CHAPTER VII

7.0.0 Sentence structure in terms of clause composition:

7.0.1 Prolegomena:

This chapter analyzes the various sentence-structures of DD in terms of clause composition and the resultant possible classifications. In this study the sentence has been posited as the largest stretch of grammar forming a syntactic construction. It is a structure which is fully describable in grammatical terms. It is higher in rank than the clause in the hierarchy of grammatical units (vide section 6.0.1 of this study), so that a sentence consists of one or more clauses although in DD a sentence might very well comprise a single morpheme even. The following description of sentence-structures in terms of clause composition, will define and establish the grammatical unit clause in DD followed by classifications of DD
sentences in terms of clause-compositions.

7.1.1 The clause in DD:

In DD the grammatical unit clause\(^1\) is higher in rank than the unit phrase or group.\(^2\) A clause in DD is actually or potentially divisible into a subject component and a predicate component in which (actually or potentially) two syntactic units — one Noun-phrase (henceforth NP) and one Verb-phrase (henceforth VP) function. A clause may remain embedded within a sentence or it may be congruent with a sentence. The minimum form to which a clause can actually or potentially be reduced is N+V — which is an exocentric

1(a). Gleason, H.A. : An Introduction to Descriptive Linguistics, 1979, p. 46


(e). Quirk et al. : A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language, 1985, pp. 719-720


construction -

/rame kʰaise/ Ram has taken

The sentence above comprises a single clause, the grammatical structure of which can be shown as a concatenation of an NP (/rame/) and a VP (/kʰaise/) exhibiting the syntagmatic relation of a subject and a predicate within the sentence.

7.2.1 Uniclausal and polyclausal sentences in DD:

A sentence might comprise one or more clauses (vide section 7.1.0 of this study). In DD a sentence having only one clause in it is designated a uniclausal sentence. Sentences with more than one clause are polyclausal sentences.

1. /mui qohatit zam/ I shall go to Guwahati

The sentence above has only one clause in it. Hence, it is a uniclausal sentence.

2. /horo ahile tui zabi/ You leave when Hara arrives.

The sentence above has two clauses in it, /horo ahile/ and /tui zabi/ and hence is a polyclausal sentence (to be more precise a biclausal sentence).
In this study the term polyclausal generally refers to sentences comprising more than one clause. If the analysis demands precision in description terms like biclausal, triclausal etc. will be used to denote sentences with two, three clause etc.

7.2.2 Dependent and Independent clauses:

In terms of mutual relationship DD clauses are subcategorized as (a) dependent (or hypotactic or subordinate) clauses and (b) independent (or paratactic or coordinate) clauses.

7.2.2.1 A clause which functions as subordinate to an independent clause within a polyclausal sentence is designated a dependent clause. An independent clause can function as a sentence by itself, whereas a dependent clause cannot (except in very rare occasions like responses etc.) -

/hi b hat k hai pat haret zabo/

He will go to the field after taking his meal.

In the sentence above /hi b hat k hai/ is a dependent clause, whereas, /hi pat haret zabo/ is an independent clause.

The basic characteristic of a dependent clause is that the verb in it is in a characteristic non-finite form.
As against this an independent clause is characterized by a verb (if present) in the finite/full form exhibiting characteristic inflections.

7.2.2.2 Dependent clauses belong to one of the following types—in terms of their syntactic functions—(a) Noun clauses, (b) Adjective clauses, and (c) Adverb clauses.3

7.2.2.3 A clause which functions as a noun in a sentence is a Noun clause. Noun clauses function in the subject and object and complement slots of DD sentences.

/bouwe randa moyso mosto zuti huise/

The meat cooked by my sister-in-law was very delicious.

In the sentence above the dependent clause /bouwe randa moyso/ has functioned in the subject slot of the sentence and hence it is a subject noun clause.

/tui boha pirakh an anilug/

(I) brought the wooden seat you did sit on.

In the sentence above the dependent clause /tui boha pirakh an/ has functioned in the object slot and is therefore an object noun clause.

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Noun clauses can function as noun-complements.

