

# ON THE COMPLEMENT SENTENCES IN MODERN COLLOQUIAL BURMESE

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## Introduction

The device of complementation, which forms the clausal element required by predicates, is essential for languages to have richer expressional capacity. Certain languages have several complement sentence (henceforth CS) types, and in this case, it is interesting to see the functional distribution of those types.

Modern colloquial Burmese has four CS types below.

- a. **Quotative sentence(QS)**: marked with the same sentence markers as root sentences, i.e., *-te\_*(realis)/*-me\_*(irrealis)/*-phu:*(negative neutralized form, with the verbs with negative prefix *ma-*)/*-φ*(mandative, positive)/*-ne.*(mandative, negative, with *ma-*) etc., usually followed by the quotative marker *-lou.*
- b. **Nominal clause(NC)**: marked with the nominal clause markers *-ta\_*(realis)/*-hma\_*(irrealis). Negative neutralization does not happen, unlike QS.
- c. **Nominalized quotative sentence(NQS)**: marked with the non-mandative sentence markers *-te\_*/*-me\_*/*-phu:* followed by the nominal expression *shou\_`ta\_* "the thing which is said that".
- d. ***-phu.* clause(PC)**: marked with the marker *-phu.*

These forms are used not only as CS, but also as adverbial subordinate clauses, not required by main predicates.

The aim of this paper is to clarify properties of these four CS types.

## 1 Whether argument or not – QS vs. other types –

### 1.1 The difference between QS and other types

Among the four types of CS, QS is different from the other three types, at least in the two respects below.

The first difference is **category**. Burmese has three main grammatical classes: noun, verb and particle. The **noun** class can be divided into two subclasses in respect to whether the noun can bear the Subject function and the (Gruberian) Theme role or not: one is typically "nominal", and the other is somewhat "adverbial". Now, the three types other than QS can be Subjects, but QS cannot.

- (1) a. \*[mane'pain: txwa:*-me\_*](*-lou.*) kaun:ˆte\_||  
morning go IRL QUT good RLS
- b. [mane'pain: txwa:*-hma\_*] kaun:ˆte\_||  
NIRL
- "It is good that (he) will go in the morning."
- c. [mane'pain: txwa:*-me\_ shou\_`ta\_*] kaun:ˆte\_|| "ibid."  
IRL tell NRLS
- d. [mane'pain: txwa:ˆ*phu.*] kaun:ˆte\_|| "(He) had better go in the morning."  
PHOU

And while the other three types can cooccur with the disambiguated Theme marker *-kou\_*, only QS cooccurs with the quotative marker *-lou.*, not *-kou\_*.

- (2) a. maun\_ba.^ka. [cano\_ japan\_pyi\_ yau'-me\_]-lou. sin:za:-nei^te\_||  
 Mg.Ba SSB I Japan arrive IRL QUT think stay RLS  
 "Maung Ba is thinking that I will go to Japan."  
 b. maun\_ba.^ka. [cano\_ japan\_pyi\_ yau'-hma\_](^kou\_) sin:za:-nei^te\_||  
 NIRL DTH  
 "Maung Ba is thinking about the fact that I will go to Japan."  
 c. maun\_ba.^ka. [cano\_ japan\_pyi\_ yau'-me\_ shou^ta\_](^kou\_)  
 IRL tell NRLS DTH  
 sin:za:-nei^te\_|| "ibid."  
 d. maun\_ba.^ka. [cano\_ japan\_pyi\_ yau'-phou\_](^kou\_) sin:za:-nei^te\_||  
 PHOU DTH  
 "Maung Ba is thinking about that I should go to Japan."

Moreover, whereas anaphoric and interrogative pro-forms for the types except QS are *da\_* 'it' and *ba\_* 'what', respectively, those for QS are *di\_-lou\_* 'so' and *be\_-lou\_* 'how'. The former can cooccur with *-kou\_*, but the latter cannot. (3a)(4a) correspond to (2a), and (3b)(4b) correspond to (2b-d).

