

Surface indicators of storyline in the Kam origin myth

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0. Introduction

0.1 Brief description of the Kam people

China has 55 minority nationalities whose total population numbers of 67,230,000 or 6.7 percent of the total population of China. The rest of its population is the Han nationality. The minority nationalities are scattered throughout about 60 percent of the area of China. They have unique characteristics in their languages and cultures, poems, folk tales, legends, music, dance, paintings, literary works, science literature, and costumes (Ma and Su 1988).

Kam is a minority nationality inhabiting Guizhou, Hunan and Guangxi Provinces. The majority live in the southeast corner of Guizhou Province, especially in Liping County. A large number of Kam are found in Tongdao County of Hunan Province and in Sanjiang and Longsheng of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. There are a small number of Kam in Hubei Province where they migrated a few decades ago and have been assimilated by the Han majority. The Kam people live in mountainous areas but prefer to settle on river banks where they engage in wet paddy farming of glutinous rice, which is their preferred type of rice. There are two major varieties of the Kam language: Northern and Southern (see the map below). The Kam have a population of 1,425,000.¹ Kam is the name they call themselves. They are called Dong or Tung in Chinese (Edmondson and Solnit 1988).

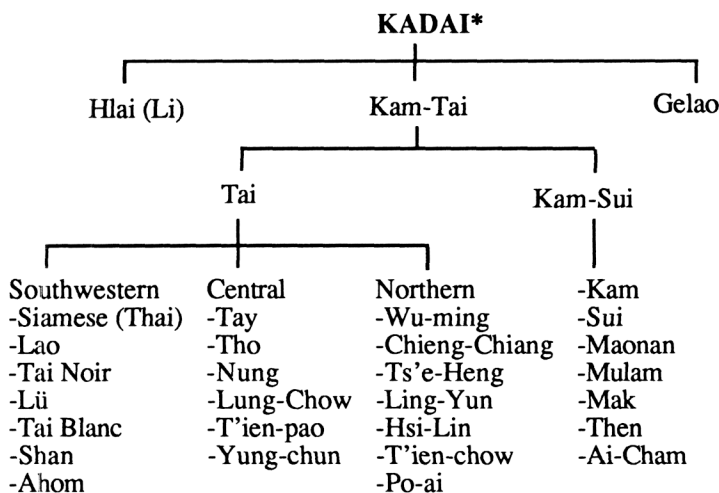
¹ Mr. Zhou Guoyan, a Chinese linguist of the Central University for Nationalities (Beijing), notes that according to the fourth census in 1990, the population of the Kam people was approximately 2,514,014.



(Edmondson and Solnit 1988:21)

0.2 Language affiliation

The Kam people are distant cousins of the Siamese of Thailand. Both the Kam and Siamese speak a language that is part of the Kam-Tai group of languages as diagrammed below (Edmondson and Quan 1993).



(Adapted from Li 1960:24 and Edmondson and Solnit 1988:4)

0.3 A sketch of Kam sound system

The data used for this study is a variety of Kam spoken in Tongdao county of Hunan Province. The informant is a linguistics professor at the Central University for Nationalities, Beijing, China. He is a native speaker of Kam and also speaks Chinese. The data were collected during his visit in Thailand in May 1993.

The Tongdao variety is close to the variety of Rongjiang Zhanglu, a widely representative dialect, as described by Yang (1988) and Zheng and Yang (1988). The Tongdao variety has 21 initials if the Han sound [f] is not counted, whereas the Rongjiang Zhanglu variety has 20 initials. The additional sound of Tongdao variety is the uvular stop [q]. In both varieties the aspirated stops are regarded as nondistinctive. The stops /p t t̥ k ʔ pj kw/ are optionally aspirated when they occur with one subset of the tones. The stops are unaspirated when they occur with the other subset of the tones (Zheng and Yang 1988). The Kam system of initials is simple because there is a general tendency for Kam initials to merge and simplify. Aspirated initials cause a tone split resulting in a merger of these initials with the unaspirated initials (Yang 1988). The 21 initials of the Tongdao variety are as follows:

p	t	t̥	k	ŋ	ʔ
[pʰ]	[tʰ]	[t̥ʰ]	[kʰ]	[qʰ]	
pj			kw		
[pʰj]			[kʰw]		
m	n	ɲ	ŋ		
mj			ŋw		
	l				
	lj				
	s	ç		h	
w		j			

