CHAPTER VI

6.0.0 Sentence typology — Statements, Imperative, Interrogative and Minor types:

6.0.1 Prolegomena:

This chapter describes the basic structural patterns of the DD Sentences and classifications thereof. This study is a sentence-level analysis, and the sentence constitutes the highest unit in the taxonomic hierarchy of grammatical units, the other units being the clause, the group, the word and the morpheme in the descending order.

6.1.1 Classification of DD sentence:

Favourite and Non-favourite sentences:

DD sentences broadly belong to one of the two sub-categories — the Favourite and the Non-favourite.

1. Following Halliday et al. the term group has been used in place of the term phrase. (The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching, 1966, p. 26).

(b). Bendor-Samuel, J.T.: The Verbal Piece in Jebero, 1961, p. 43
(c). Fries, C.C.: The Structure of English, 1952
A Favorite Sentence is a complete utterance, in that, grammatically it is not a part of a preceding utterance nor of a following one. Grammatically any Favorite sentence is divisible into at least one subject component and one predicate component. Sentences which do not fulfill these criteria belong to the Non-favorite sub-category.

This study is mainly concerned with the analysis of Favorite sentences. Sentence typology involves classification of Favorite sentences in terms of various speaker-hearer relations. Non-favorite sentences on the other hand, comprise wishes, interjections, exclamations, optives, curses and so on. These are not characterized by regular underlying syntactic patterns. These are very often idomatic in structure and also do not conform to recurrent syntactic patterns.

Favorite sentence types in all languages occur much more frequently than Non-favorite ones. This criterion is based on the principle of frequency count of occurrence and therefore, this justifies the distinguishing of the Favorite group of sentences from the Non-favorite ones. This linguistic factor prompted the adoption of the Favorite sentences (to the exclusion of the Non-favorite ones) as the basic data for the analysis undertaken.

In the discussion that follows, the adjectives 'Major' and 'Favorite' have been used synonymously to designate this category of sentences.

6.1.3 Classification of DD Favorite sentences:

Grammatically a DD Favorite sentence has invariably the following characteristic-minimally, Noun phrase (henceforth NP) in the subject slot and a Verb phrase (henceforth VP) in the predicate slot. The occurrences of these two components are either actual or potential. The very first binary cut of an Immediate constituent Analysis would discover these two components within the body of a DD Favourite Sentence.
A Favorite sentence in DD, therefore, has the minimal constituent structure: NP + VP, which is an exocentric construction. In the VP again, the verb may be an obligatory surface constituent (as in a Non-equational sentence) or an optional constituent (as in an equational sentence).  

This statement is not valid for response utterances constituting context — specific sentences which are characterized by syntactic peculiarities of their own. Response utterances might comprise a single noun or a verb or an adjective or an adverb or even a marginal sound:

Questions: Answers:

1. /tat ka t'ake/ Who lives there? /zodu/ Jadu (a Noun)
2. /masta ki koribo/ What will (you) do with the fish? /b'azibo/ Will fry (a Verb)
3. /guruta keneka/ How does the cow look like? /boga/ White (an adjective)
4. /rame kenekakori beraj/ How does Ram walk? /aste kori/ Slowly (an Adverb)

In the examples 1, 2, 3 and 4 cited above, the response utterances comprise a noun, a verb, an adjective and an adverb in that order. Response utterances are, in fact context-specific constructions of Favorite sentences.

6.1.4 Equational and Non-equational sentences:

DD sentences belonging to the Favorite category have been sub-categorized as (a) Equational and (b) Non-equational sentences based on the sole criterion of absence and presence of verbal heads in the surface verb phrases constituting the predicate components.

6.1.5 An Equational sentence is conspicuous by the absence of a verbal head or nucleus in the predicate verb-phrase, e.g. /ram mosto gorib sawa/ Ram is a very poor boy.

