Structure of Hmong-Mien Languages
Session #5 Syntax

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Session overview

• Constructions
  – Word order
  – Classifiers and classifier phrases (Riddle)
  – Serial verbs in White Hmong (Jarkey)
  – Relative clauses in Xong (Sposato)
  – Complementation in White Hmong (Jarkey)
  – A note on Assignment #2

• Function words and their history
  – Conjunctions
  – Question words
  – Negators

• Discourse particles
Reading Hmong sentences

The texts are in the Romanized Popular Alphabet, which uses final consonant symbols as tone markers and is thus much easier to type. Here is how to read them:

-b = 55, -j = 52, -v = 24, -s = 22, -ø = 33, -g = 42, -m = 21ʔ, -d = 213

Also initial s- is [ʃ] (and ts- is [tʃ] etc.), initial x- is [s], and initial r- is [ɾ]. Doubled vowels are nasalized, not long, so e.g. Hmoob is [hmoŋ]


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• **Discourse particles**
Generalizations about word order

• SVO

• Fronted topics are common, however.

• Head-initial (N-Dem, N-RC, prepositional).

• Yet Poss-N and, and in Mienic Dem-N. A small class of “true” ADJs appears before N, but the open class of stative Vs appears after N. North Hmongic relative clauses can appear on either side of N (Sposato 2012).

• NPs or CLFPs? NUM-CLF-N, so if the CLF-phrase contains N, head initial, otherwise …
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  - Question words
  - Negators
- **Discourse particles**
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>DEM</th>
<th>Num + CLF</th>
<th>Adj</th>
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</table>
Classifier required or usual

- **NUM ____ N**  \(peb \ tus \ qav\) ‘3 frogs’
- **Quantifier ____ N**  \(txhua \ tus \ qav\) ‘every frog’
- **____ N DEM**  \(tus \ qav \ ntawd\) ‘that frog’
- **POSS ____ N**  \(kuv \ tus \ qav\) ‘my frog’

And combinations thereof:  \(peb \ tus \ qav \ ntawd, kuv \ peb \ tus \ qav, \) etc.
Useful things that classifiers do...

- Used as anaphor for previously-mentioned NP
  
  莪 您 探 探  anatomy  皮 ？
  2SG buy how many CLF-flat skirt 1SG buy 2-CLF-flat
  ‘How many skirts did you buy? I bought two of them.’

- Used to nominalize verbs (esp. with animate classifiers)
  
  tus sau ‘writer’
  CLF-animate write

- Used to disambiguate homophonicous nouns (tus txiv ‘husband’ vs. lub txiv ‘fruit’) and clarify polysemous nouns (phau ntawv ‘book’ vs. daim ntawv ‘sheet of paper’ vs. tsab ntawv ‘letter’, all with ntawv ‘paper’).
Classifiers and discourse

• All of the following words (and more) have been used to describe the appearance of classifiers in natural speech when they are not required by the presence of a quantifier, possessor, or demonstrative: e.g., “new topic”, “foregrounded participant”, “definite reference”, “specific reference”, “individualized/instantiated/precise reference”. It certainly seems like a noun without a classifier is underspecified and generic. The use of classifiers for second and subsequent mention of a discourse participant is also mentioned (but seems somewhat at odds with the “new topic” function).

• Riddle (1989) attempts to find the right generalization for both the contexts where classifiers are required and the contexts where they are not: “referential salience”. See airplane story excerpt …
Classifiers and cognitive space

What kinds of categories are encoded by Hmong classifiers? Bisang 1993 uses semantic feature analysis to distinguish classifiers proper from those that quantify:

- **Classifiers proper**
  - Animate (human, animate-including-human)
  - Shape (round/bulky, stubby, long and stringy, flat …)
  - Things that come in pairs
  - Tools

- **Quantifiers**
  - Linear measure
  - Units of weight, area, time
  - “Intrinsic quantifiers”: piles, clusters, gusts, bundles, etc.
  - Collectives
  - Kinds
Bisang’s structural argument for a distinction between classifiers and “measure words”


classifiers (CLF-ADJ)

– tus tuam vaj CLF great king ‘the great king’
– ib lub menyuam tsev 1 CLF small house ‘a small house’

vs. quantifiers (ADJ-CLF)

