

## The Ideophone-Forming Construction ...-*Sa* and Lexical Categories in Amis<sup>1</sup>

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### Introduction

(1) The sentences in (2), termed as the *-sa* construction, have received much discussion in Tsai and Tseng (1997) and Liu (2003). This construction can either serve as the only predicate in the sentence (e.g. (2d)) or as a manner adverbial for its following verb in a complex sentence (e.g. (2a)).

(2) a. Sa-harakat-sa/harakat-sa<sup>2</sup> kisu mi-nukay.  
SA -fast-SA/fast-SA 2S.NOM MI-return  
'You return so fast.'

b. Sa-rayaray-sa/\*rayaray-sa kita pa-sasuluy t-u-na  
SA -row-SA/row-SA 1P.INCL.NOM CAU-pass DAT-NCM-this  
itiya kalamkam.  
ITIYA fast  
'Let's line up (and in this way) and we can pass this quickly.'

c. Sa-pata-patay-sa/\*sa-patay-sa cingra.  
SA-RED-dead-SA/seem-dead-SA 3S.NOM  
'He is playing dead.'

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<sup>1</sup> Amis is spoken in the east coast of Taiwan. It has the largest population of speakers (around 130,000) among all the Formosan languages (i.e. Austronesian languages spoken in Taiwan). According to Tsuchida (1982), Amis has five major dialects: Sakizaya (or Sakiraya), Northern (or Nanshi Amis), Tavalong-Vataan, Central, (Haian Amis and Hsiukulan Amis excluding Tavalong-Vataan) and Southern (Peinan Amis and Hengchun Amis). The data discussed in this paper was collected from Haian Amis (i.e. Coastal Amis), one of the Central dialects spoken in Changpin, Taitung County. The author would like to thank the major Amis informants Ms. Jin-Mei Li (Panay in Amis), Mr. Wan-song Lin (Talod in Amis), and Jyun-Ju Lin (Ohay in Amis) for providing the data, and National Science Council in Taiwan for the financial support on the Amis fieldwork in April 2004.

<sup>2</sup> The phonetic symbols used in the transcription generally follow the IPA system, with the following exceptions: /e/ stands for schwa [ə], /d/ for voiceless lateral [t̪], /ʔ/ for glottal stop [ʔ], /q/ for pharyngealized glottal stop [q̰], and /ŋ/ for /ŋ/. The morphemic analyses and glosses in the examples are based on Wu (2003). The following abbreviations and symbols are used in the gloss:

1/2/3S: first/second/third person singular	ASP: Aspect	AV: Actor Voice	DAT: Dative
FAC: Factual Marker	GEN: Genitive	InV: Instrument Voice	LNK: Linker
LV: Locative Voice	NCM: Noun Class Marker	NOM: Nominative	PREP: Preposition
RED: Reduplication	UV: Undergoer Voice		

- d. Patay-sa           cingra.  
 dead-SA               3S.NOM  
 ‘He died that way.’

(3) Major Findings in Tsai and Tseng (1997)

- a. -*Sa* appears after the verbal and nominal roots, deriving an “adverbial verb” (Tsai and Tseng 1997:63, translation mine) that manifests an onomatopoeic, expressive, and stative reading for the roots.
- b. This suffix can appear with quite a few prefixes. For example:

Prefixes	Examples of X(=Word <sub>root</sub> )	Forms and Meanings of <i>Prefix-X-sa</i>
sa- ‘form’ <sup>3</sup>	<i>kalingking</i> ‘sounds of flinging’	<i>sa-kalingking-sa</i> ‘fling with the sound of <i>kalingking</i> ’ ( <i>sa-kalingking</i> ‘making the sound of <i>kalingking</i> (?)’)
pa- ‘causative morpheme’	<i>’icel</i> ‘strength’	<i>pa-’icel-sa</i> ‘doing with strength’ ( <i>pa-’icel</i> ‘give strength’)
ha- <sup>4</sup>	<i>ngorngor</i> ‘stumble’	<i>ha-ngorngor-sa</i> ‘with the manner of body-flipping’ ( <i>ha-ngorngor</i> ‘do body-flipping’)
tala- ‘toward’	<i>wili</i> ‘left’	<i>tala-wili-sa</i> ‘walk heading for the left’ ( <i>tala-wili</i> ‘heading for the left’)
tano- ‘intensifier; only’	<i>losa</i> ‘tears’	<i>tano-losa’-sa</i> ‘with all the tears’ ( <i>tano-losa</i> ‘all the tears’)

