

A Study of the usage ‘Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother’ in Myanmar Language

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to present Myanmar usage ‘Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother’ from the standpoint of Sociolinguistics. Myanmar Language derived from Tibeto-Chinese family of languages. Myanmar language is tone languages because high and low tones determine different meaning of words. Besides Myanmar Language has sayings, proverbs and metaphors like other languages. The usage of ‘Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother’ is the metaphor of Myanmar Language. It comes from the poem of ‘Ger Aye’. Ger Aye is the name of Myanmar girl. In this poem, the characters are Ger Aye, her mother, Mister Bachelor and the little monkey. Mother made the bun with paper sticking to it. And then, she offers a bun with the Lilly salver. The little monkey came running down and put and eat the bun. Mother did not see the little monkey. She thinks the bun was lost by Ger Aye. For this case, Ger Aye was beaten by her mother. She was crying in the darkness. Mister Bachelor pulled her leg, hanging down. At that time, it thundered in the south of sky. Again, Mother made the bun with paper sticking to it. And then, she offers a bun with the Lilly salver. The little monkey came running down and put and eat the bun. Mother did not see the little monkey. She thinks the bun was lost by Ger Aye. For this case, Ger Aye was beaten by her mother. She was crying in the darkness. Mister Bachelor pulled her leg, hanging down. At that time, it thundered in the south of sky. These actions are again and again. This poem shows Myanmar traditional Culture. The research questions are (1) **What is the root of the usage ‘Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother’?** and (2) **In which social situations it can be used?** This problem will be solved by Qualitative Research Method from the aspect of Sociolinguistics.

Key words: Ger Aye, Myanmar Language, metaphor, sociolinguistics.

Introduction

Myanmar language derived from Tibeto-Chinese family of languages. Myanmar language is tone language because high and low tones determine different meaning of words. Besides Myanmar Language has sayings, proverbs and metaphors like other languages. The usage of ‘Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother’ is the metaphor of Myanmar Language.

Objectives

1. To know what is the root of the usage, ‘Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother’ and in which social situation it can be used.
2. To apply for foreign students who are studying Myanmar Language

Hypothesis

Myanmar people use the usage ‘Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother’ in suitable social situation which likes circle.

1. Background of problem

Myanmar people use to the usage ‘Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother’ in suitable social situations. It is a metaphor of Myanmar Language.

In that,

Metaphor is a word or phrase which is used for special effect, and which does not have its usual or literal meaning.¹

A metaphor that is extended throughout a poem or story, and may involve further related comparisons, is an extended metaphor.²

¹ Richard, 1992, 139.

² www.wiki.metaphor.com

So, the usage of ‘Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother’ is an extended metaphor of Myanmar Language.

This problem will be solved by Qualitative Research Method from the aspect of Sociolinguistics.

Sociolinguistics is a branch of Linguistics which studies all aspects of the relationship between Language and Society.¹

In Linguistics terms and Concepts,

Sociolinguistics, or the study of Language in relation to society, is a relative newcomer to the linguistic fold. It was not until the early 1960s, largely as a result of William Labov’s work in America, and Peter Trudgill’s in Britain, that it developed into a recognized branch of Linguistics.²

Sociolinguistics is the descriptive study of the effect of any and all aspects of society, including cultural norms, expectations, and context, on the way language is used, and the effects of language use on society.

The social aspects of language were in the modern sense first studied by Indian and Japanese linguists in the 1930s, and also by Louis Gauchat in Switzerland in the early 1900s, but none received much attention in the West until much later. The first attested use of the term sociolinguistics was by Thomas Callan Hodson in the title of his 1939 article ‘Sociolinguistics in India’ published in *Man in India*.³

In 1952 the late Haver C. Currie published a paper, first drafted in 1949, entitled ‘Projection of sociolinguistics: the relationship of speech to social status’. It took sometimes for the term ‘sociolinguistics’ for which Currie claims priority, to take root, but by the early 1960s the first sociolinguistics conferences were being held anthologies of articles dealing with properties of

¹ Crystal,2003,422.