– ib me pab noog 1 small CLF bird ‘a small group of birds’
– ib niag tsheb neeg 1 big CLF man ‘a big car-load of men’
## Word order cline (roughly north-south)

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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Adj</td>
<td>Num + CLF</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
- **DEM**: Demonstrative
- **Num**: Numeric
- **CLF**: Classifier
- **Adj**: Adjective
- **Noun**: Noun
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  - Negators

- **Discourse particles**
Serial Verb Constructions (SVCs)

Chronologically ordered events (Xong, Sposato 2015)

\[
\text{Aod-ngonl naus beux daos geud giab nonx.}
\quad \text{one-CLF:animate bird hit die hold stir.fry eat}
\quad \text{‘(I) killed the bird and cooked it (to eat).’ (Xingyu Shi, in Oub Meinl Yaos Geud)}
\]

However, this is not always the case (White Hmong, Jarkey 2014:116):

\[
\text{Cov Hmoob hla dej Nakoom dim hauv Npogteb mus Thaibteb}
\quad \text{CLF\textsubscript{coll} Hmong cross river Mekong escape inside Laos go Thailand}
\]
SVCs

• One event with multiple predicates ("monoclausal but multi-predicational")
• At least one shared argument
• A “macro event” in which predicates share time adverbials, modals, evidentials
• Single verbs do not express high transitivity (no three-place predicates, for example): additional verbs must be included to reference success of action, endpoint, etc.
Transitivity-increasing SVCs
(co-indexed arguments in red)

- **Disposal:** CLF tiger bite monkey eat
  \[\text{NP1} \; \text{V1} \; \text{NP2} \; \text{V2}\]

- **Pivot:** She hit dog run away
  \[\text{NP1} \; \text{V1} \; \text{NP2} \; \text{V2}\]

- **Attainment:** She sew get CLF skirt this
  \[\text{NP1} \; \text{V1} \; \text{V2} \; (\text{NP2})\]
  She go arrive there
Cotemporal SVCs
elaboration of internal structure

• component elements of the SVC occur cotemporally, not sequentially

• the focus is entirely on the internal structure of the subject’s action: spatial location, path, extent, and orientation; its manner, its duration, and its process

• Several subtypes according to features of the event highlighted

(Jarkey 2014: 120)
Subtypes of cotemporal SVCs

NP1  V1  (NP2)  V2

• Cotemporal motion
  take.along + run + come  turn.around + return + come

• Associated motion and action
  shout + come.home  search.about + arrive

• Stance and action
  sit + chat  stand + walk

• Cotemporal actions
  cry + jump  bathe + play
We interrupt this discussion …

…to switch over to an excerpt from

The Event Panorama: Linking SVCs in White Hmong
Nerida Jarkey, Department of Linguistics
University of Sydney
July 2014
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Constructions: relative clauses

• In White Hmong, RCs are postnominal. Invariant *uas* appears at left edge of the RC. It is possible to relativize on all positions, and the position relativized on is typically represented within the RC as a gap.

• Relativizer is *kws* in closely related Green Hmong. This follows a pattern: grammatical elements even in mutually intelligible dialects rarely correspond, which gives them a feeling of recency (cf. discussion of conjunctions below).
White Hmong RC examples  
(from Riddle 1993)

"ces nws mus nrog tus thab han uas ø zov ntug dej ntawm tham then 3SG go with CLF soldier that watch edge water at.place talk “… then he went to talk with a soldier that was watching the riverbank.”"

"Ib-qho uas tus kwvtij Hmoob Thai tau piav ø… 1-thing that CLF kinsman Hmong Thai ATT explain “One thing that the Hmong kinsman from Thailand explained…”"

"Tus pojnim uas kuv muab cov txhuv rau ø… CLF woman that 1SG give COLL rice to “The woman that I gave the rice to…”"
Relative clauses in Xong (North Hmongic)  
(Sposato 2012)