The Tongdao variety has seven contrastive vowels with positional variants. They are as follows:

i		u
e		o
	ə	
	ɐ	
a		

The Tongdao variety has nine non-stopped tones as follows:

	A	B	C	DL	DS	
aspirated	1	35	53	13	13	35
	2 3	55	453	333	323	55
voiced	4	11	33	31	31	11

0.4 Theoretical framework

The present study aims to analyse the Kam origin myth by using mainly the framework of discourse analysis as expounded by Longacre (1983). Some other models as developed by Grimes (1975) and Callow (1974) are also employed, especially in the analysis of discourse information. The Kam origin myth has been selected for this study because it shares a similarity to origin myths in other languages of the Kam-Tai group. For example, Tai Noir and Tai Blanc in Vietnam and Laos also have origin myths with similar content to the Kam origin myth. It is also linguistically interesting to compare a language of peoples who are distant cousins of the Thai in terms of its discourse structure, especially narrative discourse.

The paper will begin with an analysis of the plot structure and the marking of peak in this narrative so that the reader will get the content of the story. Then it discusses how the themeline or storyline is semantically distinguished from the non-storyline elements. The paper proceeds to its main concern, i.e. the grammatical identification of the storyline. The form and function of reported speech are also mentioned as a part of the storyline.

1. Overall plot structure

Longacre (1983) proposes that a climactic narrative has the following components as its notional structure features:

Exposition, 'Lay it out', introduces participants, temporal and spatial settings, circumstances and other information which is expository or descriptive in nature.

Inciting moment, 'Get something going', brings about an unexpected event or action which is deviated from the habitual routine.

Developing conflict, 'Keep the heat on', increases a tension of the story.

Climax, 'Knot it all up proper', is the highest tension of the story where contradiction and confrontation are inevitable.

Denouement, 'Loosen it', gives a solution to the problem.

Final suspense, 'Keep untangling', gives details of the solution to the problem.

Conclusion, 'Wrap it up', ends the story with happiness or tragedy.

The Kam origin myth has the notional structure features presented above except for the "Final suspense." The following is the plot structure of the story consisting of those notional structure features.

Exposition

Once upon a time, there was a big flood. Everybody died except a brother and a sister named Chang Liang and Chang Mui. They survived because they were hidden inside a gourd.

Inciting incident

Since they were the only couple in the universe, they wanted to increase the number of mankind. There was no other way for them except getting married. But how could siblings get married?

Developing conflict

Ep 1 The brother and the sister came out of the gourd. The brother or the sister (it is not clear who is the speaker) said, "We should run around the gourd." Then the brother ran after the sister. If the brother could catch up with the sister, she would agree to marry him. The brother then ran after his sister around the gourd in the same direction. However he could not catch up with her. Afterwards a turtle said to him "You are very foolish. It is difficult to catch up with her if you run after her. You must run in the opposite direction. (You must) run in the opposite direction. Then you can catch up with her. Follow what I tell you." Her brother followed the turtle's words. (He) followed the turtle's words. He suddenly ran in the opposite direction. (He) was able to catch up with his sister. (He) was able to get a hold of her. (After he) was able to get a hold of her, his sister said "I will not marry you. The turtle told you what to do. The turtle is bad." So she went to see the turtle and stepped on the turtle's shell until it was broken into halves. The evidence of her footprint can be seen in the pattern of the turtle's back until now.

Ep 2 The sister then set up a condition. She said "We will climb up a mountain. Each of us will roll a grindstone down the mountain. If the two grindstones meet, I will agree to marry you." Both of them climbed up a mountain and each of them rolled a grindstone down the mountain. The two grindstones met.

