The Structures of Denominal Location and Locatum Verbs in Kavalan

The present paper investigates the functional structures of denominal location and locatum verbs in Kavalan, an Austronesian language in Taiwan. A location verb denotes a location where its direct object is moved to (e.g., to cage a bird), whereas a locatum verb denotes a theme that is moved to a location expressed by its direct object (e.g., to saddle a horse) (Clark & Clark 1979). While Mateu (2001) and Harley (2005) argue that the two types of locative verbs are grammatically indistinguishable, Acedo-Matellán & Real-Puigdollers (2015) and Hale & Keyser (2002) analyze them as two distinct classes of verbs whose structures differ in the nature of their P heads. This paper will argue that Kavalan location and locatum verbs lend empirical support for the latter analysis and propose a syntactic account for their different properties.

The first difference between Kavalan location and locatum verbs concerns their morphological derivations. A location verb is derived via pi- prefixation, whereas a locatum verb takes pu-, as illustrated in (1). Both pi- and pu- are obligatory.

(1) a. pi-beKasku-an-ku ya zanum b. pu-waneng-an-ku ya zanum
   PI-bottle-PV-1SG.ERG ABS water PU-sugar-PV-1SG.ERG ABS water
   ‘I bottled the water.’ ‘I sugared the water.’

Moreover, a pi-marked location verb is ungrammatical without the patient voice (PV) marker (1a vs. 2a), whereas a pu-marked locatum verb is grammatical either with or without PV (1b vs. 2b). The contrast suggests that the locatum prefix pu- is a genuine verb-creating affix, while the location prefix pi- by itself does not derive a verb from a noun.

(2) a. *pi-subuq=iku tu kelisiw b. pu-waneng=iku tu zanum
   PI-backpack=1SG.ABS OBL money PU-sugar=1SG.ABS OBL water
   ‘I put money in a backpack.’ ‘I sugared water.’

Kavalan location and locatum verbs also differ in their aspectual properties. A location verb is inherently telic. A co-occurring temporal adverbial is interpreted as a time-frame adverbial (3a). It receives a durative reading only when it is construed as a temporal modifier of the result state instead of the entire event (3b). In contrast, a locatum verb can be either telic or atelic. A temporal adverbial that co-occurs with a locatum verb can receive either a time-frame or a durative interpretation (4).

(3) a. u-zusa pun-an pi-subuq-an-na ni imuy ya kelisiw
   NHUM-two minute-AN PI-backpack-PV-3ERG ERG Imuy ABS money
   ‘I put the money in the backpack in two minutes.’
   b. u-zusa dedan-an pi-subuq-an-na ni imuy ya kelisiw
   NHUM-two day-AN PI-backpack-PV-3ERG ERG Imuy ABS money
   ‘I put the money in the backpack and it’s been there for two days.’

(4) u-zusa pun-an pu-waneng-an-ku ya zanum
   NHUM-two minute-AN PU-sugar-PV-1SG.ERG ABS water
   ‘I added the sugar to the water in two minutes.’
   or ‘I have been adding sugar to the water for two minutes.’

Another interpretive difference between the two types of locative verbs concerns the integration of the theme with the location. As illustrated by the contrast between (5a) and (5b) and between (6a) and (6b), a location verb depicts a purely locative relation where the theme and location remain independent and do not form one unit, whereas the use of a locatum verb implies that the theme is integrated into the location as its descriptive or characteristic property (cf. English in Buck (1993)). As opposed to the location verb in (5a),
the locatum verb in (5b) expresses more than a locative relation and means ‘to put feathers on the backpack as an ornament’. The unacceptability of (6b) can be attributed to the lack of the additional implication regarding the theme/location integration when we describe the locative relation between a cup and a table in an unmarked context.

(5) a. pi-subuq-an-ku ya panuz b. pu-panuz-an-ku ya subuq
   PI-backpack-PV-1SG.ERG ABS feather PU-feather-PV-1SG.ERG ABS backpack
   ‘I put the feathers in a backpack.’ ‘I decorated the backpack with feathers.’

(6) a. pi-takan-an-ku ya awa’ b. *pu-awa’-an-ku ya taken
   PI-table-PV-1SG.ERG ABS cup PU-cup-PV-1SG.ERG ABS table
   ‘I put the cup on a table.’ (Intended for: ‘I put a cup on the table.’)

The differences between Kavalan location and locatum verbs suggest that the two types of locative verbs are structurally distinct. The different affixes they take are overt morphological evidence for Hale & Keyser’s (2002) analysis, which posits distinct P heads for them. A Kavalan location verb is derived via the incorporation of a location noun to a Place head and V_CAUSE (\[vP-cause ext. arg. [vP-cause V_CAUSE(\(-an\)) [P_place NP(theme) [P_place Place(pi-) N(location)]]]].) Its obligatory telic and locative interpretation can be attributed to the Place component in its structure, which constitutes its end-point and establishes its boundedness. The Place head pi-, however, only specifies a locative relation. The contrast between (1a) and (2a) indicates that what assigns the external argument and turns a location noun to a verb is PV -an, which has been found to perform the same functions in the derivation of transitive interrogative verbs and should be analyzed as V_CAUSE (Lin 2015). In contrast, a locum verb is derived via the incorporation of a theme noun to a Partitive head instead of a locative head ((\[vP v [PartitiveP NP(location) [Partitive Partitive N(theme)]]])), as suggested by Acedo-Matellán & Real-Puigdollers (2015). While a Kavalan location verb strictly denotes a locative event due to the Place head, the Partitive head of a locatum verb induces a connotation where the theme and the location are integrated as a unit. Moreover, as the locatum prefix pu- by itself can turn a noun into a verb without any overt voice affixes in addition to its locatum function, it should be construed as the spell-out of a syntactic sub-tree that contains both (underspecified) v and Partitive (within the framework of Nanosyntax, Starke 2009).

In conclusion, Kavalan location and locatum verbs differ both morphosyntactically and semantically. Their derivations involve distinct functional projections and thus the two classes of verbs should not be conflated.