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Youssef A. Haddad

CONTROL INTO CONJUNCTIVE PARTICIPLE CLAUSES

THE CASE OF ASSAMESE

TRENDS IN LINGUISTICS

Control into Conjunctive Participle Clauses

The Case of Assamese

by

Youssef A. Haddad

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For Elena and Aaya

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Since 2007, I have done more research on the topic of Adjunct Control in South Asian languages and collected more data. Some of my work on Telugu has appeared in the following journals: *Journal of Linguistics*, *The Linguistic Review*, and *Journal of South Asian Linguistics*. This book, on the other hand, brings together in one volume a thorough investigation of control into conjunctive participle clauses with a special focus on Assamese. I thank the Center for the Humanities and the Public Sphere at the University of Florida for the Summer Humanities Fellowship 2010 that allowed me to devote more time to the book and finish it in a timely manner.

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Finally, I thank God for seeing me through it all. "Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me" – they always have.

Youssef A. Haddad
Fall 2010
Gainesville, Florida

List of Abbreviations

*	unacceptable/ungrammatical
?	degraded
✓	acceptable/grammatical (only used in contrast with * or ?)
1	1st person
3	3rd person
ABS	absolutive
ACC	accusative
CL	classifier
CNP	conjunctive participle
COMP	complementizer
DAT	dative
EMPH	emphatic
ERG	ergative
EXP NOM	experiential nominative
F	feminine
FUT	future
GEN	genitive
GRND	gerund
HON	honorific
INF	infinitive
LOC	locative
M	masculine
N	neuter
NEG	negative
NOM	nominative
P	plural
pro_{EXP}	null expletive
REFL	reflexive
S	singular
SUB	subjunctive
SUBJ	subject

Contents

Acknowledgments vii
List of Abbreviations xiii

Chapter 1
Introduction 1
1. Research questions 1
2. Domain of investigation 2
3. Analytic approach 4
   3.1. From Government and Binding to Minimalism: An overview 5
      3.1.1. The architecture of the grammar in Government and Binding 5
      3.1.2. The architecture of the grammar in the Minimalist Program 8
   3.2. Control in Government and Binding 12
   3.3. Control in the Minimalist Program 15
      3.3.1. The PRO Theory of Control 15
      3.3.2. The Movement Theory of Control 18
   3.4. Multiple copy spell-out and the realization vs. deletion of copies 22
      3.4.1. Deletion of copies 22
      3.4.2. Realization of multiple copies 26
4. Structure of the study 28

Chapter 2
Assamese Adjunct Control: A descriptive overview 30
1. Introduction 30
2. Linguistic overview 30
3. Case in Assamese: A descriptive overview 32
4. Finite clauses in Assamese 38
5. Nonfinite clauses in Assamese 39
   5.1. Infinitive clauses in Assamese 39
   5.2. Conjunctive participle clauses in Assamese 41
   5.3. The subordinate nature of CNP clauses 42
6. CNP clauses and Adjunct Control 45
   6.1. Forward Control in Assamese 47
   6.2. Backward Control in Assamese 51

6.3 Copy Control 56
6.4. Exceptions 65
7. Conclusion 67

Chapter 3
Forward/Backward Adjunct Control: The analysis 69
1. Introduction 69
2. Forward/Backward Control: The facts 70
2.1. Forward Control 72
2.2. Backward Control 79
3. Assamese Adjunct Control as Obligatory Control 83
4. Assamese Adjunct Control as sideward movement 85
4.1. Forward Control 87
4.1.1. Forward Control as sideward movement 87
4.1.2. Forward Control as sideward plus remnant movement 89
4.2. Backward Control in Assamese 91
5. Multiple Case checking and Copy Control 99
6. Case in raising vs. control 101
6.1. Landau's analysis 101
6.2. Raising vs. control in Assamese 103
6.3. Case in raising vs. control: The counterargument 104
6.3.1. Boeckx and Hornstein's analysis 105
6.3.2. Beyond Assamese: Case and Theta-Role Visibility 106
7. Conclusion 109

Chapter 4
Copy Adjunct Control: The analysis 111
1. Introduction 111
2. Copy Control as movement 115
3. Copy Control: The derivational history 117
4. Copy Control and linearization 120
4.1. Multiple copy spell-out 122
4.1.1. Nunes's analysis 122
4.1.2. Fujii's analysis 123
4.2. Multiple copy spell-out and Multiple Spell-Out 126
4.2.1. Multiple Spell-Out and copy raising 127
4.2.2. Multiple Spell-Out and Copy Control 130
5. Adjunction to CP and unwanted sideward movement 136
6. Phonological realization of copies 141

