When dínə appears as a complement, it is usual to have the main verb preceded by the iterative bound morpheme qe-, and to have this in turn preceded by the adverbial verb syèq (#23 above):
    syèq qe-hkrun dínə  'as long as

(74) V + hkrup  'to happen to V; chance to V; unexpectedly V'
    mə hkrup  'see by chance'
    hkrun hkrup  'happen to meet'
    cyan hkrup  'chance to be black'

(75) V + mót  'to seem to V, appear to V'
    rai mót  'appear to be'
    hitug mót  'seem to fall (of rain)'
(76) \( V + \text{wà} \) 'to become V; to get to V; to get to be V'
\( \text{mù wà} \) 'to get to see (have opportunity of seeing)'
\( \text{kezya wà} \) 'to become good; to improve'
\( \text{qyúp mọyu wà} \) 'be getting to want V, V, V to sleep (i.e. become sleepy)'

(77) \( V + \text{zyàn} \) 'to actually V; to V in spite of all odds'
\( \text{gàlo zyàn} \) 'actually do'
\( \text{lù zyàn} \) 'actually be able'

(78) \( V + \text{màgan} \) 'to V anyway; to go ahead and V; to have V'ed already'
\( \text{sa màgan} \) 'go on ahead (without waiting for others)'
\( \text{gàlo màgan} \) 'go ahead and do'
\( \text{htùq màgan} \) 'to have already fallen (of rain)'

See #57 and 65 for other functions of this workhorse verb.

(79) \( V + \text{ṣyàyàn} \) 'to actually V; to V in spite of all odds'
This is formally the causative of \( \text{zyàn} \) (#77 above), and appears to be identical in meaning with it. But strangely enough, \( \text{zyàn} \) seems to be used only in sentences with singular subjects, while \( \text{ṣyàyàn} \) is used only in sentences with plural subjects.
The "distributive" \( \text{ṣyàyàn} \) (#70 above) is quite distinct, and has nothing to do with \( \text{zyàn} \).)

2.26 Contact or displacement.

(80) \( V + \text{ban} \) 'to V into (something)'
\( \text{rú ban} \) 'pour into'
\( \text{ṣyón ban} \) 'put into, insert'
\( \text{dihrkrát ban} \) 'fall into'

As a main verb, \( \text{ban} \) means 'to put, place, locate'.

(81) \( V + \text{dá} \) 'to V something so it stays; to V something for good; to V something so it remains in a certain state'
\( \text{nôi dá} \) 'hang (sthg) up'
\( \text{kum dá} \) 'wall off (sthg)'
\( \text{dàgam dá} \) 'take an ost.'
\( \text{gerán dá} \) 'sharpen up'

\( \text{dá} \) occurs after hundreds of verbs, always adding the nuance of stability, constancy, permanence, "for good-ness". It is often best translated by an English complementary adverb like 'up, out, off, away'.

As a main verb \( \text{dá} \) means 'to put, place'. \( \text{dá} \) performs a function very similar to that of \( \text{dáct} \) (#82) and to the Japanese verb \( \text{oku} \).

(82) \( V + \text{dáct} \) 'to V something thoroughly, to V something for good, to V sthg so it stays'.
\( \text{kàbài dáct} \) 'throw away (for good)'
\( \text{zyòq dáct} \) 'give out, distribute'
\( \text{nu dáct} \) 'catch sight of' (lit. "see thoroughly")
As a main verb dàt means 'to put, place, fasten.'

\( (81) \) \text{V + gàq} 'to V open; to V something so it breaks open'
- kàhtàm gàq 'slash open'
- gàlùn gàq 'pierce open'
- zèn gàq 'cut open'
- kôk gàq 'dig open'
- hkyèn gàq 'hack open'

\( (84) \) \text{V + hkrà} 'to V and hit; to V and touch'
- qàzyòq hkrà 'to graze sthg' (lit. "glance-touch")
- mòsòp hkrà 'to stroke sthg' (lit. "stroke-touch")
- qàhtù hkrà 'to collide with sthg' (lit. "collide-touch")
- qàdòt hkrà 'to drive into sthg' (lit. "pound-touch")

\( (85) \) \text{V + hpòq} 'to V something open'
- hòn hpòq 'to kick open'
- màhkyèt hpòq 'to scratch open'
hpòq implies somewhat less violence than gàq.

\( (86) \) \text{V + là} 'to take something and V; to V something out or away'
- syòq là 'to fish out (sthg from the water)'
- hpaì là 'to take and carry (sthg)'
- hkyè là 'to rescue (someone)'
  (lit. "take and save")
- syàgà là 'to summons (someone) forth'
  (lit. "take & call")
- lù là 'to get hold of (sthg)'
  (lit. "take and have")
- gahkyèq là 'to jerk (sthg) out'
- pòn là 'to take (sthg) up in one's arms'
- kàròt là 'to drag (sthg) away'
  (lit. "take and drag")
là is one of the most frequently used complementary verbs.