Ep 3 She (the sister) told (the brother) “ (I) do not agree. What we should do next is to go to a river. We have to stand separately across the banks of the river. Each of us will light a candle. If the smoke from both candles meet above the river, I will agree to marry you.” After that they went to a river. They stood separately across the banks of the river. Each of them lighted a candle. The smoke from both candles met above the river. The sister could not think of any other means. She said, “We can marry.”

Climax

Ep 4 After one year of their marriage, they had a child. But their child was shaped like a meatloaf. It did not have feet, head or eyes. It had only a mouth. The only thing that it knew was eating rice. It could not even call its mother. Its mother fed him but he never got full. The couple did not know what to do with it.

Denouement

Finally they came up with an idea. They cut their child into pieces and threw them into the forest.

Conclusion

The next morning they saw that those pieces of flesh turned out to be mankind all over the place, on the mountains, down the valleys and along the rivers. The flesh became Kam people. That was why Kam people are kind and honest. The bone became Hmong people. That was why Hmong people are hard working. The intestine became Chinese people. That was why Chinese people are smart. This is how mankind come into being.

According to Longacre (1983), Climax and/or Denouement may be marked in a special way in the surface structure. The episode which has features peculiar to itself is termed “Peak.” Peak may be signalled by the absence of certain features or by other devices, such as rhetorical underlining and concentration of participants. In the original Kam myth, Climax is featured as Peak, which is identified by the complete absence of speech acts.

2. The characteristics of storyline and nonstoryline elements

2.1 *Semantic elements*

Longacre (1989) proposed that every discourse has its main line of development and supportive material. The main line of development is the central feature of the discourse, whereas supportive material consists essentially of elaborations and additions. Different types of discourse have differing main lines of development. In a narrative discourse the main line of development is a storyline and the supportive material is nonstoryline.

The storyline is a generic term to include any happenings that push the story forward. The important characteristics of these happenings are punctuality, sequentiality, and (most often) volition (Longacre 1990). The nonstoryline is semantically characterized as those nonevents namely setting, background, evaluation and collateral (Grimes 1975). Setting includes expository and descriptive materials. Background consists of nonpunctiliar and nonsequential activities or states. Evaluation is intrusive materials. And collateral covers all possible events which might or might not happen.

2.2 Surface indicators

According to Longacre (1983), the storyline is characterized in varying ways in various languages. In languages with tense-aspect systems such as English, differing tense, aspect, mood, and voice forms have different functions in discourse. For example, the storyline is marked by simple past tense forms whereas past-progressive forms report concomitant activities or nonstoryline. Kam belongs to the same language family as Thai. So it can be expected that, like Thai, it has no verbal inflection. Therefore, the storyline and nonstoryline cannot be identified solely on the basis of verbforms as in English. Longacre (to appear) points out that the languages of this type distinguish the storyline by a conspiracy of nonsystemic ways.

As pointed out by Longacre (1994:125), a narrative is characterized as “the reporting of a chain of sequential punctiliar happenings (which are, for the most part, casually connected): actions, motions, cognitive events, contingencies, and last but not least, speech acts.” In the Kam origin myth, sequential punctiliar happenings include actions, motions, contingencies and speech acts, but not cognitive events. Since reported speech acts have particular features which distinguish them from other sorts of happenings, they will be discussed separately. Any happenings other than speech acts will be discussed together as non speech acts in section 3.

3. Storyline non-speech acts

3.1 Types of non speech verbs

The identification of the storyline in the Kam origin myth is similar to Thai narrative (cf. Somsonge 1992a). The verb forms are unmarked for punctuality and sequentiality. They are usually accompanied by a punctiliar or sequential indicator. Without this indicator, the punctuality and sequentiality will be determined by the textual situation. The verb forms which are non speech verbs include motion verbs, action verbs, and contingency verbs as in example (1).

(1) motion verbs

tai ⁵³	ja: ¹¹	qe: ³⁵	ɕu: ³³	pjeu ⁵³	ne: ³³
If-so	two	cl.	aux.	run	part.

