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Relativization Strategies in Wappo*

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Wappo is a language with no morphology or syntax identifying a "head noun" in sentences conveying relative clause messages. The purpose of this paper is to show how clause-marking strategies are used instead of grammatical head-plus-relative constructions for relativization in Wappo.

I. Preliminaries.

Wappo is an SOV language with a rich case system of which we will only be concerned with the nominative, accusative, and dative. For nouns, the nominative is morphologically signalled by the suffix (-i), the accusative is morphologically zero, and the dative is the suffix -thu:

(1)   'man'
    Nominative: kew-i
    Accusative: kew-ø
    Dative: kew-thu

However, for pronouns, there are different forms for the nominative and accusative:

(2)	1sg	2sg	3sg anim.	3sg {demonstr. / inanim.}	
Nom:	?ah	mi?	cephi/hephi	cephi/hephi	
	?i	mi	te	ce/he	
	?i-thu	mi-thu	te-thu	ce-thu/he-thu	

To make our examples easier to follow, we will gloss these pronouns with their English equivalents, and add the information about their case where necessary. The difference between ce/he is their deictic meaning. Ce is equivalent to "that", whereas he is equivalent to "this".

One other important point to note before we look at relative clauses is that subordinate clauses of all kinds are characterized by the fact that their subjects appear in the accusative form. Thus, to take an object complement example, look at (3):

(3) ?ah [ce kew-ø   ?i hakše] hatiskhi?[1]
    I   the man-acc. me like   know
    I know that the man likes me

Observe that in (3), the object complement of the verb hatiskhi? 'know' has its subject kew 'man' in the accusative form rather than in the nominative, which would be kewi, as shown in (1)[2] We

note also in passing that the form of the verb, hakše, in (3), is characseritic of non-infinitival subordinate clauses. In some instances, the verb in a non-infinitival subordinate clause takes a special form, but in the great majority of cases it involves only the dropping of the word-final glottal stop from the verb in a main clause.

With these preliminary remarks having been made, then, let us turn to a discussion of relativization itself.

II. Relativization strategies.

There are essentially three ways in which relative clause messages are signalled:

IIa. "Internal Head" constructions.

These constructions simply involve a clause in subject, object, or oblique position. We illustrate one of each type.

(4) Subject:
   [ʔi chuya-ø   tumt] - i   šoyikhiʔ
   me house-acc. bought - nom. burned down
   The house that I bought burned down

(5) Object:
   ʔah [ʔi kew-ø   nawta] hakšeʔ
   I   me man-acc. saw   like
   I like the man I saw

(6) Oblique (here: dative):
   ʔah [ce kew-ø   ʔew-ø   tohta] - thu taka-ø
   I   the man-acc. fish-acc caught   dat basket-acc.
   mahestaʔ
   gave
   (i) I gave the basket to the man who caught the fish

There are several things to notice about this "internal head" strategy. First, the clauses enclosed in brackets are in the position in which a simple noun with the function would occur, initial for the subject, pre-verbal for the object, and pre-object for the dative. Second, these clauses are each marked with the appropriate case marker, -i for the subject, ø for the object, and -thu for the dative, and these case markers are clearly attached to the entire clause, since they follow the subordinate verb. Third, as with all "internal head" relative clause strategies, which have been described for a number of other American Indian languages (see Gorbet (1977) and references cited there), there is no head noun; the noun which is to be interpreted as the head is strictly a matter of inference. What this means, of course, is that such sentences may be ambiguous. Thus, to go back to (6), since there is no marking to signal which of the nouns in the embedded clause is to be interpreted as the head, there is nothing to prevent us from taking the head to be ʔew 'fish'. Then the sentence would mean:

(7)(ii) I gave the basket to the fish that the man caught[3]

It seems reasonable to suppose that both knowledge of the world

and discourse context help to render this type of potential
ambiguity relatively innocuous. Still, it is true that this
internal head strategy for relativization is remarkably non-
transparent in the sense that the syntactic structure, which
involves an internally embedded clause, gives relatively few clues
to elucidate the semantic structure, in which some noun is being
characterized by one presupposed proposition (the relative clause)
and one new, or information-bearing, proposition (the main clause).
The internal head strategy, then, is as opaque a relativization
strategy as languages ever seem to have. For this reason,
languages with internal head strategies also tend to display
alternative strategies which are less opaque. In Wappo, these
alternative strategies are essentially discourse strategies
involving simple juxtaposition of two clauses. As we will see,
there is still no head noun, but anaphoric pronouns are used to
aid in identifying the noun which is to be interpreted as the head.
In what follows we will have to refer to this noun which is to be
interpreted as the head, but which is not a head in any syntactic
sense. For convenience, let us call it (after Kuroda 1976) the
pivotal noun. Now we propose to illustrate these two alternative
relativization strategies first and then discuss them both together.

