Dialect differences for Katu prepositional phrases

Nancy A. COSTELLO
University of Sydney

Differences in the grammatical structure of phrases distinguish the dialect of Katu found in Vietnam (Katu VN), and the one in the Lao P.D.R. (Katu L). Specifically, Katu VN frequently uses prepositional phrases whereas Katu L is distinctive for its lack of such phrases. For example, Katu VN often uses the prepositions di? ‘in, on, place’, le? ‘to, towards, place’, lr? ‘and, with’, tae? ‘from’ in prepositional phrases followed by a noun, a locative, or a preposition. The relative pronoun du ‘who, which’ is also frequently used in prepositional phrases followed by a numeral, or a modifier, or a verb phrase.

The majority of Katu L utterances, on the other hand, do not use prepositions, but occasionally use lr?, which has a number of meanings such as ‘and, with, about, to, from’. Katu Lao utterances also occasionally use kat ‘in, on’. It is interesting that Katu L never uses the relative pronoun du, yet the rest of the sentence structure is the same as for Katu VN. All these forms are exemplified in the following sentences which are taken from Katu texts.

Katu VN: di? ‘in, on, place’ can be followed by a noun or pronoun or locative.

1. mut at di? ?dek
   Mut stay in there
   ‘Mut stayed there.’

2. pa?diil tprvt di? ?doŋ
   woman stay in house
   ‘The girl stayed in the house.’

3. ?do sooŋ kah tprvt di? cek ?yv?
   it flee neg. stay in/place there more
   ‘It fled, (it) did not stay there any more.’

   he order have tree in here have tree in here
   ‘He orders a tree to be here, then there is a tree here.’

5. jak ?byk talum manwih di? kalɔŋ
   French much meet people in/place road
   ‘The French met many people on the road.’

MON-KHMER STUDIES 30:65-73
The following example shows two noun phrases in succession, a device used for emphasis.


   I hide him in top tree in top betel nut

   ‘I hid him in the top of the tree, in the top of the betel nut tree.’

   Occasionally Katu VN omits *di?* and the verb is followed directly by the goal.

7. **agoot cet kaloon ?bonŋ**

   tiger die inside hole

   ‘The tiger was dead in the hole.’

8. **vi ku mot ?donŋ kontum**

   already I enter house Kontum

   ‘I entered a house in Kontum.’

   Katu L: Almost all utterances in Katu L do not use a prepositional phrase, and the verb is directly followed by the goal. Emphasis is given by the use of repetition and contrast.

9. **ku kareŋ c tu pcoon tu panaaŋ**

   I hide he top tree top betel nut tree

   ‘I hid him in the top of the tree, in the top of the betel nut tree.’

10. **pandruih at ?denŋ**

    man stay house

    ‘The man stayed in the house.’

11. **ndil at areŋ**

    woman stay field

    ‘The woman stayed in the field.’

12. **c noun taroun**

    he sit seat

    ‘He is sitting on a seat.’

13. **c sooŋ kah at cek iik**

    it flee neg. stay there more

    ‘It fled, (it) did not stay there any more.’

   Occasionally Katu L uses *kət* ‘in, on’ which is followed by a noun or locative or pronoun.

14. **arviŋ brau kamoc ŋaai vooc at kət piŋ**

    soul dead-person someone go stay in grave

    ‘Some dead people’s souls go and stay in the grave.’
Katu VN frequently uses *le?* ‘to, towards, place’ which is followed by a noun, or pronoun, or locative.

15. mai mot le? karuun\v
you enter toward river
‘You entered the river.’

trap rabbit give to tiger
‘The rabbit gave the trap to the tiger.’

17. ?doŋ moom le? ama
he say to father
‘He talked to his father.’

18. ?boon kavai le? ?doŋ
take Kavai to house
‘(They) took Kavai to the house.’

19. nek vooi? le? ccoh
thus go place there
‘(They) went over there.’

tiger cry afraid afraid die beg to monkey
‘The tiger cried, it was afraid of dying, (so) it begged the monkey.’

In the following examples *le?* has the meaning of ‘place’:

21. le? mai kiaŋ at oo? at ?dan ku
place you want stay neg stay near me
‘Wherever you want to stay, don’t stay near me.’

Occasionally Katu VN omits *le?* as in the following example:

22. ravaai manuih co kcoon kaneen\v
soul person return place dead
‘People’s souls return to the place of the dead.’

