CHAPTER SIX

THE NOMINALISING PREFIX <a\(^1\)->

Like many other languages, Zaiwa has various means of nominalising. The nominalising prefix <a\(^1\)-> (nom-) is basically a nominaliser with transpositional functions which can be explained in terms of its nominalising function. The factitive marker <σ\(^5\)> (nom-), which has already been discussed in Chapter 4, is another important nominaliser in Zaiwa. Whereas the central function of the factitive marker <σ\(^5\)> is reification of an argument as such, the central function of the nominalising prefix <a\(^1\)-> (nom-) is transpositional, and adds a more concrete sense to the situation which is denoted by the root. Quite obviously, the Zaiwa nominalising prefix <a\(^1\)-> is cognate to Burmese a̋- ə. Okell (1969: 243-8) describes the latter Burmese equivalent as a formative prefix that either in a productive way makes nouns from verb bases, or in an unproductive way is prefixed to noun bases. Below, I shall discuss the various syntactic functions of the nominalising prefix <a\(^1\)-> (nom-) in separate sections.

6.1 THE NOMINALISING PREFIX <a\(^1\)-> NOMINALISING STATIVE VERBS

A first function of the nominalising prefix <a\(^1\)-> (nom-) is that of nominalising stative verbs to exemplify their adjectival function, e.g. after <ngyui\(^3\)> ‘green/blue’ in a\(^1\)-ngyui\(^3\) (nom-green/blue) ‘green/blue, the colour green/blue’ and after <sek\(^5\)> ‘new’ in a\(^1\)-sek\(^5\) (nom-new). New shoes can both be referred to as sau\(^5\)hai\(^1\) sek\(^5\) (shoe new) and sau\(^5\)hai\(^1\) a\(^1\)-sek\(^5\) (shoe nom-new). In cases like the latter example, the nominalising prefix <a\(^1\)-> adds a more concrete sense to the situation which is denoted by the root. In cases like the following sentence, the omission of the copula <ngvut\(^5\)> ‘to be’ after the nominalised stative verb was rejected, thus indicating that these forms syntactically have a status as nominal constituents, rather than verbs.
A\textsuperscript{1}-sek\textsuperscript{5} ng\text{\textmu}t\textsuperscript{5} a\textsuperscript{1-si}\textsuperscript{31} luq\textsuperscript{1}?
om--new be nom--still+I Y/N
Is it still new?

Stative verbs that are nominalised by \(<a\textsuperscript{1}->\) (nom-) are often modified by the form \(ma\textsuperscript{54}\) (LOC+FCT). The latter form consists of the locative case marker \(<ma\textsuperscript{35} \sim ma\textsuperscript{55} \sim me\textsuperscript{55}>\) and the factitive marker \(<a\textsuperscript{55}>\).

This form can be used in two different ways. First, it can be used in a literal way, nominalising or subordinating a locational notion indicated by a preceding noun, e.g. \(mue\textsuperscript{31}-bu\textsuperscript{11} ma\textsuperscript{54} pui\textsuperscript{11}-lvup\textsuperscript{5}\) (wrap-clothes LOC+FCT dust/chaff-be.dusty) ‘the dust on the clothes’.

The second function of the form \(ma\textsuperscript{54}\) (LOC+FCT) is of more interest here, since it is used after nominalised stative verbs, many of which are nominalised by \(<a\textsuperscript{1}->\) (nom-). Here, the form \(ma\textsuperscript{54}\) (LOC+FCT) is used as the Zaiwa description marker, serving as a descriptive means for indicating that a given entity or situation bears the characteristics of the preceding nominalised stative verb.

\begin{enumerate}
\item Ngo\textsuperscript{31} a\textsuperscript{1-nye}\textsuperscript{31} ma\textsuperscript{54} zuen\textsuperscript{54}.
\text{1SG nom--red LOC+FCT cut/clip+FCT}
I cut red ones.
\item Mue\textsuperscript{31}-bu\textsuperscript{11} hau\textsuperscript{31} a\textsuperscript{1-nyu}\textsuperscript{51} ma\textsuperscript{54}
wrap--clothes the/that nom--green/blue LOC+FCT
a\textsuperscript{1-nyu}\textsuperscript{5} luq\textsuperscript{1}?
NEG--be Y/N
Were those clothes green/blue ones?
\item A\textsuperscript{1-bv\textmu}n\textsuperscript{55} ma\textsuperscript{54} luq\textsuperscript{1}, a\textsuperscript{1-lvum}\textsuperscript{11} ma\textsuperscript{54} luq\textsuperscript{1}?
nom--flat/slice LOC+FCT Y/N nom--lump LOC+FCT Y/N
The flat one or the round one?
\end{enumerate}

Combinations of two nominalised stative verbs more often than not go unaccompanied by \(ma\textsuperscript{54}\) (LOC+FCT), as illustrated by the following sentence.

\begin{enumerate}
\item A\textsuperscript{1-bv\textmu}k\textsuperscript{5} a\textsuperscript{1-ba}\textsuperscript{35} dut\textsuperscript{1} dvo\textsuperscript{31} r\textsuperscript{55}.
nom--turn/grind nom--wind become place(vt)(ipf) PE [rope] It is all tangled up.
\end{enumerate}