

# SIMPLE SENTENCE IN A·WE

Amanda Aski Macdonald Momin

Department of Garo, NEHU, Tura Campus, India

## **ABSTRACT**

*A-we is the standard variety of the A-chik language also known as A-chikku which is also commonly known as the Garo language. The Garo language belongs to the Tibeto-Burman branch of the Sino-Tibetan language family. Since Syntax involves arranging words to create logical phrases, clauses, and sentences, simple sentence is an important part of syntax and thus knowing about the simple sentence in A-we forms the basis of writing correct sentences in this variety of the Garo language. Noam Chomsky, the famous Linguist used the phrase, “ colorless green ideas sleep furiously’ in his book, Syntactic Structures (1957) as an example of a sentence which is syntactically and grammatically correct because it has the correct word order and the verb is consistent with the subject but is semantically incorrect. Chomsky (1957) thus illustrates that the rules governing syntax are different from the meaning conveyed by words. We can observe that there are subject and predicate in a simple sentence in language, which is the same for A-we. It is not essential that a simple sentence must be a short sentence and it is also possible to write a simple sentence if there is only one predicate used with a number of subjects to make a long sentence. Such sentences are still called a simple sentence. In this paper, we will discuss some classification of simple sentence in A-we which will further contribute to the study of syntax in A-we as well as aid in constructing proper sentences in the language.*

## **KEYWORDS**

*A-we, Garo, Tibeto-Burman, Simple Sentence & Syntax*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Garos are one as the largest group amongst the tribals of Meghalaya, India, besides the Khasis and the Jaintias. Linguistically, they belong to Bodo-Naga section of Assam-Burmese branch under the Tibeto-Burman language group of the Sino-Tibetan family. A·we is the standard variety of the Garo language. The Garos prefer to call themselves A·chik and their language as A·chikku. According to Devy & Syiem (2014, p.228), A·chikku or Garo, as it is commonly known as, is spoken by the people called the A·chik Mandes who are concentrated in the western part of Meghalaya, named after them as the Garo Hills, and in the adjoining areas of Assam, Bangladesh and Tripura. Sangma (1983) mentions that the A·kawe or A·we variety of speakers dwell in the whole of the northern hills and the foothills of the plains, from the Kamrup district in the east to the Jinjiram (Jinari) river. Some of the important places in the 26 northern slopes of the North Garo Hills district where this variety is spoken are Resu, Mendi, Dilma, Damra, Rajasimla, Nishangram, Bajengdoba, Berubari, Kharkutta Chotcholja and Adokgre. This variety was used for widespread communication among the Garos and the first translations of important books were done in this variety. Hence, A·we has been used as the standard variety and it was also used for the translation of the Bible from English to Garo by the American Missionaries Rev. Mason and Rev. Ramke along with several other American missionaries and native A·we speakers. The speakers of this variety are also found in the Goalpara District of Assam.

Since no work has been done on Simple Sentence in A·we, this paper is an attempt to describe the three types of Simple sentence i.e. simple, complex and compound sentences which are divided based on its structure in A·we. It can also be seen from the examples cited in this paper, that there are subject and predicate in simple sentence in A·we. A sentence in A·we can also be made longer by using different words before the subject and predicate.

The main objectives of this paper are given below-

- (i) To find out how inflection takes place in simple sentence in A·we.
- (ii) To find out the different types of simple sentence in A·we.

## 2. DISCUSSION

Syntax can be classified in various parts depending on different points of view. Thus, syntax can be classified into three parts based on structure. The three types of sentence in A·we are simple, complex and compound sentences. However, only the Simple Sentence in A·we will be discussed in this paper. There must be a subject and a predicate in a simple sentence. That is why, the sentences in A·we have subject and predicate. A sentence can be made longer by using different words before the subject and the predicate and based on this the structures can be seen more clearly which are shown in examples (1) to (19).

When we use an adjective before the subject it is called adjunct to the subject Noun or Pronoun. Similarly, if we use some words before the predicate to express the meaning of predicate, then it is called adjunct to predicate verb. Therefore, it is not essential that a simple sentence must be a short sentence. If there is only one predicate used, and one subject to make a sentence, then the sentence is also called a simple sentence. For example:

- (1) dozo bila  
bird fly  
'The bird flies'

In example (1), it can be seen that it is a sentence that exists without using different types of adjuncts. The same sentence can be made a simple sentence by adding some adjuncts. For example:

- (2) diŋtaŋ diŋtaŋ roŋ-ni dozo-raŋ nitobegipa salgi-o bilaŋ-eŋa  
different different colour-POSS bird-Pl beautiful sky-LOC fly-P.PROG  
'A flock of colourful birds are flying together in the beautiful sky'

In example (2) a simple sentence is made by adding different adjuncts before subject dozo (bird) and before predicate bila (fly). Thus A·we has the same form of simple sentence structure in a form as follows; subject-object-verb (SOV). Another example in A·we showing simple sentence are given below:

- (3) aŋa mi chaʒa  
I rice eat  
'I eat rice'

Thus, the simple sentence in A·we can be shown in the form of a tree diagram as follows:

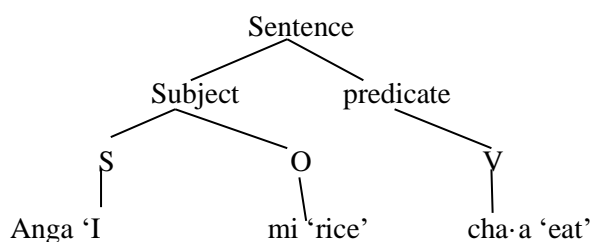


Figure 1. Simple Sentence in A·we

The simple sentence in A·we can further be divided into the following classification:

- (i) Simple sentence in A·we with one word
- (ii) Simple sentence in A·we with Verb
- (iii) Simple sentence in A·we without Verb
- (iv) Simple sentence in A·we with dual Verbs
- (v) Simple sentence in A·we with repeated Verbs.