Much more complicated. Although North Hmongic is also SVO, relative clauses can appear in either prenominal or postnominal position, with either a left-edge RC marker or a right-edge RC (associative) marker…or both, or neither. Most distinctive is a prenominal RC with a left-edge marker; rarely attested in other languages:

\[
[\text{max nonx hlit}]_{\text{RC}} \text{ miex} \\
\text{REL eat rice person} \\
\text{“the person who’s eating rice”}
\]
Table 1. Summary of Xong relative clause constructions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relative clause type</th>
<th>Relative clause marker(s)</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Possible roles of head noun</th>
<th>Equivalent headless construction?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Max-only</td>
<td>Initial max</td>
<td>Pre- or post-head</td>
<td>Subject; possibly possessor</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max-naond/nangd</td>
<td>Initial max and final naond/nangd</td>
<td>Pre-head only</td>
<td>Subject; possibly possessor</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naond/nangd</td>
<td>Final naond/nangd</td>
<td>Pre-head only</td>
<td>Subject; object; possibly possessor; none (abstract)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unmarked</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Post-head only</td>
<td>Subject; possibly oblique (location; instrument)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sposato reports that the various RC options available to Xong speakers do not seem to differ semantically. So why is there such great variety? Contact with Chinese languages that have prenominal RCs clearly seems to be the answer: the borrowed prenominal pattern is layered over the native postnominal pattern, and the borrowed use of a right-edge RC (associative) marker is layered over the native use of a left-edge RC marker. The etymologies of the markers themselves has yet to be worked out.

The hybrid construction—prenominal, yet with a left-edge RC marker—shows that the constructions are not only layered, but are interwoven.
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Complementation in White Hmong

Jarkey 2006

Four complementizers:

…(hais) tias… for embedded statements, direct quotes, indirect questions

…txog (hais) tias… for embedded statements as topics

…kom… for potential situations, direct expressions of will (subject must be different)

…tias kom… for indirect expressions of will

Or no complementizer at all, either with
two full verbs (like go, fear NP know, see NP crawl, etc.) or a “secondary verb” plus a full verb (should come, start talk, continue shower, try drive, etc.)

Not serial verb constructions because the second verb can be independently negated, yet the second clause is not as independent as those introduced by one of the four complementizers, because it cannot be moved without leaving a trace behind.

\[
\text{[mus khwv] mas, kuv xav mus tshaj.plaws li os.}
\]

go market TOP 1S want go exceedingly PART PART
...(hais) tias... for embedded statements, direct quotes, indirect questions

1) kuv totaub (hais) tias lawv yog Hmoob
   1s understand that 3P be Hmong
   “I understand that they are Hmong.”

2) lawv tsis totaub tias peb hais txog dabtsi tiag
   3P NEG understand that 1P speak about what really
   “They don’t really understand what we are talking about.”
“He remembered about (the fact) that he really had come to be born a son to a Hmong (family) long ago…"
...kom... for potential situations, direct expressions of will (subject must be different)

1) *kuv nyiam kom nws mus*
   1s like that 3p go
   “I like him to go.”

2) *yog koj xav kom tsis txhob xa nyiaj tuaj...*
   if 2s want that NEG NEG.IMP send money come
   “If you don’t want (people) to send money...”
for indirect expressions of will

grandfather Saddam say that population America
cry and groan

“Old Saddam, (he) told the American people that (they) should cry and groan…”
Assignment #2, due Tuesday 7/25

• There are three White Hmong texts under Files that you should look at closely for this assignment. The texts have all been glossed and translated. This should make it possible for you to examine some syntactic structures typical of this language. Find and briefly discuss 5 or 6 structures that are particularly interesting or are particularly problematic.

• You might want to focus on classifier use, serial verb constructions, relative clauses, and complementation, since we’ve briefly discussed each of these. But select whatever structures you find interesting, not necessarily these four.
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Conjunctions: most from Chinese

• One can study the nature of a paratactic language not only by looking at what it typically does, but also the history of its atypical structures: overt marking of coordination and subordination.

• Hmong coordinators and subordinators exist, but most can be shown to be new. In a couple of cases they have developed from native verbs, but more often they have been borrowed from Chinese.

• Although conjunctions (like everything else) can be borrowed, there may be something different in this case: a language that doesn’t like conjunctions (Hmong) is borrowing conjunctions from another language that doesn’t like conjunctions (Chinese). The resulting picture is very messy.
One native conjunction

and < with < to accompany < to follow < to track PH *ndroC

Xong (North Hmongic) *nhaons* ‘and, with, to be with, to accompany’ “this form is still quite clearly a verb in modern Xong. However, it does show quite a bit of overlap with more canonical examples of conjunctions in other languages.” (Adam Sposato, p.c. 2013)

This development has also taken place in two West Hmongic languages, Shimenkan and Gaopo. But in White Hmong, this line of development has stopped at *nrog* ‘with’.

