

Meanings and Functions of Inflectional Affixes of the Verbs in *Bahasa Tamiang*

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Abstract: This paper is aimed to seek the functions and meaning of inflectional affixes in Bahasa Tamiang. By following Creswell (2017) the method applied in this analysis is qualitative research in which the data were gathered by conducting interview and participating observation. The data then were analyzed by using the immediate constituent analysis and paraphrase. The meaning of the arguments was found by following Chafe's and Fillmore's Case Grammar. The result of the analysis is that Bahasa Tamiang has some inflectional affixes to form verb in the morphological process; they are [N-], [be-], and [di-]. [N-] that can be realized into /n/, /m/, /ŋ/, /ŋ/, /ŋə/, ŋa/ according to the phonetic environment in which the affix is attached. Conjugation in inflectional morphology appeared in BT is diathesis and person. However, diathesis is more dominant than person. Person generally appears in passive verb in which the AGENT is the third person.

1 INTRODUCTION

Morphology in general consists of two sub fields; inflectional and derivational morphology (see Bauer, 1988; Katamba, 2004; Widowsen, 1997; Stump, 2001; and Aronof & Fudeman, 2005). In inflectional and derivational morphology, affixes can be categorized into inflectional and derivational affixes. Following Bauer (1988:12) he argued that an affix which possibly produces a new word form of a lexeme from a base is an inflectional affix, while an affix which produces a new lexeme from a base is derivational one. He also provided the example to this matter, as a word form *recreate*. This word form can be analyzed into a prefix *re-*, a root *create*, and a suffix *-s*. The prefix makes a new lexeme *recreate* from the base *create*. But the suffix *-s* just provides another word form of the lexeme *recreate*. The prefix *re-* is derivational, but the suffix *-s* is inflectional.

In line with the example above, understanding about the functions of the affix can be drawn; 1) derivational affix produces new lexeme (new word); and 2) inflectional affix functions to produce grammatical word from a lexeme (see Bauer 1988:12-13). Furthermore, there are some ways to differentiate inflectional affix from derivational one

(see Bauer, 1988; Katamba, 2004), they are 1) a derivational affix can change the category of the word attached, while inflectional affix cannot., 2) a derivational affix may have an inconstant meaning, while the inflectional affix may have the constant one, and 3) based on the general rule, a derivational affix is less productive than the inflectional one.

The study of morphology from derivational and inflectional perspective in which Malay language (including Bahasa Indonesia) is still rare in number (Subroto, 1987 in Ermanto, 2008). Moreover, Malay language is not typologically flection. So, this paper is aimed to seek the function and meaning of inflectional affixes in Bahasa Tamiang (BT for short) for the reason that BT is Malay variant and one of the indigenous languages spoken in Indonesia. This paper focuses on affixational process of morphology. This due to the fact that this process is regarded the productive one to form word (see Bauer, 1988; Plag 2004; Katamba, 2004; Yule, 2006). Affixation is the process of adding or attaching affix to the root. Affix which is attached before the root is called prefix, after the root is called suffixation, and inside the root is called infixation. Besides focusing in affixational process, this paper is also limited to the analysis of verb. This is due to the character of the verb that has the function as the predicate of the sentence.

Furthermore, in syntactical construction, this word category determines other category(s) which joins in the construction.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The process of inflectional morphology in the languages is known as conjugation and inclination (Verhaar, 1999:121). Conjugation is inflectional alternation in verb, while declination is the inflectional alternation in noun and other word categories as pronoun and adjective. In line with (Verhaar, 1999) (comp. with Bauer, 1988), conjugation includes tense, aspects, modes, diathesis, and person, number and type. Tense relates to the time shown by the verb; as present, past or future. Aspect deals with the meaning or sense delivered by the verb; as stative, inchoative, punctual, durative/progressive, (im)perfective, resultative/non-resultative, and habitative. Then mode relates to speaker's behavior toward the thing being spoken. Verb seen in modes illustrates indicative, conjunctive, optative/desiderative, interrogative and negative. Diathesis relates to the role of transitive verb in which it can play as the agent or not. Diathesis is also differentiated whether the verb is active or passive (some particular languages recognize medial diathesis). Furthermore, some particular languages also give mark to the verb according to the preceding person (first, second or third), also to number (singular, plural, dual or trial), and the type (masculine, feminine and neutral).

