

The morphology and syntax of Seediq focus

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1 Introduction

The Seediq language of Taiwan is spoken in the mountainous areas of Nantou County and in coastal areas of Hualien County, stretching from central Taiwan to the Pacific coast.¹ Seediq is an Atayalic language, and the Seediq tribe is commonly referred to as a subgroup of the Atayal people. Consequently, figures as to the number of speakers vary considerably, ranging from 5,000 (Chen 1992) to around 20,000 (Ferrell 1969). The dialect described in this paper is the Paran dialect, also referred to as the *Tgdaya* (literally 'uphill') dialect by speakers of other dialects. It is spoken in the Seediq-speaking areas of Nantou County, its original centre being the village of Paran (Wushe in Chinese).

2 The morphology of focus

Seediq has basically a four-focus system. The foci are the following: AF (Actor Focus, indicating that an actor is clause subject), PF (Patient Focus, indicating that a patient is clause subject), LF (Locative Focus, indicating that a location or a partially affected patient is clause subject) and IF (Instrument Focus, indicating that an instrument, a beneficiary, an object given or the patient of a causative is clause subject). These forms can in turn appear in various moods and tenses, as illustrated in Table 1.² The abbreviations in the left column refer to the following moods and tenses:³

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² Certain forms are rather uncommon and possibly no longer productive. I have, however, included all forms attested in my corpus. As concerns the forms given under IF, I am grateful to Lin Hsui-Hsu for

PRES stands for Present Tense, the unmarked form of the verb, also the one used if preceded by an auxiliary bearing temporal information. The reference of a PRES verb is not always present tense, however. With PF it has future reference in isolation, and with other non-AF foci it is tense-neutral in meaning, i.e. it can have present, past or future interpretation, depending on context.⁴

IMP stands for Imperative, the form used in commands, and also the form used immediately following the sentential negator *ini*.

PRET stands for Preterite Tense. This is the form of the verb used to refer to a punctual action at a time earlier than a certain reference point — note that it does not necessarily refer to a time earlier than the time of utterance, so it is an instance of relative tense rather than absolute tense. This category can only be used to refer to a completed event in the (relative) past, and never to indicate a progressive action in the past, nor a perfective view of a (relative) future event. Thus, this tense/aspect category necessarily combines the meaning of relative past tense with an aspectual meaning of perfectivity. Neither of these elements can be ignored.⁵

IMMED FUT and DIST FUT stand for Immediate Future and Distant Future respectively. These are only distinguished in AF, and only for some verbs — thus, verbs which form AF PRES in *m-* have no Immediate Future form. Immediate Future often has connotations of an action being scheduled and planned in advance, whereas the Distant Future has implications of an action taking place at some indefinite time in the future. The Seediq future appears to be an absolute rather than a relative tense. At any rate, I have not succeeded in eliciting examples where a future form is used in an absolute past context.

Note also that the forms listed as FUT for LF and PF are very specialised in meaning (see §2.2 and §2.3) and are certainly not prototypical future forms. They are listed as FUT simply to allow maximum symmetry in the table.

IRR stands for Irrealis, the verb form used for warnings or suggestions. Its meaning varies from something like 'Let us...' to 'Careful! X might happen!', depending on context. The most commonly seen form is PF IRR. AF IRR is very uncommon and is perhaps not productive. IRR is the category referred to in Holmer (1996) as Subjunctive.

The table above illustrates the various forms of the Seediq verb. The contemporary use of these focus forms is, however, not necessarily related simply to focus, but also has some connotations of aspect. Moreover, there are some other points which deserve comments. The details of usage of each focus will be presented in the following sections.

having brought certain facts to my attention which have led to a more complete picture. Moreover, while the exact status of some of the forms given in this table is not certain, the table includes major revisions of inaccuracies and mistakes present in Holmer (1996).

³ Another abbreviation given in the table is RED-, which stands for reduplication of the initial consonant of the root.

⁴ Such examples will be translated in this paper as English present tense so as not to have to choose a marked tense category for the translation.

⁵ Clearly, then, neither 'tense' nor 'aspect' is a particularly suitable term to describe this category. I choose the term 'tense' because there is a usage of focus itself which behaves more prototypically like aspect (see §2.2 and §2.3).

Table 1: The Seediq focus affixes

	AF	PF	LF	IF
PRES	-m-/m-	-un	-an	s-
IMP	∅	-i	-i	-ani
PRET	mn-/mn-	-n-	-n-an	sn- (?)
IMMEDFUT	m-			s-
		RED-un	RED-an	
DIST FUT	mp-			∅/p- (?)
IRR	m- -a	-o	-e	-ane/-ano

2.1 Actor focus

The distinctive AF morpheme is an *m*, appearing either as an infix (1a) or as a prefix (1b). It is not entirely predictable which verbs have an infix *-m-* [um] and which have a prefix *m-* [mu],⁶ although verbs with an active meaning tend to have the infix form and stative verbs tend to have the prefix form. There is even one transitive/unaccusative pair which differs only in this respect (1c,d). However, such examples are very rare (I have found no such other minimal pair), so it appears that the active/stative distinction is no longer productive in Seediq, although it still to a certain extent determines whether *-m-* is realised as a prefix or an infix with a given verb. Some verbs, such as *beebu* 'to beat', do not have an *-m-* in the AF form. Adjectives, which behave syntactically as verbs to a certain extent, do not have any *-m-* form either.

- (1)a. *q-m-alang* [qumálaN] (< *qalang*)
'to fence in'
- b. *m-sepi* [musépi] (< *sepi*)
'to dream'
- c. *t-m-utuy* [tumútuy] (< *tutuy*)
'to wake someone'
- d. *m-tutuy* [mutútuy] (< *tutuy*)
'to awaken'

The AF IMP form is given in Table 1 as a \emptyset -affix, i.e. as being identical to the verb root. This holds for both action verbs and process verbs (2a). However, adjectives have an imperative or negatable form beginning in *k-/q-* (2b,c).⁷

- (2)a. *Ini imah sino Lubi.*
NEG (AF.IMP)-drink wine Lubi
'Lubi doesn't drink wine.'

⁶ This paper follows the orthographic principles outlined in Li (1992). Pre-stress vowels are predictable and therefore not written. The orthographic pre-stress consonant clusters are resyllabified with an epenthetic vowel, which is realised as [u] unless separated from the stressed vowel by [ʔ] or [h], in which case it copies the stressed vowel. For more details see Yang (1976); Holmer (1996).

⁷ The choice of *k-* or *q-* depends on whether the root contains the phoneme *q*. If it does, the prefix is *q-*. If not, the prefix is *k-*.