Most White Hmong linkers appear to be borrowed from Chinese, specifically from Southwest Mandarin.
Obvious Chinese loanwords

• **but**
  
  *tab sis* [ta^55 j̚i^22] ‘but’, variants *tiam sis, tib sis*
  
  < 但是  Man. *dànshì* [tan^52 ʂ̩i^52] ‘but’

• **because**
  
  *vim(chij)* [vi^21ʔ cʰi^52] ‘because’
  
  < 为此  Man. *wèicǐ* [wei^52 tɕʰi^214] ‘for this reason’

• **(and) then**
  
  *ces* [ce^22] ‘(and) then’
  
  <  繼  Man. *jì* [tɕi^52] ‘to continue, follow; then’
possibly Chinese

los [lɔ̃²²] ‘or’, with variant los sis [lɔ̃²² ʃi²²]

Koj mus los nyob?
you go or stay
“Are you going or staying?”

ho [hɔ³³] (linker)

mus ho tuaj
go and but return
“Au revoir”
los ‘or’: contexts of use

1) *Koj mus los nyob?*
   2s go or stay
   “Are you going or staying here?”

2) *Koj mus los tsis mus?*
   2s go or not go
   “Are you going or not?

3) *Koj mus thiab los?*
   2s go too or ...
   “Are you going, too?”
-sis probably Chinese

los ‘or’ has a variant los sis [lɔ́̀²² ʃi²²], the second half of which is probably from 是 ‘to be (this way)’, as in the functionally similar 還是 hái shì ‘or’.

Also:

*tab sis* [ta⁵⁵ ʃi²²] ‘but’

< 但是 Man. dàn shì [tan⁵¹ ʂɿ⁵¹] ‘but’

*txawm sis* [tsau²¹ʔ ʃi²²]

< 就是 Man. jiù shì [tɕioʊ⁵¹ ʂɿ⁵¹] ‘just so’

*tam sim* ‘immediately’  *sam sim* ‘still (ongoing)’

*liam sim* ‘ruined, destroyed’  *huv si, tib si* ‘all, whole’
the linker *ho*: contexts of use

1) *Mus ho tuaj (/los).*
   go and return to visit (/return home)
   “au revoir”

2) *Nws xav mus, ho ntshai.*
   he want go but fear
   “He wants to go, but is afraid.”

3) *Koj ho tsis mus lod?* (in opposition to expectation)
   you then not go huh?
   “So you didn’t go then?”

4) *Koj ho ua saib.* (in opposition to me)
   you therefore make examine
   “OK, you take a look.”
ho from Chinese hé?

1) 和 hé [χɤʌ35] ‘together with’ < MC hwa < OC *[g]ˈoj

2) A pretty good match exists in Xong (North Hmongic, Hunan Province): /o^2/ ~ /u^2/ “serves to conjoin NP internal constituents within a single larger NP” (Adam Sposato, p.c. 2013)

biaob-zhaut-ngonl daob-niel ox daob-yul
five-six-CLF:animate AN-water.buffalo and AN-cow
“five or six water buffalo and cows” (i.e. five or six animals, some of which are water buffalo and some of which are cows)

3) But the “on the contrary” sense of Hmong ho is not associated with Chinese 和 hé.
thiab (= Green Hmong hab) ‘and; also’

A true coordinating conjunction as well as an adverb meaning “also”:

\[\text{thiab} [\text{thia}^{55}]\]
\[< \text{添} \text{tian} [\text{thian}^{44}] < \text{MC them} \text{‘to append; add to; increase; replenish’}\]

In Mandarin used only as a verb.
In Cantonese used as a verb and as a sentence-final adverb/particle meaning ‘more; in addition, too’.
In Hmong used a sentence-final adverb and as a conjunction.
thiab ‘and; also’: contexts of use

1) nws niam thiab nws txiv
   3sg mother and 3sg father
   “his/her mother and father”
2) Kuv yuav mus thiab.
   1sg want/will go too
   “I’m going too.”
3) Koj puas nyiam kuv? Kuv nyiam koj thiab.
   2s Q like 1sg 1sg like 2sg and
   “Do you like me? Yes, I like you, but there’s more to be said.”
4) Nws ua thiab, tsis ua thiab.
   3sg do and not do too
   “He only half-did it.”
further development within Hmong