In this example, the predicate /mosto gorib sawa/ is conspicuous by the absence of the verbal head or nucleus. This example exhibits the non-occurrence of the verbal head which is potentially /hoj/ 'is' a verb inflected for the fused categories of 3rd person tense 1.
In Equational sentences Tense and Time connotations are conveyed by appropriate adverbs, where necessary. The context also plays a major role in denoting time correlations, e.g.

/tela ta at ghoro/ Then he was at home.

In this sentence, the time indication in the absence of the verb is effected by the time adverbial /tela/ then.

Some more examples of Equational sentences are given below:
1. /hela mui iskulot/ I was at school then.
2. /tar hela mosto b^huk/ Then he was very hungry
3. /obolar sata mosto tao/ The tea was very hot then
4. /azi mui dutnait/ Today I will be in Dudhnoi.

In the examples cited above, the verbs deleted are /asilu/, /lagisil/, /asil/ and /thakim/ respectively. The tense and time connotations are interpreted by the hearer partly contextually and partly with the help of the time adverbials, if any.

6.1.6 A Non-equational sentence comprises an obligatory verbal head either in the finite or in the non-finite form in the predicate verb-phrase, e.g.
In the example above, the predicate verb-phrase /ranik ekta a m disilun/ has as its nucleus the verb /disilun/ exhibiting a concord with the 1st person subject in that it is inflected for the fused categories of 1st person and tense 3.

The following is a tabular summary of the discussion above exhibiting sub-categorization of DD sentences as per Bloomfieldian terminology:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Favourite</th>
<th>Non-favourite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equational</td>
<td>Non-equational</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2.0 Typological classification:

Favourite sentences in DD are broadly divided into three types in terms of various speaker-hearer relations. This is, generally being referred to as typological
Typological classification of sentences entails the postulation of three basic types in DD: (1) Statements, (2) Exhortatives (including imperatives) and (3) Interrogatives.

6.2.1 Statements:

In DD, sentences which do not necessarily elicit verbal and non-verbal responses from the hearer, (although such responses may very well be there) are designated statements.

1. /guru bar upokari zuntu/ The cow is a useful animal.
2. /mui bhat kha/ I eat rice

(e). Quirk, R. & Greenbaum, S.: A University Grammar of English, 1985, p. 191

(c). Quirk, R. & Greenbaum, S.: A University Grammar of English, 1985, p. 191
The sentences above do not necessarily elicit any verbal and non-verbal responses from the hearer(s) and hence belong to statement category.

6.2.2. Classification of statement type sentences:

Statements in grammatical terms have been classified as (1) Affirmatives and (2) Negatives.

6.2.2.1 Affirmatives comprise Equational and Non-equational types whereas Negatives are necessarily Non-equational in structure. The following are two examples of equational and non-equational affirmative sentence types:

(1) /apata dusto holeu porat b'hal/ The boy is naughty but good at studies.

(2) /mui b'at kham aru g'humam/ I will have my meal and then have a nap

6.2.2.2 Negative sentences are signalled by the presence of

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negativizing affixes in the verbs. This single criterion distinguishes grammatically negative sentences from affirmative ones. The negative morpheme \{Neg\} has seven allo-morphs — \{n-\}, \{ni-\}, \{ne-\}, \{na-\}, \{no-\}, \{nu-\} and \{nu-\}, the selections of which are phonologically conditioned. These are shown below:

/nahot/ (I) don't come
/nidin/ (I) don't give
/neletabi/ (you) don't mud plaster (it).
/nazak/ (I) don't go
/nomore/ (He) does not die
/nuzuzou/ (I) do not fight
/nugnumabi/ (you) don't sleep

6.2.2.3 Negative formation can be effected by the morphological process of suppletion as well — /pare/ (he) can,

/nore/ (he) cannot

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   : An Introduction to Assamese, 1978, p. 51
Exhortatives:

Exhortative sentences in DD exhibit certain characteristics which distinguish them in grammatical terms from the statement type sentences. In exhortative sentences, the subject nouns (pronouns) must necessarily belong to either the second person or third person category whereas in the statement type sentences the subjects belong to any of the three person categories. Exhortatives do not permit any passivization whereas most statements permit it. Exhortative sentences are necessarily Non-equational whereas statements comprise both Equational and Non-equational sentences. Moreover, presence of the second person and third person surface subjects in exhortative type of sentences is optional. In actual utterances there are shortly deleted.

