The state-achievement-accomplishment class of verbs in Lao
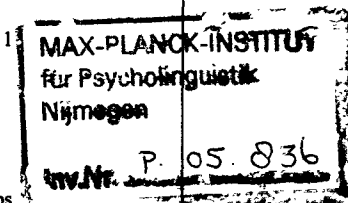N. J. Enfield, University of Melbourne, 1997.

In this paper, I would like to explore the possibility that there is a major class of verbs in Lao, which may be called Dynamic-Statives. In terms of the logical structure of the verbs, as well as the aspectual structure, in terms of ongoing situations and the borders between them, it seems that Lao grammatically treats in the same way the full range of verbal concepts which would in other languages fall into the three separate classes of state, achievement, and accomplishment. Thus, 'red' may mean 'be.red' or 'go.red', 'build' may mean 'get.built' or 'be.built'. I will explore these verbs in terms of their logical and aspectual structure, and compare how they behave grammatically.

Based on an analysis of both logical structure and aspectual structure, two major classes of predicates can be established in Lao. These are ACTIVITIES (e.g. walk, play guitar, live.somewhere, work) and DYNAMIC-STATIVEs, (covering all of Dowty's state, achievement, and accomplishment).

Lao verbs tend to be versatile, with many performing "grammatical" functions, such as marking non-core arguments (i.e. as "prepositions") as well as making aspect and modality distinctions. Many verbs show ambitransitivity, and many may have a number of different aspectual interpretations. Cf. dèèng 'red', 'be red', 'go red'; mii 'have', 'accumulate'; taaj 'die', ' be dead'; saang 'get built', 'be built', 'build'. Members of the whole range of 'predicates' - including 'live', 'have', 'give', 'break', 'die', 'hoist', 'red', 'play (guitar)', 'talk', 'ill', 'expensive', 'disappear', 'demolish', 'build houses', 'build that house' - all take the same array of morphosyntactic modification (mainly TAM marking, e.g. 'perf', 'exp', 'prog', 'retro', as well as temporal expressions), with only a couple of restrictions here and there (e.g. reduplication).
The bases for sub-classification are largely covert.

Verb Class	Logical Structure
State	predicate' (x)
	e.g. 'John has a mansion': have' (John, a mansion)
Achievement	BECOME predicate' (x)
	e.g. 'John got a mansion': BECOME have' (John, a mansion)
Activity	DO (x, [predicate' (x)])
	e.g. 'John builds mansions': DO (John, [mansion-build' (John)])
Accomplishment	f CAUSE y
	e.g. 'John built a mansion':
	[do' (John, something)] CAUSE [BECOME built' (mansion)]

Table 1 Verb Classes and Logical Structures (Foley and Van Valin 1984:39)

Should activities include HAPPEN rather than DO? The latter subsumes the former.

Sasse's "cognitive model" is "related to human perception and the processing of states of affairs. The basic idea is that states of affairs may or may not be conceived of as having boundaries." (Sasse 1990:33):

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|----------------------------------|
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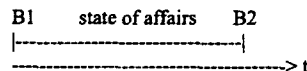
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States of affairs ('people doing things', 'things happening', 'things being the case') are situations (S), and the borders around them are situation changes (SC). Thus,
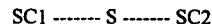
SC1 ------- S ------- SC2

Figure 2

Breu/Sasse				Dowty/Vendler
TSTA	SC1	[S]	SC2	(states)
ISTA	[SC1	S]	SC2	
ACTI	[SC1	S	SC2]	(activities)
GTER	SC1	[S	SC2]	(accomplishments)
TTER	SC1	S	[SC2]	(achievements)

Figure 3

I propose the following, to capture the fact that we are concerned at times with the situations on either side of an SC:

S-1 -------SC1 ------- S ------- SC2 ------- S+1

Figure 4

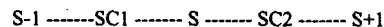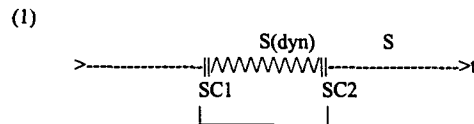The structure of Lao "activities" (e.g. lin kitaa 'play the guitar'; juu 'be.at'; het.viak 'do.work', 'work') is as follows:

(1)
```
                            S(dyn)        S
>----------------||/\/\/\/\/\/\/\||----------------->t
                 SC1          SC2
                 |_____|
```