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6.1. Movement and the PF realization of copies 142
6.2. Lack of cataphoricity and the nature of the CNP subject 146
7. Conclusion 150

Chapter 5
Adjunct Control violations as Expletive Control 151
1. Introduction 151
2. Nonvolitional as unaccusative 156
3. Unaccusative predicates and Expletive Control 157
3.1. Adjunct Control and the target of sideward movement 163
3.2. Expletive Control and cyclic merge 166
4. English Expletive Control 169
5. Conclusion 175

Chapter 6
Trigger: Why movement in control? 176
1. Introduction 176
2. Enlightened Self-Interest and control 177
3. Event and control 179
4. CP vs. IP and control 182
4.1. IP as defective for [Person] 186
4.2. IP as defective for [Tense] 187
5. Movement and predication 188
5.1. Theoretical assumptions 188
5.1.1. The merge of adjuncts 189
5.1.2. Predication 190
5.2. CNP clauses as predicative 191
5.3. Sinhala CNP clauses as nonpredicative 195
6. Conclusion 197

Chapter 7
Summary and conclusion 198
1. Summary 198
2. Theoretical implications 200
2.1. Multiple Case checking 201
2.2. R-expressions vs. pronominals in Copy Control 201
2.3. Why movement 202
3. Concluding remarks 202

Notes 204
References 212
Index 225

Chapter 1
Introduction

1. Research questions

This study is based in the Minimalist Program of the Principles-and-Parameters approach to syntactic theory (Chomsky 1981, 1995, 2000; Chomsky and Lasnik 1995). It explores a phenomenon of control into a special type of adjunct known as the adverbial or conjunctive participle clause in a South Asian, Indo-Aryan language: Assamese.

Control is a relation of interpretation dependency between two arguments in a given structure, one in the matrix clause and one in the subordinate clause. To illustrate, in sentence (1), there are two arguments: a "manage-er" realized as Tom and an implied "eat-er." Both arguments have to be coreferential, and thus the "eat-er" is unmistakably Tom.

(1) *[Tom managed [___ to eat the whole hamburger by himself]]*

This study focuses on Adjunct Control, which is a relation of obligatory coreferentiality between the subject in the matrix clause and the subject in the adjunct/conjunctive participle clause.

Control has been a controversial issue in Chomskyan generative grammar for a long time. One prevalent assumption in the literature has been that control is a relation of coreferentiality between an overt NP in a higher (matrix) clause and a silent NP in a lower (subordinate) clause, as sentences (2) and (3) illustrate. The silent NP is symbolized by Δ.

(2) *[Matrix Tom_i hopes [Subordinate Complement Δ_i to win]]*
(3) *[[Matrix Tom_i won] [Subordinate Adjunct without Δ_i knowing it]]*

These are not the only attested patterns, however. Other patterns do exist, leading to the following typology of control in (4) (Polinsky and Potsdam 2006: 174). In Forward Control, (4a), only the matrix NP is pronounced. In Backward Control, (4b), only the subordinate NP is pronounced. In Copy Control, (4c), both the matrix and subordinate NPs are pronounced.

(4) a. *Forward Control*
[Matrix NP_i ... [Subordinate Δ_i ...]]
b. *Backward Control*
[Matrix Δ_i ... [Subordinate NP_i ...]]
c. *Copy Control*
[Matrix NP_i ... [Subordinate NP_i ...]]

Forward Control is the most researched. Its history goes back to the 1960s (Chomsky 1965; Rosenbaum 1967). Backward Control is a less studied phenomenon. It has been investigated in a number of languages, including Japanese (Kuroda 1965, 1978), Tsez (Polinsky and Potsdam 2002), Malagasy (Polinsky and Potsdam 2003), and Korean (Monahan 2003). Copy Control is the least studied phenomenon. It has been explored in Tongan (Chung 1978), San Lucas Quiaviní Zapotec (Lee 2003; Boeckx, Hornstein, and Nunes 2007), and Telugu (Haddad 2009a).

Interestingly, all three types of control are attested in Assamese, although Backward Control seems to be quite restricted. The main questions that the study means to answer are the following:

- What are the syntactic characteristics of Adjunct Control – or, more specifically, control into conjunctive participle clauses – in Assamese?
- What are the mechanics involved in the derivation of the different types of control (Forward, Backward, and Copy)?
- How does Adjunct Control contribute to the analysis of control in general?

