Relative Clause Structure in Manipuri

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Abstract: Manipuri is a T-B language of the Sino-Tibetan language family. It is the official language of Manipur, a north-eastern state of India. The paper discusses three types of relative clause structure in Manipuri.

1. Internally headed relative clause (IHR C),
2. Externally headed relative clause (EHRC) and
3. Headless Relative clause (HRC). In the case of HRC, a sufficient referent capable of standing for the deleted head noun must be present such as verb exhibiting nominal property, quantifying words, genitive constructions and demonstratives; this is situational and context sensitive. In cases where relative clause structure is formed with quantifiers, the quantifiers can only follow the head noun.

4. Keyword: Relative clause, noun phrase, internally headed relative clause, externally headed relative clause, headless relative clause.

I. Introduction

Relative clause is used when the reference of a noun cannot be clarified satisfactorily by any determiner. It is a sentence that is embedded into a noun phrase, and marked in some way as subordinate to the particular noun for which clarity of reference is sought. In Manipuri, relative clause is formed by addition of the nominalizer (NZR) pә~bә to the embedded verb and a determiner (DET) әdu ‘that’, әsi ‘this’ is used as a correlative marker as shown below.

(i) ләykәл dә ләysiŋ satli
(ii) ләysiŋ әdu phәjәy

When sentence (i) and (ii) is combined, the relativized sentence is formed as below ләykәldә satlibә ләysiŋ әdu phәjәy

In the above sentence, ләykәldә satlibә ‘that is blooming in the garden’ is a relative clause that is modifying the head noun ләysiŋ ‘flowers’.

There are cases where the correlative marker can be dropped as in the case of quantifiers.

II. Types of Relative Clause:

Noun phrases consist of a potentially lengthy series of grammatical words whose relative order is fairly rigid and whose boundaries are well-defined. The relative clauses are discussed under the following types.

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<td>Internally headed relative clause</td>
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<td>Externally headed relative clause</td>
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Table 1:Types of Relative Clause

(i) Internally headed relative clause: In internally headed relative clause, the head noun occurs inside the relativized noun phrase.

(ii) Externally headed relative clause: In externally headed relative clause, the head noun occurs outside the relativized clause. Here, the head noun can either precede or follow the relative clause.

(iii) Headless relative clause: In headless relative clause, the noun phrase head may be deleted if the remaining material is a sufficient referent (for example, a relational marker cannot be a sufficient referent). There must be some entity present which is capable of standing for the deleted head noun such as verb exhibiting nominal properties, quantifying words, genitive constructions and demonstrative.

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The three types of relative clauses are discussed as in the following structures:

1. **Used of verb exhibiting nominal property:**
   
   Examples:
   
   a. **ma-ә phuritә әmә lay**
      
      He bought one shirt.
   
   b. **phuritә mәca әnuә әw-кә**
      
      The son took the shirt.

   The three types of relative clause can be exemplified by combination of sentence (a) and (b) as shown below:

   **Internally headed relative clause:** In internally headed relative clause, the head noun phurit 'shirt' occurs within the noun phrase which is a relativized noun phrase.
   
   ma-ә phuritә әmә lay rok-ә әdu mәcanupa-әә әw-кә
   
   The shirt that he bought is taken by his son.

   **Externally headed relative clause:** In externally headed relative clause, the head noun phurit 'shirt' occurs outside the relativized clause which functions as a noun phrase. Here, the head noun phurit 'shirt' can either precede or follow the relative clause.
   
   i. **ma-ә lay rok-ә phuritә әdu mәcanupa-әә әw-кә**
      
      The shirt that he bought is taken by his son.
   
      ii. **phuritә ma-ә lay rok-ә әdu mәcanupa-әә әw-кә**
          
          The shirt that he bought is taken by his son.

   **Headless relative clause:** The verbs exhibiting nominal property can stand as a sufficient referent for the deleted noun.
   
   The modifying word layәkә 'bought' is a sufficient referent that is capable of standing for the deleted head noun phurit 'shirt' as in
   
   ma-ә lay rok-ә әdu mәcanupa-әә әw-кә
   
   His son took away what he bought.

2. **Used of quantifying words:**
   
   Examples:
   
   a. **әŋaŋ kuдиәmәk әk-y**
      
      Every child came.
   
   b. **әŋaŋ-siŋ әә duәә dәә layrik pi**
      
      The children were given books.

   The three types of relative clause can be exemplified by combination of sentence (a) and (b) as shown below:

   **Internally headed relative clause:**
   
   lak-әә әŋaŋ kuдиәmәkә әә layrik pi
   
   Every child that came were given books.

   **Externally headed relative clause:**
   
   aŋaŋ lak-әә kuдиәmәkә әә layrik pi
   
   Every child that came were given books.

   When quantifying words are used, the head noun can only precede the relative clause.
**Headless relative clause:** The quantifying words can stand as a sufficient referent for the deleted noun. Here, the quantifying word khudiŋmәk ‘each/every’ is a sufficient referent that is capable of standing for the deleted head noun әŋaŋ ‘child’ as shown below:

\[
lak-li-bә khudiŋmәk tә layrik pi come-PRG-NZR QTF EMP book give\]

Everyone that came were given books.