/hiit asil lale kina sagolta/

That was the goat Lal bought.

The dependent clause /lale kina sagolta/ has functioned in the sentence above as the noun-complement and therefore it constitutes a complement noun-clause.

7.2.2.4 Dependent clauses functioning as modifiers of nouns in sentences are Adjective clauses.

/mui mitijot aha manutar boktita hunilun/

I heard the lecture delivered by the man who came to the meeting.

In the sentence above, the dependent clause /mitijot aha manutar/ has modified the object noun /boktita/ lecture, and hence it is an adjective clause.

An adjective clause may remain embedded in a noun-phrase within a verb-phrase.

/tule g'as k'hai th'aka gaitar basurta anise/

Tul has brought the calf of the cow which was grazing

The dependent clause /g'as k'hai th'aka gaitar/ has modified the noun /basurta/ the calf, which is the object of the verb /anise/ has brought, in the sentence.
The adjective clause in the example above remains embedded within verb phrase of the sentence.

An adjective clause may function as an adjective complement.

\( \text{ita sola berai t}^h\text{aka manutar} / \)

This shirt belongs to the man who is loitering.

The dependent adjective clause /berai t\( ^h \)aka manutar/ has functioned as an adjective complement.

7.2.2.5 Dependent clauses may have adverbial functions and are referred to as Adverb clauses in this study.

\( \text{domon ahi pawathe mui ahilug} / \)

When Daman arrived I left.

The sentence above comprises the dependent clause \( \text{domon ahi pawathe} / \) when Daman arrived and the independent clause \( \text{mui ahilug} / \) I left. The dependent clause has the function of modification of the principal verb /ahilug/ and is responsible for the time connotation and hence, it is an adverb clause.

7.2.2.6 Adverb clauses can be classified as Adverb clauses of time, place, manner etc. The adverb clause in sentence
above is an adverb clause of time.

7.2.2.7 /babae boha piratat mui bohisilug/

I sat down in the wooden seat on which my father used to sit.

The dependent clause /babae boha piratat/ the seat on which my father used to sit has an adverbial function of the connotation of location. Hence, it is an adverb clause of location.

7.2.2.8 /mui dauri dauri ahie motork^an palug/

I caught the bus running very fast.

In the sentence above /dauri dauri ahie/ running very fast is an adverb clause having the connotation of manner, and is therefore an adverb clause of manner. It is quite possible to postulate many more types of adverb clauses in terms of function and connotation. It is assumed that three examples would serve the purpose.

7.3.0 Clause composition of DD sentences:

DD sentences may be sub-categorized in terms of various different clause compositions.
A sentence having only one clause in it is a simple sentence. Sentences comprising more than one clause belong to one of following sub-categories: Complex, Compound, Compoundo-Complex or Reciprocal.

7.3.1 Simple sentences:

Sentences which comprise single clauses are called simple sentences.

/mui\, \text{bhat}\, k\text{hay}/ I eat rice

The simple sentence above has only one clause in it, which comprises the single subject and predicate components /mui/ and /b\text{hat}\, k\text{hay}/ respectively. The verb nucleus in the predicate component is /k\text{hay}/.

7.3.2 Complex sentences:

Sentences with one or more independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses are designated complex sentences in this study.

/mud\text{huwe}\, gao\, d\text{hui}\, b\text{hat}\, k\text{habo}/

Madhu will take his meal after bathing.

The sentence above has two clauses, one dependent and the other independent. /mud\text{huwe}\, gao\, d\text{hui}/ is the dependent
clause whereas /mudhuw bhat kabo/ is the independent one. These two clauses constitute the complex sentence. Concatenation of dependent and independent clauses is effected by the process of bondage—a syntactic device.

7.3.3 Compound sentences:

Sentences with two or more independent clauses are compound sentences. Conjoining of independent clauses in a compound sentence is referred to as linkage—which is a syntactic device. The following is an example of a compound sentence.

/mui zam ary kharm/ I shall go and eat.