² Finch,2000,193.

³ www.wiki.sociolinguistics.com.

language calling for the inclusion of social factors in the analysis had started to appear.¹

According to this points, Sociolinguistics is the study of the relationship between Language and it's society.

In sociolinguistics, it has language functions.

It has been pointed out that apart from conveying information from one person to another, language may be used to express emotions from one person to another, language may be used to express emotions and to direct the activities of other people.²

C- Criper and H.G. Widdowson distinguished seven factors of language functions. They are (1) referential function

(2) expressive or emotive function

(3) directive function

(4) phatic or contact function

(5) contextual function

(6) metalinguistics function

(7) poetic function.³

Thus, this paper will analyze the metaphor of 'Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother' aspects of Sociolinguistics.

2. Description of the root of the usage 'Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother'

The usage 'Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother' comes from the Myanmar poem of 'Ger Aye'. Ger aye is the name of Myanmar girl. This poem is as follow.

¹ www.blackwellreference.com

² Criper & Widdowson, 1975,195.

³ Criper & Widdowson, 1975,195-197.

‘Ger Aye’

Ger Aye, because her mother beat her
Was crying in the darkness
Mister Bachelor from a hole in the wall,
Pulled her leg,
Hanging down
Hanging down. Wait a bit.
It thundered in the south.
A bun
A bun with paper sticking to it.
Was put on the lily salver as an offering,
From above the shrine the little monkey
Came running down,
Ger Aye.

(Translated by J.A Stewart)¹

In Myanmar,

‘ဂျာအေး’
ဂျာအေး သူ့အမေရိုက်လို့
မှောင်မိုက်မှာငို
ကိုလူပျို ထရံပေါက်က
ခြေထောက်ကို ဆွဲ

¹ Than Htut, 2002, 16.

တွဲလဲ။
တွဲလဲ။ နေပါဦး
မိုးတောင်ကချွန်
မုန့်လုံး။
မုန့်လုံးကို စက္ကူကပ်လို့
ကြာကလပ်မှာ ဆွမ်းတော်တင်
ပလ္လင်ပေါ်က မျောက်ကလေး
ဆင်းတယ်လို့ပြေး
ဂျာအေး။
(Anonymous)

This poem is an endless folk song. It starts with ‘Ger Aye’ (ဂျာအေး) and ends with ‘Ger Aye’ (ဂျာအေး) and starts with ‘Ger Aye’ and ends with ‘Ger Aye’ and so on. But it is never end and it likes circle. There are three paragraphs in this poem. The first stanza starts with ‘Ger Aye’. The first stanza end of syllable is ‘Hanging down’(တွဲလဲ) and The second stanza starts with ‘Hanging down’(တွဲလဲ). The second stanza ends with ‘A bun’ (မုန့်လုံး) and the third stanza starts with ‘A bun’ (မုန့်လုံး). The third stanza ends with ‘Ger Aye’(ဂျာအေး) and the first stanza starts with ‘Ger Aye’(ဂျာအေး). So, it is never end. It shows that is Myanmar verses linking rhythm. Besides, this poem shows Myanmar Culture. Most of Myanmar are Buddhists. So, they offer snack or rice and curry to the image of Buddha.

Ger Aye is the name of Myanmar girl. In this poem, the characters are Ger Aye, her mother, Mister Bachelor and the little monkey. Mother made the bun with paper sticking to it. And then, she offers a bun with the Lilly salver. The little monkey came running down and put and eat the bun. Mother did not see the little monkey. She thinks the bun was lost by Ger

Aye. For this case, Ger Aye was beaten by her mother. She was crying in the darkness. Mister Bachelor pulled her leg, hanging down. At that time, it thundered in the south of sky.

Again, Mother made the bun with paper sticking to it. And then, she offers a bun with the Lilly salver. The little monkey came running down and put and eat the bun. Mother did not see the little monkey. She thinks the bun was lost by Ger Aye. For this case, Ger Aye was beaten by her mother. She was crying in the darkness. Mister Bachelor pulled her leg, hanging down. At that time, it thundered in the south of sky. These actions are again and again. So, this case likes circle and endless.