\( (87) \) \text{V + gàt} 'to kill by V'ing; to V to death'
- gàp gàt 'shoot to death'
- syàñà gàt 'kill by poison'
- mòrà gàt 'strangle'
- kòmyèt gàt 'crush to death'

\( (88) \) \text{V + tôn (+ dà) } 'to V sthg so it stays, to V sthg permanently, etc.
As a main verb, tôn means 'to put, place' (cf. #8's 81 and 82 above). But the very frequent sequence tôn dà (see #81 above) acts as a unit and itself follows innumerable main verbs, thus forming three-verb strings:
- hkhài tôn dà 'to plant (sthg)'
- bòu tôn dà 'to bring up (someone)'
2.27 Motion.

Kachin verbs of motion make an interesting study in themselves. They may be divided into three categories:

(a) restricted -- motion-verbs that occur in series only before versatile motion-verbs;

(b) versatile -- motion-verbs that may occur after any restricted motion-verb;

(c) hyper-versatile -- the single verb (wà) that may occur not only after any restricted motion-verb, but also after a sequence of restricted motion-verb plus versatile motion-verb.

In the restricted category we put the following verbs (among many others): gàt 'run', ǹhtàm 'leap', tso 'go high', hrpou 'flee', nêm 'go low', ǹhtàn 'go back', pyàu 'float', pyen 'fly', ràp 'cross', kàmàq 'stagger', kòyìn 'turn around', syòcyút 'chase' etc. 24

We proceed to give examples of versatile and hyperversatile verbs of motion:

(91) V + hkom 'to V on foot; to V walking'
    ràp hkom 'cross on foot'
    ǹhtàn hkom 'return on foot'

(92) V + lâì 'to V across; to V through; to V crossing'
    ràp lâì 'cross over'
    ñumhòm lâì 'leap across'

(93) V + lùn 'to V up; to V climbing'
    pyàu lùn 'float up'
    gàt lùn 'run up; climb up running'

(94) V + pru 'to V out; to V coming out'
    kàmàq pru 'stagger out'
    pyen pru 'fly out'

(95) V + qyúq ~ yúq 'to V down; to V descending'
    gàt qyúq 'run down'
    ñumhòm qyúq 'leap down'

(96) V + sa 'move V'ing; go/come V'ing'
    pyen sa 'go flying; come flying'
    gàt sa 'go running; come running'
sa also occurs as an adverbial verb (*pre-head versatile verb*); in these cases, the following main verb need not be a verb of motion. The meaning of \(sa + V\) is 'go and \(V\)', i.e. 'move into position to be able to perform the verbal action': \(sa\) *tam* 'go and look for', \(sa\) *sà* 'go and see off'.

(97) \(V + syàn\) 'to \(V\) into; to \(V\) entering'

\(pyen\) syàn 'fly into'
\(nhtan\) syàn 'go back into'

(98) \(V + gawan\ ~ kawan\) 'to \(V\) around; to \(V\) in circles'

\(syacyut\) kawan 'chase around'
\(gat\) gawan 'run around'

The above motion-verbs (91-98) are all "post-head versatile"—i.e., they may follow any restricted verb of motion, modifying it as attribute to head. On the other hand, any versatile verb may itself function as the main verb in a VP. When one of the motion verbs in this group is playing the role of main verb in its VP, it may be followed by a second member of the group. This second verb is then the versatile attribute modifying the first verb. Consider these examples:

\[hkõm\ \text{gyúq} 'descent on foot' ("walk descendingly"), \ hkõm\ \text{lài} 'walk through', \text{lài}\ syàn 'cross into', \ hkõm\ \text{lùn} 'climb up on foot', \ hkõm\ \text{pru} 'walk out', \ hkõm\ syàn 'walk into', \ hkõm\ gawan 'walk around'.\]

The verbs \text{lùn} 'go up', \text{gyúq} 'go down', \text{pru} 'go out', and \text{syàn} 'go in', correspond semantically and syntactically to the Mandarin verbs \text{shàng} \(\mathcal{F}\), \text{shiah} \(\mathcal{F}\), \text{chù} \(\mathcal{V}\), and \text{jinn} \(\mathcal{F}\), respectively.

The verb \(wà\) enjoys special concatenative freedom. Its meaning is very general, something like 'to \(V\) while moving'. Like the other versatile verbs of motion, it may occur after restricted motion-verbs (*\text{kanaq} \(wà\) 'move staggering, stagger along', \text{gat} \(wà\) 'run, go running, come running, move by running'). Again like the other versatile motion-verbs, \(wà\) may modify a preceding versatile motion-verb (#'s 91-98) which then functions as the main verb of the VP: \text{syàn} \(wà\) 'come in, go in, move in', \text{pru} \(wà\) 'come/go/move out', \text{lùn} \(wà\) 'come/go/move up', \text{gyúq} \(wà\) 'come/go/move down', \(śa\) \(wà\) 'go, come, move'.