### 2.1. Simple sentence in A·we with one word:

Simple sentences in A·we with one word are those sentences where a single word can express the sense of a complete sentence. Usually these kinds of sentences are composed of a single verb. There are simple sentence with one word in A·we. For example:

A·we	English
(4) chaʔa	eat
(5) reʔbagen	shall come
(6) reʔaŋbo	go

A question for such a pattern may be asked as follows:

A·we	English
(7) biara Silmema?	Is this Silme?
(8) hoʔe/	yes
(9) hoʔe, aŋa Silme	yes, I am Silme
(10) naŋʔni kamko matchotjokma?	Have you done your work?
(11) hoʔe/dakdʒok/ dakaha	yes/done

From the above mentioned examples (4) to (11), it is seen that in A·we, the simple sentence with one word can either be an answer or an order to an interrogative sentence. Alternatively, behind this kind of sentences there is an extended complete sentence. However, in everyday use, a single verb is often used in a conversation.

### 2.2. Simple sentence in A·we with Verb:

The commonly used simple sentences in A·we are the simple sentences with verb. The examples for this classification are given below:

- (12) biʔsa mi chaʔa  
child rice eat  
'The child eats rice'
- (13) kalseng cycle salenja  
kalseng bicycle ride-P.PROG  
'Kalseng is riding a bicycle'

From the above mentioned example (12) and (13), we can see the simple sentence with verb in A·we. The lexemes cha·a 'eat' and salenja 'riding' are the verbs.

### 2.3. Simple sentence in A·we without Verb

There are many meaningful sentences without verb in A·we. Normally, the sentence mainly uses the noun, pronoun, adjective and numeral classifiers. The examples for this classification are given below:

- (14) iade tablesa  
it table is  
'It is a table'  
(15) biade nama  
he/she good  
'He/she is good'

From the above mentioned examples (14) and (15), we can see the simple sentences in A·we without verb.

#### 2.4. Simple sentence in A·we with dual Verbs

Sentences with dual verbs are mostly used in A·we. In the sentences with dual verbs, the first verb is incomplete and the second verb is complete. The examples for Simple sentence in A·we with dual verbs are given below:

- (16) minchi mi chaꞤe skul-chi reꞤaꞤa-ha  
minchi rice eat school-LOC go-PST  
'Minchi went to school after eating rice'

In example (16), mi 'rice' can denote breakfast or lunch in A·we depending on the time frame since the staple food consumed by the Garos either in the morning, day or night is rice with curry/gravy. The two verbs or dual verbs in this example is cha·e 'eat' and re·angaha 'go'.

- (17) ua skul-chini reꞤbapilꞤode mi chaꞤ-ja-ha  
he/she school-LOC back rice eat-NEG-PST  
'He/she does not eat rice after coming back school'

In the above example (17), it is seen that simple sentence with dual verbs is present in A·we. In the example re·bapilode 'back' and cha·jaha '(does not) eat' is the verb. The first verb is incomplete and second verb is complete as shown in the examples (16) and (17) in A·we.

#### 2.5. Simple sentence in A·we with repeated Verbs

Most of the time in A·we, sentence with repeated verbs are used. The repeating verb is seen in the sentences with dual verbs. The examples for this classification are given below:

- (18) nochi kat-e nokꞤi sokbaa-ha  
nochi run-PST home arrive/come-PST  
'Nochi came/arrived home running'  
(19) ua phone kaꞤe kam-ko kaꞤjola-ha  
he/she phone do work-ACC do-PST  
'He/she did the work while he/she was on the phone'

From the examples (18) and (19) it is seen that A·we has simple sentence with repeated verbs. The repeated verbs in (18) are kate 'running/arriving' and sokbaaha 'arriving/coming' while in (19), the repeated verbs are ka·e 'did' and ka·jolaha 'did'.

### 3. CONCLUSIONS

In the examples given from (1) to (19), we can observe that the simple sentence is present in A·we through which other complex sentences can be formed. The Subject and predicate plays an

important role in forming a simple sentence in A·we. The following assumptions can be made based on the examples mentioned in this paper. Thus, Syntax can be classified into the different classification of Simple Sentence in A·we. There must be a subject and predicate present in a simple sentence in A·we. We can also observe that A·we has the simple sentence structure in the word order, SOV i.e., Subject-Object-Verb. And finally, the simple sentence of A·we can be classified into five parts which are Simple sentence in A·we with one word , Simple sentence in A·we with verb, Simple sentence in A·we without verb ,Simple sentence in A·we with dual verbs and Simple sentence in A·we with repeated verbs.

Since this paper is a first of its kind in the A·we variety of the Garo language, further studies can be done regarding the many different types of sentences such as complex and compound sentences to show the richness and complexity of the A·we variety of the Garo/A·chik language. Further, more studies can be done on the other varieties as well since there are less research done on syntax in the Garo/A·chik language.

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## AUTHOR

**Amanda Aski Macdonald Momin** has a PhD in Garo for her thesis titled “Lexical Semantic study of A·we”, a Bachelor’s degree in Computer Application from St. Francis College for Women, Hyderabad and a B.Ed degree from Don Bosco College of Teacher Education, Tura. She also has a Master’s degree in Linguistics from the North Eastern Hill University, Shillong, Meghalaya. She has worked with Asia Pacific Baptist Federation (APBF) as a Communications Executive. Presently, she is working as a Lecturer in Don Bosco College of Teacher Education (DBCTE) as well as a Guest Faculty in the Department of Garo, NEHU, Tura Campus.