The rest of the chapter is organized as follows. Section 2 presents the domain of investigation of the study. Section 3 lays out the theoretical foundation upon which the following chapters are built. Section 4 provides a brief overview of the monograph.

2. Domain of investigation

This study is mainly concerned with one South Asian language: Assamese, an Indo-Aryan language. The Indo-Aryan language family is one of the major language families that share the South Asian subcontinent. It is also one of the five largest language families in the world, having more than 640 million speakers (est. 1981) (Masica 1991: 8).[1]

Assamese, also known as Asamiya, is the major language of the state of Assam in the far northeastern part of India. More than half of the people living in Assam (ca. 13 out of ca. 22 million) speak Assamese as a native language. Many others, both in Assam and in the neighboring states of Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, and Nagaland, speak it as a second language (Masica 1991; Goswami and Tamuli 2003: 393–394). Assamese has a long literary tradition that arguably goes back to the 6th or 7th century AD. However, the earliest literary work that is unmistakably Assamese dates to the 13th century AD (Goswami and Tamuli 2003: 397).

This study focuses on one aspect of Assamese, namely, Obligatory Adjunct Control into a special type of nonfinite participial clause known as the conjunctive participle (CNP) clause. Adjunct Control is a control relation between two subjects, one in the matrix clause and one in an adjunct. Three types of Assamese Adjunct Control are examined. These are Forward Control, in which only the matrix subject is pronounced, (5a); Backward Control, in which only the subordinate/adjunct subject is pronounced, (5b); and Copy Control, in which both subjects are pronounced, (5c).

(5) a. *[Ram-e_i* *[Δ_i *$_k$* *xɒmɒi* *na-thak-i]*
[Ram-NOM [Δ time NEG-keep-CNP]
bfiat *na-khal-e]*
rice NEG-ate-3]
'Having no time, Ram didn't eat rice.'

b. ?*[Δ_i *$_k$* *[Ram-ɒr$_i$* *xɒmɒi* *na-thak-i]*
[Δ [Ram-GEN time NEG-keep-CNP]
bfiat *na-khal-e]*
rice NEG-ate-3]
'Having no time, Ram didn't eat rice.'

c. *[[Ram-ɒr* *xɒmɒi* *na-thak-i]*
[[Ram-GEN time NEG-keep-CNP]
Ram-e *bfiat* *na-khal-e]*
Ram-NOM rice NEG-ate-3]
'Having no time, Ram didn't eat rice.'

Although structures that involve a CNP clause are generally Obligatory Control structures, a few exceptions exist. For example, sentence (6) involves a CNP clause, yet disjoint subjects are allowed.

(6) *[[dɦumuɦa afi-i] bofiut gos bɦaŋil]*
[[storm.ABS come-CNP] many trees.ABS broke]
'A storm having come, many trees were destroyed.'

The following chapters account for structures like (5a–c) and (6) within syntactic theory. Section 3 highlights relevant aspects of this theory.

3. Analytic approach

Building on work by Hornstein (1999, 2003), I analyze Adjunct Control as an instance of movement, whereby the subject is base-generated in the adjunct before it moves to the matrix clause. The analysis of Adjunct Control requires answering two questions. First, what are the mechanics involved in the derivation of Assamese Adjunct Control structures? Second, what are the mechanics involved in the pronunciation of either or both subjects in the different types of Adjunct Control structures that Assamese allows?

The answer to the first question requires familiarity with the syntactic theory related to control in general. Assuming the Movement Theory of Control (Hornstein 1999) and that the two subjects in an Adjunct Control structure are related via movement, the answer to the second question is based in the broader phenomenon of multiple copy spell-out, whereby more than one copy of the same token is pronounced in a single structure. The main task is to determine the factors that are decisive in the realization of copies, resulting in variation in Adjunct Control.

I address these questions in Sections 3.2 through 3.4. In Sections 3.2 and 3.3, I review two opposing approaches to control theory: the PRO Theory of Control and the Movement Theory of Control. I show that the movement approach is more compatible with the Assamese data. Section 3.4 deals with the issue of multiple copy spell-out. It brings to the fore the factors that may be decisive in the pronunciation of either or both subjects in the different types of Assamese Adjunct Control structures.

First, however, an overview of the framework within which this study is based is appropriate. The study adopts the movement approach to control, which has been made possible by changes in syntactic theory during the 1990s. Section 3.1 highlights some major aspects of this theory and explains how the changes came about.

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