- (3) a. maun\_ba.^ka. di\_-lou\_ sin:za: -nei^te\_||  
 Mg.Ba SSB this like consider stay RLS "Maung Ba thinks so."  
 b. maun\_ba.^ka. da^kou\_ sin:za:-nei^te\_||  
 it DTH  
 "Maung Ba is thinking about it."  
 (4) a. maun\_ba.^ka. be\_-lou\_ sin:za:-nei^txa-le:||  
 which like RLS WHQ  
 "How does Maung Ba think?"  
 b. maun\_ba.^ka. ba\_(^kou\_) sin:za:-nei^txa-le:||  
 what DTH  
 "What is Maung Ba thinking about?"

From these observations, we can say that the QS is "adverbial" unlike others.

The second difference can be seen with predicates having negative meaning inherently, *nyin:-* 'to deny' and *matxin\_ga\_phyi'-* 'to doubt'. (Both belong to Hooper(1975)'s nonassertive predicate: p.112.) Suppose the inherent negativity of these predicates has its own scope. The QS, but not other types, is outside the scope of negation.

- (5) a. cano\_ [maun\_ba. la\_-me\_]-lou. nyin:^te\_||  
 I Mg.Ba come IRL QUT deny RLS  
 "I denied, saying that Maung Ba would come."  
 b. cano\_ [maun\_ba. la\_-hma\_](^kou\_) nyin:^te\_||  
 NIRL  
 "I denied that Maung Ba would come."  
 c. cano\_ [maun\_ba. la\_-me\_ shou^ta\_](^kou\_) nyin:^te\_||  
 IRL tell NRLS DTH "ibid."  
 d. cano\_ [maun\_ba. la\_^phou\_](^kou\_) nyin:^te\_||  
 PHOU DTH "ibid."

From this, we can see that other three types are under the direct influence of the predicates which take them, while QS is not.

The difference in the way a predicate acts upon several CS types reflects the difference in the structural status of the CS types. Clauses of the types other than the QS we saw above are arguments of predicates, while QSs are, say, adjuncts. The categorial difference we saw above also supports it, since we can say that arguments are usually "nominal", and "adverbial" arguments can

hardly be seen, if any.

## 1.2 The requirement of QS by predicates

It should be noted that QSs in (2)–(5) are indispensable in each sentence, although those are adjuncts. Thus, we must recognize that there are adjuncts required by and those not required by predicates. The inserted quotative in the following example is an instance of a QS not required by predicates.

- (6) [na: ^to. -ma]-lou. lou'-te. akha\_ ca. ^to. -le:  
rest final IRL QUT act ARLS time reach when also  
cha\_tei'-khalei:^ka. tha.- sho\_ ^ta\_ ^phe: ||  
titch little SSB get up attack NRLS EMP  
"And whenever (the big fly) was about to come to rest, the little  
titchy one got up and gave (him) what for." (Okell:338)

It is not the case that the types other than QS always have the priority to QS in the selection by predicates. For example, *thin\_* 'to think' requires only QS, not other types.

Some predicates require both an argument-type CS and QS at once.

- (7) ma.phyu\_ ^ka. [di\_ sa\_dan:^the:-hma\_ ahma: mya:^ta\_ ] ^kou  
Ma Phyu SSB this paper inside in error many NRLS DTH  
[cano\_ pa\_ragu\_ ma-phyi'-nain\_ ^phu:] -lou. wi\_phan\_ ^te\_ ||  
I authority not be can NEG QUT criticize RLS  
"Ma Phyu noticed that there are many errors in this paper, and  
criticized that I cannot be an authority."

The patterns of the requirement of non-subject CS types by predicates are as follows.

