

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 (IHRC),
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)-pə~bə to the embedded verb and a determiner (DET)- ədu 'that', əsi 'this' is used as a correlative marker as shown below.

- (i) ləykol də ləysiŋ satli
- (ii) ləysiŋ ədu phəjəy

When sentence (i) and (ii) is combined, the relativized sentence is formed as below
 ləykoldə satlibə ləysiŋ ədu phəjəy

In the above sentence, ləykoldə satlibə 'that is blooming in the garden' is a relative clause that is modifying the head noun ləysiŋ '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.

Types	Functions
Internally headed relative clause	The head noun occurs inside the relativized clause
Externally headed relative clause	The head noun occurs outside the relativized clause
Headless relative clause	The head noun is deleted

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.

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

1. Used of verb exhibiting nominal property:

Examples:

- a. ma-nə phurit əmə ləy
he-NOMshirt one buy
He bought one shirt.
- b. phuritədu məcanupa nə ləw-khre
shirtDET son NOM take-ASP
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-nə phurit əmə ləy-rək-pə du məcanupa-nə ləw-khre
he-NOMshirt one buy-DTC-NZR DET son-NOM take-ASP
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-nə ləy-rək-pə phurit ədu məcanupa-nə ləw-khre
he-NOM buy-DTC-NZR shirt DET son-NOM take-ASP
The shirt that he bought is taken by his son.
- ii. phurit ma-nə ləy-rək-pə ədu məcanupa-nə ləw-khre
shirt he-NOM buy-DTC-NZR DET son-NOM take-ASP
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 ləyrək-pə ‘bought’ is a sufficient referent that is capable of standing for the deleted head noun phurit ‘shirt’ as in

- ma-nə ləy-rək-pə ədu məcanupa-nə ləw-khre
he-NOM buy-DTC-NZR DET son-NOM take-ASP
His son took away what he bought.

2. Used of quantifying words:

Examples:

- a. əŋaŋ khudiŋmæk lak-y
child QTF come-ASP
Every child came.
- b. əŋaŋ-siŋ du də layrik pi
child-PL DET DAT book give
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-li-bə əŋaŋ khudiŋmæk tə layrik pi
come-PRG-NZR child QTF EMP book give
Every child that came were given books.

Externally headed relative clause:

- əŋaŋ lak-li-bə khudiŋmæk tə layrik pi
child come-PRG-NZR QTF EMP book give
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 khudiṁmæk ‘each/every’ is a sufficient referent that is capable of standing for the deleted head noun əṅaṅ ‘child’ as shown below:

lak-li-bə khudiṁmæk tə layrik pi
 come-PRG-NZR QTF EMP book give

Everyone that came were given books.

3. Used of genitive constructions:

Examples:

a. tombə-gi khoṅup ləy-bi-rək-y
 Tomba-GEN shoes buy-BNF-DTC-ASP
 (somebody) Bought shoes for Tomba.

b. khoṅup ədu phəjəy
 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:

tombə-gi khoṅup ləy-bi-rək-pə du phəjəy
 Tomba-GEN shoes buy-BNF-DTC-NZR DET nice

The shoes bought for Tomba is nice.

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

Externally headed relative clause:

i. khoṅup tombə-gi ləy-bi-rək-pə du phəjəy
 shoes Tomba-GEN buy-BNF-DTC-NZR DET nice
 The shoes bought for Tomba is nice.

ii. tombə-gi ləy-bi-rək-pə khoṅup tu phəjəy
 Tomba-GEN buy-BNF-DTC-NZR shoes DET nice
 The shoes bought for Tomba is nice.

In externally headed relative clause, the head noun khoṅup ‘shoes’ occurs outside the relativized clause which function as a noun phrase. Here, the head noun khoṅup ‘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 tombəgi ‘Tomba’s’ is a sufficient referent that is capable of standing for the deleted head noun khoṅup ‘shoes’.

tombə-gi ləy-bi-rək-pə du phəjəy
 Tomba-GEN buy-BNF-DTC-NZR DET nice

That which is bought for Tomba is nice.

4. Used of demonstrative:

Examples:

a. ləykol də ləy-siṅ sat-li
 garden LOC flower-PL bloom-ASP
 Flowers are blooming in the garden.

b. ləy-siṅ ədu phəjəy
 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:

ləykol də ləy-siṅ sat-li-bə ədu phəjəy
 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 *ləysiŋ* ‘flowers’ occurs within the noun phrase which is a relativized noun phrase.

Externally headed relative clause:

ləy-siŋ *ləykol* *də* *sat-li-bə* *ədu* *phəjəy*
 flower-PL garden LOC bloom-PRG-NZR DET nice
 Flowers that are blooming in the garden are nice.

ləykol *də* *sat-li-bə* *ləy-siŋ* *ədu* *phəjəy*
 Garden LOC bloom-PRG-NZR flower-PL DET nice
 Flowers that are blooming in the garden are nice.

In externally headed relative clause, the head noun *ləysiŋ* ‘flowers’ occurs outside the relativized clause which functions as a noun phrase. Here, the head noun *ləysiŋ* ‘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 *ədu* ‘that’ can stand for the deleted head noun *ləysiŋ* ‘flowers’.

ləykol *də* *sat-li-bə* *ədu* *phəjəy*
 Garden LOC bloom-PRG-NZR DET nice
 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 clauseand 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

- NOM Nominative
- DAT Dative
- DET Determiner
- EMP Emphatic
- ASP Aspect
- NZR Nominalizer
- QTF Quantifier
- PRG Progressive
- GEN Genitive
- BNF Benefactive
- DTC Deictic
- LOC Locative
- Pl Plural

References

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