In the vast majority of sentences Katu L does not use a preposition, and the verb is directly followed by the goal.

23. akon mot ?deŋ
father enter house
‘The father entered the house.’
24. idial vooc are
   wife go field
   'The wife went to the field.'

25. ve biŋ ateh kui co veel
    have full basket carry return village
    'When the basket is full, we return carrying it to the village.'

However, occasionally Katu L uses ḥŋ ‘to, towards’:

26. ve biŋ ateh kui co doon ḥŋ veel
    have full basket carry return take to village
    'When the basket is full, we return taking it to the village.'

The following are examples of ḥŋ ‘and, with’ in Katu VN:

27. pi ḥŋ at ḥŋ tapaai teŋ ḥŋ vnnŋ
    they stay with rabbit work rice storage house
    'They stayed with the rabbit and made a rice storage house.'

28. aduak kiaŋ tvk leŋ aku ḥŋ mai
    Vietnamese want reach kill me and you
    'The Vietnamese want to come to kill you and me.'

29. soŋ ḥŋ ḥŋ vnnŋ ḥŋ ca
    finish and sleep he eat
    'After sleeping, he ate.'

Katu L occasionally uses the preposition ḥŋ ‘and, with, to, concerning’:

30. ŋaai pi ḥŋ panian katu he
    some speak with children Katu we
    'Some speak with our Katu children.'

31. te imo abym yua at ḥŋ takuui katu
    particle sister Abom order stay with people Katu
    'Abom ordered his sister to stay with the Katu.'

32. abym cøom tak tvıp durul ḥŋ takuui
    Abom able work deep shallow to people
    'Abom can cause important and unimportant things (deep or shallow) (to happen to) people.'

33. abat at kät katiak ḥŋ takuui katu he
    Abat stay on ground with people Katu we
    'Abat stayed on the earth with us Katu people.'
The preposition လာ ‘from’ is frequently used in Katu VN, and is followed by a noun, pronoun, or locative:

34. **ku kyl tæ? mai**
I buy from you
‘I buy from you.’

they go from here
‘They went from here.’

36. **ʔde vooi? paco tæ? abuui**
he go cause to return from bad spirits
‘He went and brought him back from the bad spirits.’

37. **ʔbyk ηaai co tæ? kahoo? co tæ? paraaŋ**
many who return from sweat return from heat vooi? tæ? høŋ
go from back
‘Many people return from sweating, from hot weather, they came from behind him.’

38. **kiju? vooi? nok tæ?**
Kijuq come from there
‘Kijuq came from there.’

39. **duak kiaŋ noo? ndoh pai tæ? katu**
Vietnamese want plur. blouse take from Katu
‘The Vietnamese want the blouses, they take them from the Katu.’

40. **caraac teŋ tæ? aluŋ**
buttons make from lead
‘Buttons are made from lead.’

Occasionally Katu L uses လာ ‘from’ as in the following example:

41. **lŋ isaaau ve preeŋ doop lŋ ikon**
with son-in-law have relationship receive from father

ikan pandil ve ayooh
mother girl have skirts
‘The son-in-law has the relationship in which he receives skirts from the girl’s father and mother.’

The relative pronoun ဗြ ‘who, which’ is used frequently in Katu VN with a numeral, or a modifier, or a verb phrase. Sometimes ဗြ is used to add emphasis to the utterance. It is interesting that it does not occur at all in Katu L, which uses the
same sentence structure as Katu VN, while omitting *du*. In Katu L emphasis is gained by the use of repetition, and by contrasting parallel statements.

42. paniān nik tooh jir? liam du mui vooi? kaðəŋ
   child over there crock good which one go hold

   mət du mui du mui vooi?
   enter which one which one go
   ‘Children, over there is a good crock. One went and held it, and went inside. One by one they went.’

The following is example of *du* in Katu VN: *du* with a numeral:

43. du mui du mui vooi?
    which one which one go
    ‘They went one by one.’

The following are examples of *du* with a modifier:

44. ḏo luk du tam kum cik pai du tam
    he mix which black also then take which black
    ‘He mixed black, then he also took black.’

45. noo? yi ḏυrk naai du hual plur. we many who bad
    ‘We have many people who are bad.’

46. ḏaŋ ku ndol du liam
    give me basket which good
    ‘Give me the basket which is good.’

