

Subordination in Western Tamang

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Abstract

This article examines the clause combining in Western Tamang of Nuwakot district in Nepal. The significance of language as spoken in a particular community of Nepal reflects in the diversity as being accommodated in the national policy of language by the language commission of Nepal. Western Tamang is a major dialect of Tamang, a Tibeto-Burman language spoken in Nepal. The main goal of this study has been to analyze the forms and functions of clause combining in Western Tamang. This article describes the process of clause combining from both formal and functional perspectives. The data for this study have been taken from the Western Tamang dialect spoken in Rasuwa and Trishuli based on functional-typological grammar of T.Givón (2001). However, simple clauses are discussed in terms of subordination and coordination to some extent.

Subordination involves five kinds of clauses: serial verb construction, complement clauses, adverbial clauses, relative clauses and converbal clauses. In subordination, Western Tamang uses non-finite form of the verb as a major strategy for clause combining. In coordination, except for conjunction and adversative conjunction, it uses coordinators borrowed from Nepali. It uses simple juxtaposition, an asyndetic coordination for conjunction. Clause combining as a morpho-syntactic phenomenon in Western Tamang reveals typologically interesting characteristics which needs from a broad typological perspective.

The morpho-syntactic analysis of clause combining in the Western Tamang would contribute to understanding new phenomenon in Western Tamang and other related languages. This study may provide the basic foundation for the further study of the morpho-syntactic aspects in dialect. It is useful to local community for preparing materials for multilingual education in the dialect as well. Despite differences perceived among the Tamang speaking people in terms of language variations, the basics in their language are similar. The beauty and property of language can be seen in diversity.

Keywords: Clause combining, subordination, coordination, conjunction, disjunction, relative clause, verbal predicates

Introduction

This paper examines the subordination in Western Tamang spoken in Nuwakot district in Nepal from functional-typological perspectives. Tamang language is mainly spoken in central Nepal particularly the Hilly areas around the Kathmandu valley. It is also spoken in outside of Nepal: Darjeeling, Sikkim, Assam and Nagaland in India and also Burma and Bhutan. Tamang is a language of the Tibetan-Burman language family, belonging to the same branch as classic Tibetan but it is not a descendent of classical Tibetan. However, it is not a Tibetan dialect (Chalise, 2003). The dividing line between the Eastern and Western Tamang lies in the Trusuli River. It is mainly spoken in Dhading,

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Nuwakot and other parts of Western Nepal. The language classification of western-Tamang is Sino-Tibetan, Tibeto-Burman, Western Tibeto-Burman, Bodies, Gurung, Tamang. Western Tamang uses subject – object – verb (SOV) sentence structure and is a tonal language (Epele et al. 2012). Western Tamang is a major dialect of Tamang, a Tibeto-Burman language spoken in Nepal (Regmi and Regmi, 2018). The data for this study have been taken from the Western Tamang dialect spoken in Rasuwa and Trishuli. In Western Tamang, subordination involves five kinds of clauses: serial verb construction, complement clauses, adverbial clauses, relative clauses and converbial clauses (Adhikari, 2015). In subordination, non-finite form of the verb is used as a major strategy. Clause combining as a morpho-syntactic phenomenon reveals typologically interesting characteristics which would contribute to understand new phenomenon in Western Tamang and other related languages. The comparative study ensures the quality of research as undertaken in this paper. The article contributes to enriching cultural and societal fabric of Nepal.

This paper is organized as follows: In Section 2, we briefly discussed simple clauses in Western Tamang. Section 3 deals with subordination in the language. In Section 4, we summarize the findings of the paper. As per the organization plan, the paper presents different items of research information for comprehension.