(2)   kamlang V - dynamic situation S started before t, is happening at t, and will finish after t

(3) (a) dèèng   kamlang   'aap   nam
          D.   prog   bathe   water
          'Dang is having a bath.'
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          P.   see   D.   time   3p   prog   do.work
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Another reading is a simple extension of this, the "transient present" (quasi-iterative) reading, where kamlang V means 'V happens these days, lately':
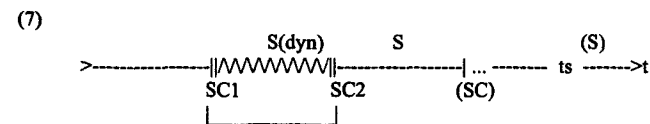
(4) dèèng   kamlang   tèèng-kin   phet-phet
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        Activity verbs can allow ambiguity in expressions with the experiential marker khøøj (sense (ii) by implicature, Grice 1975):

(5) (a) dèèng   khøøj   khap   lot   ciip
          D.   exp   drive   vehicle   jeep
          i. 'Dang has "ever" driven a jeep.'
          ii. 'Dang is accustomed to driving jeeps.'
     (b) malii   khøøj   kin   sin   dip
          M.   exp   eat   meat   raw
          i. 'Mali has "ever" eaten raw meat.'
          ii. 'Mali is accustomed to eating raw meat.'
     (c) dèèng   khøøj   juu   viangcan
          D.   exp   be.at   V.
          i. 'Dang has "ever" lived in Vientiane.'
          ii. 'Dang is accustomed to living in Vientiane.'

(6)   khøøj - 'experiential'; V has been the situation, 'at least once', and the resulting state of that situation is not the case now.

The (i) readings in (5) are the default readings, illustrated as follows:

(7)

```
                    S(dyn)        S                 (S)
>----------------||/\/\/\/\/\/\||----------------| ... -------- ts ------>t
                SC1          SC2               (SC)
                  |_____|
```

A postposed temporal phrase, for example nùng sua.mong 'one hour', is construed as being the length of time between SC1 and SC2 (in (1)), i.e. the duration of the activity's progression:

(8) (a) dèèng   khap   lot   sua.mong   nùng
          D.   drive   car   hour   one
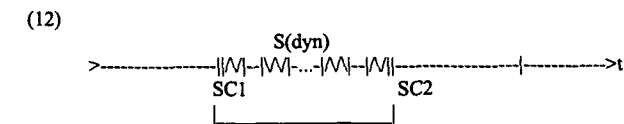   'Dang drove the car for one hour.'

     (b) malii   juu   savan   sòòng   'aathit
          M.   be.at   S.   two   week
          'Mali was in Savan for two weeks.'

(9) (a) dèèng   saj   sua.mong   nùng   khap   lot
          D.   use   hour   one   drive   car
          'Dang used up an hour driving the car.'
     (b) *dèèng   saj   sua.mong   nùng   cep   thòòng
          D.   use   hour   one   sore   belly
          *'Dang used up an hour having an upset stomach.'

Note that cep thòòng 'to have an upset stomach' behaves in all other respects like an activity verb. The difference is that its dynamicity is due to 'things happening' rather than anyone 'doing' anything. Thus, a sub-distinction of activities is based on presence of do' vs. happen' in the logical structure of the verb. A further distinction between do' vs. happen' activities emerges from the use of saw 'to cease' in a phase complement construction:

(10) (a) dèèng   saw   het.viak
          D.   cease   do.work
          i. 'Dang has given up working (i.e. will not work again).'
          ii. ?'Dang has stopped working (e.g. for today).'
     (b) dèèng   saw   cep   thòòng
          D.   cease   sore   belly
          i. ?'Dang has given up having an upset stomach.'
          ii. 'Dang's (condition of having an) upset stomach has ceased.'

(11)   saw V - V stops, prematurely (you would think there would be more V-ing than this).

Situation S can be dynamic by virtue of repeated habitual occurence of a sub-situation (quasi-iterative, cf. (4), above):

(12)

```
                        S(dyn)
>----------------||/\/|--|\/\|-...-|/\/|--|/\/||----------------|----------->t
                SC1                     SC2
                  |_____|
```

Finally, the preverbal retrospective marker haakòò puts SC1 into the immediate (relevant) past.