This poem is taught by teachers to 1st standard students of primary school in Myanmar. The author is an anonymous. This poem appeared at the emerging of paper because of the sentence, ‘A bun with paper sticking to it’. So, it shows that it started about 18th century (Konebound Period).

3. Analysis of the usage ‘Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother’

The usage of ‘Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother’ can be used in suitable social situations.

e.g 1. Aye Aye and her younger sister Hla Hla watch a Korean movie from MRTV at their house. The movie’s plot is complex and like circle.

Aye Aye : ‘This movie is being **‘Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother’.**’

‘ဒီရုပ်ရှင်က ဂျာအေးသူ့အမေရိုက်ဖြစ်နေပြီ။’

Hla Hla : ‘Right Ma Ma.’

‘ဟုတ်တယ်မမ။’

In this social situation, Aye Aye and Hla Hla watch a korean movie at their house. The relationship of Aye Aye and Hla Hla are sisters. Aye Aye said, ‘This movie is being **‘Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother’.**’ She used this usage as a metaphor. This speech

event performs referential function, emotive function, contextual function and contact function of sociolinguistics.

e.g 2. At U Chit Teashop of Yangon University. Mg Mg is talking about the history of ancient city of Tagaung to Ko Ko. But his speech is not going to aim and complex of Tagaung King's name.

Ko Ko : 'Mg Mg, your speech is being **'Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother'**.'

‘မောင်မောင်၊ မင်းပြောတဲ့စကားက ဂျာအေးသူ့အမေရိုက်ဖြစ်နေပြီ။’

Mg Mg : Never mind. Next day I will tell you this history. Tonight I will read the history of ancient city of Tagaung'

‘စိတ်မရှိပါနဲ့ကွာ။ နောက်နေ့မှငါမင်းကို ဒီသမိုင်းကြောင်းကိုပြောမယ်

ခုည ငါ တကောင်းပြည်သမိုင်းဖတ်ဦးမယ်။ ’

Ko Ko : OK. See you tomorrow.

‘ကောင်းပြီ။ မနက်ဖြန်တွေ့မယ်နော်’

In this social situation, Ko Ko and Mg Mg is sitting at U Chit Teashop of Yangon University. The relationship of Ko Ko and Mg Mg are friends. Ko Ko said, 'Mg Mg, your speech is being **'Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother'**. He used this usage as a metaphor. This speech event performs referential function, emotive function, directive function, contextual function and contact function of sociolinguistics.

e.g 3. Ma Ma and Mya Mya work at trading company. They are accountants of their company. Today they did the account of last month income and outcome.

But it is not equal valance.

Mya Mya : 'This case likes **'Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother'**.'

‘ဒီဟာက ဂျာအေးသူ့အမေရိုက်ဖြစ်နေပြီ။’

Ma Ma : ‘Yes. We will try it.’

‘ဟုတ်တယ်။ တို့ ကြိုးစားကြတာပေါ့’

In this social situation, Mya Mya and Ma Ma are accountants of trading company. The relationship of Mya Mya and Ma Ma are colleagues. Mya Mya said, ‘This case likes **‘Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother’.**’ She used this usage as the metaphor of Myanmar Language. This speech event performs referential function, emotive function, directive function, contextual function and contact function of sociolinguistics.

e.g 4. U Aung is a managing director of Tourism Company.

His officers and he are meeting in Conference Room of his company. He is angry with his officers for bad reception to tourist.

U Aung- ‘Yesterday, one of our customers complained to me that is your bad reception to tourists.

Your behavior is being **Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother.**

I always say customers are always right.

So, we fulfilled our customer’s desires.’