‘Then the two of them ran.’

action verbs

ta: ³³	ta: ³³	ɕu: ³³	soŋ ⁵³	lui: ³³	pai ⁵⁵
later	that	aux.	put	down	go

‘Then they put the grindstones down.’

contingency verbs

nam ³¹	ta: ³³	pin ⁵³	kwən ³⁵	nən ¹¹	pai ⁵⁵	le ¹¹
flesh	that	become	be	human	go	part.

‘That meatloaf became mankind.’

3.2 Punctiliar and sequential indicators

These verb forms are usually accompanied by a punctiliar indicator or/and a sequential indicator. The storyline manifested by these verb forms is frequently highlighted by an extensive use of repetitive devices. The following sections will discuss punctiliar indicator, sequential indicator, and repetitive devices.

3.2.1 Punctiliar indicator

The only punctiliar indicator found in the Kam original myth is [laŋ³¹] ‘suddenly’ which usually preposes a motion verb as in example (2).

(2)	mau ³³	ɕu: ³³	laŋ ³¹	tau ⁵³	ton ⁵³	pai ⁵⁵
	he	aux.	suddenly	enter	return	go

‘He then went in the opposite direction.’

3.2.2 Sequential indicator

The sequential indicator which is very dominant in the myth is [ta:³³ lən¹¹] ‘later after (after that).’ When this sequential indicator appears, it can be expected that the following clause containing the verbform mentioned above has the storyline status. This sequential indicator has a similar function to the perfective marker [léɛw kɔɔ] ‘and then’ which is also a sequential indicator in Thai narrative. Another sequential indicator which is similar in form to [ta:³³ lən¹¹] is [ta:³³ ta:³³] ‘later that (after that)’ as in example 1. However its occurrence is not frequent as [ta:³³ lən¹¹]. Example (3) illustrates the use of [ta:³³ lən¹¹] as a sequential indicator.

(3)	ta: ³³	lən ¹¹	ɕu: ³³	mau ⁵⁵	ja: ¹¹	qɛ ³⁵	nəŋ ¹¹
	later	after	aux.	he/she	two	cl.	really

ta ⁴⁵³	ten ¹¹	pai ⁵⁵
go-up	mountain	go

‘Then, both of them really went up the mountain.’

Sequentiality may also be signalled by temporal expressions, such as [ta:³³ ʔi:⁵⁵ nən¹¹] ‘a year passed’ and [jət³⁵ lən¹¹] ‘morning after (next morning)’ as in examples (4) and (5).

- (4) ta:33 ʔi:55 ɲin11 ne:33
 pass one year part.
- li:323 man53 lak31
 get cl. child
 ‘After one year, they had a baby.’
- (5) jət35 lən11 tən11 taŋ55 nu:53 kau31 nən31 tai33
 morning after up come look in flesh that
 ‘Next morning, they got up and took a look at those pieces of flesh.’

Another sequential indicator which is very dominant in the Kam original myth is the auxiliary verb [ɕu:33] ‘then’. The verb forms, mostly action and motion verbs, which have storyline status are frequently preceded by this sequential indicator as examples (2) and (3).

It is worth mentioning that [ɕu:33] has a similar function to the preserial verb [kɔ̃:] ‘then’ in Thai, which also functions as a sequential indicator. Despite their similar function in narrative, [ɕu:33] is much different in form from [kɔ̃:]. Furthermore, in other Southeast Asian languages there are similar sequential indicators with slightly different forms: Mon-Khmer languages (Somkiet 1982), Kui (Somsonge 1992b), Prai (Mingkwon 1989) have [kəʔ] [kʌʔ] and [kə], respectively. And in the Austronesian language Moken we also find [kɔ̃:] in narratives (Veena 1980) with similar function to [kɔ̃:]. Kam is a language of the Tai family which frequently preserves more original features than Thai and it does not have anything which is very close in form to [kɔ̃:]. Therefore it is not likely that [kɔ̃:] is an original feature of Thai. So it can be speculated that [kɔ̃:] might be an areal feature of most Southeast Asian languages, but its source has not been determined.