Discussion

Simple clauses

Although there are diverse types of clauses in languages found in oral and written versions, this paper particularly examines the clauses employed in the Western Tamang. In accordance with that, the article demonstrates both properties and variations of clauses. Simple clauses, generally, mean main, declarative, affirmative and active clause which serves as the reference point for grammatical description (Givón, 2001:105). The internal structure of simple clauses can be broadly categorized as non-verbal predicate and verbal predicate (Dryer, 2007). They are briefly discussed as follows:

Non-verbal predicate simple clauses

The significance of clause variables demands the demonstration of the structural variations. There are three types of non-verbal predicate simple clauses as adjectival predicate, nominal predicate and locative predicate (Dryer, 2007). All these types of simple clauses occur with copula verbs in Western Tamang. The basic constituent order in such simple clause is: subject (SUB), predicate (PRD) and copula (COP) as shown in (1), (2) and (3) below.

(1) Adjectival Predicate

- | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (1) | <i>ηala dim dzjaba mula</i> |
| | ηa-la Dim dzja-ba mu-la |
| | 1SG-GEN House good-NMLZ COP-EXIST-NPST |
| | "My house is beautiful." |

In example (1), *dzjaba* ‘good’ is an adjective which is used as adjectival predicate with existential copula ‘be’.

(2) Nominal Predicate

- (2) *ŋala min raz hinla*
 ŋa-la Min raz hin-la
 1SG-GEN Name raj COP-EQUT-NPST
 "My mane is Raj."

In example (2), *raz* 'Raj' is nominal predicate which is followed by the existential copula 'be'.

(3) Locative Predicate

- (3) *ŋala dim nuwakotri mula*
 ŋa-la Dim nuwakot-ri mu-la
 1SG-GEN House nuwakot-LOC COP-EXIST-NPST
 "My house is in Nuwakot."

In example (3), the proper noun is suffixed by locative morpheme *-ri* and followed by existential copula 'be'.

Verbal predicate simple clauses

Whatever verbal predicate is in English can be although relevant it is not discussed here. The focus of the paper as mentioned above has been on the Western Tamang is given to different linguistic properties specifically to the clauses here. The Western Tamang presents two types of verbal predicate simple clauses viz., intransitive and transitive clauses. In transitive clause, the predicate takes two or more arguments whereas the intransitive clause takes only a single argument. Givón (2001) notes that the intransitive predicate can also take an indirect object as transitive predicate as shown in the table below.

Table 1: Verbal predicate clauses with their argument structure

Clause Types	Intransitive	Transitive
Simple	NP _{SUB} V	NP _{SUB} NP _{DO} V
With Indirect Object	NP _{SUB} PP/ NP _{IO} V	NP _{SUB} NP _{DO} PP/ NP _{IO} V

Table 1 presents four types of verbal predicate clauses in Western Tamang. They are: simple intransitive clauses, simple transitive clauses, intransitive clauses with indirect object and transitive clauses with indirect objects.

In the simple intransitive clause in Western Tamang, the predicate takes a single argument i.e. subject (SUB) in the absolutive case as shown in (4) below.

- (4) *tsjaŋba sændoki mubala ro*
 Tsjaŋba Sændoki mu-ba-la ro
 younger Benevolent COP:EXIST-NMLZ- REP
 brother GEN
 "The younger brother was benevolent." it is said.

In example (4), the predicate is intransitive that usually takes a single argument as the subject as zero marked absolutive case.

In simple transitive clause, the verbal predicate takes two arguments as subject (SUB) and direct object (DO) as shown in (5) below.

- (5) *ŋala dzadze ken tsadzi*
 ŋa-la Dzadze ken tsa-dzi
 1SG-GEN son-ERG rice eat-ERG
 "My son ate rice."

In example (5), the first argument functions as subject of the clause and the second argument occurs pre-verbally.

- (5) *ŋadze dinri woen sjalba mula*
 ŋa-dze din-ri woen sjal-ba mu-la
 1SG-ERG day-LOC cloth wash-NMLG COP:EXIST-NPST
 "I wash cloth in the day."

