

# The Mising Verb Phrase

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## Abstract

This paper examines the Verb Phrase (VP) in Mising, a Tibeto- Burman language of the North Assam group. The VP in Mising is often polymorphemic in shape, its semantic role made operational by a process of agglutination of suffixes. In (1) below we have a list of verbal suffixes with their definite semantic role.

1.	<b>Verbal suffixes</b>	<b>Semantic role</b>
	- <i>da(k)</i>	action performed everyday
	- <i>dag</i>	action performed sometime/ once a while
	- <i>ta</i>	action is completed just now
	- <i>tag</i>	action got completed just a while ago

Most native speakers consider the verbal suffixes to be tense markers. Analysis of the Mising verbal system shows the Present tense marker is  $\phi$  , the Past tense marker is *-ai* and the Future tense marker is *-ye*. See (2a-c) below.

2a. ram-bv yub – da(k)	2b. ram-bv yub – dag-ai	2c. ram-bv yub -ye
Ram-he sleep- asp	Ram-he sleep- asp-pst	Ram-he sleep- fut
‘Ram sleeps.’	‘Ram slept.’	‘Ram will sleep.’

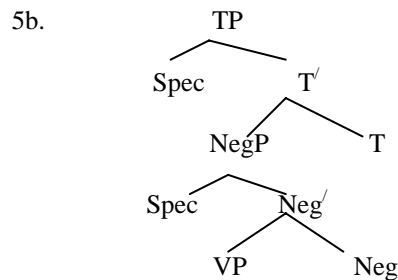
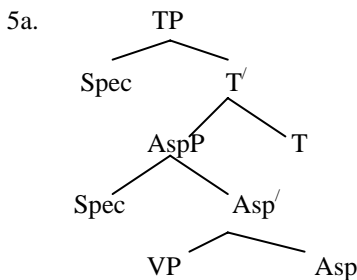
From (2) it is evident the verbal suffixes in (1) are aspectual markers. Further evidence that the verbal suffixes in (1) are aspectual markers come from the negative sentences in (3).

3a. ram-bv yub – ma	3b. ram-bv yub -mang- ai	3c. ram-bv yub – ma- ye
Ram-he sleep- neg	Ram-he sleep- neg –pst	Ram-he sleep- neg fut
‘Ram does not sleep.’	‘Ram did not sleep’	‘Ram will not sleep.’

In (3) the aspectual marker *-da* does not co-occur with the negative markers *-ma* and *mang*, while the Past tense marker *-ai* (3b) and the future tense marker *-ye* (3c) occur with the negative markers. From (2) and (3) we may assume that the linear order of the Mising VP is as shown in (4) below:

- |    |                          |                           |
|----|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 4. | a. Verb - Aspect - Tense | ( for positive sentences) |
|    | b. Verb- Negative -Tense | ( for negative sentences) |

Assuming that our observation is on the right line, in the X-bar configuration the Aspect Phrase (Asp.P) precedes the TensePhrase (TP) in the positive and in the negative sentences the Negative Phrase (NegP) precedes the TP as shown in (5a) and (5b) respectively.



**References:**

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