3.2.3 Repetitive devices

The term repetition is used to mean “referring to the same event twice, whether the same words are repeated or not” (Callow 1974:74). Repetition is mostly used to control the rate or speed at which information is presented. The Kam origin myth has a spread-out information structure. That is, the information is presented slowly, with a great deal of redundancy or repetition. The most notable function of repetition is to spread out the information load in order to highlight the storyline of the myth. An occurrence of repetition anywhere in the text enables the listener to be aware that the information being conveyed is significant.

Repetition in the Kam origin myth is mostly used for preview and linkage. In the former, the narrator aims to underline an event as a crucial information. He alerts the listener by letting a participant talk about that event before it actually happens. Therefore previews of events which constitute a theme line can be made through the speeches of participants. In regard to linkage, the Kam origin myth has large-scale repetition for linkage. The previous crucial happening is frequently repeated by a back referential clause which indicates a completion of the previous event and serves as a point of reference for the following crucial happening.

In example (6) the turtle suggested to the brother that he should run after his sister in the opposite direction to catch up with her. His suggestion is a preview of the following crucial happening, that is, the brother ran after his sister in the opposite direction. This happening is on the storyline, marked by the sequential indicator [ɕu:33] 'then' and the puntiliar indicator [laŋ31] 'at once'. After the statement that the brother was able to catch up with his sister, this fact is repeated twice. The first repetition adds more details to the previous report. That is, the brother could not only catch up with the sister but also get a hold of her. The next repetition is identical to the final detail. It functions as a linkage which serves as a point of reference for the following crucial happening, i.e. the sister refused to marry her brother. The pattern of repetition can be summarized as follows:

Preview	-	The turtle suggested "You are foolish. You should run in the opposite direction. If you do so, you can catch up with your sister."
Storyline	-	The brother ran in the opposite direction and did catch up with his sister.
Amplification	-	He got a hold of his sister.
Linkage	-	After the brother got a hold of his sister,
Storyline	-	the sister refused to marry him.

(6)	ta:55 later	lən11 after	ne:33 part.	li:323 get	tu:11 body	tɕau53 turtle	qaŋ35 say	sai:35 let
	mau33 him/her	tɕiŋ453 listen						
	"n̄a:11 you	ʔe:323 foolish	lau31 very	ho33 part.				
	n̄a:11 you	pən323 only	ji:55 part.	tak11 part.	po:33 gourd	pjeu53 run	nan11 difficult	ʔo:31 part.
	n̄a:11 you	nan11 difficult	lam55 follow	mau33 him/her	n̄a:11 you	jiu53 must		
	tau53 enter	tɕon53 return	pai55 go					
	tau53 enter	tɕon53 return	pai55 go					
	ha:323 like this	tɕiŋ53 hence	we:31 part.	li:323 able	ʔo:31 part.			
	ʔi:55 obey	nai33 this	haŋ11 like	ne:33" part.				

ɬai ³¹ brother	qe: ³⁵ her	ɕu: ³³ aux.	ʔi: ⁵⁵ obey	tu: ¹¹ cl.	ɬau ⁵³ turtle	ɬa: ³³ that		
ʔi: ⁵⁵ obey	tu: ¹¹ cl.	tau ⁵³ turtle	ta: ³³ that	ɕu: ³³ aux.	qaŋ ³²³ say			
mau ³³ he	ɕu: ³³ aux.	laŋ ³¹ suddenly	tau ⁵³ enter	ɬon ⁵³ return	pai ⁵⁵ go			
lam ⁵⁵ follow	li: ³²³ able	mau ³³ he	la ¹¹ part					
sap ⁵⁵ catch	li: ³²³ able	noŋ ³¹ sister	qe: ³⁵ his	la ¹¹ part.				
sap ⁵⁵ catch	li: ³²³ able	noŋ ³¹ sister	qe: ³⁵ his	nu: ³⁵ how-to	haŋ ¹¹ like	we: ³¹ part.	li: ²³² part.	
qe: ¹¹ not	soŋ ³⁵ agree							

‘The turtle said to him “You are very foolish. It is difficult to catch up with her if you run after her. You must run in the opposite direction. (You must) run in the opposite direction. Then you can catch up with her. Follow what I tell you.”