- Predicates taking argument-type CS (=NC, NQS, and PC) alone  
emotional predicates: ex. *txana:-* 'to pity'; predicates of sight: ex. *ci.-* 'to look at'; others: *mei.-* 'to forget'
- Predicates taking argument-type CS or QS  
non-emotional factive predicates: ex. *txi.-* 'to know', *dxadi. ya.-* 'to remember';  
nonassertive predicates: ex. *nyin:-* 'to deny', *matxin\_ga\_ phyi'-* 'to doubt';  
predicates taking irrealis CS: ex. *yi\_ywe\_-* 'to intend' *gadi. pyu.-* 'to promise';  
others: *sin:za:-* 'to consider', *pyo:-* 'to speak' etc.
- Predicates taking argument-type alone, or both argument-type and QS at once  
*wi\_phan\_-* 'to criticize'
- Predicates taking QS alone, or both argument-type and QS at once  
*thin\_-* 'to think'
- Predicates taking argument-type or QS, or both at once  
*twei:-* 'to consider'

## 2 The difference in modality – PC vs. NC/NQS –

In chapter 1, we saw that PC can be an argument, in common with NC/NQS. Then, we have to ask what the difference between PC and NC/NQS is.

The types except PC show the realis/irrealis opposition of epistemic mood, relative to the point of time when the event denoted by the main predicate occurs. But PC has a single form, exhibiting no opposition of realisness. Thus we can expect that PC has a special modal value. In this chapter we shall consider the special modal value of PC.

## 2.1 Non-mandative PC

PCs are of two kinds: "mandative" PCs, which express what the subject requires the animate goal to do, and "non-mandative" PCs, which does not.

Non-mandative PC is similar to irrealis CS in that it expresses the event not realized when the event denoted by the main predicate occurs. In fact, most of the predicates taking non-mandative PCs also take irrealis QS, NC, or NQS.

- (8) a. u:sein\_ [di\_-hma\_ da'poun\_ yai'-phou.](^kou\_) yi\_ywe\_ ^te\_ ||  
 U Sein here in photo take PHOU DTH intend RLS  
 "U Sein intended to take photos here."  
 b. u:sein\_ [di\_-hma\_ da'poun\_ yai'-me\_]-lou. yi\_ywe\_ ^te\_ ||  
 IRL QUT "ibid."
- (9) a. txu\_ cano.^kou\_ [pai'shan\_ myan\_myran\_ pyan\_sha'-phou.]  
 he me to money soon return PHOU  
 gadi. pyu.^te\_ ||  
 promise RLS "He promised me that he would return the money soon."  
 b. txu\_ cano.^kou\_ [pai'shan\_ myan\_myran\_ pyan\_sha'-me\_ shou\_ ^ta\_ ]  
 NIRL tell RLS  
 gadi. pyu.^te\_ || "ibid."  
 c. txu\_ cano.^kou\_ [pai'shan\_ myan\_myran\_ pyan\_sha'-me\_]-lou.  
 IRL QUT  
 gadi. pyu.^te\_ || "ibid."

But it never means that the reading of a non-mandative PC is always similar to that of irrealis NC, NQS, or QS. Compare (1b,c)(2b,c) and (1d)(2d). (1d) has the implication that the speaker expects the event denoted by the PC to occur. (1b,c) do not have such implication. (2b,c) presuppose that the event denoted by NC/NQS will realize after the event denoted by the main predicates occurs. (2d) does not presuppose it, but has the implication that the subject of the main predicate requires for the event expressed by the PC to occur. Thus we can characterize the modal value of PC as follows: PC is the form expressing that some person the sentence refers to, or the speaker (or, perhaps also the hearer) has the necessity of the occurrence of the event it denotes.

## 2.2 Mandative PC

The predicates taking mandative PCs also take mandative Qs, which marked by either the positive marker  $-\phi$ , or the negative marker  $-ne$ . and negative verbal prefix *ma-*.

- (10)a. cano\_ maun\_maun.^kou\_ [caun: te' -phou.] khain:-lai'-te ||  
 I Mg.Mg. to school go up PHOU order just RLS  
 "I ordered Maung Maung to go to school."  
 b. cano\_ maun\_maun.^kou\_ [caun: te'-pa\_ - $\phi$ ]-lou. khain:-lai'-te ||  
 POL MDP QUT  
 "I ordered Maung Maung, 'Go to school!'"

Mandative as well as non-mandative PCs are arguments. This is obvious from its anaphoric and interrogative pro-forms *da\_*/*ba\_*, and its being in the negative scope of the predicates such as *ta:-* 'to prohibit', *kan.gwe'-* 'to prevent', etc.