- b. *Ini k-paru sapah -mu.*
 NEG IMP-big house 1SG.GEN.
 'My house is not big.'
- c. *K-paru hari p-n-atis -su!*
 IMP-big a.bit -PF.PRET-write⁸ 2SG
 'Write a bit bigger!' (lit. 'Let that which you write be a bit bigger!')

2.2 Patient focus

In isolation, PF PRES is interpreted as having a future meaning (3a). However, it may be combined with the past tense auxiliary *wada*, giving a past tense interpretation (3b). When PF is used, it always has perfective connotations, with the action being viewed as a whole rather than as an ongoing process.

- (3)a. *Mah-un -mu sino kiya.*
 drink-PF 1SG.GEN wine that
 'I'll drink up that wine.'
- b. *Wada -mu mah-un sino kiya.*
 PRET 1SG.GEN drink-PF wine that
 'I drank up that wine.'

PF FUT is given in Table 1 as reduplication of the initial consonant combined with the *-un* suffix. While this treatment allows a maximum symmetry within the table, it should be noted that this form emphasises the truth value of the proposition (4).

- (4)a. *Biq-un -su -mu.*
 give-PF 2SG.NOM 1SG.GEN.
 'I'll give it to you.'
- b. *B-biq-un -su -mu!*
 -FUT-give-PF 2SG.NOM 1SG.GEN
 'I will give it to you!'

PF PRET (formed by the *-n-* infix) normally refers to the product of an action (5a,b), and in many cases is primarily nominal in nature. Moreover, not all verbs have a PF PRET form (5c). Thus, the use of PF PRET is not directly parallel to the use of PF PRES with a past tense auxiliary (5d).⁹

- (5)a. *hlama t-n-ekan*
 rice.cake -PF.PRET-pound
 'pounded rice-cake'
- b. *t-n-abus*
 -PF.PRET-winnow
 'chaff'

⁸ -X- in a gloss (such as -PF.PRET-) indicates that the morpheme concerned is an infix.

⁹ Thus, the meaning of PF.PRET is in this case less obviously temporal than aspectual. However, given that *-n-* and *wada* cannot cooccur, there is motivation to treat them as instances of the same category.

- c. **N-imah -mu sino nii.*
 PF.PRET-drink 1SG.GEN wine this
 (intended reading: 'I have drunk up this wine.')
- d. *Wada -mu mah-un sino nii.*
 PRET 1SG.GEN drink-PF wine this
 'I drank up this wine.'

2.3 Locative focus

LF PRES is normally interpreted as a locative focus when used in isolation (6a). However, LF PRET does not necessarily have a locative connotations, although it may (6b). LF PRET is often used as a straight passive (6c), usually with a partitive or imperfective meaning, in contrast to the completive or perfective interpretation of PF with a preterite auxiliary (6d).

- (6)a. *Tkan-an -mu beras duhung nii.*
 pound-LF 1SG.GEN rice mortar this
 'I pound rice in this mortar.'
- b. *P-n-uq-an -mu damac pngerax kiya.*
 -PRET-eat-LF 1SG.GEN food plate that
 'I ate food from that bowl.'
- c. *P-n-uq-an -mu damac nii.*
 -PRET-eat-LF 1SG.GEN food this
 'I ate this food (there may be some left).'
- d. *Wada -mu puq-un damac nii.*
 PRET 1SG.GEN eat-PF food this
 'I ate up this food (there's none left).'

LF FUT is entirely nominal in meaning, and refers to the possibility of an action occurring. It is usually used together with the verbs *niqan* 'there is' and *uka* 'there is not'.

- (7) *Uka m-mah-an sino kiya.*
 not.have -FUT-drink-LF wine that
 'That wine is undrinkable.'

LF IRR is listed as *-e* while PF IRR is listed as *-o*. The reason for this is that *-e* sometimes has partitive/imperfective connotations as opposed to completive/perfective connotations for *-o* (see 8a,b).¹⁰ However, *-e* and *-o* are, according to my consultants, often freely interchangeable (8c).

- (8)a. *Mah-e -ta sino...*
 drink-LF.IRR 1PL.INC.GEN wine
 'Let's drink some wine...' (line of a song)

¹⁰ This classification also tallies well with the cognate forms *-ay* and *-aw* in Atayal (Egerod 1965; Huang 1995). Note, however, that *-ay* in the Mayrinax dialect of Atayal may also be used in AF (Huang 1995:79-81), whereas this does not occur in Seediq.

- b. *Mah-o -mu sino nii.*
 drink-PF.IRR 1SG.GEN wine this
 'I might drink up this wine (so if you want any, drink it now!).'
- c. *Qta-i hari! Mah-e / mah-o -daha sino kiya!*
 see-PF.IMP a bit drink-LF.IRR drink-PF.IRR 3PL.GEN wine that
 'Careful! They might drink that wine!'

LF IMP is formed by suffixation of *-i*. Note that this form is identical to the form for PF IMP. Thus, the PF/LF distinction is not realised in the imperative or negatable mood, as illustrated by examples (9a–d).

- (9)a. *Ini -mu tkan-i beras nii.*
 NEG 1SG.GEN pound-PF.IMP rice this
 'I haven't pounded this rice.'
- b. *Ini -mu tkan-i beras duhung nii.*
 NEG 1SG.GEN pound-LF.IMP rice mortar this
 'I do not pound rice in this mortar.'
- c. *Ini -mu puq-i damac nii.*
 NEG 1SG.GEN eat-PF.IMP food this
 'I haven't eaten this food.'
- d. *Ini -mu puq-i damac pngerax kiya.*
 NEG 1SG.GEN eat-LF.IMP food plate that
 'I haven't eaten food from that plate.'

This lack of distinction between LF and PF IMP is shared with the closely related language Mayrinax Atayal (Huang 1995).

2.4 Instrument focus

The tense/mood neutral form of IF involves the prefixation of an *s*-morpheme. This morpheme does not recur in any of the other forms of IF, with the possible exception of IF PRET, if the form *sn-* given in Table 1 is to be considered the regular IF PRET affix. While IF prototypically indicates that the clause subject is an instrument or beneficiary, a couple of verbs, notably *s-qada* 'IF-discard' (cf. *q-m-ada* '-AF-discard') and *sa-apa* 'IF-carry' (cf. *m-apa* 'AF-carry') use IF forms to create a straight passive, parallel in function to a PF form for other verbs (10).¹¹

- (10)a. *S-qada -na ka qyqeya.*
 IF-throw.away 3SG.GEN NOM thing
 'He throws the thing away.'
- b. *Sa-apa -mu laqi kiya.*
 IF-carry 1SG.GEN child that
 'I carry that child.'