(13) (a) dèèng   haakòò   het.viak
          D.   retro   do.work
          'Dang just started working(, when...)'
     (b) malii   haakòò   khian
          M.   retro   write
          'Mali just started writing(, when...)'

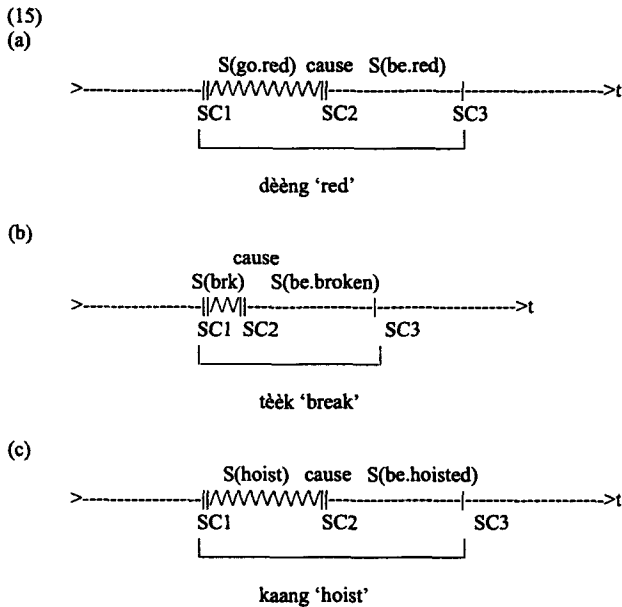The rest of the Lao predicates (including translation equivalents of English "states", "achievements" and "accomplishments" as well as a class of "passive accomplishments") have the following structure:

(14)

```
                    S(dyn) cause  S(sta)           (S)
>----------------||WWWWWVV||----------------|--------------------->t
                 SC1        SC2              SC3
                 L_____J
```

Dynamic-stative predicate structure

These verbs (including mii 'have', thaw 'old', dèèng 'red', taaj 'die', kaang 'be.hoisted', tèèk 'break', and certain activity verbs with referential objects (i.e. non-incorporated objects, as in saang hùan lang nan 'build that house') basically behave in the same way. Specific differences in semantic effect (i.e. from combination with various morphosyntactic marking) are due to specific differences in relative salience, and relative "shape" of the subparts of the structure in (14):

(15)
(a)

```
                    S(go.red) cause  S(be.red)
>----------------||WWWWWVV||----------------|--------------------->t
                 SC1        SC2              SC3
                 L_____J
```

dèèng 'red'

(b)

```
                      cause
                    S(brk)  S(be.broken)
>-----------------||/VVV||----------------|--------------------->t
                  SC1 SC2                 SC3
                  L_____J
```

tèèk 'break'

(c)

```
                    S(hoist) cause  S(be.hoisted)
>----------------||WWWWWVV||----------------|--------------------->t
                 SC1        SC2              SC3
                 L_____J
```

kaang 'hoist'

"Passive accomplishments" are so-called for the convenient reference to English. These are telic predicates, with S=O ambitransitivity (note the surface problem in (c) where zero anaphora of postverbal nominal produces actor-undergoer ambiguity):

(16) (a)   dèèng kaang mung   lèèw
            D.   hoist mosquito.net finish
            'Dang has hoisted the mosquito net.'
      (b)   mung   kaang lèèw
            mosquito.net hoist finish
            'The mosquito net has been hoisted.'
      (c)   dèèng kaang lèèw
            D.   hoist finish
            'Dang has hoisted (it).'
(17) (a)   paa   too   nii   taaj
            fish body this die
            i. 'This fish (has) died.'
            ii. 'This fish is dead.'

Since kamlang specifies that the profiled situation be dynamic, it picks out Sdyn, with inchoative the result:

(18) (a)   dèèng kamlang   taaj
            D.   prog   die
            'Dang is dying/about to die.'
      (b)   cia   kamlang   dèèng
            paper   prog   red
            'The paper is going red.'
      (c)   hùan lang nii   ñang kamlang   saang
            house clf   this still prog   build
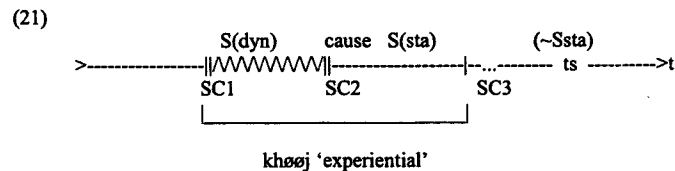   'This house is still being built.'

