

# RELATIVE CLAUSES IN LAMKANG

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# Map Of India

## MANIPUR



# Lamkang People

Damsels  
ready for  
Dance



## DEMOGRAPHY

- The Lamkang number about 10,000 as per the 1999 census report.
- The Lamkang Nagas live in 40 villages in Chandel District, Manipur
- Speakers of Lamkang in Senapati District, Manipur, in Kohima and Dimapur in Nagaland, and also in and around the Tamu area of Myanmar.

## FORMING RELATIVE CLAUSES

- Lamkang has five constructions to form relative clauses, depending on which of the verb's core arguments is to be modified.
- Using V to stand for the verb stem and X, Y, and Z to stand for its nominal arguments, every verb phrase can be schematized as “X V-s Y (@ Z)”, e.g. “The teacher (X) gave (V) a book (Y) to the student (@ Z)”.

## STEM ALTERNATION

Like its sister languages in the South Central subgroup, Lamkang uses verbal ablaut to mark certain grammatical distinctions. Most verbs have just two alternating forms, conventionally called “Stem-I” and “Stem-II.”

## STEM ALTERNATION

To modify the subject or agent of a verb (dɛj ), Lamkang prefixes the nominalizer *k-* to the Stem-I form of a verb root:

k-dɛj

<sub>x</sub>NOM-see(I)

‘the person who sees’

k-ʔip

<sub>x</sub>NOM-sleep(I)

‘the person who sleeps’



| gloss                   | Stem I | Stem II |
|-------------------------|--------|---------|
| 'the person who sees'   | k-dɛj  | dɛ      |
| 'the person who sleeps' | k-ʔip  | i:      |

To modify the subject or agent of a verb (dɛj), Lamkang prefixes the nominalizer *k-* to the Stem-I form of a verb root:

|       |                           |                         |
|-------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| k-dɛj | <sub>x</sub> NOM-see(I)   | 'the person who sees'   |
| k-ʔip | <sub>x</sub> NOM-sleep(I) | 'the person who sleeps' |

*Only transitive verbs are eligible for this construction:*

\*m-dɔ-ʔi            [\*the one s/he slept]

## Modifying Patient

To modify the patient (Y, = direct object), we prefix the nominalizer *do-* to the Stem-II form:

|          |                              |                     |
|----------|------------------------------|---------------------|
| m-do-de  | 3- <sub>y</sub> NOM-see(II)  | 'the one s/he sees' |
| m-do-pik | 3- <sub>y</sub> NOM-give(II) | 'the one s/he gave' |



There is also an abbreviated structure for relativizing Y, as in:

|           |                      |                             |
|-----------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| m-dɪŋ-hɔr | 3-firewood-bring(II) | ‘the firewood s/he brought’ |
| k-ŋa-sɛt  | 1-fish(n)-fish(v.II) | ‘the fish I caught’         |

The five types (with “I” representing Stem-I and “II” representing Stem-II -- the contrast in this verb hor ‘carry’ is only tonal, not segmental) are shown in the following table.

# Nominalizing strategies

| Affixes   | Lamkang                | gloss   |
|-----------|------------------------|---|
| k-I       | dIŋ <b>k-hər'</b>      | <b>the one who carries</b> the firewood                             |
| dɔ-II     | m- <b>dɔ-hər''</b> dIŋ | the firewood <b>which</b> s/he <b>carries</b>                       |
| II-ne?    | m-dIŋ <b>hər''-ne?</b> | <b>the place where</b> s/he <b>carried</b> the firewood <b>from</b> |
| dɔ-II-ne? | m- <b>do-hər''-ne?</b> | the <b>means by which</b> s/he carried it                           |
| NOUN-II   | m-dIŋ <b>hər''</b>     | the firewood <b>(which)</b> s/he <b>carried</b>                     |

## Examples of the Relative Clause

(1) momo ηI?      dIη                      k<sup>h</sup>u kvɛr hɪn                      pi-dəʔ.  
Momo=ERG      firewood                      village-elder                      toward      gave  
'Momo gave the firewood to the village elder.'

Sentence (1) shows the basic clause with all three nominal arguments fully expressed.

## Examples of Argument Nominalization

(2) dɪŋ                      k-pi            (Stem-I)  
firewood<sub>x</sub> NOM-give  
'(the one) who gave the firewood'

## Examples of Patient Nominalization

3) dɪŋ                      m-dɔ̌-pik (Stem-II)  
firewood                      3-y NOM-give  
'the firewood that he gave'

## Nominalization of Indirect speech

(4) k<sup>h</sup>u kvɛr            m-hɪnnɪʔ            m-dɔ-pik-nɛʔ  
Village-elder            3-toward 3-<sub>y</sub>NOM-give-<sub>z</sub>NOM  
'(the) village elder to whom s/he gave (it)'

## Locative Nominalization

(5) dɪŋ                    m-dɔ-ren-nɛʔ                    mʊn  
firewood 3-<sub>y</sub>NOM-cut-<sub>z</sub>NOM                    place  
'the place where s/he cut the firewood'

## Relativizing Morpheme *dɔ-*

In Lamkang, relative clauses may be constructed using the relativizing morpheme *dɔ-* ‘which/what/when/who’. The relative clause morpheme can be prefixed by a participant marker to show who is involved in the action:

- (6a) *k-dɔ-tʃak* ‘which I am eating’
- (b) *e-dɔ-tʃak* ‘which you are eating’
- (c) *m-dɔ-tʃak* ‘which s/he is eating’.

In these examples, the *k-*, *e-*, and *m-* are participant markers. The verb root is *tʃak* ‘eat’ and the relative clause marker is *dɔ-*.

## Conclusion

As there is to date no grammar of Lamkang, this paper represents an initial step towards such a work. More new discoveries are hoped for.

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