Classification of the Exhortative type:

Exhortative sentences can be divided into two categories — (1) Imperatives and (2) Volitives.

Imperative sentences:

Imperative sentences normally presuppose non-verbal responses with or without the accompaniment of verbal
responses. It is used to convey instructions, advice, requests, commands and so on, addressed to the hearer constituting the grammatical second person category. The subjects of the Imperative sentences necessarily belong to the second person. In actual utterances the subject may be overt or covert, e.g.

With overt subjects:          With covert subjects:
(1) /tui ko/  you tell!  (1a) /ko/  (you) tell!
(2) /tui kobi/  you will tell! (2a) /kobi/  (you) will tell!

Sentences (1) and (2) above illustrate Imperative sentences with overt second person singular subjects.
Sentences (1a) and (2a) illustrate Imperative sentences with covert subjects. The verbs in all the four sentences are inflected for the fused categories of second person and Tense 1 in (1) and (1a) and of second person and Tense 5 in (2) and (2b) respectively.

6.3.1.2 Another sub-type of Imperative sentences found in DD is characterized by overt Imperative formative suffixed to the fourth forms of the verbs. The use of this sub-type is highly contextual. The verb is inflected for Tense 4 only with
concomitant suffixation of the Imperative formative {na}. The time connotation conveyed is that of immediate future. An attitudinal aspect of impatience, irritation etc. is also signalled by the verb.

(1) /tui kojina/ you tell (right now).
    /tui gelina/ you leave (right now).

6.3.2 Volitive sentences:

Volitive sentences in DD represent commands or requests of the speaker conveyed or intended to the third person through the second person hearer. The following examples illustrate the volitive sentences addressed to the third person through the second person hearer.

(1) /tæ kʰauk/ with 3rd person subject
    (It is my desire that) he eats.

(2) /sawata zauk/ with 3rd person subject
    (It is my desire that) the child goes

The examples above are conspicuous by the presence of two verb forms /kʰauk/ and /zauk/ which are not members of the regular paradigms of the verbs {kha} and {za} in terms of inflections for the fused categories of tense and person. Morphologically this volitive inflection of the two
verbs is quite different from the verb inflections for the same categories in Statements and Interrogatives. The subject noun (pronoun) of Volitive sentences necessarily belong to the 3rd person category. These two features -- the unique inflection of the verb and the restriction on the occurrence of 1st and 2nd person subject nouns (pronouns) justify the postulation of the Volitive sub-type within the Exhortative type of sentences in DD.

/tae bohok/ (It is my desire that) he/she sits down
/tami ahok/ (It is my desire that) they come
/rame kʰ auk/ (It is my desire that) Ram eats
/horkʰɔ pasta bəzat zauk/ (It is my desire that) Harkha leaves at 5.

6.4.0 Interrogatives:

Interrogatives in DD comprise utterances which normally elicit verbal responses of some sort with or without the accompaniment of non-verbal responses on the part of the hearer.

6.4.1 In terms of structural peculiarities and verbal responses elicited DD Interrogatives can broadly be sub-categorized as given below:

(a) K-type questions

(b) Yes/No type questions and

(c) The Mixed type questions.

6.4.1.1 The K-type:

This type of question is formed by using one of the Interrogative words designated K- words in this study. Some such words are /ki/ what, /kundi/ where, /kio/ why and so on. This type of question parallels the Wh-questions in English. The verbal responses to such questions cannot summarily be given by either yes or no. This type of Interrogative sentences can be Equational or Non-equational.

