

Valence-changing particles in Pwo Karen

Atsuhiko KATO

Osaka University of Foreign Studies (currently at STEDT)

atsuhiko@osaka-gaidai.ac.jp

Pwo Karen is an SVO type language which belongs to the Karenic branch of the Tibeto-Burman languages and is spoken in Burma and Thailand. It has more than sixty particles that are placed before or after verbs and they are called “verb particles” in this paper. Some of these verb particles have the function of changing the arguments of verbs. For example, one such verb particle, *θà*, which originates in the noun that means “heart” and denotes spontaneity, changes the object of the verb into its subject. See below:

(1) ʔəwê pàv thán pàitərân
3sg open up window
‘He opened the window.’

(2) pàitərân pàv thán θà
window open up
‘The window opened.’

The object of sentence (1), *pàitərân* “window”, occurs as the subject in sentence (2) in which *θà* is added. The verb *pàv* is a transitive verb.

In this paper I will show the behaviors of all of the valence-changing particles in Pwo Karen, and by doing so, I will reveal one of the important aspects of Pwo Karen morphosyntax.