IIb. "Preposing" strategy.
    Since in this construction the presupposed clause, which ends
with a pronoun, is presented first, followed by the "main", or
informative, clause, we have:

    (8) Subject:
        [ʔi   chuya-ø   tumta]   cephi   šoyikhi?
        me   house-acc. bought   it(nom.) burned down
        The house I bought, that one burned down
        (=The house I bought burned down)

    (9) Object:
        [ʔi   kew-ø   nawta]   ce   ʔah   hakše?
        me   man-acc. saw   it(acc.) I   like
        The man I saw, I like that one
        (=I like the man I saw)

IIc. "Postposing" strategy.
    With this construction the informative, or main, clause is
given first, followed by the presupposed clause, which again ends
with a pronoun:

    (10) Subject:
        čhuya- i   šoyikhi?   [ʔi   tumta]   cephi
        house-nom. burned down me bought   it(nom.)
        The house burned down, that one I bought
        (=The house I bought burned down)

(11) <u>Object:</u>
    ?ah kew-∅   hakše? [?i nawta]   ce[4]
    I   man-acc. like   me saw   it(acc.)
    I like the man, that one I saw
    (=I like the man I saw)

We have presented these two alternative relativization strategies together so that we can highlight their similarities. First, note that the presupposed clauses, enclosed in brackets in these examples, are simply juxtaposed to the main clauses, before them in the "preposing" strategy and after them in the "postposing" strategy. That is, they are not in any obvious way syntactically subordinate to the main clause. Yet they are marked as subordinate, both by the accusative case marking of their subjects and by their subordinate verb forms mentioned above in Section I. This suggests that they are functioning as subordinate clauses even though they are not syntactically headed by any noun or verb in the main clause.

Second, note that the clause which comes first, whether presupposed or main, must contain an occurrence of the pivotal noun, while the clause which comes second does not contain any instance of this noun, and is thus only partially specified. This fact suggests that the precedence relation normally found in discourse between an antecedent and a pro-element is operating here: the antecedent must precede the anaphoric pronoun element, whether the main or presupposed clause comes first.

Third, notice the pronouns themselves, which we have underlined and translated as 'that one'. These pronouns are <u>syntactically</u> attached to the presupposed clause, but they are related to the main clause in an interesting way. To show that they are syntactically attached to the presupposed clause, we observe that they are always positioned at the end of the presupposed clause, whether it is sentence-initial, as in (8) and (9) or sentence-final, as in (10) and (11). But there is further evidence that these pronouns are attached to the presupposed clause. This evidence can be found in question-answer pairs in which the presupposed clause itself is the answer:

(12) Q: ih   kew-∅   mi?   hakše??
      which   man-acc. you(nom.) like?
      Which man do you like?
   A: ?i nawta   ce
      me   saw it(acc.)
      That one I saw

A final piece of evidence that the pronouns are indeed attached to the presupposed clause is the fact that nowhere else in the language could an object pronoun occur before the subject, as it does in (9), and nowhere else could pronouns occur sentence-finally, as they do in (10) and (11). The SOV order effectively prohibits occurrence of pronouns in these positions. They are clearly, then, attached to the presupposed clause and are playing

no syntactic role in the main clause.

However, a glance at (8) and (10) versus (9) and (11) will show that the pronouns are related to the main clause in that they are case-marked for the case role of the pivotal noun in the main clause. Thus in (8) and (10), where the pivotal noun is the subject of the main verb, šoyikhi? 'burned down', we find the nominative form of the pronoun, cephi; conversely where the pivotal noun is the object of the main verb hakse? 'like', in (9) and (11), we find the accusative form of the pronoun, ce.

Our question, then, is what these pronouns are doing positioned at the end of the presupposed clause but case-marked according to the role of the pivotal noun in the main clause.

To answer this question, we note first that the pronouns ce and cephi are optional at the end of the presupposed clause when it is internal. Thus, variants of (4), (5), and (6) above are:

(4') [?i čhuya-∅   tumta]   cephi   šoyikhi?
    me house-acc. bought   it(nom.) burned down
    The house that I bought burned down (happens to be
    indistinguishable from (8))

(5') ?ah [?i kew-∅   nawta]   ce   hakše?
    I   me man-acc. saw   it(acc.)   like
    I like the man I saw

(6') ?ah [ce   kew-∅   ?ew-∅   tohta] ce-thu taka - ∅
    I   the man-acc. fish-acc. bought it-dat basket-acc.
    mahesta?
    gave
    I gave the basket to the man who bought the fish

Sentences (4'), (5'), and (6') differ from (4), (5), and (6) only in the appearance of the optional pronoun at the end of the embedded presupposed clause. Note that, just as with the preposing and postposing strategies, the pronouns here are playing no syntactic role in the main clause and are case-marked according to the role of the pivotal noun in the main clause. The pronouns are obligatory, however, when the clause has been "dislocated", as it were, to the left or to the right.