"Achievement" verbs often have more momentary dynamic situation Sdyn, as, for example, with break. Thus, break+prog may be prospective, inchoative (e.g. if breakage is in slow-motion film, or slow cracking from earthquake, etc), or iterative, according to the context:

(19) (a)   còòk nuaj nii   kamlang   tèèk
            glass clf   this prog   break
            i. 'This glass is about to break.' (e.g. toppling)
            ii. 'This glass is breaking.' (e.g. cracking before our eyes)
            iii. 'This glass is continually breaking.'

All these construals are simply alternatives for extending Sdyn across the time of speech, according to the meaning of kamlang 'prog'.

(20) (a)   khòòp.khua dèèng kamlang   mii   ngøn
            family   D.   prog   have   money
            'Dang's family is beginning to have money.'
      (b)   laakhaa   kamlang   phèèng
            price   prog   expensive
            'The prices are going up/beginning to get expensive.'
      (c)   phòò kamlang   thaw
            father prog   old
            'Father is getting old.'

For some of these verbs, SC2 is not at all salient (e.g. old), while for others it is (e.g. have). For the latter, the SC2 is separately lexicalised (as in English), as get.
Thus, the dynamicity of Sdyn is profiled whenever kamlang is used, and according to the "shape" of the particular verb's structure, the available construals differ. The D-S verbs remain the same in their basic internal structure.

(21)

```
              S(dyn)      cause  S(sta)        (~Ssta)
>----------------||MWWWWWW||----------------|--...------- ts ---------->t
              SC1          SC2             SC3
         |_____|
```

                    khøøj 'experiential'

(22) (a)   dèèng khøøj mii   ngøn
           D.   exp   have   money
           'Dang once had money.'
     (b)   dèèng khøøj taaj
           D.   exp   die
           'Dang has "ever" died.' (but was resuscitated)

The accomplishment verbs tend not to work with the experiential, but this is not a broad rule due to general logical or aspectual structure of the class:

(23) (a)   haw khøøj maang   hùan nii
           I   exp   demolish house this
           'I have "ever" demolished this house.' (it has since been rebuilt)
     (b)   *haw khøøj saang   hùan nii
           I   exp   build   house this
           '*I have "ever" built this house.'

As shown above, V sua-mong nùng 'V (for) one hour' profiles SC-SC. With D-S verbs it gets a choice, and so different verbs behave quite differently. Here we can separate accomplishments from states, where the preferred profile is over SC1-SC2 (Sdyn) and SC2 - SC3 (Ssta), respectively. Achievements may go either way:

(24) (a)   khòòj huu   sua-mong   nùng
           I   know hour   one
           'I knew it (have known it) for an hour.'
     (b)   'an   nii   dèèng sua-mong   nùng
           thing this red   hour   one
           i. 'This thing was red for an hour.'
           ii. !'This thing went red for an hour.'
     (c)   ?phòò khòòj thaw pii   nùng
           father I   old   year   one
           i. ?'My father was old for a year.'
           ii. ?'My father went old for a year.'
           (latter perhaps OK in science fiction context)

(d)   maak nii   suk   'aathit nùng
      fruit this ripe week one
      i. 'This fruit has been ripening for a week.'
      ii. 'This fruit took (takes) a week to ripen.'
      iii. 'This fruit has been ripe for a week.'

Problem with (d) is due to different concepts of correlation between 'stage-of-ripeness' and 'readiness-for-eating' for various fruits. Cf. durian (concern is with SCsta) vs. pawpaw (concern is with SCdyn).

D-S verbs cannot get a 'retire' reading for saw 'cease'. They only get the 'stop, unfinished' reading, applied to Sdyn (as for activities). The clearest examples are the accomplishment verbs:

(25) (a)   hùan lang nii   saw   saang
           house clf   this cease build
           'This house has (been) stopped being built.'
           'They've stopped building this house.'
     (b)   sin phèèn nii   malii saw   tam
           skirt clf   this M.   cease weave
           'Mali has stopped weaving this (unfinished) skirt.'

Here, Sdyn is 'interrupted' before its natural conclusion.