Her brother followed the turtle’s words. (He) followed the turtle’s words. He suddenly ran in the opposite direction. (He) was able to catch up with his sister.(He) was able to get a hold of her. (After he) was able to get a hold of her, his sister refused to marry him.’

4. Storyline speech acts

Reported speech acts are sequential punctiliar happenings like other sorts of happenings as proposed by Longacre (1994:125) below:

The storyline of a narrative may be advanced as much by reported dialogue as by the recital of other sorts of interaction. In reported dialogue the main functions of the formula of quotation (QF) is to tie the speech acts which constitute dialogue explicitly into the storyline, and to identify the speakers and addressees as participants within the slate of participants which characterizes the story.

In the Kam origin myth, there are six occurrences of reported speech acts found in the following happenings:

1. The brother or the sister (it is not clear who is the speaker) said both of them should run around the gourd.
2. The turtle suggested to the brother that he should run into the opposite direction to catch up with his sister.

3. The sister refused to marry her brother because it was the turtle's idea that helped her brother to catch up with her.

4. The sister again refused to marry her brother and set a condition in which they had to climb up a mountain. Each of them rolled a grindstone down the mountain. If the two grindstones met, the sister would agree to marry the brother.

5. The sister refused to marry her brother and set another condition in which they had to stand separately across the banks of a river. Then each of them lighted a candle. If the smoke from both candles met above the river, the sister would agree to marry the brother.

6. The sister said they could get married.

Of all these occurrences of reported speech acts, only the initiating utterances have been found. There are no responding utterances. A participant may make a proposal, a suggestion, and/or a refusal and there is no verbal response from another participant. The non-verbal response is carried out when a participant follows the proposal or the suggestion afterwards. Any happenings taking place after speech acts are on the storyline. Therefore, speech acts function in the discourse as a preview of the storyline. In telling the listener what is going to happen before it actually happens, the narrator is using a kind of repetitive device which functions to highlight the themeline or the storyline of the myth. It should be noted also that most reported speech acts appear when there is an emotional tension of participant interaction in dialogue.

4.1 Storyline speech verbs

There are two speech verbs used in the QFs, that is, *qaŋ*³⁵ 'say' (see example 6) and *pau*⁵³ 'tell' (see example 8). There is one instance in which these two speech verbs are used together as *qaŋ*³⁵ *pau*⁵³ 'say that.'

4.2 Identification of speaker and addressee

All QF's prepose Q's. The quotation formulas vary as to absence of specification of either the speaker or the addressee (Nul QF), specification of both the speaker and the addressee, or specification of only the speaker. Variation in the form of the QF is governed by the notion of thematicity-dominance in a similar manner to the work of Reid (1979) on Totanac (Mexico). It is also determined by the textual needs of participant identification and maintenance.

4.2.1 Nul QF

There is only one occurrence of Nul QF. It occurs at the beginning of the myth as illustrated in example (7) below. The Nul QF cannot be clearly interpreted if the speaker is the brother or the sister. However, it does not matter who the speaker or the addressee is as apparently they are in agreement on the matter. At this point, there is no attempted dominance of one participant over the other.

- (7) *ʔa*⁵³ *qui*³³ *ʔaŋ*⁵³ *te:*⁵³ *ja:*¹¹ *tau*⁵⁵ *çi:*³³ *te:*¹¹
 if so like that two we aux. that one

qam ³¹ cl.	nai ³³ this					
ʔi: ⁵⁵ obey	tʰak ¹¹ part.	po: ³³ gourd	nai ³³ this	pjeu ⁵³ run	ɕu: ³³ like	this
we: ³¹ part.	li: ³² able	la: ³¹ part.				
ʔi: ⁵⁵ obey	tʰak ¹¹ part.	po: ³³ gourd	nai ³³ that	pjeu ⁵³ run	ɕu: ³³ like	this
we: ³¹ part.	li: ³² able	la: ³¹ part.				
tʰai ⁵³ If so	ja: ¹¹ two	qe: ³⁵ cl.	ɕu: ³³ part.	pjeu ⁵³ run	ne: ³³ part.	