- (11)a. shaya\_ ^ka. cano.^kou\_ [japan\_-lou\_ pyo:^phou.] ta: ^te\_ ||  
 teacher SSB me to Japanese like speak PHOU prohibit RLS  
 "The teacher prohibited me to speak in Japanese."

b. shaya\_ka. cano.^kou\_ [japan\_-lou\_ pyo:- $\phi$ ]-lou. ta:^te\_||  
 MDP QUT

"The teacher prohibited me (to speak e.g. in Burmese), saying 'Speak in Japanese!'"

The modal value of the non-mandative PC almost carries over to that of the mandative PC. In most cases, the "necessity" is that of the main subject. The only exception is the case of *ta:-*, *kan.gwe'*-, etc. with inherent "negative" meaning.

### 3 The effect of an intermediate predicate *shou\_-* -- NC vs. NQS --

The difference between NC and NQS, both being used as arguments and both exhibiting realis/irrealis opposition, is that the latter has a complex structure, i.e., NC containing QS, and that the NC has *shou\_-* 'to tell' as its predicate. What follows this structural difference?

#### 3.1 As the substitute of NC

The clause markers *-ta\_-*/*-hma\_-* form NC by attaching to verbal predicates in the final position. Therefore, sentences without verbal predicates in final position, such as equational or pseudo-cleft sentences, cannot have the corresponding NC forms.

(12) txu\_ kala:^pa\_||  
 he Indian POL "He is an Indian." (equational sentence)

(13) maun\_maun.^kou\_ yai'-ta\_ maun\_ba.^pa\_||  
 Mg.Mg. DTH beat NRLS Mg.Ba POL  
 "It is Maung Ba that beat Maung Maung." (pseudo-cleft sentence)

Yes-no questions, characterized only by the sentence modifier *-la:* following a clause marker, also cannot have the corresponding NC form, because no sentence modifier can be attached to the nominal clause marker in NC in the dependent clause.

(14) ma.ma. la\_ ^txa-la: ||  
 Ma Ma come RLS QST "Did Ma Ma come?"

Where the NC corresponding to above sentence types is required, NQS is used in place of NC.

(15) ama. ^ka. [txu\_ kala: shou\_ ^ta\_ ]^kou\_ pyo: -mi. ^te\_||  
 sister SSB he Indian tell NRLS DTH speak inadvertently RLS  
 "(My) elder sister said inadvertently that he is an Indian."

(16) [maun\_maun.^kou\_ yai'-ta\_ maun\_ba. shou\_ ^ta\_ ]^kou\_  
 Mg.Mg. DTH beat NRLS Mg.Ba tell NRLS DTH  
 cano\_ txi.^te\_||  
 I know RLS "I know that it is Maung Ba that Maung Maung beat."

(17) txu\_ka. [ma.ma. la\_ ^txa -la: shou\_ ^ta\_ ]^kou\_ mei. ^te\_||  
 he SSB Ma Ma come RLS QST tell NRLS DTH forget RLS  
 "He forgot whether Ma Ma came or not."

#### 3.2 The inability to denote unverbilized "pure" events

The predicates of sight (*ci-* 'to look at', *myin\_-* 'to see', etc.) can only take NC, but not NQS.

- (18)a. cano\_ [maun\_maun\_ japan\_pyi\_ka. thwe'khwa\_`ta\_]`kou\_  
 I Mg.Mg. Japan from leave NRLS DTH  
 myin\_-ya.`te\_||  
 see can RLS "I saw Maung Maung leave Japan."  
 b. \*cano\_ [maun\_maun\_ japan\_pyi\_ka. thwe'khwa\_`te\_ shou\_`ta\_]`kou\_  
 tell NRLS DTH  
 myin\_-ya.`te\_||

From this, we can see that NQS cannot denote unverballed "pure" events as the object of seeing. Obviously, this is due to the presence of *shou\_*- in NQS.

The presence of *shou\_*- could make a subtle difference between NC and NQS in the case of other predicates, but I have not been able to make it clear yet.