In intransitive clause with an indirect object, the verbal predicate takes two arguments as the first one functioning as subject (SUB) in the absolutive case and another occurs pre-verbally as coded by a postposition in Western Tamang as shown in (6).

- (6) *ramdze tshokanri kitab thendzi*
 ram-dze tshokan-ri kitab then-dzi
 ram-ERG table-LOC book put-PST
 "Ram put the book on the table."

Subordination

The role of subordination in language is paramount. The similar importance can be seen in clause combining in Western Tamang as well. Clause combining is functionally defined as a process simply forming a functional-syntactic construction to show the degree of clause iteration: most integrated to the least integrated (Givón, 2001a:328). It normally involves two basic processes as subordination and co-ordination (Van Valin, 1984, pp. 241-242). Clause combining refers to the multi-verb construction in the language (Payne, 1997:305) in which two clauses can be combined by co-ordination or subordination. The subordination in Western Tamang consists of a relation of dependency as discussed in Lehmann (1988), Payne (1997) and Givón (2001) and such relation is controlled mostly by a verbal form, finite, non-finite or nominalized clauses. The Western Tamang exhibits five types of subordinate clauses and generally referred to as complex constructions. They are serial verb construction, complement clauses, adverbial clauses, relative clauses and converbial clauses.

Serial verb construction

The serial verb construction consists of a sequence of verbs that is overtly marked neither for the subordinate nor for the coordinate relation. It prototypically consists of two or more verb roots which neither form a compound nor as the member of separate clause (Payne, 1997, p. 307) as shown in (7) below.

- (7) *ŋatse tsaamjaŋ thuŋamjaŋ jaŋnəjaŋ*
 ŋa-tse tsa-a-mjaŋ thuŋ-a-mjaŋ jaŋ-nə-jaŋ
 1SG-ERG eat-NEG-INF drink-NEG-INF get-IMPH-INF

"I have got nothing (for living)." [Literally: "I have nothing to eat and drink".

In example (7), the serial verbs consists of a sequence of verbs *tsa* 'eat', *thuŋ* 'drink' and *jaŋ* 'get'. They are overtly marked neither for the subordinate nor for the coordinate. They are uttered within a single intonation in Western Tamang.

Complement clause

The complement clause is another type of subordinate clause that functions as subject, direct object or prepositional object of a verb. However, the Western Tamang complement clauses are non-finite ones. Functionally, there are two types of complement clauses as subject complement and object complement clauses as discussed in (8) and (9) respectively below.

- (8) *dza akhabala ŋada tsinta tadzi*
 Dza a-kha-ba-la ŋa-da tsinta ta-dzi
 Son NEG-arrive-NMLZ-GEN 1SG-DAT worry occur-PST
 "That the son did not arrive worried me".

In example (8), the verb of complement clause *kha* 'arrive' is prefixed by a negative marker *a-* and suffixed by the nominalizer *-ba* which is followed by the genitive marker *-la*. Similarly, an object complement clause is shown in (9).

- (9) *ŋadze mhidhgu khaba mledzi*
 ŋa-dze mhi-dhgu kha-ba mle-dzi
 1SG-ERG men-PL come-NMLZ forget-PST
 "I forget that people were coming".

In example (9), the object of the matrix verb *mle* 'forget' is a complement clause that ends with *kha-ba* 'come-NMLZ'.

Adverbial clause

The adverbial clauses in Western Tamang can be discussed in terms of time, place, manner, purpose, reason, concession and condition. The subordinators used for them are *ŋondze* 'before', *khanə* 'where', *raŋ* 'as if/ as same as' *-tibri* 'to/ in order to', *-dzim* 'because/as', *-lenə* 'though/ although/ even though' and *-səm* 'if/ unless' respectively. These clauses are discussed in (10-16) below.