“If that is so, we should run around the gourd. Running around the gourd is okay. Running around the gourd is okay.” The two of them then ran.’

4.2.2 Both speaker and addressee identification

The QF in which both the speaker and addressee are specified also occurs once when there is a textual need of participant identification. The QF consists of a noun phrase [tu:¹¹ tʰau⁵³] ‘the turtle’ encoding the speaker, a speech verb [qam³⁵] ‘to say’ and a pronoun [mau³³] ‘him’ encoding the addressee as in example (6). The speaker is specified because he is first introduced into the story and he is set up as a locally thematic participant. Note also that the happening after his quote is a repetition of the quote which is on the storyline.

4.2.3 Only speaker identification

One QF in which only the speaker is specified has a pronoun [mau³³] ‘she’ encoding the speaker and the speech verb [pau⁵³] ‘to tell’ or [qam³²³] ‘to say’ as in example (8). This QF formula is used when a participant resumes her thematic status after the topic continuity is interrupted by a non-storyline element. Before the occurrence of the quote the speaker is the thematic participant. She stepped on the turtle’s shell and broke it into halves. After this happening, the narrator gives a comment that the evidence of the sister’s footprint can be seen in the pattern of the turtle’s back until now. After this decontextualized statement to the audience, the sister resumes her thematic status again and the QF formula as described above is used. Besides the thematicity, the notion of dominance also plays an important role here. This QF formula signals speaker dominance in that the sister is in control of the situation. She attempts to dominate her brother by setting a condition for him.

In another case, where there has been no interruption of the non-storyline, this same QF formula is used to single out the speaker as the thematic participant

and to signal that the speaker is in control of the situation. Before the speech act, two participants, the brother and the sister, are both thematic. Then the sister is singled out by a pronoun as the thematic participant who attempts to dominate the brother by telling him what to do according to her condition. There is no need for a full noun phrase as [noŋ³¹ qe:³⁵] ‘his sister’ to refer to the speaker as the textual clue tells the listener who the speaker is. Even though it is obvious who the speaker would be, the Nul QF is not applied to this speech act because the thematic rule requires that the speaker be overtly marked.

- (8) ʔa¹¹ ta⁵³ mau³³ pau⁵³ “nai³³ qe:¹¹ soŋ⁵³
 part. part. she tell this not agree
- jau¹¹ tci:³³ ca⁵³ nu⁵³ n:a:¹¹ tca:⁴⁵³ tɕen¹¹ pai⁵⁵
 I if so if you go-up mountain go
- ʔa¹¹ nu⁵³ n:a:¹¹ tca:⁴⁵³ tɕen¹¹ pai³³
 part. if you go up mountain go
- ʔa¹¹ soŋ⁵³ ja:¹¹ maŋ⁵³ tɕen¹¹
 part. put-down two sides mountain
- ja:¹¹ tau⁵⁵ muŋ³¹ soŋ⁵³ ʔi⁵⁵
 two we each put-down one
- k'wai⁴⁵³ mo:³³ lui³³ pai⁵⁵
 cl. grindstone down go
- mo³³ ta:³³ ʔu⁵⁵ tɕen¹¹ ne³³ soŋ⁵³ pai⁵⁵
 grindstone from on mountain part. put-down go
- soŋ⁵³ pai⁵⁵ nu⁵³ ja:¹¹ qe³⁵ mo:³³ t'au⁴⁵³
 put-down go if two cl. grindstone reach
- ʔa:¹¹ te³²³ tɕen¹¹ pai⁵⁵ qap³²³ pai⁵⁵
 part. under mountain go stick together go
- tca⁵³ ɕu:¹¹ ja:¹¹ qe³⁵ we³¹ t'ən³⁵ li:³² la¹¹
 like that two cl. marry able part.
- ta³³ lən¹¹ ju³³ mau⁵⁵ ja:¹¹ qe³⁵ nəŋ¹¹ tca⁴⁵³
 later after part. he/she two cl. really go-up
- tɕen¹¹ pai⁵⁵.
 mountain go

‘She said, “I do not agree with you. If you can go up a mountain, each of us rolls a grindstone down, and the two grindstones meet, I will marry you.” Later, they really went up a mountain.’