The IF IMP suffix is *-ani* ((11a); compare with affirmative (11b)). However, it appears that some verbs use the LF/PF IMP form *-i* in alternation with or instead of *-ani* ((11c);

¹¹ I thank Naomi Tsukida for having brought this fact to my attention.

compare with affirmative (11d)) when the meaning is clearly instrumental. Interestingly enough, if *-ani* is used with such verbs, the implication is often benefactive rather than instrumental (see (11e)).

- (11)a. *Ini -daha dmt-ani ido damac kiya.*
 NEG 3PL.GEN eat.with-IF.IMP rice food that
 'They don't eat that food to accompany rice.'
- b. *S-damac -daha ido damac kiya.*
 IF-eat.with 3PL.GEN rice food that
 'They eat that food to accompany rice.'
- c. *Ini -mu lbu-i klabuy nii.*
 NEG 1SG.GEN wrap-PF/LF.IMP paper this
 'I don't wrap (things) with this paper.'
- d. *S-labu -mu klabuy gaga.*
 IF-wrap 1SG.GEN paper that
 'I wrap (things) with that paper.'
- e. *Ini -mu lby-ani.*
 NEG 1SG.GEN wrap-IF.IMP
 'I haven't wrapped it up for him/her.'

This seems to indicate that the situation is more complex than it appears at first sight. If this contrast can be shown to be systematic, it is possible that the imperative/negatable mood displays a distinction between a clearly instrumental focus and a clearly benefactive focus, a distinction which I have not found with other mood/tense forms (it does not hold for all verbs, as can be seen from (11a)).

IF PRET is given as *sn-* (12a,b). This form is actually quite rare in normal usage, and it often alternates with the PRET forms of other (non-actor/passive) foci, such as PF PRET (12c) or LF PRET (12d). This does not, however, change the basic configuration of the clause: (12d) is still an IF clause in that the instrument is subject.

- (12)a. *S-n-damac -daha ido ciga qcurux nii.*
 IF-PRET-with 3PL.GEN rice yesterday fish this
 'They ate this fish with rice yesterday.'
- b. *S-n-qada -na Pawan qyqeya nii.*
 IF-PRET-throw.away 3SG.GEN Pawan thing this
 'Pawan threw away this thing.'
- c. *Q-n-ada -na Pawan qyqeya nii.*
 -PF.PRET-throw.away 3SG.GEN Pawan thing this
 'Pawan threw away this thing.'
- d. *S-n-bet-an -mu ricah btakan nii.¹²*
 -PRET-beat-LF 1SG.GEN plum bamboo this
 'I used this bamboo pole to knock down plums (from the tree).'

¹² This example and its paraphrases ((13a,b), (16c), (36a,b)) are inspired by a paraphrase in Chang 1997b. However, I have adapted the word order in a couple of the examples to what my principal consultant feels is the least marked order.

IF FUT is given as either *s-*, \emptyset or *p-*. The simplest option is to use *s-* as a tense-neutral form (13a), or, as with PRET, to borrow a form from another focus, such as PF PRES, which has a future interpretation ((13b), see also (15c)). Again, this does not affect the configuration of the clause. The \emptyset form seems to be some kind of nominalisation rather than a regular IF FUT, although it is used in contexts where an IF form, particularly FUT, would be expected (13c). The status of the *p-* prefix (not to be confused with a causative *p-*)¹³ is not clear either (13d), although its use seems to be similar.

- (13)a. *S-sebuc -mu ricah btakan nii.*
 IF-beat 1SG.GEN plum bamboo this
 'I am knocking/will knock the plums out of the tree with this bamboo pole.'
- b. *Sbet-un -mu ricah btakan nii.*
 beat-PF 1SG.GEN plum bamboo this
 'I will knock the plums out of the tree with this bamboo.'
- c. *Ngal-un -daha sudu tabu -daha dapa.*
 take-PF 3PL.GEN grass fodder/feed.IF(?) 3PL.GEN cow
 'They take hay to feed cows.'/'They take hay as their cow-fodder.'
- d. *P-tabu -mu dapa sudu `nii.*
 IF.FUT(?)=feed 1SG.GEN cow grass this
 'I shall feed cows with this grass.'

IF IRR is given as *-anel-ano* (14). The former (*-ane*) is the regular reflex of forms appearing in other Atayalic languages, such as *-anay* in Mayrinax Atayal (Huang 1995). The status of *-ano* in Seediq is more unusual. According to my consultants, it can be used optionally in place of *-ane*.

- (14)a. *Qta-i hari! Sbt-ane/sbt-ano -daha laqi qhuni kiya!*
 look-PF.IMP a.bit beat-IF.IRR 3PL.GEN child wood that
 'Careful! They might beat a child with that piece of wood!'
- b. *Qta-i hari! Qda-ane/qda-ano -daha lukus -su!*
 look-PF.IMP a.bit discard-IF.IRR 3PL.GEN clothes 2SG.GEN
 'Careful! They might throw away your clothes!'

The alternation of *-ane* and *-ano* is reminiscent of the alternation between LF IRR *-e* and PF IRR *-o*, and it is quite likely that *-ano* is formed by analogy to the latter (taking the *-an* suffixed form to be a derived stem to which either *-e* or *-o* can be affixed). This is probably strengthened by the fact that IF IMP is *-ani*, which superficially also resembles the PF *-i* morpheme suffixed to a stem ending in *-an*. In view of this, we would expect the *-an* morpheme to occur in other types of formation as well. This is in fact the case. Thus, a parallel PF form for *q-m-ada* 'to throw away' is *qda-an-un*, comprising both the *-an* suffix and the *-un* suffix (15a,b). This form has an unambiguous future interpretation, typical of PF PRES, which is normally lacking in the simple IF form (see (15c)). In fact, even a 'double' LF form *q-n-da-an-an* is attested, where LF *-an* is affixed to a form which already contains the *-an* suffix (15d).

¹³ The unmarked causative in Seediq is AF in function, and could thus not cooccur with the GEN clitic *-mu*. Non-actor-focussed forms of the causative combine the *p-* with the focus morphology concerned (e.g. *p-un* 'CAUS--PF'; *p-an* 'CAUS--LF'; *s-p-* 'IF-CAUS.')

- (15)a. *Qda-an-un -na kusun ka qyqeya kiya.*
 discard-AN-PF 3SG.GEN tomorrow NOM thing that
 'He will throw away that thing tomorrow.'
- b. *Pa-an-un -mu laqi kiya.*
 carry-AN-PF 1SG.GEN child that
 'I'll carry that child.'
- c. *Sa-apa -mu laqi kiya.*
 IF-carry 1SG.GEN child that
 'I carry that child.'
- d. *Q-n-da-an-an -daha huling kdere kiya.*
 -PRET-discard-AN-LF 3PL.GEN dog cliff that
 'They threw a dog over that cliff.'