‘မနေ့က တို့ဖောက်သည်တစ်ယောက်က ငါ့ကို လာတင်သွားတယ်။ မင်းတို့လုပ်ရပ်က

ဂျာအေးသူ့အမေရိုက်ဖြစ်နေပြီ။

ဖောက်သည်တွေဟာ အမြဲတမ်းမှန်တယ်လို့ ငါ အမြဲပြောတယ်။

ဒါ့ကြောင့် တို့တွေ တို့ဖောက်သည်တွေရဲ့ အလိုဆန္ဒတွေကို ဖြည့်ဆည်းပေးရမယ်။’

Officers- Yes Sir.

‘ဟုတ်ကဲ့ပါဆရာ’

In this social situation, U Aung and his officers are meeting in Conference Room of his company. U Aung said, ‘Your behavior is being **Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother**’. He used this usage as a metaphor. This speech event performs referential function, emotive function, directive function, contextual function and contact function of sociolinguistics.

e.g 5. U Soe and Daw Khin have one daughter and one son. Daughter’s name is Hnin Hnin and she is ten years old. Son’s name is Thiha and he is nine years old. U soe is a doctor. This morning, their father went to work and then they are quarrelling. Thus, Daw Khin scolds them.

Daw Khin- ‘Hnin Hnin and Thiha, you are quarelling when your father went to work.

you are being **Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother**.

Don’t quarrel. Don’t quarrel. I always say it.

But you don’t obey mother’s speech. Hnin Hnin, Be away from your younger brother. Thiha doesn’t play with Hnin Hnin.’

နှင်းနှင်းနဲ့ သီဟ။ မင်းတို့အဖေ အလုပ်သွားတာနဲ့ မင်းတို့ရန်ဖြစ်နေကြတယ်။မင်းတို့က

ဂျာအေးသူ့အမေရိုက်ဖြစ်နေပြီ။

ရန်မဖြစ်နဲ့။ ရန်မဖြစ်နဲ့။ ငါအမြဲပြောတယ်။

ဒါပေမဲ့ မင်းတို့က အမေ့စကား နားမထောင်ဘူးနှင်းနှင်း။ သမီးက မောင်လေးနဲ့

အဝေးမှာနေ။ သီဟ မင်းက နှင်းနှင်းနဲ့ မဆော့နဲ့။

Hnin Hnin- ‘Yes Mom.’

‘ဟတ်ကဲ့မေမေ’

Thiha - ‘Yes Mom.’

‘ဟုတ်ကဲ့မေမေ’

In this social situation, U Soe is Daw Khin’s husband and Hnin Hnin and Thiha are their daughter and son. Daw Khin said, ‘you are being **Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother.**’ She used this usage as a metaphor. This speech event performs referential function, emotive function, directive function, contextual function, metalinguistics function and contact function of sociolinguistics.

e.g 6. Daw Nwe Nwe and Daw Mu Mu are old friends. They are about 45 years old and they did not have contact with each other about twelve years. Today they met at City Mart in Yangon. They recognized each other and they were very happy. Then they went to Moon Bakery. They are drinking juice and talking about their life.

Daw Mu Mu - I’m single and what about you?

ငါတော့ အပျိုကြီးပဲ။ ဒါနဲ့ နင်ရော။

Daw Nwe Nwe-My husband is U Kyaw Kyaw whom you know.

ငါ့အမျိုးသားက ဦးကျော်ကျော်ပါ။ သူ့ကို နင်သိပါတယ်။

Daw Mu Mu - Is he your first lover?

သူက နင့်အချစ်ဦးမဟုတ်လား။

Daw Nwe Nwe- Yes. I had second, third, fourth lovers. Finally, I know that my really lover

is Ko Ko Kyaw. He loves only me and his mind is never change. So, we married in 2005. We have two daughters.

‘ဟုတ်တယ်။ ငါ့မှာ ဒုတိယ၊ တတိယ၊ စတုတ္ထချစ်သူတွေရှိတယ်။ နောက်ဆုံးတော့ ငါ အမှန်တကယ်ချစ်သူက ကိုကိုကျော်ဆိုတာ သိခဲ့ရတယ်။ သူက ငါ့တစ်ယောက်

တည်းကိုပဲ ချစ်ပြီး၊ သူ့စိတ်ကဘယတော့မှ မပြောင်းလဲဘူး။ ဒါ့ကြောင့် တို့ ၂၀၀၅
ခုနှစ်မှာ လက်ထပ်ခဲ့ကြတယ်။ တို့မှာ သမီးလေး နှစ်ယောက်ရှိတယ်။’

Daw Mu Mu - Oh! I see. Finally, your love likes **‘Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother’**.