5. Conclusion

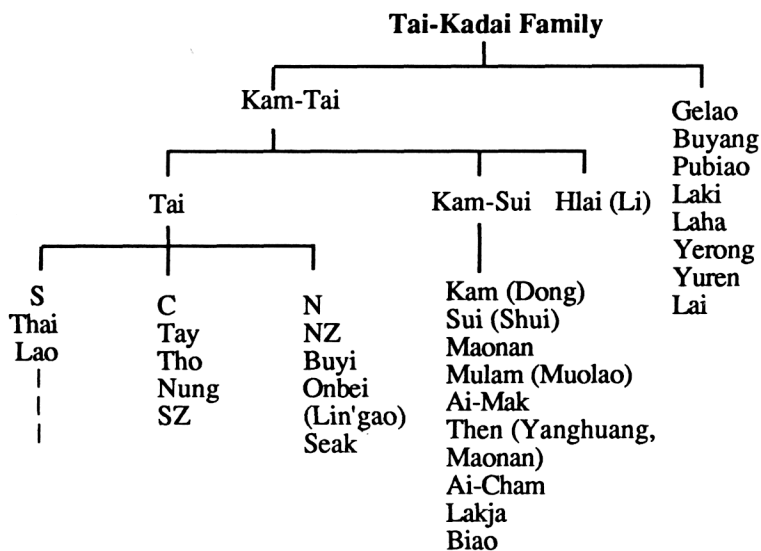
The storyline in this Kam narrative is indicated by particular kinds of verb forms, namely, motion verbs, action verbs and contingency verbs. These verb forms are usually accompanied by the punctiliar indicator [laŋ³¹] ‘suddenly’ and/or a sequentiality indicator, namely, [ta:³³ lən¹¹] or [ta:³³ ta³³] ‘and then’. These sequentiality of storyline is also signalled by a temporal expression such as [ta:³³ ʔi:⁵⁵ nən¹¹] ‘a year passed’ and [jət³⁵ lən¹¹] ‘next morning’. Another sequential indicator which is dominant in the story is the auxiliary verb [cu:³³] ‘then’. The storyline is also signalled by a preview of the storyline within a quote. This is a kind of repetitive devices used to highlight the storyline. A linkage as a kind of repetitive devices is also employed to signal the storyline status of the following happening.

Reported speech acts are sequential punctiliar happenings just like other sorts of happenings. They consist of a Quotation Formula (QF) and the content of Quotation (Q). The verbs of the QF’s have the storyline status. All reported speech acts are initiating utterances, there are no verbal responses. The non-verbal response is carried out when a participant follows the proposal or the suggestion as indicated in the quotation. Speech acts, therefore, function in the myth as a preview of the storyline. The non-verbal response is the storyline itself. The presence of most reported speech acts is dependent on an emotional tension of participant interaction in dialogue. The quotation formulas vary according to absence of specification of either the speaker or the addressee (NUL QF), specification of both the speaker and the addressee, or specification of only the speaker. No variation as to their placement relative to the quote was found. Data from more narratives may show more variation. Variation in the form of the QF is governed by the notion of thematicity-dominance.

Addendum

Zhou Guoyan indicates that the language affiliation of Kadai group is as follows:

Some of the names under the Central and Northern Tai languages are place names, not language names, which represent only a small part of a language. Among them, Lung-Chow (Longzhou), T’ien-pao (an old place name, no longer used now), and Yung-chun are within the area of the Southern dialect of the Zhuang language. Wuming, Chieng-Chiang, Lingyun, Hsi-Lin (Xilin), T’ien-Chow (an old place name, no longer used now), and Po-ai are within the northern dialect of Zhuang language. Ts’e-Heng (Cheheng) is a county in Guizhou where the people speak the Buyi language. Chinese linguists usually arrange the Tai-Kadai family as follows:



SZ = Southern Zhuang

NZ = Northern Zhuang

Abbreviations

aux	auxiliary verb
cl.	classifier
ep.	episode
opp.dir.	opposite direction
part.	particle

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