Thus, the affixes in use with IF cannot be subsumed into a regular pattern, rather, they appear to be the result of two different systems operating simultaneously; one following regular Atayalic reflexes, and the other overgeneralising parts of these by treating the *-an*-section in IF forms as an intermediate stem-forming suffix to which further suffixation is possible. It is possible that this is the result of some kind of change which the verb system in Seediq is undergoing.

3. The syntax of Seediq

3.1 Word order

Seediq is basically a VOS language, although a certain amount of word order variation does occur. A full NP subject typically appears clause-finally (16a), optionally followed by a time adverb (but note that such an adverb may also occur immediately after the verb). In a passive (i.e. non-AF) clause, the Agent usually precedes the subject (16b). However, it is also rather common for the Agent to be postposed after the subject, particularly if there are more than two arguments in the clause (16c).

- (16)a. *M-n-imah sino Pawan.*
 -AF-PRET-drink wine Pawan
 'Pawan drank wine.'
- b. *Wada puq-un qolic ka damac -su.*
 PRET eat-PF rat NOM food 2SG.GEN
 'Your food was eaten up by rats.'
- c. *S-sebuc -na ricah ka btakan Pawan.*
 IF-strike 3SG.GEN plum NOM bamboo Pawan
 'Pawan strikes plums (down from the tree) with a bamboo.'

Another possible word order is SVO, which is derived by topicalisation of the subject to pre-verbal position. Such a topic may be, but need not be, followed by a topic marker *ge*.

- (17) *Boyak ge m-ntena babuy (heya).*
 boar TOP AF-resemble pig 3SG.NOM.LONG
 'A wild boar is similar to a pig.'/'A wild boar, it is similar to a pig.'

Auxiliaries, negators and subordinators precede the verb, in the following order: subordinator, tense-marker, negator, modal or Aktionsart-auxiliary and main verb.

3.2 Arguments

Indefinite/non-individuated nouns are not case-marked in Paran Seediq.¹⁴ However, definite agents in passive clauses (including proper nouns) are obligatorily preceded by the agent marker¹⁵ *na* (which can conveniently be described as a genitive/ergative¹⁶ determiner). Additionally, subjects of both active and passive clauses are optionally preceded by the subject marker¹⁷ *ka* (which can, for its part, be described as a nominative determiner).

- (18)a. *Wada puq-un *(na) Pawan (ka) bunga -su.*
 PRET eat-PF GEN Pawan NOM sweet.potato 2SG.GEN
 'Pawan ate up your sweet potato.'
- b. *M-n-ekan bunga (ka) Pawan.*
 AF-PRET-eat sweet.potato NOM Pawan
 'Pawan ate (some) sweet potato.'

Pronoun morphology, on the other hand, is richer. Seediq has two sets of pronouns, so-called long pronouns, which occur in the same position in the clause as full NP's, and clitic pronouns, which appear cliticised to the first verbal element in the clause (be it a subordinator, an auxiliary, a negator or a main verb). In modern Paran Seediq, long pronouns can distinguish two cases:¹⁸ Nominative and Genitive. Genitive long pronouns are primarily used as possessive predicates (19a). Nominative long pronouns can be used either as subjects (19b) or objects (19c), for all focus types.

- (19)a. *Naku ka sapah nii.*
 1SG.GEN.LONG NOM house this
 'This house is mine.'

14 In the Taroko dialect spoken in Hualien County, however, nouns referring to humans do have an object case suffix: *-an*.

15 This marker is homophonous with the third person singular genitive clitic *na*. Often it is impossible to determine which is which in a given context. In doubtful cases I have glossed *na* as the clitic. However, the clitic always directly follows an auxiliary verb if there is one, so in 18a we are clearly dealing with the agent marker.

16 I adhere to traditional terminology in referring to this case as 'genitive' (GEN), although I am well aware that its function together with a verb is undeniably that of ergative case. Whether or not this implies that Seediq is an ergative language (as suggested for other focus languages — including the very closely related language Atayal — in an increasing number of works, see Huang 1994; Starosta 1986; Starosta 1997) is a matter of debate, and largely depends on how we choose to define terms such as 'ergativity' and 'transitivity'. Certainly, Seediq does have clear ergative characteristics, although other features seem to place it almost equally clearly in the accusative camp. I shall not address this question here.

17 It has a wider use, in fact, since it can be used to indicate high individuation of other NP's as well, although its most common function is as a subject marker.

18 Specific object/oblique pronouns are not used today in the Paran dialect (as opposed to the situation in the Taroko dialect), except in deliberately archaic speech.

- b. *Q-m-n-ita -ku Pawan (yaku).*
 -AF-PRET-see 1SG.NOM Pawan 1SG.NOM.LONG
 'I saw Pawan.'
- c. *Q-m-n-ita -ku heya.*
 -AF-PRET-see 1SG.NOM 3SG.NOM.LONG
 'I saw her/him.'

Clitic pronouns also distinguish two cases: Nominative and Genitive, although the distinction has fused for most persons. There is also a small set of portmanteau clitics which combine one agent with one patient. If a desired configuration does not exist as a portmanteau form, two pronouns are chosen from the table. GEN clitics are used for agents of passives (non-AF), and NOM clitics are used for subjects, irrespective of the focus of the verb. The entire set of pronouns is illustrated in Table 2.

Recent research (Chang 1997a) has suggested that the clitic pronouns should be viewed as agreement morphemes instead. There are certain advantages to this suggestion, as it explains the co-occurrence of clitic pronouns with coreferent clausemate long pronouns or NP's, as well as other problematic facts. At the same time, this view is not entirely unproblematic, since other types of suffixation in Seediq regularly lead to a stress shift connected with other morphophonemic changes (for details see Yang 1976 or Holmer 1996). This type of stress shift is hardly ever triggered by the presence of a clitic pronoun.¹⁹ In this paper I have chosen not to address this question, but simply to adhere to traditional terminology and refer to the relevant category as clitic pronouns, while noting that they in certain ways behave like agreement morphemes, perhaps being an intermediate stage in the development of agreement.