(4) Liu (2003) investigates the construction -*sa*, and she analyzes *X-sa* and *sa-X-sa* as the same construction, treating *sa-...-sa* as a circumfix. The following analyses have been proposed in Liu (2003), stated from (5) to (8).

(5) In complex sentences, *X-sa* and *sa-X-sa* expressions function as subordinate clauses for their following clause, “in which the affixes *sa-...-sa* and *-sa* attached to the verb roots are markers of manner adverbials in Amis” (Liu 2003: 156). This is exemplified in (2a).

(6) The form *sa-X-sa* appears with the verbs that do not have a patient voice form (e.g. *harakat* ‘fast’), while the form *X-sa* appears with verbs that have a patient voice counterpart (e.g. *mi-takaw* ‘steal’/*ma-takaw* ‘steal (patient voice)’). This contrast is shown below: ((6b-c) are taken from Liu 2003:74, gloss mine):

<sup>3</sup> There is more than one meaning of *sa-*, which will be discussed later.

<sup>4</sup> It is hard to translate the prefix *ha-* based on the examples Tsai and Tseng (1997) provide. According to the Amis dictionary compiled by Fey (1986: 107), this prefix is frequently used in the Southern Dialect to indicate a planned activity.

a. Sa-harakat-sa /harakat-sa kisu mi-nukay.  
 SA -fast-SA/fast-SA 2S.NOM MI-return  
 ‘You return so fast.’

b. Takaw-sa Ø-ci aki (a) k-um-aqen t-u ’epah  
 steal-SA NOM-NCM Aki LNK eat-UM DAT-NCM wine  
 n-i kacaw. Ma-nengneng n-i panay  
 GEN-NCM Kacaw UV-see GEN-NCM Panay  
 ‘Aki is drinking Kacaw’s wine stealthily. This is seen by Panay.’

c. \*Sa-takaw-sa Ø-ci aki (a) k-um-aqen t-u ’epah  
 steal-SA NOM-NCM Aki LNK eat-UM DAT-NCM wine  
 n-i kacaw. Ma-nengneng n-i panay  
 GEN-NCM Kacaw UV-see GEN-NCM Panay

(7) Tense and aspect markers are not allowed to co-occur with either *X-sa/sa-X-sa* and the following verb.

a. (\*na) sa-harakat-sa (\*tu) (a) (\*na) k<um>aqen (\*tu) ci  
 Past SA-fast-SA Prf A Past eat<AV>eat Prf Nom  
 aki tu hemej  
 aki Acc rice  
 ‘Aki is eating his meals quickly.’ (Liu 2003: 155, original transcription and gloss)

b. (\*na)naqun-sa (\*tu) (a) (\*na)mi-pidpid tu ci aki  
 Past careful-SA Prf A Past AV-pick Prf Nom aki  
 tu lupas  
 Acc rice  
 ‘Aki is picking peaches carefully’ (Liu 2003: 155, original transcription and gloss)