‘အို ငါသဘောပေါက်တယ်။ နောက်ဆုံးတော့ မင်းရဲ့အချစ်က ဂျာအေးသူ့အမေရိုက်
ဖြစ်နေရော’

Daw Nwe New- Really right my friend.

‘တကယ် မှန်တယ်သူငယ်ချင်း’

In this social situation, Daw Nwe Nwe and Daw Mu Mu are old friends old and they didn't have contact with each other about twelve years. They met at City Mart and they went Moon Bakery and talking about their life. Daw Mu Mu said, ‘Finally, your love likes **‘Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother’**’. She used this usage as a metaphor. This speech event performs referential function, emotive function, contextual function and contact function of sociolinguistics.

e.g 7. Ko Ko and Ko Toe are best friends. At Sunday, they met Teashop.

Ko Ko – Are you OK in your work?

‘အလုပ်အဆင်ပြေလားသူငယ်ချင်း’

Ko Toe – OK. But my boss is being **‘Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother’** when he is speaking concerned with work.

‘အဆင်ပြေပါတယ်။ ဒါပေမဲ့ ငါ့ သူဌေးက အလုပ်နဲ့ ပတ်သက်ပြီးစကားပြောရင် ဂျာအေး
သူ့အမေရိုက်ဖြစ်နေတယ်။’

Ko Ko- So you are hard working.

‘ဒါ့ကြောင့် မင်းတို့ အလုပ်ကြိုးစားတာပေါ့။’

Ko Toe – Of course.

‘ဟုတ်တာပေါ့’

In this social situation, Ko Ko and Ko Toe are best friends. They met at Teashop in their holiday. Ko Toe said, ‘But my boss is being **‘Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother’** when he is speaking concerned with work.’ He used this usage as a metaphor. This speech event performs referential function, emotive function, contextual function and contact function of sociolinguistics.

In the above examples, the social situation of watching TV programme, talking about the history of ancient city Tagaung, working their work in company and in family, and two old friends and best friend talking, the usage **‘Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother’** can be used as a metaphor in their speech.

Therefore, the usage **‘Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother’** can be used the circle situation of every social case.

Average use of Language Functions in the usage **‘Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother’** of the above examples

| No. | Usage | Language function | Times | % |
|-----|--|--------------------------------|-------|--------|
| 1. | The speech events of ‘Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother’ | referential function | 7 | 100% |
| | | expressive or emotive function | 7 | 100% |
| | | directive function | 4 | 66.67% |
| | | phatic or contact function | 7 | 100% |
| | | contextual function | 7 | 100% |
| | | metalinguistics function | 1 | 16.67% |

According to this table, The speech events of the usage ‘**Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother**’ performs 100% of referential function, emotive function, contact function, and contextual function. Besides it performs 66.67% of directive function and 16.67% of metalinguistics function. Therefore, Myanmar people use the usage ‘**Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother**’ that performs mostly referential function, emotive function, contact function, and contextual function and occasionally directive function and metalinguistics function. It can be used between the same social class or upper social class to middle and lower social class.

The same social class

upper social class \Rightarrow upper social class

middle social class \Rightarrow middle social class

lower social class \Rightarrow lower social class

Upper social class to middle and lower social class.

upper social class \Rightarrow middle social class

upper social class \Rightarrow lower social class

middle social class \Rightarrow lower social class

Conclusion

This paper presented the study of the usage, ‘Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother’ in Myanmar Language. The root of this usage comes from Myanmar endless folk song ‘Ger Aye’ and it started in 18th century (Konebaung Period).

As a result, the metaphor of the usage, ‘Ger Aye who is beaten by her mother’ is using in the circle situation of every social case in Myanmar.

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