Table 2: Pronouns in Seediq

	Long pronouns			Clitic pronouns	
	NOM	GEN	(OBJ)	NOM	GEN
1SG	<i>yaku</i>	<i>naku</i>	<i>(kenan)</i>	<i>ku</i>	<i>mu</i>
2SG	<i>isu</i>	<i>nisu</i>	<i>(sunan)</i>	<i>su</i>	
3SG	<i>heya</i>	<i>nheya</i>	–	–	<i>ra</i>
1PL.INC	<i>ita</i>	<i>nita</i>	–	<i>ta</i>	
1PLEXC	<i>yami</i>	<i>nami</i>	–	<i>nami-mian</i>	
2PL	<i>yamu</i>	<i>namu</i>	<i>(munan)</i>	<i>namu</i>	
3PL	<i>dheya</i>	<i>ndheya</i>	–	–	<i>daha</i>
Portmanteau clitic:					
	1SG.GEN, 2SG.NOM		2SG.GEN, 1SG.NOM		1SG.GEN, 2PL.NOM
	<i>misu</i>		<i>saku</i>		<i>maku</i>

¹⁹ It can occur optionally with the verb *máha* 'to go, get going', as in [maháku] 'I'm going to...' or [mahásu] 'You're going to...' and in certain set phrases, such as *haani ta* 'go-IF.IMP 1PL.INC' > [níta] 'let's'. In all of these examples the stress shift is optional. With other pronouns and most other verbs, the stress shift is impossible.

If two clitics cooccur with a verb (this is only possible with non-AF verbs²⁰) the order is NOM-GEN (20). However, the portmanteau forms, in so far as they are morphologically transparent, contain atomic elements in the opposite order (compare for instance the relative positions of the *m-* and *-s-* in *misu* '1SG.GEN, 2SG.NOM' and the relative positions of *s-* and *-k-* in *saku* '2SG.GEN, 1SG.NOM').²¹

- (20)a. *Q-n-ta-an -ku -namu.*
 -PRET-see-LF 1SG.NOM 2PL.GEN
 'You (PL) saw me.'
- b. *Q-n-ta-an -namu -daha.*
 -PRET-see-LF 2PL.NOM 3PL.GEN
 'They saw you (PL).'
- c. *Qta-un -su -mu.*²²
 see-PF 2SG.NOM 1SG.GEN
 'I will see you.'

Enclitic pronouns are attached to the first verbal element in the clause. This can be a subordinator (21a), a tense-marker (21b), a negator (21c) or a main verb (21d). However, they may not cliticise to topics and other preverbal elements (21e). A clitic pronoun may also cliticise to a noun, if it is used predicatively (21f) or if the clitic is the possessor of the noun (21g).

- (21)a. *Netun -ku -na wada ini qta-i*²³...
 if 1SG.NOM 3SG.GEN PRET NEG see-PF.IMP
 'If he didn't see me...'
- b. *Wada -na puq-un ka bunga.*
 PRET 3SG.GEN eat-PF NOM sweet.potato
 'He ate up the sweet potato.'
- c. *Ini -ku kela m-bahang kari mukan.*
 NEG 1SG.NOM (AF.IMP)-know AF-listen language Taiwanese
 'I can't understand Taiwanese.'
- d. *M-n-ekan -ku bunga ciga.*
 AF-PRET-eat 1SG.NOM sweet.potato yesterday
 'I ate sweet potatoes yesterday.'

²⁰ Note also that clitics can only co-occur if at least one of them is unambiguous as to case (see §4.3).

²¹ Chang (1997a) suggests instead that bound pronoun ordering can be generalised as first/second person – third person (i.e. third person follows first and second person – the generalisation says nothing about the order of first and second person pronouns). This generalisation, while technically correct, and while it also covers (or is not contradicted by) the morpheme ordering within the portmanteau pronouns, is actually not particularly illuminating, since it does not address or account for the relative ordering of bound pronouns which are not third person (NOM-GEN for regular clusters, and GEN-NOM for atomic elements within portmanteaux).

²² *-su-mu* '2.SG.NOM-1.SG.GEN' is in free variation with *misu* '2.SG.NOM,1.SG.GEN', which apparently has a rather archaic flavour. The other portmanteau clitics, however, do not have non-portmanteau alternants.

²³ Recall that the negator *ini* is obligatorily followed by a verb in IMP mood.

- e. **Ciga -ku m-n-eyah hini.*
 yesterday 1SG.NOM AF-PRET-come here
 (Intended reading: 'I came here yesterday.')
- f. *Seediq -ku yaku.*
 Seediq 1SG.NOM 1SG.NOM.LONG
 'I am a Seediq.'
- g. *tama -mu*
 father 1SG.GEN
 'my father'

4. Syntactic properties of Seediq focus

4.1 Auxiliaries and focus

In a Seediq clause, various types of auxiliary may receive focus affixation. Some of these auxiliaries correspond in meaning to adverbs of manner (22a–d), others are directional in meaning (22e–h). In Holmer (1996), such auxiliaries are termed 'focus auxiliaries' by virtue of their ability to carry a focus distinction, as opposed to 'tense auxiliaries' which can only carry a tense/aspect distinction. I shall adhere to this practice in this paper.

- (22)a. *Hde-un m-ekan ngiyo ka qolic.*
 finish-PF AF-eat cat NOM rat
 'The rats will be finished off by cats.'
- b. *Ma h-m-n-edu m-ekan damac laqi nii!*
 and -AF-PRET-finish AF-eat food child this
 'But this child finished off all the food!'
- c. *Bleq-un -daha m-ekuy ka dapa.*
 properly-PF 3PL.GEN AF-tie NOM cow
 'They tie the cow securely.'
- d. *Nme-un -daha t-m-uting ka qmegi.*
 powder-PF 3SG.GEN -AF-beat NOM soapwort
 'They beat the soapwort to a powder.'
- e. *Ha-un -mu m-angan qedin -mu.*
 go-PF 1SG.GEN AF-take wife 1SG.GEN
 'I'll go catch my wife.'
- f. *Yah-o m-ekan qolic ka bunga.*
 come-PF.IRR AF-eat rat NOM sweet.potato
 '(Careful!) Rats might come and eat the sweet potatoes.'
- g. *M-n-eyah m-ekan bunga qolic kiya.*
 AF-PRET-come AF-eat sweet.potato rat that
 'That rat came to eat sweet potatoes.'
- h. *Sa-i pusa uyung bebe ka parih nii!*
 go-PF.IMP put back eaves NOM hoe this
 'Go and put this hoe under the eaves behind the house!'

An interesting point to note is that if the auxiliary is in a non-AF focus (22a,c–f, h), the main verb is obligatorily in AF.²⁴ This is despite the fact that it is the main verb which is primarily affected by the diathetic change. Thus, in (22e), the clause subject is clearly the patient of the verb *mekan* ‘to eat’ rather than of *yah-o* ‘come-PF.IRR’, although the PF morphology is realised on the latter. In this sense, AF is a default focus form which in itself does not make a clause necessarily AF. Rather, a clause is AF if and only if the first verb capable of focus-marking (be it a focus auxiliary or a main verb) is AF. It is always the focus of this first verb which determines the focus interpretation of the entire following clause.