添 tiān ‘to add to’ was borrowed as a verb by (at least) two other West Hmongic languages that do not use it as a coordinating conjunction:

- Xuyong /tha 1/ ‘to add, increase’
- Shimen /thie 1/ ‘to add, increase; append; to’

In White and Green Hmong, it is only used as an adverb and as a conjunction, but *not* as a verb:

```
conjunction < adverb (< verb)
```

Did the grammaticalization take place in the borrower or in the donor?
A Green Hmong switch-reference conjunction (Li 1989)

Li claims that when used as a clausal conjunction, this same conjunction (GM hab = WH thiab) conjoins same-subject clauses, and another, huas, conjoins different-subject clauses. *Huas* also “weakly contrastive” (like *ho* in White Hmong: probably cognate, both from 和 *hé* [χɤʌ35] ‘together with’ < MC hwa).

*Tuam*₁ moog kawm-ntawv *hab* nwgᵢ moog yuav zaub noj.
*Tuam*₁ moog kawm-ntawv *huas* nwgᵢ moog yuav zaub noj.
Toua go study and he go buy food eat
“In ordinary speech, zero is the commonest marker of coordination … there seems to be no primarily coordinate conjunction of the English ‘and’-type which simply joins two expressions in logical conjunction.” (264-65)
Chinese so-called ‘and’ words and their sources

和 hé [χɤʌ35] < MC hwa < OC *[g]ʃoj
   ‘and’ < ‘together with’ < ‘to blend’ < ‘harmonious’ (N + N)

跟 gēn [kən44] < MC kon
   ‘and/with’ < ‘follow’ (more ‘with’ than ‘and’)

與 yǔ [ju214] < MC yoX < OC *C.ɡaʔ
   ‘and; together with’ < ‘associate with’ < ‘give’ (formal contexts)

及 jí [tɕi35] < MC gip < OC *[m-k-]ɾəp
   ‘and’ < ‘reach; come up to’ (A including B, A more important than B)

加 jiā [tɕia44] < MC kæ < OC *kʃraj
   ‘and’ < ‘plus’ < ‘add, append, increase’ (A plus the “bonus” of B)
beyond Mandarin

Jiānghuái dialect of Mandarin (also Kèjiā and Yuè)
同 [tʰoŋ³⁴] (Man. tóng) < MC duwng < OC *lˤoŋ
‘and’ < ‘same’ < ‘together; to join’

Northern Wú (Sūzhōu)
搭 [taʔ⁴] (Man. dā) < MC top
‘and’ < ‘to join’

Southern Mǐn (Cháozhōu)
共 [køyŋ²⁴²] (Man. gòng) < MC gjowngH < OC *N-kǒŋʔ-s
‘and’ < ‘in common’ < ‘together, all’
HM words for ‘and’ (or lack thereof)
Chen 2013

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shibanzhai</td>
<td>ta(^A)</td>
<td>Mao’ao (Baheng, East)</td>
<td>tha(^1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaozhai (WHmongic)</td>
<td>ta(^A/D)</td>
<td>Qibailong (Dongnu)</td>
<td>pu(^3), Ŝen(^2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dananshan</td>
<td>tčau(^1)</td>
<td>Xishan (Nunu)</td>
<td>?li(^3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gaopo (WHmongic)</td>
<td>nta(^6)</td>
<td>Yaolu (Numao)</td>
<td>tø(^3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zongdi (WHmongic)</td>
<td>-- ←</td>
<td>Bana</td>
<td>ko(^3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shimenkan</td>
<td>nto(^6)</td>
<td>Younuo</td>
<td>la(^1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Layiping (NHmongic)</td>
<td>ŋan(^6)</td>
<td>Xiashuicun (She)</td>
<td>tho(^4/6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Xiaozhang (NHmongic)</td>
<td>-- ←</td>
<td>Longhua (Jiongnai)</td>
<td>ta(^1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yanghao (EHmongic)</td>
<td>tčan(^1), na(^7)</td>
<td>Longding (Mian)</td>
<td>thin(^1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caidiwan (EHmongic)</td>
<td>-- ←</td>
<td>Yanyuan (Jinmen)</td>
<td>kwan(^3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yaogao (EHmongic)</td>
<td>tai(^7)</td>
<td>Shuanglong (Biaomin)</td>
<td>kin(^1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heba (EHmongic)</td>
<td>ţun(^1)</td>
<td>Youling (Zaomin)</td>
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<td>Gundong (Baheng)</td>
<td>na(^6)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Session overview