(8) Sentences with manner adverbials require **an agentive subject** and thus the following verbs are strictly affixed with AV (i.e. “Agentivity Restriction” (Liu 2003: 147)). This contrast is seen below, where the arguments of *ma-futiq* ‘sleep’ and *t-um-angic* ‘cry’ are analyzed as experiencer, not agent. (Examples are from Liu 2003, original gloss and transcription)

a. \*sa-harakat-sa ci aki (a) ma-futiq  
 SA-fast-SA Nom aki A AV-sleep

- b. \**naqun-sa* ci aki (a) t<um>aNic.  
 careful-SA Nom aki A cry<AV>cry

### **Some Problems with Liu's (2003) Analysis**

- (9) The “agentivity restriction” claimed in Liu (2003) might be attributed to the semantic incompatibility of X and its modified verb (e.g. *harakat* ‘fast’ and *ma-futiq* ‘sleep’), not the requirement of the *-sa* construction. Compare the example below with (8a):

**Tangsul-sa** Ø-ci aki (a) **ma-futiq**  
 immediately-SA NOM-NCM Aki LIN MA-sleep  
 ‘Aki fell asleep immediately.’

- (10) The selectional restrictions of either *X-sa* or *sa-X-sa* does not lie on the whether X has a patient voice (or undergoer voice in my analysis) or not. For example, *harakat* ‘fast’ takes both *X-sa* and *sa-X-sa* forms, though it does not have a patient voice (undergoer voice). The verb *palu* ‘beat’, though it has a UV form, can still appear in *sa-X-sa* form as long as the root form gets reduplicated. The relevant examples are given in (11).

- (11) a. Sa-harakat-sa/harakat-sa kisu mi-nukay.  
 SA -fast-SA/fast-SA 2S.NOM MI-return  
 ‘You return so fast.’

b. Palu-sa kisu takuwanan  
 beat-SA 2S.NOM 1S.DAT  
 ‘Why did you then beat me?’

c. \*Sa-palu-sa kisu takuwanan  
 SA-beat-SA 2S.NOM 1S.DAT

d. Sa-palu-palu-sa kisu takuwanan  
 SA-RED-beat-SA 2S.NOM 1S.DAT  
 ‘Why do you always seem to want to beat me?’

### **The Intriguing Structural Features of the -sa Construction**

- (12) First, the prefix part in the circumfix *sa-X-sa* is optional for some roots (e.g. (13a)), while for others it is obligatory (e.g. (13b)).

(13) a. Sa-harakat-sa/harakat-sa kisu mi-nukay.  
SA -fast-SA/fast-SA 2S.NOM MI-return  
'You return so fast.'

b. Sa-rayaray-sa/\*rayaray-sa kita pa-sasuluy t-u-na  
SA -row-SA/row-SA 1P.INCL.NOM CAU-pass DAT-NCM-this  
itiya kalamkam.  
ITIYA fast  
'Let's line up (and in this way) and we can pass this quickly.'

(14) Second, some of the root forms must be reduplicated when prefixed with *sa-*. For such reduplicated roots, the prefix *sa-* is almost always obligatory (e.g. (15a)).

(15) a. Sa-pata-patay-sa/\*sa-patay-sa cingra.  
SA-RED-dead-SA/ SA-dead-SA 3S.NOM  
'He is playing dead.'

b. Patay-sa cingra.  
dead-SA 3S.NOM  
'He died that way.'

(16) Third, the prefix *sa-* in *sa-X-sa* is not rendered in the same way in the examples shown above.

(17) Proposals made in my study:

- The construction introduced by *-sa* is an ideophone forming construction.
- The prefix *sa-* in *sa-X-sa* should be analyzed as an independent prefix, instead of a part of a circumfix. Moreover, this prefix is not semantically unified.
- Whether the prefix *sa-* obligatory appears or not in this construction, and how this prefix is rendered in the derived form are related to the **lexical categories** of the root (i.e. X)

### **-Sa Construction as an Ideophone-forming Construction: A Preliminary Analysis**

(18) The definition of an ideophone (or expressive, mimetic, etc.) from Doke (1935:118):

"Words describing "a predicate, qualificative or adverb in respect to manner, colour, smell, action, state, or intensity."

(19) Some features of ideophones based on Childs (1994):

- In the vast majority of cases, ideophones perform adverbial function and are closely related to verbs. (p. 181)

- Ideophones display very little morphology....The only productive process at work with ideophones in general is repetition, sometimes morphologicalized as reduplication. (p. 185)
- Ideophones are often introduced by a dummy verb with meanings such as “do”, “say”, “quote”, or “think”.