47. ve naai du kavaan ve adəæk nik len adəæk
    have someone who rich have pig then kill pig
    ‘If someone has riches, has pigs, then he kills pigs.’

    if place which rich with water buffalo with pig

    manuuih mahaal
    people happy
    ‘If there is a rich place, with water buffalo and pigs, people are happy.’

49. ḏuun adəŋ du ḏυrk
    get corn which much
    ‘(They) get a lot of corn.’

Katu L has the same sentence structure as Katu VN but without *du*, as follows:
50. o luk karmaŋ kum cik ial karmaŋ
   he mix black also then take black
   'He mixed black, then he also took black.'

51. ?doŋ ku ateh lo?
    give me back basket good
    'Give me a good back basket.'

52. a lei pandil lo? pandil naai yuh
    he see girl good girl someone want
    'He sees a good girl, one someone wants.'

Sometimes in Katu VN there is a string of two or three examples of du plus a
modifier. The repetition plus the use of du adds emphasis and shows contrast.

53. ve kamɔ du kaboo? nik kamɔ du kaboo?
    have year which satisfied then year which satisfied
    'There is a year when we eat until we are satisfied, that is a year when we
    eat until we are content.'

54. kum ve kavaan ve naa ve du thraŋ
    also have rich have poor have who rich/easy
    ve du kuk
    have who suffering
    'There is wealth, there is poverty, there is plenty, there is suffering.'

55. la naai du kaʔai du reen nik du kaʔai kian
    if someone who sick who moan this who sick want
    cet kah masunŋ
dead neg. know
    'If someone is sick, moans, and is nearly dead, we don't know what to do.'

When du is used with a verb phrase is used, sometimes there is repetition of
several verb phrases for emphasis and contrast as in example 59 and 60:

56. ?do lei paʔdiil du liam paʔdiil naai du kian
    he see girl who good girl someone who want
    'He sees a girl who is good, who someone wants.'

57. naai du hat ndol hy? kyl ndyl
    someone who without basket then buy basket
    'Whoever is without a back basket then buys basket for the back.'
58. **κατο ηααι ινι αι λυ ινι ιν αι καη**
Katu someone who hungry who have buy have someone who

κιαν τεεη δαι κυ του αη καη
want to make feast I go buy

'The Katu, whoever is hungry, buys. If there is someone who wants a feast, I go and buy.'

59. **νε ηααι ινι κοομ γυ ινι ηααι ινι καη**
have someone who can work sorcery have some who neg.

'There are some who can work sorcery, there are some who cannot.'

60. **ηααι ινι νε αηι αει ταην ηοη**
someone who has rice then weave basket

'Whoever has rice, then weaves baskets for the back.'

61. **νε ηααι ινι κιαν γεεη αηε γυ δη ινι ηοομ**
have someone who want hate us work sorcery in liver

'There is someone who hates us and works sorcery in the heart.'

62. **ηααι ινι τρηη δη ηηοη φαι ιυη παηιαη**
someone who stay in house must look after children

'Whoever stays in the house must look after the children.'

Sentences in Katu L express the meaning of the modifier 'who, which', using verb phrases, and sometimes repetition, but without using **du**.

63. **ηααι καη νε αηεη ηυ ηοοι αηεη**
someone not have back basket then buy back basket

'Whoever does not have a basket, then buys a basket for the back.'

64. **ηνηη ιυη ηαηη κηη παηι ηαηη**
he mix black then take black

'He mixes black, then takes black.'

65. **νε ηααι κοομ γυ ινι ηααι καη κοομ**
have some can work sorcery have some neg. able

'There are some who can work sorcery there are some who are not able.'

66. **μανουηι ηηη θυ θυ θυ θυ ηιυ ιυ ιυ ιυ ιυ ηιυ**
person follow me obey me I look after

'The person who follows and obeys me, I look after.'

67. **νε ηααι κιαν γεεη αηε γυ ινι ηοομ**
have someone want hate us work sorcery liver

'There is someone who hates us and works sorcery in the heart.'
68. ṇaaı ve arc nek taan ateh
someone have rice then weave back basket
'Someone who has rice then weaves a back basket.'

Katu belongs to the Katuic branch of the Mon-Khmer language family, and has approximately 52,000 speakers, 37,000 living in Quang Nam province in central Vietnam, and 15,000 in Salavan and Xe Kong provinces in the Lao P.D.R.

REFERENCES


Received: 20 October 1999

PO Box 4276
Vientiane
LAO P.D.R.