• Constructions
  – Word order
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  – Serial verbs in White Hmong (Jarkey)
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• Function words and their history
  – Conjunctions
  – Question words
  – Negators

• Discourse particles
Yes-No Questions

Two primary yes-no question strategies:

– preverbal Q-word

  *Koj puas yog Hmoob?*
  
  2SG Q  be  Hmong
  
  Are you Hmong?

– A-(or)-not-A construction

  *Koj mus los tsis mus?*
  
  2SG go  or  not go
  
  Are you going?
Wh-Questions

1) Variety in interrogative pronouns abounds. Cognates do not line up across languages even for ‘who’ and ‘what’, supposedly the two most basic interrogatives.

2) Most interrogatives (with the exception of ‘which’) are compounds.

3) As we have seen, compounding is the most common word formation process in HM languages. This feature is correlated with the instability of interrogatives because it allows for the frequent formation of new interrogatives on the model of “which + X” (or “what + X”), where X may vary.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hmongic</th>
<th>Mienic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qo Xiong</td>
<td>pəi2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmu</td>
<td>paŋ2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmong</td>
<td>pa2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-Hmø</td>
<td>vənA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunu</td>
<td>pen2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiongnai</td>
<td>pen2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pa-Hng</td>
<td>pɛ2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ho Nte</td>
<td>phun2</td>
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### Which

<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>Qo Xiong</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hmu</td>
<td>tei6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmong</td>
<td>tu6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-Hmø</td>
<td>naB tsiB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunu</td>
<td>tau6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiongnai</td>
<td>hna3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pa-Hng</td>
<td>ti6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ho Nte</td>
<td>pa4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mien: ha:i5  
Mun: ?di:6  
Biao Min: ha5  
Zao Min: ba
### What

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hmongic</th>
<th>Mienic</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qo Xiong qø1 ɳaŋ1</td>
<td>Mien ha:i5 jiuŋ6 ha:i5 ɲuŋ6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmu qei2 ɕi3</td>
<td>Mun gin2 thjaŋ4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmong da1 tʃi5</td>
<td>Biao Min di5 dəi2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-Hmø tsiB tsıB</td>
<td>Zao Min si ni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunu pu1 ɕi3’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiongnai lanŋ1 ɖa5 nei4 ʐã2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pa-Hng qa1 jɔ7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ho Nte tsha5 na1 ha5 na1</td>
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## What

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Hmongic</th>
<th>Mienic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qo Xiong prefix + ? (qɔl ɲaŋ1)</td>
<td>Mien which + kind clf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>which + thing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmu ? + what</td>
<td>Mun ? + ?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmong ? + what</td>
<td>Biao Min ? + what</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-Hmø what + what</td>
<td>Zao Min ? + ?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunu prefix + what (pu1 çi3’)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiongnai general clf + ?; ? + ?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pa-Hng prefix? + ?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ho Nte ? + ?</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Who

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hmongic</th>
<th>Mienic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qo Xiong</td>
<td>Mien</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmu</td>
<td>Mun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmong</td>
<td>Biao Min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-Hmø</td>
<td>Zao Min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiongnai</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pa-Hng</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ho Nte (She)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| tɕi3 le1 | haːi5 tau2 |
| tɛɕi3  | ?a2 baːn1 |
| lɛŋ2 tw6 |           |
| dəNɐ tɕiB | si ni men |
| ti6 ɕi3’ |           |
| hna5   |           |
| ti6 lɦɛ2 |           |
| pe1    |           |
## Who