By referring the previous research results under Bahasa Indonesia (in case that Bahasa Indonesia and Bahasa Tamiang are under the same branch of Malay language), it is understood that categories of inflectional morphology as tense, aspects, number and modes are not recognized in Bahasa Indonesia. These categories are stated lexically. As mentioned before, Bahasa Indonesia does not belong to flectional language, however the diathesis and person categories can be found in Bahasa Indonesia (Aliva, ad. Al. 1991: 1908).

Some affixes in Bahasa Indonesia which function to derive verb are [meN-], [di-], and [ber-]. [meN-] marks the verb as the active category in which the subject in syntactic construction has the role of AGENT. While [di-] functions as passive marker to state that the role of subject is PASIENT. This morphological process is regular, productive, applicable, and occur in verb formation with ACTION PROCESS (transitive) semantic feature, as in the examples of the words *cari* "find", *pukul*

"strike", *dorong* "push", produce the word form *mencari*, *memukul*, dan *mendorong*. Prefix [ber-] which is attached to the word will produce the output of verb form as in *lari* 'run' becomes *berlari* 'run'. In this process Subroto (1987 in Ermanto 2008) stated that basically there is not different reference between *lari* and *berlari*, so that it can be included in inflectional category.

Inspired by the papers written by (Aliva, 1991) and (Ermanto, 2008) which proposed some inflectional affixes found in Bahasa Indonesia, the analysis about the inflectional affixes in Bahasa Tamiang in terms of functions and meanings is conducted.

3 METHODOLOGY

This study adopted qualitative method to conduct research as proposed by (Creswell, 2017). The data used in this study are mainly spoken data obtained from the selected informants based on selected criteria. The data will be taken from the storytelling, 207 Swadesh word list and the list of tentative derivational words from 100 roots, and conversation among villagers in various traditional activities. The main technique was participating observation which proposed to learn to speak and comprehend the language as fluently as possible. The data are collected from conversations and narrative text.

Besides participating observation, interview informant to gain general information on their activities, occupation, belief and customs, history of the people and the village was conducted. Then, 207 basic Swadesh word list and another self-designed set of 100 roots with its tentative derivational forms which showed various word formations was also used. The interview conducted was one-on-one interview (Cresswel, 2017) in which the researcher asked questions to and recorded answer from only one informant in every session. During the interview, the researchers stick with the questions, but are flexible enough to follow the conversation of the interviewee. To gain a clear understanding, the researchers also use the pictures and gestures which refer to the words being asked, to catch the equivalent word in Tamiang. Data were gathered from depth interview and participating observation. The technique of analyzing data follows Cresswell (2017). The data available were deduced following immediate constituent analysis. Then the data were also paraphrasing in the possible construction to get the appropriate functions. This paper was also used the case grammar by Chafe (1970) and Fillmore

(1971) to get the meanings presented by the arguments.

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Functions and Meanings of Inflectional Affixes

BahasaTamiang has at least three affixes which are attached to the root which may have function to create verb; they are [N-], [be-], and [di-]. All the affixes are prefixes.