Compare typically momentaneous 'achievements', where saw greatly prefers an iterative reading, either where one thing can repeatedly go through SC2, (or) where participants are multiplied:

(26) (a)   còòk saw   tèèk
           glass cease break
           i. 'The glass has stopped breaking (over and over).'
           ii. 'The glasses have stopped breaking.'
     (b)   man saw   taaj
           it   cease die
           *'It has stopped dying (over and over).'
           'They have stopped dropping dead (e.g. frogs in a tub).'

Stative verbs are similar, in that Sdyn is profiled:

(27) (a)   khaw saw   mii   ngøn
           3p   cease have money
           'She has stopped accumulating money.'
     (b)   man saw   dèèng
           it   cease red
           'It has stopped going red (and one couldn't say it is "red" now).'

In conclusion:

The various verbal operators and modifiers examined here have had pretty consistent semantic values, and in their interaction with the internal structure of the verbs, have produced different semantic results. Separate class membership is quite distinct at the higher level, between ACTIVITY verbs and DYNAMIC-STATIVE verbs. Below that, the basic template of the D-S verb structure is consistent, with variation in template shape having semantic consequences. Comparing statives, accomplishments, and achievements, the differences are partly due to relative salience of components, for reasons of usage and presumably cultural familiarity. A classic D-S verb is 'die', since the central components Sdyn, SC, and Ssta are all important, and conceptually salient. Huu 'know' seems more oriented toward Ssta, while saang 'be.built' is more oriented toward Sdyn.

The broad range of D-S verbs in Lao basically share the same logical structure (in Dowty's sense), and aspectual structure (in Sasse's sense). Slight modifications can be made to these schemas, and the two can be successfully integrated, in complementary fashion. The differences between various D-S verbs in their behaviour and interpretation are not particularly clear-cut, and they basically fall out as a result of the specific shape of their instantiation of the general D-S schema.

Note
This paper was written with the extensive input of Latsamay Sylavong. I would like to thank Tony Diller, Bob Dixon, Matthew Dryer, Dominique Estival, Nick Evans, Hans-Jeurgen Sasse, and Anna Wierzbicka for helpful comments and suggestions in response to earlier presentations of this work. Faults remain my own.

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Grice, H. Paul 1975. "Logic and Conversation". In Cole, Peter and Jerry L. Morgan
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Rosen?
Sasse, Hans-Jürgen 1990, "Aspect and Aktionsart: a Reconciliation" in Carl Vetters
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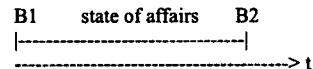
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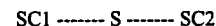
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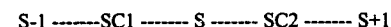
S-1 -------SC1 ------- S ------- SC2 ------- S+1

Figure 4
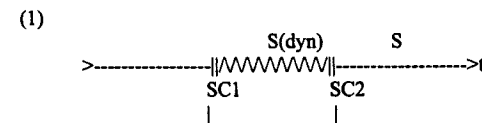
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```
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>----------------||WWWWWW||------------------>t
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                 L_____J
```

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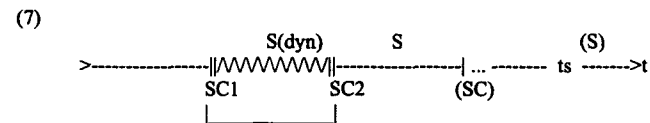
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         M.   exp   eat   meat   raw
         i. 'Mali has "ever" eaten raw meat.'
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         D.   exp   be.at V.
         i. 'Dang has "ever" lived in Vientiane.'
         ii. 'Dang is accustomed to living in Vientiane.'

(6) khøøj - 'experiential'; V has been the situation, 'at least once', and the resulting state of that situation is not the case now.

The (i) readings in (5) are the default readings, illustrated as follows:

(7)