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hmongic</th>
<th>Mienic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qo Xiong</td>
<td>Mien</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>which + human clf</td>
<td>which + human clf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmu</td>
<td>Mun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>animate clf + what</td>
<td>? + ?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmong</td>
<td>Biao Min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>human clf + which</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-Hmø</td>
<td>Zao Min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>animate clf + what</td>
<td>what + ?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>? + what</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiongnai</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>which</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pa-Hng</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>which + human clf</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ho Nte (She)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmongic</td>
<td>Mienic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qo Xiong ta3 ʨi3</td>
<td>Mien ha:i5 dau1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmu haŋ3 tei6</td>
<td>Mun ?bo6 ?di:6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmong qhɔ3 tu6</td>
<td>Biao Min --</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-Hmø tceuA ðuB</td>
<td>Zao Min ba buŋ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ba naŋ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunu khi3 tau6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiongnai kwa5 ʔjeu3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pa-Hng ti6 na1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ho Nte (She)</td>
<td>pa4 ti1, pa4 tat8, pa4 hɔ6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmongic</td>
<td>Mienic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qo Xiong ? + which</td>
<td>Mien which + land/ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmu place + which</td>
<td>Mun ? + which</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmong place + which</td>
<td>Biao Min --</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-Hmø ? + ?</td>
<td>Zao Min which + ?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunu place + which</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiongnai ? + ?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pa-Hng which + ?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ho Nte (She) which + ?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Variation within individual languages

• White Hmong
  – who
    • lœ² tu⁶ [person clf + which]
    • tu⁷ tu⁶ [animate clf + which]
    • tu⁷ da¹tʃi⁵ [animate clf + what]
  – when
    • thau⁸ tu⁶ [time + which]
    • lu¹ cai² tu⁶ [period of time + which]
Other isolating languages with “transparent” interrogative compounds

- Creoles
  - “The most striking characteristic of question words in a number of creole languages is their analytical character.” (Muysken & Smith 1990:884) E.g. 18th c. Sranan (Bruyn 1993, cited in Cysouw 2004) all [hu- + X] “extreme transparency”

- West African languages
  - Suffixed ‘which’ in Ewe (-ka) and Fon (-tɛ)

- Sinitic and Southeast Asian languages
  - non-standard varieties of Chinese
  - Kam-Tai
Which  18/18 compounds
       [interrogative particle + general classifier]
What  15/18 compounds
       [what + interrogative particle ]
Who   13/18 compounds
       [interrogative particle + general classifier]
Where 14/18 compounds
How   15/18 compounds

—Hàn yǔ Fāngyán Cíhuì [Chinese dialect glossary]
Kam-Tai

Which 10/12 compounds
What 10/12 compounds
Who 5/12 compounds (yet at least 4 different roots)
Where 11/12 compounds
How 12/12 compounds

–Languages and Cultures of the Kam-Tai (Zhuang-Dong) Group
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  – Question words
  – Negators

• **Discourse particles**
Negation
NEG-V across the family

PaHng  nʉ⁴ n̚² nɔ² qa¹ tɕɤ⁵
(Wenjie)  he  NEG eat  hot peppers.  “He doesn’t eat hot peppers.”
Mien  nen² n̚⁵ tɑːi² a³
he  NEG come PFV  “He didn’t come.”

Hmu  nen² a² tɑ² zɤ⁵
(Yanghao)  he  NEG come PFV  “He didn’t come.”
Ho Ne  vaŋ⁴ ne³se⁶ ha⁶ hɔ⁶ tiu³ hɔ³
(Lien Hua)  I  now  NEG drink alcohol PFV  “I don’t drink alcohol anymore.”

Hmong  ku³ tʃi⁷ sa³ nɔ¹ i¹ lɛn⁶
(White)  I  NEG want live one person  “I don’t want to live alone.”
Qo Xiong  we⁴ tʃi⁷ ʂɛi¹ ko²
(Jiwei)  I  NEG meet work  “I won’t meet to work [on it].”
3 negators: N – A – T

HM languages use one of three negators:
-- a nasal (an NV morpheme or a syllabic nasal)
-- a low back vowel
-- something akin to White Hmong *tsis* [tʃi²²]

http://goo.gl/maps/sOK40

Historical questions: how have HM languages replaced their negators? Is Jespersen’s Cycle at work (a French-style *ne > ne … pas > pas* development)? Which negator was the original one?
the N negator probably from Chinese

毋  wú     MC mju     OC *mo     do not
勿  wù     MC mjut    OC *mut     do not
勿  wù     MC mjut    OC *mut     not … it
无, 無  wú     MC mju     OC *ma     have not
靡  mǐ     MC mjex    OC *majʔ? not have, not exist