A small set of constructions is exempt from this principle. Thus, passive complements of certain control verbs appear in a non-AF focus (23a,b). Likewise, so-called ‘tough constructions’ (such as ‘good to eat’, ‘nice to hear’) also have a non-AF second verb (23c).

- (23)a. *Ani ima m-qaras kux-un seedaq.*
 even who AF-happy like-PF person
 ‘Everyone wants to be liked.’ (lit: ‘Everyone is happy to be liked.’)
- b. *M-qaras Pawan qta-an seedaq.*
 AF-happy Pawan see-LF person
 ‘Pawan likes to be seen.’
- c. *Malu puq-un damac nii.*
 good eat-PF food this
 ‘This food is good to eat.’

What these constructions all have in common is that the patient of the embedded verb is simultaneously the subject of the matrix verb or adjective. Thus we can generalise that focus is realised on the auxiliary rather than on the main verb, as long as the underlying actor of both verbs is the same. If the underlying actor is different, each verb must take care of its own focus interpretation.

The interaction of focus forms with auxiliaries has another interesting implication. In most cases, the form of the auxiliary is identical to the form which the main verb would have if the auxiliary were absent. Thus, if the auxiliaries were absent in (22), the main verbs would have the following forms: (22a) *puq-un* ‘eat-PF’; (22c) *bkey-un* ‘tie-PF’; (22e) *ngal-un* ‘take-PF’ etc.

However, the situation is different for IF. While we would expect an instrument/oblique subject to be cross-referenced by an auxiliary in IF (in analogy to the PF/LF auxiliaries in the examples under (22)), such an IF auxiliary is ungrammatical (24a). If the meaning of the auxiliary is required (for instance if we wish to express the idea of ‘going to do something’), an auxiliary in PF/LF may be used instead (24b). Note that this does not change the configuration of the clause, namely that the oblique is still clause subject. This use of a PF/LF auxiliary in what is structurally equivalent to an IF clause is rather marked, however. While it can be elicited, I have yet to find it in spontaneous examples. Instead, the least marked construction would simply involve not using any auxiliary at all (24c).

²⁴ *Pusa* in (22h) is not an exception. It is a causative form and as such never overtly marked with the AF *-m-* morpheme (for more details see Holmer 1996:48ff.). However, the syntactic function of a bare causative is always AF.

However, with the two verbs *s-qada* 'IF-throw.away' and *sa-apa* 'IF-carry', which, as we recall from §2.4, are IF in form although arguably PF in function, the opposite holds. These two verbs are commonly accompanied by PF/LF auxiliaries: examples like (24d) and (24e) are relatively unmarked, and are often spontaneously produced by Seediq speakers.

- (24)a. **Sa-aha -daha q-m-alang lmiq̄u ka dapa.*
 IF-go 3PL.GEN -AF-fence.in forest NOM cow
 (Intended reading = 24b)
- b. *Ha-un -daha q-m-alang lmiq̄u ka dapa.*
 go-PF 3PL.GEN -AF-fence.in forest NOM cow
 'They'll go and fence is some forest for the cow.'
- c. *S-qalang -daha lmiq̄u ka dapa.*
 IF-fence.in 3PL.GEN forest NOM cow
 'They fence in a section of forest for the cow.'
- d. *Asi -daha sa-i q-m-ada huling d-m-edux.*
 just 3PL.GEN go-PF.IMP -AF-discard dog -AF-howl
 'They just get rid of dogs that howl.'
- e. *S-damux -daha sapah*
 IF-roof 3PL.GEN house

ka btunux n-sa-an -daha m-apa.
 NOM stone PRET-go-LF 3PL.GEN AF-carry
 'They make the roof of the house with the slate they have carried.'

Thus, while the distinction between AF and non-AF seems to be a property of the clause as a whole (in that it can be realised on an auxiliary rather than on the verb itself), and while the further distinction between LF and PF is often related to the aspectual interpretation of the action rather than to the focus of the verb, IF seems to be a category which is only connected with the verb to which it belongs. It cannot be realised on an auxiliary,²⁵ and its function is usually expressed without resorting to an auxiliary at all (although such examples are possible, see (24b)).

4.2 Focus with ditransitives and causatives

Another important aspect of the focus system is its use with verbs which have more than two arguments. Such verbs are ditransitives and causatives.²⁶ A ditransitive verb in AF indicates that the clause subject is the agent, i.e. the giver (25a), and an AF causative²⁷ indicates that the subject is the causer (25b).

- (25)a. *M-bege -ku sapah nü Pawan.*
 AF.FUT.IMMED-give 1SG.NOM house this Pawan
 'I'll give Pawan this house.'

²⁵ The IF IMP affix *-ani* can, however, be used with auxiliaries. Baudhin (undated, approx. late 1960's, early 1970's) quotes many examples with *ha-ani* 'go-IF IMP', meaning 'let's'.

²⁶ Crucially, this refers to causatives of transitives rather than causatives of intransitives.

²⁷ Note that AF causatives do not carry the *m*-affix.

- b. *Pi-imah -ku sino seediq kiya.*
 (AF),CAUS-drink 1SG.NOM wine person that
 'I invite that person to drink wine.'

A ditransitive verb in IF, on the other hand, indicates that the subject is the object given (26a), and a causative IF verb indicates that the subject is patient of the action (26b,c).

- (26)a. *S-bege -mu Awi lukus -mu.*
 IF-give 1SG.GEN Awi clothes 1SG.GEN
 'I give my clothes to Awi.'
- b. *S-pi-imah -mu seedaq sino nii.*
 IF-CAUS-drink 1SG.GEN person wine this
 'I invite someone to drink this wine.'
- c. *S-p-qita -na Awi ka patis Pawan.*
 IF-CAUS-see 3SG.GEN Awi NOM book Pawan
 'Pawan shows Awi the book.'

Both AF and IF are unambiguous in this respect. AF can only refer to the causer/giver, and IF can only refer to the patient/object given. The use of LF and PF, on the other hand, is often ambiguous. While the use of either LF or PF is obligatory if the subject is the causee of a causative verb (27a) or the recipient of a ditransitive verb (27b), these foci can also be optionally used for objects given (27c) or patients of causatives (27d), preferably (but not exclusively) if the recipient is not overtly expressed.