```
                    S(dyn)        S                (S)
>----------------||/VWWWWVV||----------------| ... --------- ts ------->t
                SC1         SC2           (SC)
                └_____┘
```

A postposed temporal phrase, for example nùng sua.mong 'one hour', is construed as being the length of time between SC1 and SC2 (in (1)), i.e. the duration of the activity's progression:

(8) (a) dèèng khap   lot   sua.mong   nùng
         D.   drive car   hour   one
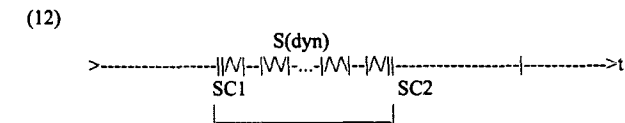   'Dang drove the car for one hour.'

    (b) malii juu   savan   sòòng   'aathit
         M.   be.at S.   two   week
         'Mali was in Savan for two weeks.'

(9) (a) dèèng saj   sua.mong   nùng   khap   lot
         D.   use   hour   one   drive car
         'Dang used up an hour driving the car.'

    (b) *dèèng saj   sua.mong   nùng   cep   thòòng
         D.   use   hour   one   sore   belly
         *'Dang used up an hour having an upset stomach.'

Note that cep thòòng 'to have an upset stomach' behaves in all other respects like an activity verb. The difference is that its dynamicity is due to 'things happening' rather than anyone 'doing' anything. Thus, a sub-distinction of activities is based on presence of do' vs. happen' in the logical structure of the verb. A further distinction between do' vs. happen' activities emerges from the use of saw 'to cease' in a phase complement construction:

(10) (a) dèèng saw   het.viak
          D.   cease do.work
          i. 'Dang has given up working (i.e. will not work again).'
          ii. ?'Dang has stopped working (e.g. for today).'

     (b) dèèng saw   cep   thòòng
          D.   cease sore   belly
          i. ?'Dang has given up having an upset stomach.'
          ii. 'Dang's (condition of having an) upset stomach has ceased.'

(11) saw V - V stops, prematurely (you would think there would be more V-ing than this).
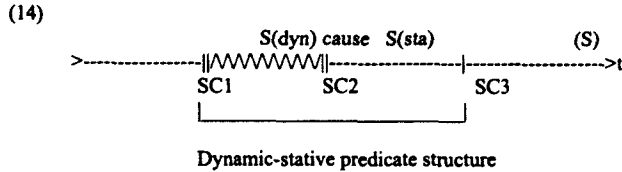
Situation S can be dynamic by virtue of repeated habitual occurence of a sub-situation (quasi-iterative, cf. (4), above):

(12)

```
                        S(dyn)
>----------------||/\|--|VV|-...-|/\\|--|/V||----------------|---------->t
                SC1                    SC2
                └_____┘
```
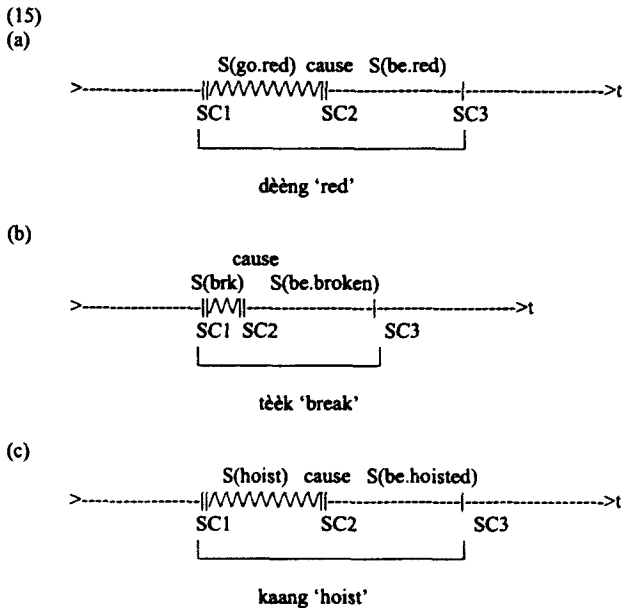
Finally, the preverbal retrospective marker haakòò puts SC1 into the immediate (relevant) past.

(13) (a) dèèng haakòò het.viak
          D.   retro do.work
          'Dang just started working(, when...)'

     (b) malii haakòò khian
          M.   retro write
          'Mali just started writing(, when...)'

The rest of the Lao predicates (including translation equivalents of English "states", "achievements" and "accomplishments" as well as a class of "passive accomplishments") have the following structure:

(14)

```
                    S(dyn) cause S(sta)            (S)
>----------------||MWWWWW||------------------|------------------->t
                  SC1          SC2          SC3
                  L_____|
```

Dynamic-stative predicate structure

These verbs (including mii 'have', thaw 'old', dèèng 'red', taaj 'die', kaang 'be.hoisted', tèèk 'break', and certain activity verbs with referential objects (i.e. non-incorporated objects, as in saang hùan lang nan 'build that house') basically behave in the same way. Specific differences in semantic effect (i.e. from combination with various morphosyntactic marking) are due to specific differences in relative salience, and relative "shape" of the subparts of the structure in (14):

(15)
(a)