In addition, \(wà\) has the special property of occurring after 2-verb sequences of restricted motion-verb plus versatile motion-verb: \(pyen\) syàn \(wà\) 'fly in, come flying in, go flying in',

\(\text{gat}\ \text{pru} \(wà\) 'run out, come running out, go running out', \text{kanaq} \(lùn\) \(wà\) 'stagger up, come staggering up, go staggering up', \text{syacyut} \(gyúq\) \(wà\) 'chase down, come chasing down, go chasing down'. Three-verb concatenations of this sort are strikingly similar to Mandarin "directional complement" phrases like \text{fei} shiah \text{lài} 'come flying down' ("fly-descend-come") or \text{fei} \text{shang} \text{chiuh} 'go flying up' ("fly-ascend-go"). The difference is that the Kachin \(wà\) is indeterminate with respect to direction of motion, unlike Mandarin \text{lài} 'cisative motion' and \text{chiuh} 'transitive motion'. To specify such directionality, Kachin requires an additional morpheme, usually a verb-particle.

** * * *
NOTES

*1 Maran's eagerly awaited revision of Hanson's Kachin Dictionary will include a "Language Handbook Appendix." A few other references to works on Kachin grammar are given below.

*2 I have added some new footnotes. These are marked with an asterisk, but are numbered consecutively with the original footnotes. Shades of the STC!

3 Certain verbal particles, chiefly qai, serve to nominalize the preceding verb. The resultant \([V + P]\) then behaves just like a noun, and may be followed by a \(P\) or a "natural noun" in apposition. Thus, from ma\(cy\)i\(q\) 'be sick', and ma\(s\)ya 'person', we get [ma\(cy\)i\(q\) qai] [ma\(s\)ya] \(V\ P\ N\) 'a sick person', which we might call a relative clause, though we regard it as essentially the same construction as \([N + N]\). This leads us far beyond the realm of minimal phrase-structure, however.


*5 These morphemes, which we would now call "classifiers", are actually quite rare in Kachin, compared, e.g. to Burmese (or even Lahu).

*6 See the discussion of Lahu nouns like 3-pli 'something old' and 3-\(s\)-li 'sthg new; another; next' [Grammar of Lahu(GL) 3.34e; 3.44d; 3.45; 4.412 (5)].

*7 I have since abandoned these terms in favor of "pre-head versatiles" (\(V\)) and "post-head versatiles" (\(V\)), respectively. See GL, passim.

*8 I now use the term "unrestricted particle" for particles that may occur both post-nominally and post-verbally. See the index to GL, p. 642.

9 By "non-canonical" I mean "not having a phonological shape characteristic of free morphemes". Free morphemes may not have the shape Ca- or N- in Kachin.

0 Roughly speaking, zya- occurs before verb-roots beginning with aspirated onsonants or s-; otherwise the form is sya-.

11 Lahuists are of course reminded of the "suspensive P unf" 1u. See the index to GL, p. 665.

12 What I later came to call "fortuitous concatenation". See GL 4.312-313, 5.11, 5.42, 6.117 (4).

3 One further disclaimer: in what follows (except in the section on erbs of motion [2.27]) we confine ourselves mostly to sequences of one
versatile and one main verb. Yet it is frequent to find 2, 3, 4, or even 5 VV's strung together in a single VP. To investigate the relative order of occurrence of the verbs in such "multiversatile" verb phrases would be extremely interesting.

14 In this and the following glosses, "V" stands for any main verb.

15 By this category we mean "verbs which specify the solitude or jointness of the subject of the main verb".

*16 See the discussion of Lahu benefaction in GL 4.611-4.614.

*17 Or the Lahu Vₜₜ + ni. See index to GL, p. 657.

*18 In Lahu the desiderative morpheme gₜ is a Pᵥ, not a Vᵥ. See GL 4.311, 4.63(2).

*19 Cf. Thai dii 'be good' in W's like sₚₚ dii 'nice and pretty', ḏₚₚ dii 'nice and tasty', etc.

20 Under this vague heading we wish to include all complementary verbs relating to the state of an action's progress -- its completion or incompletion, beginning or fulfillment.

*21 Cf. Mandarin lì (_Timer) or Lahu ᶠ (GL 4.64).

*22 For a discussion of some issues raised by Kachin causatives, see Maran 1971.

*23 I would now guess that dam is a Pᵥ, rather than a Vᵥ, since I doubt that it can be negated.

24 Exceptions: nₚₚ and tso may occur before pyen (nₚₚ pyen 'fly low', tso pyen 'fly high').

*25 Compare the Lahu Vᵥ ca (GL index, p. 652).

26 sa ṯₜ is the most frequent and general two-verb motion-phrase in Kachin. Like tₜₜ dₜ (♯88 above) it behaves as a versatile unit in longer verb-strings: ḏₜₜ sa ṯₜ or ḏₜₜ sa-ṭₜ 'go/come/move on foot'.

₂₀₆
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