- (27)a. *P-n-mah-an -mu sino seedaq kiya.*
 CAUS-PRET-drink-LF 1SG.GEN wine person that
 'I invited that person to drink wine.'
- b. *B-n-iq-an -mu lukus -mu heya.*
 -PRET-give-LF 1SG.GEN clothes 1SG.GEN 3SG.NOM.LONG
 'I gave him/her my clothes.'
- c. *Ani lukus ini -daha ngal-i b-n-ege -daha.*
 even clothes NEG 3PL.GEN take-PF.IMP -PF.PRET-give 3PL.GEN
 'They do not accept even clothes if they are given by them.'
- d. *P-n-mah-an -mu sino nii.*
 CAUS-PRET-drink-LF 1SG.GEN wine this
 'I invited someone to drink this wine.'

The generalisation seems to be that LF/PF can be used whenever the subject is not the agent (i.e. the causer or giver) and that IF is optionally used to clarify that the subject is a patient or object given. This type of clarification is particularly important if both the recipient/causee and the patient are overtly expressed.

4.3 Factors underlying focus choice

We have hitherto looked at the distribution of various foci with various configurations of arguments. We have not, however, addressed the question of how a given focus is chosen, or rather, why a given argument is chosen as subject. Which of these choices is more basic is a matter of debate (for varying points of view see Chang 1997b and Holmer 1996). However,

from a descriptive point of view (given particularly the ambiguity of focus choice illustrated in §4.2) it is simpler to assume that focus choice reflects subject choice rather than vice versa.

If only one argument is present in the argument structure (note that it need not be overtly expressed), it serves as clause subject, and the focus used is AF. AF is also used with zero-place verbs such as weather verbs (28). Furthermore, AF is used as a default form for any verb following an auxiliary which is capable of carrying focus (so-called ‘focus auxiliaries’).

- (28) *Gaga q-m-uyux.*
 PROG -AF-rain
 ‘It is raining.’

If a one-place predicate is used with an extra NP, such as an oblique of some kind, it is usual for the oblique to be realised as the subject, and then the focus of the verb is changed accordingly. Thus, if the oblique is the reason for an action, the verb appears in PF (29a, quoted from Chang 1997b:71). If the oblique is a location, the verb appears in LF (29b, quoted from Chang 1997b:71).

- (29)a. *Lngis-un na Pawan ka Temi.*
 cry-PF GEN Pawan NOM Temi
 ‘Pawan will cry for Temi.’
- b. *Lngis-an na Pawan ka pray-an.*
 cry-LF GEN Pawan NOM cook-LF
 ‘Pawan cried in the kitchen.’

Another possibility is that the agent is chosen as subject and the oblique can still be expressed. This is grammatical in some cases (30a) but ungrammatical in others (30b, quoted from Chang 1997b:71). It is difficult to assess the reason for this difference, but presumably it has to do with the possibility of interpreting the oblique.

- (30)a. *Gaga l-m-ingis yqeya q Pawan.*
 PROG -AF-cry wet.field Pawan
 ‘Pawan is crying in the field.’
- b. **L-m-ingis Temi ka Pawan.*
 -AF-cry Temi NOM Pawan
 (Intended reading: ‘Pawan is crying for Temi.’)

If a two-place predicate is used, either the agent or the patient may be clause subject. If one of the arguments is definite, it is likely to appear as clause subject (31a,b). If both are definite, the patient is more likely to be realised as subject, particularly if it is also totally affected (31c). This is presumably because a definite agent can be marked with a GEN determiner *na*, whereas there is no corresponding object determiner. With personal names, on the other hand, there seems to be no obvious preference either way (31d,e), probably because both are inherently definite. The focus of the verb varies accordingly, AF with agent subjects and LF/PF with patient subjects (recall that LF/PF is regularly used as a past tense straight passive with no locative connotations).

- (31)a. *Wada puqun qolic ka bunga.*
 PRET eat-PF rat NOM sweet.potato
 ‘The sweet potatoes were eaten up by rats.’

- b. *M-n-ekan bunga ka qolic.*
 -AF-PRET-eat sweet.potato NOM rat
 'The rat ate sweet potatoes.'
- c. *P-n-ug-an na qolic ka bunga.*
 -PRET-eat-LF GEN rat NOM sweet.potato
 'The rat ate the sweet potatoes.'
- d. *Q-m-n-ita Awi ka Pawan.*
 -AF-PRET-see Awi NOM Pawan
 'Pawan saw Awi.'
- e. *Q-n-ta-an na Pawan ka Awi.*
 -PRET-see-LF GEN Pawan NOM Awi
 'Pawan saw Awi.'

If the agent (but not the patient) is pronominal, it generally only appears as subject if the patient is either indefinite or partially affected (32a). A definite or totally affected patient is regularly realised as a subject (32b). Conversely, a pronoun patient is almost always realised as clause subject (32c). A long pronoun serving as an object with a full NP subject is questionably grammatical (32d).

- (32)a. *M-n-ekan -ku ido.*
 -AF-PRET-eat 1SG.NOM rice
 'I ate rice.'
- b. *P-n-ug-an -mu damac -su.*
 -PRET-eat-LF 1SG.GEN food 2SG.GEN
 'I ate your food.'
- c. *Q-n-yut-an -ku -na quyu.*
 -PRET-bite-LF 1SG.NOM 3SG.GEN snake
 'I was bitten by a snake.'
- d. *?Q-m-n-iyuc yaku ka quyu.*
 -AF-PRET-bite 1SG.NOM.LONG NOM snake
 'The snake bit me.'

Finally, if both arguments are pronominal, the favoured configuration is that the patient is subject, with the agent realised as a genitive clitic. This is, however, only possible if at least one of the pronouns is unambiguously either NOM or GEN (33a,b), i.e. if one of the pronouns is *ku* '1SG.NOM', *mu* '1SG.GEN', *na* '3.SG.GEN' or *daha* '3PL.GEN'. Co-occurrence of two morphologically ambiguous clitics is ungrammatical (33c). If this configuration is required, the patient is realised as an object, with the agent as subject of an AF construction (33d). In other words, the NOM-GEN ordering evident in clitic clustering is not sufficient to determine the interpretation. Instead, a morphological distinction is also required.²⁸

²⁸ Assuming a person-based ordering (such as Chang 1997a does, with 1/2-3) would imply that position would not be expected to indicate grammatical function, thus explaining the facts in (33c-e). If this is the case, however, then the fact that regular clitic clusters of first and second persons obligatorily are in NOM-GEN order, whereas the reverse order only occurs with portmanteau clitics, which have a clearly idiosyncratic form (featuring vowel changes etc.), seems to be a quite remarkable coincidence.