(b). Quirk, R. & : A University Grammar of English Greenbaum, S. 1985, p. 23
Questions:

(1) /milon kotthake/ Where does Milan live?

(2) /kak kuisa/ Who have you told?

(3) /dimbe kot/ Where is Dimbe?

Responses:

/ganot/ in the village
/tinta/ Three only
/ronzonak/ Ranjana
/ram/ Ram
/ram/ Ram
/kharat/ At Khara
/kodom/ Kadam

Sentence sets (1) and (2) above are Non-Equational in structure while set (3) is Equational. The verbs /ase/ and /hoj/ respectively have been deleted.

6.4.1.2 The Yes/No type:

This type of Interrogative sentences permits summary verbal responses by words equivalent to English Yes or No. Most DD speakers use /o/ 'yes' or its synonym /hoj/ 'yes' and /oho/ 'No' or its synonym /oho/ 'No' as responses. According to the demands of the contexts, full words like nouns and verbs are also used as responses. Yes/No questions can be Equational or Non-equational. e.g.
Questions : 

1) /boga guruta/ The white cow? /o/ Yes or /hoj/ Yes (you were talking about)

/manufa digila/ Is the man /oho/ No or /nohaj/ No tall?

2) /ramok marise/ Did (He) /marisef (he) did beat beat Ram?

/tui ita lob} Will you /nola} (I) will not take it?

Verbal Responses :

/za^roh/ (I will) go

/nak^abi/ Do not

/o/ Yes take it

/oho/ No

/oho/ No

/pat^arot/ In the field

Verbal Responses :

Questions :

/tui zabina/ Will you go? /za^roh/ (I will) go

/khamnaki/ Shall I take it? /nak^abi/ Do not

/ramnaki/ Is it Ram? /o/ Yes take it

/k^abina/ Will you eat? /oho/ No

/thougana/ Is he/she/it beautiful? /oho/ No

/g^orptna pat^arot/ Is he/she/it in the house or in the field /pat^arot/ In the field
In DD sentences with statement type surface structures can be converted to Yes/No Interrogatives by using appropriate in the tonic syllables. The following sentence is a statement in structural terms:

/dutnait banpani huise/ There is a flood in Dudhnoi.

The tonic syllable of this statement has a falling pitch as is the normal phonological practice. But the same sentence with the same constituent structure and word order can very well be converted into a Yes/No question by replacing the falling pitch with a rising one in the tonic syllable.

/dutnait banpani huise/ Has there been a flood in Dudhnoi?

The attitudinal aspect of surprise is an extra shade of meaning conveyed by the sentence with a rising pitch tonic syllable.

The resultant form is a Yes/No question because the reply can be summarily given either by /hoj/ 'Yes' or /nohaj/ 'No' or by their synonyms.

6.4.1.3 The Mixed type:

In DD the Mixed type questions are characterized by features common to both K-questions and the Yes/No questions.
Such questions are formed by the concatenation of Interrogativizers like {na} to verbs — a feature of the Yes/No type; but the responses anticipated cannot be either 'Yes' or 'No' — a feature characterizing K-questions, e.g.

Questions:

Verbal Responses:

(1) /tui zabina mui zam/ /tui zabi/ You will go
Who will go, You or I?

(2) /rohite k'abona ram k'abo/ /rame k'abo/ Ram will eat
Who will eat, Rohit or Ram?

The questions above exhibit a feature discovered in Yes/No questions — that is of suffixing the question formative {-na} to the appropriate word. But the responses cannot be summarily given by any DD word equivalent to either 'Yes' or 'No'. The Mixed type exhibits this property characteristic of K-questions. This justifies the postulation of Mixed type questions in DD.

Two more types of Interrogative sentences have been postulated in DD. These are designated Tag questions and Elliptical questions in this study.
6.4.1.3.1 Tag questions:

In DD Tag questions are tagged up to statements, but the resultant forms after the tagging up of the tag questions are Yes/No interrogatives. Tags are conjoined to statements soliciting confirmation of the truth. The answer expected is 'Yes' if the statement is affirmative, and 'No' if the statement is negative. The following examples will illustrate this statement, e.g.