#### 4 The difference in interpretation between arguments and adjuncts

Finally, consider the semantic aspect of the argument-adjunct opposition, restricting ourselves to the case of statement CS.

Putting aside PC, which has a special modal value, one of the differences in interpretation between arguments (NC, NQS) and adjuncts (QS) is seen in (5). Arguments are within, but adjuncts are outside of, the inherent negative scope of some predicates. Most other predicates show the opposition in presuppositionality: only the content of arguments is presupposed. For example, (2b,d), but not (2a), lead to contradiction, when it is not true that I will go to Japan.

Some predicates do not exhibit such clear opposition. With the predicates taking only irrealis CS (*gadi. pyu.*- 'to promise', *hmyo\_jin.*- 'to expect', etc.), neither NC, NQS nor QS is presupposed (see (9)), Whereas in the case of non-emotional factive predicates (*txi.*- 'to know', *wun\_khan.*- 'to admit'), All types are presupposed.

- (19)a. [aphei\_ la\_- ci. `ta\_]`kou\_ txu\_`tou. txi.`te\_||  
 father come look NRLS DTH he PLR know RLS  
 "They know that (their) father came to see (them)."  
 b. [aphei\_ la\_-ci.`te\_]`lou. txu\_`tou. txi.`te\_||  
 RLS QUT "ibid."

What is common in the case where NC/NQS and QS show a clear difference is that QS expresses the assertion created by the main subject. QS expresses the content which the main subject considers to be the case, which is not or need not be necessarily true. On the other hand, NC/NQS express the event given prior to the mental or communicative action denoted by the main predicate. Even when NC/NQS are used as adjuncts not required by the predicates, their contents are presupposed.

- (20) [txu.`kou\_ ci. -ya. `ta\_] txei' cau' -poun\_ po\_ `te\_||  
 him DTH look can NRLS very be afraid picture appear RLS  
 "When (I) saw him, he seemed to be afraid very much."  
 (21) [txei' ma- hla. `phu: shou\_`ta\_] txei' ma-ni\_`to. ni\_-aun\_  
 very not beautiful NEG tell NRLS very not red when red so that  
 shei: shou:-pei: -ya. `te\_|| (from a story by Maung Thar Ya)  
 dye dye give must RLS  
 "(Those are) not very beautiful, because (we) must dye them when  
 (they) are not very red."

Thus, "presupposed" is the default value of NC/NQS, and in the case of non-assertive predicates the default value is altered by the specification of the

predicates. Even in the case where NC/NQS and QS do not show a clear difference, the opposition "given" vs. "created" seems still alive.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that when a predicate takes an argument-type CS and QS at once, the predicate denotes some kind of interpreting action, The argument-type CS is the interpreted event, and the QS is the interpretation of it. Again, the "given/created" opposition holds here.

### Acknowledgement

I am very grateful to Prof. Shiro Yabu and Ayumi Ueyama for their comments and suggestions on the construction of this paper. I also would like to thank Ma Aye Tint Hlaing and U Zaw Lwin Tun for helping me with Burmese data.

### Transcription

Sawada(1992)'s system is adopted in this paper. The characteristic points are as follows: The aspirate series of stop, affricate and fricative take the form of *Ch-*, not *hC-*; *tx-* and *dx-* are dental voiceless and voiced stop, respectively; *\_* marks low-level tone, and *-a* without mark represents atonic syllables; *^* in word boundary indicates that the voicing of the initial consonant following it occurs.

### Abbreviations

ARLS	attributive clause marker, realis	NRLS	nominal clause marker, realis
DTH	disambiguated Theme marker	PHOU	nominal clause marker -phou.
IRL	sentence marker, irrealis	PLR	plural indicator on nouns
MDP	sentence marker, mandative, positive	POL	politeness
NEG	sentence marker, negative neutralized form	QST	yes-no question indicator
NIRL	nominal clause marker, irrealis	QUT	quotative marker
		RLS	sentence marker, realis
		SSB	selective subject marker
		WHQ	WH-question indicator

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