(20) The suffix *-sa* actually originates from a verb meaning “say so” that often introduces a direct quote (Wu 1995). Examples are provided in (21):

(21) a. **Sa/Saan** kaku cingraan  
 say/say 1S.NOM S.DAT  
 ‘I want to say/said to him.’

b Ka-tayra **sa/saan** Ø-ci sawmah t-u wawa.  
 KA-go.there say/say NOM-NCM Sawmah DAT-NCM child.  
 ‘Sawmah asked the child to go there.’  
 Lit. ‘Sawmah said, “Go there” to the child.’

### The Analysis of *Sa-*

(22) *Sa-* in *sa-X-sa* should be analyzed as an individual prefix, not a part of a circumfix.

- Both *sa-X* and *X-sa* can occur by itself, and the two affixes contribute different meanings to the derived form.
  - sa-rayaray-sa* ‘in the manner of lining up’
  - sa-rayaray* ‘line up’; *mi-sa-rayaray* ‘go to line up’
  - sa-harakat-sa* ‘in a very fast manner’
  - harakat-sa* ‘in a fast manner’
- The prefix *sa-* can be replaced by other prefixes in the *-sa* construction. (cf. Tsai and Tseng 1997)

(23) The prefix *sa-* in *sa-X-sa* has at least the following three meanings.

Meaning of <i>sa-</i>	Types of Root	Form of X	Optionality of <i>sa-</i>	Examples	mi-sa-...
form; create	object	root	obligatory	<i>sa-rayaray-sa</i> ‘in the manner of lining up’	Yes
intensifier	state	root form	optional	<i>sa-harakat-sa</i> ‘very fast’	No
seem; appear to	activity	reduplicated	obligatory (?)	<i>sa-palu-palu-sa</i> ‘appear to have the intention of beating sb.’	Yes
seem; appear to	accomplishment	reduplicated	obligatory	<i>sa-pata-patay-sa</i> ‘playing dead’	Yes

(24) –*Sa* Construction and Lexical Categories in Amis

Category of X	X-sa	sa-X-sa	sa-Red-X-sa	Red-X-sa	mi-sa-
<b>object</b> e.g. <i>rayaray</i> ‘row’	No	Yes ‘in the manner of forming/ creating sth.’	No	No	√
<b>State (unaffixed)</b> <i>harakat</i> ‘fast’ <i>lipahak</i> ‘happy’	Yes ‘report a state or a manner’	Yes ‘in an intensified manner’	No	No	No
<b>State</b> (prefixed with <i>ma-</i> ) <i>ma-hemek</i> ‘happy’ <i>ma-ulah</i> ‘like’	Yes ‘report a state or a manner’	No	Yes ‘always in the X state or manner’	?	?
<b>Accomplishment</b> <i>ma-patay</i> ‘become dead’ <i>ma-lasang</i> ‘get drunk’	Yes ‘report a state or a manner’	No	Yes ‘pretend to be in that state’	?	?
<b>Voluntary Activity</b> <i>mi-celiq</i> ‘shout’ <i>mi-palu</i> ‘beat’ <i>ma-tawa</i> ‘smile; laugh’	Yes ‘report an on-going action’	No	Yes ‘appear to do something continuingly’	Yes (?)	?
<b>Involuntary Activity</b> <i>ma-futiq</i> ‘sleep’	Yes ‘report an on-going action’	No	Yes ‘pretend to do something continuingly’	No	Yes

(25) Some roots are not allowed to appear in the –*sa* construction (e.g. weather words like *orad* ‘rain’)

**Conclusion**

(26) The ideophone-forming construction –*sa* closely interacts with the lexical categories in Amis.

(27) The data in (24) indicate that roots in Amis are not pre-categorical (c.f. Himmelmann’s (in press) claim for Tagalog).

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