3. **Used of genitive constructions:**

Examples:

a. tombә-ɡi khoŋup ɡәy-bi-rәk-pә
tomba-GEN shoes buy-BNF-DTC-ASP

(b)ought shoes for Tomba.

b. khoŋup әdu phәjәy
   shoes DET nice
   The shoes are nice.

The three types of relative clause can be exemplified by combination of sentence (a) and (b) as shown in the following.

**Internally headed relative clause:**

tombә-ɡi khoŋup ɡәy-bi-rәk-pә du phәjәy
tomba-GEN shoes buy-BNF-DTC-NZR DET nice

The shoes bought for Tomba is nice.

Here, the head noun khoŋup ‘shoes’ occurs inside the noun phrase.

**Externally headed relative clause:**

i. khoŋup tombә-ɡi ɡәy-bi-rәk-pә du phәjәy
   shoes Tomba-GEN buy-BNF-DTC-NZR DET nice
   The shoes bought for Tomba is nice.

ii. tombә-ɡi ɡәy-bi-rәk-pә khoŋup tu phәjәy
   Tomba-GEN buy-BNF-DTC-NZR shoes DET nice
   The shoes bought for Tomba is nice.

In externally headed relative clause, the head noun khoŋup ‘shoes’ occurs outside the relativized clause which function as a noun phrase. Here, the head noun khoŋup ‘shoes’ can either precede or follow the relative clause.

**Headless relative clause:**

The genitive constructions can stand as a sufficient referent for the deleted noun. Here, the genitive phrase tombәgi ‘Tomba’s’ is a sufficient referent that is capable of standing for the deleted head noun khoŋup ‘shoes’.

tombә-ɡi ɡәy-bi-rәk-pә du phәjәy
tomba-GEN shoes buy-BNF-DTC-NZR DET nice

That which is bought for Tomba is nice.

4. **Used of demonstrative:**

Examples:

a. ɡәy-kol әdu ɡәy-siŋ sat-li
   garden LOC flower-PL bloom-ASP
   Flowers are blooming in the garden.

b. ɡәy-siŋ әdu phәjәy
   flower-PL DET nice
   The flowers are nice.

The three types of relative clause can be exemplified by combination of sentence (a) and (b) as shown below:-

**Internally headed relative clause:**

ɡәy-kol әdu ɡәy-siŋ sat-li-bә әdu phәjәy
Garden LOC flower-PL bloom-PRG-NZR DET nice

Flowers that are blooming in the garden are nice.
In internally headed relative clause, the head noun lәysiŋ ‘flowers’ occurs within the noun phrase which is a relativized noun phrase.

**Externally headed relative clause:**

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{lәysiŋ} & \quad \text{laykol} \quad \text{dә} \quad \text{sat-li-bә} \\
\text{flower-PL} & \quad \text{garden} \quad \text{LOC} \quad \text{bloom-PRG-NZR} \quad \text{DET} \quad \text{nә} \\
\text{phәjәy} & \\
\text{nice} & \\
\end{align*}
\]

Flowers that are blooming in the garden are nice.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{laykol} & \quad \text{dә} \quad \text{sat-li-bә} \\
\text{garden} \quad \text{LOC} \quad \text{bloom-PRG-NZR} & \quad \text{flower-PL} \\
\text{DET} & \quad \text{nә} \\
\text{phәjәy} & \\
\end{align*}
\]

Flowers that are blooming in the garden are nice.

In externally headed relative clause, the head noun lәysiŋ ‘flowers’ occurs outside the relativized clause which functions as a noun phrase. Here, the head noun lәysiŋ ‘flowers’ can either precede or follow the relative clause.

**Headless relative clause:**

The demonstrative is a sufficient referent that is capable of standing for the deleted head noun.

Here the demonstrative dә ‘that’ can stand for the deleted head noun lәysiŋ ‘flowers’.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{laykol} & \quad \text{dә} \quad \text{sat-li-bә} \\
\text{garden} \quad \text{LOC} \quad \text{bloom-PRG-NZR} & \quad \text{DET} \\
\text{phәjәy} & \\
\text{nice} & \\
\end{align*}
\]

Those blooming in the garden are nice.

III. Conclusion

This paper is essentially an exploratory analysis of the structure of relative clause in Manipuri. The three types of relative clause ordering are discussed—internally headed relative clause, externally headed relative clause, and headless relative clause. In the case of externally headed relative clause, the head noun can either precede or follow the relativized clause. When quantifying words are used, the head noun can only precede the quantifiers and the correlative marker can be dropped. These preliminary findings will hopefully serve as a basis for further advancement.

IV. Abbreviations

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<td>DAT</td>
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<td>Determiner</td>
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<td>Emphatic</td>
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<td>Aspect</td>
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<td>Nominalizer</td>
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