```
                  S(go.red) cause S(be.red)
>----------------||MWWWWWWW||--------------|------------------->t
                  SC1          SC2        SC3
                  L_____|
```

dèèng 'red'

(b)

```
                        cause
                  S(brk) S(be.broken)
>----------------||MW||-------------------|------------------->t
                  SC1 SC2              SC3
                  L_____|
```

tèèk 'break'

(c)

```
                  S(hoist) cause S(be.hoisted)
>----------------||MWWWWWW||---------------|------------------->t
                  SC1          SC2        SC3
                  L_____|
```

kaang 'hoist'

"Passive accomplishments" are so-called for the convenient reference to English. These are telic predicates, with S=O ambitransitivity (note the surface problem in (c) where zero anaphora of postverbal nominal produces actor-undergoer ambiguity):

(16)	(a)	dèèng	kaang	mung		lèèw
		D.	hoist	mosquito.net		finish
		'Dang has hoisted the mosquito net.'				
	(b)	mung		kaang	lèèw	
		mosquito.net		hoist	finish	
		'The mosquito net has been hoisted.'				
	(c)	dèèng	kaang	lèèw		
		D.	hoist	finish		
		'Dang has hoisted (it).'				
(17)	(a)	paa	too	nii	taaj	
		fish	body	this	die	
		i. 'This fish (has) died.'				
		ii. 'This fish is dead.'				

Since kamlang specifies that the profiled situation be dynamic, it picks out Sdyn, with inchoative the result:

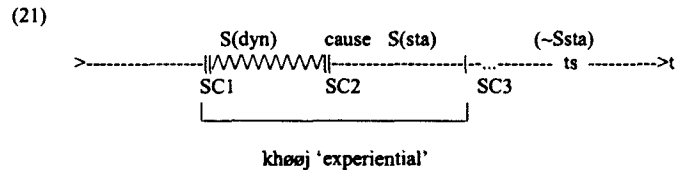| (18)	(a)	dèèng	kamlang		taaj	
		D.	prog		die	
		'Dang is dying/about to die.'				
	(b)	cia	kamlang		dèèng	
		paper	prog		red	
		'The paper is going red.'				
	(c)	hùan	lang	nii	ñang	kamlang	saang
		house	clf	this	still	prog	build
		'This house is still being built.'					

"Achievement" verbs often have more momentary dynamic situation Sdyn, as, for example, with break. Thus, break+prog may be prospective, inchoative (e.g. if breakage is in slow-motion film, or slow cracking from earthquake, etc), or iterative, according to the context:

(19)	(a)	còòk	nuaj	nii	kamlang	tèèk
		glass	clf	this	prog	break
		i. 'This glass is about to break.' (e.g. toppling)				
		ii. 'This glass is breaking.' (e.g. cracking before our eyes)				
		iii. 'This glass is continually breaking.'				

All these construals are simply alternatives for extending Sdyn across the time of speech, according to the meaning of kamlang 'prog'.

(20)	(a)	khòòp.khua	dèèng	kamlang		mii	ngøn
		family	D.	prog		have	money
		'Dang's family is beginning to have money.'					
	(b)	laakhaa		kamlang	phèèng		
		price		prog	expensive		
		'The prices are going up/beginning to get expensive.'					
	(c)	phòò	kamlang		thaw		
		father	prog		old		
		'Father is getting old.'					

For some of these verbs, SC2 is not at all salient (e.g. old), while for others it is (e.g. have). For the latter, the SC2 is separately lexicalised (as in English), as get.
Thus, the dynamicity of Sdyn is profiled whenever kamlang is used, and according to the "shape" of the particular verb's structure, the available construals differ. The D-S verbs remain the same in their basic internal structure.

(21)