What these pronouns seem to be doing, then, is functioning as something like pronominal case suffixes on the presupposed clause, marking that clause according to the role that the pivotal noun has in the main clause.[5] In the preposing strategy, that noun appears only in the presupposed clause, whereas in the postposing strategy, it appears only in the main clause. With these two strategies, then, the dislocated clauses themselves play no role in the main clause, but the pronouns signal how the pivotal noun is understood to function in that main clause.[6]

Evidence that these pronouns are functioning as case markers on the presupposed clause can be found in the fact that they alternate with the case suffixes themselves in the internal head strategy, as seen by comparing (4), (5), and (6) with (4'), (5'), and (6').

III. Conclusions.

What we have seen, then, is that in addition to the "internal head" strategy (IIa) for relativization, Wappo has two juxtaposition strategies (IIb-c) which are essentially recognizable discourse strategies. The one in which the presupposed clause comes first is often labeled a "left-dislocation" structure, while the one with the presupposed clause second has been referred to as a "right-dislocation" type of construction. The crucial difference, then, between the internal head embedded construction and the two juxtaposition constructions is that in the juxtaposition strategies the presupposed clause has been 'dislocated' out of the positional slot which it occupies in the main clause in the embedded strategy, and that slot, of course, is precisely the slot which the pivotal noun is understood to fill. What this means is that in the internal head strategy, the function, or role, of the pivotal noun is signalled by the <u>position</u> and the <u>case-marking</u> of the presupposed <u>clause</u> containing that pivotal noun. Once that clause has been "dislocated", however, it can neither be case-marked nor does it occupy any positional slot in the main clause, and hence, there is nothing to signal the functional role of the pivotal noun in the main clause. The obligatory appearance of the pronouns can now be explained: they serve in the presupposed clause to indicate the function or role that the pivotal noun has in the main clause.

What we have tried to show in this paper are (1) how a language with no syntactic means of <u>signalling</u> what noun is the "head" of a relative clause sentence manages to indicate what noun is to be so understood, and (2) how it avoids some of the difficulties in identifying this noun which are inherent in an internal head strategy by making use of discourse devices to create more transparent structures.[7]

FOOTNOTES

* It is a pleasure for us to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to our Wappo teacher, Mrs. Laura Somersal, who has been a steadfast inspiration and a paragon of patience as we have struggled to learn her language.

1. In the interest of making the data in this paper easier to follow as it was orally presented we have refrained from giving a morphemic analysis of the words in the examples. For such details, as well as further informtion on the syntax of Wappo, the interested reader is referred to Li, Thompson, and Sawyer (1977) and Li and Thompson (1977).

2. Talmy Givón points out that the fact that the mark for inalienable possession in Wappo is also zero suggests that these clauses may be profitably analyzed as a type of nominalization whose unmarked subject may actually be in the genitive case.

3. Note that in both reading (i) and (ii), whether k̩ew 'man' or
    ?ew 'fish' is taken to be the head noun, the agent-patient
    relation remains unchanged: it is the man who caught the fish
    in both cases. This is due to the fact the SOV word order
    rigidly signals grammatical relations in subordinate clauses
    (see Li, Thompson, and Sawyer (1977) for more discussion).

4. For the sake of completeness, we note that a variation of the
    postposed strategy allows an optional abstract noun ka 'person'
    at the beginning of the presupposed clause when the pivotal
    noun is human. Thus, a variant of (11) would be:
    (i) ?ah kew-∅ hakše [ka ?i nawta]   ce
         I   man-acc. like person me   saw   it(acc.)
        I like the man, the one I saw

5. We are grateful to Len Talmy for helping us to think of our
    data in these terms.

6. As sentence (6) shows, ce (but not cephi) also functions as a
    demonstrative or definite article. Crucially, however, in
    this function it is always pre-nominal. Both the alternation
    between ce and cephi and the positions of these forms argue
    against any claim that they are demonstratives on the
    presupposed clauses.

7. This comparison of the functional and structural properties of
    the "embedded" strategy and the "dislocated" strategies
    immediately raises the important question of their relative
    frequency in discourse. Unfortunately, none of these
    relativization constructions occur with sufficient frequency
    in the texts available to us (including those we have obtained
    from Mrs. Somersal and those found in Radin (1924-26)) for us
    to draw any conclusions with respect to this question. In
    the elicitation data (comprising about 150 sentences with
    relative clause constructions) on which this study is based,
    examples of all three strategies occur with roughly equal
    frequency, there being no obvious preference for any of them
    over the others.

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