- (10) *ŋa jamburi dzuba paŋ ŋondze nuwakotri tiba mula*
 ŋa jambu-ri dzu-ba paŋ ŋondze
 1SG Kathmandu-LOC come-NMLZ than before
 nuwakot-ri ti-ba mu-la
 Nuwakot-LOC live-NMLZ be-NPST
 "I lived in Nuwakot before I came to Kathmandu".

In example (10) *ŋonje* 'before' is used to indicate time adverbial in the subordinate clause.

- (11) *e khanəri ŋiba ŋaino hujuri ŋiba*
 E khanə-ri ŋi-ba ŋa ino
 2SG where-LOC go-NMLZ 1SG also
 hujuri ŋi-ba
 there-LOC go-NMLZ

“I go where you go”.

In example (11), the interrogative pronoun *khanə* ‘where’ is used to indicate place adverbial in the subordinate clause.

- (12) *eta sjerηə sjappa tam paηba paηdzi*
 e-ta sjer-ηə sjap-pa raη-ba
 3SG-DAT common cold-INF as if-NMLZ do-NMLZ
 Tam paη-ba paη-dzi
 Speech say-NMLZ speak-PST
 “He spoke as he was suffering from common cold”.

In example (12), *sjappa* ‘as if’ indicates manner in the complex clause.

- (13) *ηa taηa kəmaītibri hjako kam sjeηba*
 ŋa taηa kəmai-tibri hjako
 1SG money earn-PURP lot
 Kam sjeη-ba
 Work do-NMLZ
 “I worked hard to earn money”.

In example (13), the subordinator *tibri* indicates purpose adverbial clause.

- (14) *ηadze sjourino ken tsapala bele khəremdzin*
 ηa-dze sjo-ri-no Ken tsa-pala
 1SG-ERG early-LOC-NMLZ Rice eat-NMLZ
 Bele khərem-dzin
 Lot of hungry-SEQ
 “I ate rice early because I was hungry”.

In example (14), the clause with the verb form is suffixed by the morpheme *-dzim* indicates that the event expressed in the clause happened before another event.

- (15) *ηa gərib mulenə sətjetəm paηdzim braba mula*
 ŋa gərib mu-lenə sətjetəm
 1SG poor be-CONC truth
 paη-dzim braba mu-la
 do-SEQ talk be-NPST
 “I am honest although I am poor”.

In example (15), the clause with the verb form is suffixed by the morpheme *-lenə* that makes contrast with the statement made in another clause.

- (16) *nam taidzim ηa khaakəm*
 Nam tai-dzim ηa kha-a-kəm
 Rain fall-COND 1SG come-NEG-ABLT
 “I will not come if it rains”.

In example (16), the conditional clause occurs in the beginning of complex sentence.

Relative clause

The relative clause is subordinate clause. Givón (2001:176) defines relative clause as a clause-size modifier which is embedded in the noun phrase. In Western Tamang, there are two types of relative clauses as discussed below.

(1) Externally headed relative clause

The externally headed relative clause in Western Tamang exists as either finite (+finite) or non-finite (-finite) (Subbarao, 2012: 263) type of relative clause. They can be shown in (17) below.

- (17) *dim sobi mi khadzi*
 [Ø_i dim so-bi] Mi_i k^ha-jim
 HOUE build-NMLZ Man come-PST
 "The man who made house arrived".

- (18) *ηatse dzi thunbi mita tshektsi*
 ηa-tse [Ø_idzi thun-bi] mi-ta_i tshek-tsi
 1SG-ERG alcohol drink-NMLZ man-DAT beat-PST
 "I beat the man who drank alcohol".

In the examples (17-18), the bracketed elements *dim sobi* and *dzi thunbi* function as the relative clause.

(2) Relative-correlative clause

The relative-correlative clause is not common in Western Tamang. However, the influence of Nepali language makes the use of interrogative pronouns in this dialect. The relative-correlative clauses can be shown in (19-20) below.