```
          S(dyn)        cause  S(sta)        (~Ssta)
>----------------||WWWWWWW||------------------|--...-------- ts --------->t
          SC1            SC2           SC3
          |_____|
```

                      khøøj 'experiential'

(22)   (a)   dèèng khøøj mii   ngøn
             D.   exp   have   money
             'Dang once had money.'
       (b)   dèèng khøøj taaj
             D.   exp   die
             'Dang has "ever" died.' (but was resuscitated)

The accomplishment verbs tend not to work with the experiential, but this is not a broad rule due to general logical or aspectual structure of the class:

(23)   (a)   haw   khøøj maang   hùan   nii
             I   exp   demolish   house this
             'I have "ever" demolished this house.' (it has since been rebuilt)
       (b)   *haw khøøj saang   hùan   nii
             I   exp   build   house this
             '*I have "ever" built this house.'

As shown above, V sua-mong nùng 'V (for) one hour' profiles SC-SC. With D-S verbs it gets a choice, and so different verbs behave quite differently. Here we can separate accomplishments from states, where the preferred profile is over SC1-SC2 (Sdyn) and SC2 - SC3 (Ssta), respectively. Achievements may go either way:

(24)   (a)   khòòj huu   sua-mong   nùng
             I   know hour   one
             'I knew it (have known it) for an hour.'
       (b)   'an   nii   dèèng sua-mong   nùng
             thing this red   hour   one
             i. 'This thing was red for an hour.'
             ii. !'This thing went red for an hour.'
       (c)   ?phòò khòòj thaw pii   nùng
             father I   old   year   one
             i. ?'My father was old for a year.'
             ii. ?'My father went old for a year.'
             (latter perhaps OK in science fiction context)

(d)   maak nii   suk   'aathit nùng
      fruit this ripe   week   one
      i. 'This fruit has been ripening for a week.'
      ii. 'This fruit took (takes) a week to ripen.'
      iii. 'This fruit has been ripe for a week.'

Problem with (d) is due to different concepts of correlation between 'stage-of-ripeness' and 'readiness-for-eating' for various fruits. Cf. durian (concern is with SCsta) vs. pawpaw (concern is with SCdyn).

D-S verbs cannot get a 'retire' reading for saw 'cease'. They only get the 'stop, unfinished' reading, applied to Sdyn (as for activities). The clearest examples are the accomplishment verbs:

(25)   (a)   hùan lang nii   saw   saang
             house clf   this cease build
             'This house has (been) stopped being built.'
             'They've stopped building this house.'
       (b)   sin   phèèn nii   malii saw   tam
             skirt clf   this M.   cease weave
             'Mali has stopped weaving this (unfinished) skirt.'

Here, Sdyn is 'interrupted' before its natural conclusion.

Compare typically momentaneous 'achievements', where saw greatly prefers an iterative reading, either where one thing can repeatedly go through SC2, (or) where participants are multiplied:

(26)   (a)   còòk saw   tèèk
             glass cease break
             i. 'The glass has stopped breaking (over and over).'
             ii. 'The glasses have stopped breaking.'
       (b)   man   saw   taaj
             it   cease die
             *'It has stopped dying (over and over).'
             'They have stopped dropping dead (e.g. frogs in a tub).'

Stative verbs are similar, in that Sdyn is profiled:

(27)   (a)   khaw saw   mii   ngøn
             3p   cease have   money
             'She has stopped accumulating money.'
       (b)   man   saw   dèèng
             it   cease red
             'It has stopped going red (and one couldn't say it is "red" now).'

In conclusion:

The various verbal operators and modifiers examined here have had pretty consistent semantic values, and in their interaction with the internal structure of the verbs, have produced different semantic results. Separate class membership is quite distinct at the higher level, between ACTIVITY verbs and DYNAMIC-STATIVE verbs. Below that, the basic template of the D-S verb structure is consistent, with variation in template shape having semantic consequences. Comparing statives, accomplishments, and achievements, the differences are partly due to relative salience of components, for reasons of usage and presumably cultural familiarity. A classic D-S verb is 'die', since the central components Sdyn, SC, and Ssta are all important, and conceptually salient. Huu 'know' seems more oriented toward Ssta, while saang 'be.built' is more oriented toward Sdyn.

The broad range of D-S verbs in Lao basically share the same logical structure (in Dowty's sense), and aspectual structure (in Sasse's sense). Slight modifications can be made to these schemas, and the two can be successfully integrated, in complementary fashion. The differences between various D-S verbs in their behaviour and interpretation are not particularly clear-cut, and they basically fall out as a result of the specific shape of their instantiation of the general D-S schema.

Note

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