- (33)a. *Q-n-ta-an -ku -namu.*
 -PRET-see-LF 1SG.NOM 2PL.(GEN)
 'You (PL) saw me.'
- b. *Q-n-ta-an -namu -daha.*
 -PRET-see-LF 2PL.(NOM) 3PL.GEN
 'They saw you (PL).'
- c. **Q-n-ta-an -namu -nami.*
 -PRET-see-LF 2PL.NOM/GEN 1PL.EXC.GEN/NOM
 (Intended reading (?): 'You saw us.'/'We saw you.')
- d. *Q-m-n-ita -namu yami.*
 -AF-PRET-see 2PL.NOM 1PL.EXC.NOM.LONG
 'You saw us.'
- e. *Q-m-n-ita -nami yamu.*
 -AF-PRET-see 1PL.EXC.NOM 2PL.NOM.LONG
 'We saw you.'

If the verb is a two-place predicate, and there is an oblique NP present, the subject may be either the oblique NP or one of the other arguments. If the oblique is the subject, the focus of the verb is LF if the oblique is a location (34a), and IF if the oblique bears any other role (34b). The oblique is generally chosen as subject either because it must (34b,c),²⁹ or because it is the most salient or definite argument present (34d).

- (34)a. *Tkan-an -mu beras duhung nii.*
 pound-LF 1SG.GEN rice mortar this
 'I pound rice in this mortar.'
- b. *S-qalang -daha lmiqu ka dapa.*
 IF-fence.in 3PL.GEN forest NOM cow
 'They fence some forest for the cow.'
- c. *?Q-m-alang lmiqu dapa dheya.*
 -AF-fence.in forest cow 3PL.NOM.LONG
 (Intended reading: 'They fence in some forest for a cow.')
- d. *Sa-angan -daha qcurux atak nii.*
 IF-take 3PL.GEN fish chopsticks this
 'They pick up fish with these chopsticks.'

If the oblique is not clause subject, the focus is either AF or PF/LF, depending on whether the agent or the patient of the two-place verb is subject. The criteria determining this are probably the same as for two-place predicates in general, although in practice it appears that PF/LF is greatly preferred.³⁰

²⁹ In other words, because it cannot be interpreted unless in subject position cross-referenced by the focus of the verb.

³⁰ I have yet to find spontaneous AF examples corresponding to (35) in the Paran dialect, although they can be elicited.

- (35) ...*sruk-an -daha puniq, snaw-an -daha qsiya...*
 singe-LF 3PLGEN fire wash-LF 3PLGEN water
 '...they singe it with fire and wash it with water...'

Finally, with three-place predicates such as causatives or ditransitives, it is generally definiteness or discourse saliency which determines which argument is realised as subject. It seems to be impossible to combine an oblique with a three-place predicate, presumably because of parsing difficulties. In fact, even examples of three-place predicates with all three arguments overtly realised as full NP's (rather than clitic pronouns) are hard to come by, especially in non-AF. Moreover, such non-AF examples are usually agent-final rather than subject-final (36a,b), as opposed to the strict subject-final order for two-place predicates (36c,d).

- (36)a. *S-sebuc -na ricah ka btakan Pawan.*
 IF-strike 3SG.GEN plum NOM bamboo Pawan
 'Pawan strikes plums (down from a tree) with the bamboo.'
- b. ?*S-sebuc -na ricah na Pawan ka btakan.*
 IF-strike 3SG.GEN plum GEN Pawan NOM bamboo
 (Intended reading = 36a)
- c. *Puq-un qolic ka bunga.*
 eat-PF rat NOM sweet.potato
 'The sweet potatoes will be eaten by rats.'
- d. #*Puq-un bunga ka qolic.*
 eat-PF sweet.potato NOM rat
 (Intended reading = 36c)
 (Only possible reading: 'The rats will be eaten by sweet potatoes.')

Subject choice, and consequently focus choice, is thus determined by a rather complex set of factors. An important factor determining subject choice is definiteness: a definite NP has priority to be subject above an indefinite NP. However, this is tempered by other factors, such as the combinatory possibilities of clitic pronouns. Some types of NP (such as certain obliques) can only appear in subject position, thereby directly forcing focus choice. Another type of NP which can only appear in subject position is a relativised noun: thus, regardless of whether a given NP is agent (37a) or patient (37b), it must be the subject of the relative clause to which it belongs, with the appropriate focus expressed on the verb (see (37c), which is ungrammatical with the intended reading), unless it is represented by a resumptive pronoun within the relative clause itself (37d).

- (37)a. *seedaq m-n-apa btunux*
 person AF-PRET-carry stone
 'a person who carried a stone'
- b. *btunux n-apa na seedaq*
 stone PF.PRET-carry GEN person
 'a stone carried by the person'
- c. #*btunux m-n-apa seedaq*
 stone AF-PRET-carry person
 (Intended reading: 'a stone which a person carried')
 (Only possible reading: 'a stone which carried a person')

- d. *kari ini dehuk dungus na*
 word NEG reach meaning 3.SG.GEN
 'a mistake' (lit. 'a word, its meaning doesn't reach')

Likewise, in a wh-question with a clause-initial wh-word (as opposed to so-called 'in-situ' wh-questions), the focus of the verb must correspond to the wh-word being clause subject (38).

- (38)a. *Ima q-n-ta-an -su?*
 who? -PRET-see-LF 2SG.GEN
 'Whom did you see?'/('I know you saw someone. Who was it?')
- b. *Ima q-m-n-ita isu?*
 who? -AF-PRET-see 2SG.NOM.LONG
 'Who saw you?'
- c. **Ima q-m-n-ita -su?*
 who? -AF-PRET-see 2SG.NOM
 (Intended reading: 'Whom did you see?')
- d. *Q-m-n-ita -su ima?*
 -AF-PRET-see 2SG.NOM who?
 'Whom did you see?'/('Did you see anyone? In that case, whom?')

In cases like the above, the definiteness of the argument and the non-favouring of pronouns as direct objects ((38b), see (32d)) are of little impact, as these factors are overridden by the requirement that the extracted element be subject of the clause from which the extraction has taken place.

5 Summary

In this paper I have addressed some questions concerning the use of focus in Seediq: how the various foci are formed, which affixes are used, how focus and aspect interact, and which criteria underlie the choice of focus for a given context in Seediq. However, I have deliberately avoided analysing the facts presented here within the framework of any particular theory – the purpose of this paper has been to present an as exact as possible descriptive account of the Seediq focus system.

I have attempted to deal exclusively with questions which are relevant for the behaviour of focus in Seediq. However, given that the focus system is intertwined with most other aspects of the grammar, this has necessarily involved describing rather large adjacent areas of Seediq syntax in general. It should be noted that these descriptions can not be, and are not intended to be, exhaustive.

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