4.1.1 Prefix [N-]

Including the inflectional affixes, [N-] has function to derive word from grammatical category of active verb from the lexeme of PROCESS verb, and it will mark AGENT in the slot of subject. The meaning of this prefix is to give active marker in which the subject plays the role as the AGENT in a formal style. The following sentences illustrate the statement:

/NdapaRidaonpakiskatbelaŋ/
NdaPre[N-]find edible fern near paddy field
Nda finds the edible fern near paddy field
/ambamacabukucəRitə/(formal style)
I Pre[N-]read book story
I read the story book

Referring to the above paraphrase, it is proved that [N-] is only the active marker in formal style. *Nda* and *ambə* are the subjects from the two sentences above as the arguments from the predicate /*caRi* /and /*bacə*/, which are attached by the prefix [N-],and which become /*naRi*/ and /*macə*/. However, the predicates (active verbs) may have other arguments which function as the objects of the active constructions above. In another side, these two active verbs after being attached by the prefix [N-] may also have the role as the intransitive verb, as exemplified below:

/ambətəŋahmacə/
I [Progress] read
I am reading

Furthermore, prefix [N-] is proposed to construct an appropriate form of the PROCESS verb /*caRi*/ and ACTION /*bacə*/ with the AGENT argument in the subject slot /*ambə*/. This kind of process is included in the category of inflectional process.

Based on the above analysis, it is seen that the arguments from the verb form with the prefix [N-]

may have the role as the AGENT or have the meaning of AGENTIVE which belong to the diathesis category of inflectional ACTION verb.

4.1.2 Prefix [be-]

[be-] as an inflectional affix can attach ACTION verb which may function to form the verb appropriately in a formal style. This inflectional affix [be-] basically has the meaning as the ACTION verb marker. However, the obvious meaning of the affix can be seen as follows:

/Mat lancabəlaRikejaRmpuanŋə/
Mat LancaPre[be-]run chase woman his
Mat Lanca chased his wife

The above paraphrase shows that the verb form functions intransitively in which the argument posts only in subject slot. In the construction, the argument is played by the phrase *Mat lanca*. However, /*mpuanŋə*/ actually is not the argument of /*bəlaRi*/ but *kejaR*/.

It is seen that [be-] which is attached to PROCESS verb as shown in the above paraphrase delivers the meaning of progressiveness to the verb.

Affix [be-] has another meaning comparing to the above paraphrase, however it can maintain the root category.

/ bəsole? SajəkəjəcucuNdani/
Pre[be-] Make up just work grandchild Ndani
My grandchild is just making your face up

[be-] in the above paraphrase shows that the action is done dynamically. Based on the analysis above, in the formal style, prefix [be-] is appropriately used even it is optional. It means that if [be-] does not occur to precede the verb, the sentence is still right grammatically. The occurrence of the affix is just to create the proper construction.

Another point which can be drawn is that prefix [be-] attached to the verb need the AGENT argument in the subject position. It can be concluded that the verb belongs to inflectional verb with diathesis category.

4.1.3 Prefix [di-]

Affix [di-] belongs to inflectional category with some conditions that this affix only functions to produce the appropriate word form with the argument. Based on the function, this affix can be categorized as inflectional affix. The function of this affix is to derive grammatical word from the passive. In the construction, the object argument will become the AGENT from the PROCESS

lexeme. This affix also gives mark to the verb in which the subject argument is PASSIEN. While, the AGENT argument fills the slot of compliment, which occurs after the verb immediately. In general, the inflectional affix [di-] will be used when the AGENT arguments are the third person. The following construction will explain more clearly:

/dikumpul-kumpul dape? hatubambu/
 Pre[di-]collect get one bamboo
/something is gathered finally one part of bamboo is received

The occurrence of inflectional affix [di-] functions form the verb grammatically with PASSIEN argument in subject slot, and AGENT as the complement which come after the verb directly. The passive construction above is seen the person function appears inside. AGENT argument is presented by the third person.

5 CONCLUSION

1. BT has some inflectional affixes to form verb in the morphological process; they are [N-], [be-], and [di-]
2. [N-] can be realized into /n/, /m/, /ŋ/, /ŋ/, /ŋə/, /ŋa/ according to the phonetic environment in which the affix is attached.
3. Conjugation in inflectional morphology appeared in BT is diathesis and person. However, diathesis is more dominant than person. Person generally appears in passive verb in which the AGENT is the third person.

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