Questions: Verbal Responses:

1) /rama mod khae nohaajna/ / o / Yes
Ram drinks, isn't it?

2) /tae nahe, hojna/ / oho/ No
He would not come, is it?

In example (1) the superordinate clause is affirmative. So, the tag is negative. In example (2) the superordinate clause is negative. So, the tag is affirmative.

6.4.1.3.2 Elliptical questions:

In DD questions which do not exhibit overt subject predicate components are designated Elliptical questions. In fact, Elliptical questions represent full questions in-truncated forms with many parts deleted. All Elliptical
questions in DD are characterized by a phonological peculiarity — the tonic syllables are necessarily articulated either with the low rising or high rising pitch. The following examples would support this:

1. /te bʰat pani/ (Have you taken) any food?
2. /mati bari/ (Do you have) any property?

The examples above illustrate two Elliptical questions in DD. These are contextualized contractions of full length questions — /tu i bʰat pani kʰalina/ Have you taken your meal? and /tor mati bari asena/ Do you have any property? respectively.

6.5.1 Minor type sentences:

Some DD sentences, however, do not conform to and are not reducible to one of the basic syntactic structures described earlier. Sentences are quite frequent in utterances. In this study these are being accorded the status of Minor type sentences. In fact, all languages have Minor type sentences. They belong to what are traditionally known as interjections, exclamations, wishes, curses and so on. In the discussion that follows, the adjectives 'Minor' and
'Non-favourite' are used synonymously to designate this category of sentences.

6.5.2 Minor/Non-Favourite sentences can be classified in terms of attitudinal aspects conveyed by them. It is not possible to sub-categorize such sentences in structural terms as they do not exhibit similarities or affinities or contrasts in constituent compositions. Each Non-favourite sentence exhibits its unique structure and no two sentences are referable to a common pattern as is the case with Favourite/Major sentence types. Minor sentences are uttered as simple sentences or in parataxis with Major sentences.

The following sentences are a few examples of various Non-favourite sub-types in DD:

(a) Interjections:
1. /se ki lazor katʰa/ What a shame!
2. /o mor bap mok rakkʰa kor/ Oh God! Save me from this trouble.

(b) Exclamations:
1. /is ram iman tez/ Oh Lord! How has it bled!
2. /ba ba kiman mozar katʰa hobo / Hurrah! It will be such a fun!
(c) Wishes:

1. /he probhu‘ hi zen bʰaľe bʰaľe ghuri ahe/
   Oh Lord! May he return safely!

2. /bʰogobʰane tak aru ekso bosor zijai rakʰok/
   May God grant him hundred years of life!

(d) Blessings:

1. /tor zoj zoj moj moj hok/
   May you prosper and progress!

2. /gohalit guru bʰandarot dʰan bʰori porok/
   I wish that your cowshed is full of cows and your granary is full of grains!

(e) Curses:

1. /baper matʰa kʰawa/ You the cause of your father’s ruin!

2. /hotesuri zawa elai tık bagʰe kʰauk/ You accursed being!
   Let the tiger devour you!

6.5.3 Interjective, Exclamative (and so on) words and phrases:

The following are some words and phrases denoting interjective, exclamative (and so on) functions in DD and which can not be given the full or major word status:

/ba ba/ an exclamation of joy!

/ah ah/ an exclamation of sorrow!
an exclamation of repentance!
an exclamation of sorrow!
an exclamation of sympathy!
an exclamation of repentance!
an exclamation of surprise!
an exclamation of surprise!
an exclamation of dissapointment!
an exclamation of sorrow!
an exclamation of sorrow!
an exclamation of sympathy!
an exclamation of surprise!
O God!
O mother!
an exclamation of enthusiasm!
O God!
O, my God!