- (19) *khadzudze ge sodzi hodzudze sukka tala*
 khadzu-dze ge so-dzi hodzu-dze sukka ta-la
 who -ERG work do-PST that-ERG happiness get-NPST
 "One who works gets happiness".

- (20) *khadzuda ηadze bhriba kələm pindzi hudzu ηala dza hinla*
 khadzu-da ηa-dze bhri-ba kələm pin-dzi
 who -DAT 1SG-ERG write-NMLZ pen give-PST
 Hudzu ηa-la dza hin-la
 That 1SG-GEN son COP:EQUAT-NPST
 "The man whom I gave a pen is my son".

In the examples (19-20), the relative-correlative clauses are finite embedded clauses in Western Tamang.

Converbal clause

The converbal clauses are used as non-finite verbs which indicate adverbial subordination (Haspalmath, 1995). The clauses with converbs can occur in changing constructions and

they are sketched one after another to advance the narration. There are two types of converbal clauses as sequential and simultaneous in Western Tamang.

(1) Sequential converbial clause

The sequential converbs can be nested within a subordinate clause used mainly to describe sequential events. The sequential converbs, in Western Tamang, can be shown in (21-22) below.

- (21) *ŋa ken tsadzim bəjar ŋidzi*
 ŋa ken tsa-dzim bəjar ŋi-dzi
 1SG rice eat-SEQ market go-PST
 “After having taken meal I went to the market”.

- (22) *ŋadze dimre ŋidzim ken tsadzi*
 ŋa-dze dim-re ŋi-dzim ken tsa-dzi
 1SG-ERG house-LOC go-SEQ meal est-PST
 “After having reached home I ate meal”.

In examples (21-22), the clause with converbs (i.e., suffixed by *-dzim*) indicate the event that happened prior to the event expressed in the main clause. Here, the non-finite form of the verb has been employed as clause combining strategy in Western Tamang.

(2) Simultaneous converbial clause

Finally, the simultaneous converbs appear in chained clauses. The simultaneous converb clauses, in Western Tamang, can be formed by the reduplication of the root verb as shown in (23-24) below.

- (23) *dza iskul biskut tsanatsana ŋidzi*
 Dza Iskul biskut tsana-tsana ŋi-ji
 SON School biscuits eat-SIML go-PST
 “Eating biscuits, the son went to school”.

- (24) *ŋace brabra kju thuŋdzi*
 ŋa-ce bra-bra Kju thuŋ-dzi
 1SG-ERG walk-SIML Water drink-PST
 “I was walking with drinking water”.

In examples (23-24), the simultaneous converb is form by the reduplication of the verb root *tsana* ‘eat’ and *bra* ‘walk’ respectively to mark sequential converb in Western Tamang.

Conclusion

In this paper, I analyzed various types of subordinate clauses in the Western Tamang. The internal structure of simple clauses was broadly categorized as non-verbal and verbal predicate. There are three types of simple clauses with non-verbal predicate viz. adjectival predicate, nominal predicate and locative predicate. The non-verbal predicate clauses occur with copula verbs in western Tamang. The verbal predicate simple clauses are of

four types as intransitive, simple intransitive, intransitive with indirect object and transitive clauses with indirect object. In Western Tamang, subordination involves five kinds of clauses: serial verb construction, complement clauses, adverbial clauses, relative clauses and converbial clauses. Subordination as clause combining is a morpho-syntactic phenomenon that reveals typologically interesting characteristics which would contribute to understand new phenomenon in Western Tamang and other related languages. The study has explored diverse properties in Western Tamang. Although the focus has been on the subordination, one of the clause types in language, it has also discussed other pertaining linguistic properties in the paper. The beauty of Western Tamang can be seen in the underlying structures as depicted by the clause combining methods. The study can become an exemplary academic endeavor for the researchers seeking to work on the linguistic variations in dialects of different indigenous communities of Nepal. Despite the limitation of the objectives of the study, the paper has attempted to look at different aspects of Western Tamang as well.

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