The forms of the simple verbal negator in Norman’s “southern group” (Norman 1988:210)—Kejia /m2/, Yue /m2/, Min /m6, η6, en6, η5, oin5, ãw5/—are all from this group.
Perhaps the *tsis* word was original…

Emphatic particles often occur in sentence-final position. Some of them are low back vowels, suggesting that the low back negative may be secondary:

a. Luobohe Miao bookend negation. Every instance of preverbal M listed occurs with a final /ja^A/ (Taguchi 2008:166)

```
mu^A  ?uøN^C  ja^A
NEG  good  NEG
“It is not good.”
```

```
kaN^B  mu^A  ma^A  zeN^A  ja^A
I  NEG  have  money  NEG
“I don’t have any money.”
```

b. White Hmong final a: rejection, denial, anger, unhappiness, dismissal, ignorance

```
sjɔ³  mu^7  ua^5  da^1tʃi^5  a^7
uncertain  he  do  what  PTCL
“[I] don’t know what he’s doing.”
```

```
tʃi^7  po^8  da^1tʃi^5  li^5  a^7
NEG  see  what  PTCL  PTCL
“[I] don’t see anything at all.”
```

c. Green Hmong e ~ a: “particle emphasizing negative answer” (Lyman 1974)

```
ku^3  tʃi^7  tau^5  ʃi^8  e^7
I  NEG  get  try  PTCL
“I haven’t tried it yet.”
```

```
tʃi^7  qaŋ¹  e^7
NEG  sweet  PTCL
“[It’s] not tasty at all.”
```
... or maybe *tsis* was secondary

- Geographical distribution of *tsis* more restricted than *a*

- *tsis* is used for emphasis in Hmong reduplication, where the negative meaning is open to question (and in a spot where other languages insert other emphatics)

  *loj* ‘big’, *loj loj* ‘very big’, *loj tsis loj* ‘extremely big’

- *tsis* resembles “what/something/anything” word
  *tsjɨB* ‘what, which’ West, North, and East Hmongic
  *tsjɨD* ‘not’ West and North Hmongic

  ```
  tʃ�7 pɔ8 da1 tʃɨ5 li5 a7
  NEG see what PRT PRT
  “[I] don’t see anything at all.”
  ```
Possible series of changes resulting in NEG replacement via the A-not-A question

1. Common negation \( \text{NEG}_1\text{-Verb} \)
2. V-not-V question \( \text{Verb-NEG}_1\text{-Verb?} \)
3. Truncated V-not-V \( \text{Verb-NEG}_1? \)
4. Reanalysis of truncated Q as statement \( \text{Verb-NEG}_1 \)
5. Introduction of new NEG via J’s Cycle \( \text{NEG}_2\text{-Verb-NEG}_1 \)
6. Loss of original NEG \( \text{NEG}_2\text{-Verb} \)

#3 in the Lien Hua dialect of Ho Ne (Hmongic):
\[
\gamma^3 \eta \text{in}^2 \text{fun}^3 \text{ka}^1\text{t}^\gamma^1 \text{ha}^6 \text{ka}^1\text{t}^\gamma^1? > \gamma^3 \eta \text{in}^2 \text{fun}^3 \text{ka}^1\text{t}^\gamma^1 \text{ha}^6?
\]
that CLF river deep NEG deep that CLF river deep NEG
“Is that part of the river deep or not?”

#4 not attested …
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Discourse particles

Neither syntactic function nor semantic content: “pure pragmatics”. Utterance-final particles serve to do such things as

- express attitude of the speaker
- temper the illocutionary force of an utterance (softening)
- signal the end of a turn
- express reliability/source of evidence for the statement
- express agreement, disagreement, wonder, emphasis
- . . .

The utterance-final discourse particle is the domain for intonation: the place where intonation need not battle with tone.
Utterance-final particles in Green Hmong
Li 1990

- **nab/na/nas/nav/naj** (*na* + intonation)
  - function: reduce the illocutionary force of an utterance
  - *rov-qaab hu Cai nav?*
    return back call Cai na

- **ma/mav/mas/mab** (*ma* + intonation)
  - function: mark response to hearer’s claim, expectation, or belief
  - *Sob, kuv yuav ua le ntawm ma.*
    well ok 1s will do like that ma

- **nua**
  - function: indicate that the utterance is being made on behalf of another person
  - *Nwg xaav moog rua America nua.*
    3s want go to America nua
References