The two independent clauses /mui zam/ I shall go and /mui kharm/ I shall eat are linked up by the structural word /ary/ and, with the concomitant deletion of the second subject, as the subject nominal is common to both the clauses.

2. /zitu aru mitu gorot ahil/

Jitu and Mitu came home

The sentence above, comprises two independent clauses conjoined together by the linking word /ary/ and

(a) /zitu ghorot ahil/ Jitu came home
(b) /mitu ghorot ahil/ Mitu came home

The actual linkage by /aru/ and, takes place between
the two subject — nominals of the two clauses. As both the
predicates are identical one of them is deleted, in the
resultant compound sentence.

3. /zitu ghorot gel kintu mitu negel/
Jitu went home but Mitu did not.

7.3.4 Compoundo-Complex sentences:

Sentences with one or more independent clauses and one
or more dependent clauses in the syntagmatic relations of
the linkage and bondage entailing various grammatical devices
are called compoundo-complex sentences:

/sita ahile mui zam kintu nitae nazaj/
If Sita comes I shall go but Nita will not.

In the sentence above, the clauses /mui zam/ I shall
go and /nitae nazaj/ Nita will not go, are potentially
independent, while /sita ahile/ if Sita comes is dependent.
Bondage has been effected by the verbal head assuming the

characteristic non-finite form in the dependent clause /sita ahi/ if Sita comes. The linking word /kintu/ but, has effected the linkage of the two independent clauses /mui zam/ I shall go and /nitae nazaj/ Nita will not go.

7.3.5 Reciprocative sentences:

In a structural study of DD, we need to postulate the Reciprocative category of sentences. Any sentence with two hypotactic clauses which presuppose each other in that both are mutually dependent (grammatically and semantically) is designated a Reciprocative sentence in this study.

/tui zudi gelihui muiy gelu'nhui/
If you would have gone I would have gone too.

The sentence above comprises two hypotactic clauses /tui zudi gelihui/ if you would have gone and /muiy gelu'nhui/ I too would have gone. Both are in the relationship of mutual hypotaxis. Bondage has been effected by the verbal head assuming the characteristic non-finite form in the initial clause /tui zudi gelihui/ if you would have gone. The bound morpheme {-hui} is suffixed to the inflected form of the verb /gelu/ in the succeeding clause /muiy gelu'nhui/ I too would have gone. Thus
both the clauses are mutually dependent on each other. This justifies the postulation of an additional type — the Reciprocative type in DD.

7.4.0 Equational and Non-equational clauses:

In this study DD sentences belonging to the Favourite category have been sub-categorized as (a) Equational and (b) Non-equational (vide section 6.1.4 chapter VI of this study). This sub-categorization is based on the sole criterion of absence or presence of the unit verb in the sentences. Based on the same criteria, DD clauses are sub-categorized as belonging to the Equational and Non-equational types.

7.4.1 An equational clause in DD has the verb only in the covert form.

1. /nita saura/ Nita is tall.

The uniclausal sentence above is conspicuous by the absence of a verbal head in the predicate component and hence an equational sentence/clause.
7.4.2 Absence of a verb in an equational clause is however not absolute. The negative, interrogative counterparts of such clauses have necessarily overt verb forms as shown by the examples below:

2. /nita saura nohaj/ Nita is not tall (Negative)
3. /nita saura hojna/ Is Nita tall? (Interrogative)

The verbs in the two sentences exhibit negative and interrogative inflection respectively in addition to appropriate tense-person inflections.

7.4.3 In DD, equational clauses function in paratactic or hypothetic relations with other equational or non-equational independent clauses within sentences.

/nita saura ary k^elten^ena/
Nita is tall and lean and thin.

The compound sentence above comprises two equational clauses in parataxis with the common subject noun /nita/ but having different predicates /saur^a/ and /k^elten^ena/. The linkage is effected by the conjunctive /ary/. In DD the subject noun of the second clause is always deleted if both the clauses in parataxis are characterized by a
7.4.4 Likewise, if the predicates of two equational clauses are identical the first one is deleted in the syntax of parataxis. The different subject nouns are conjoined by appropriate conjunctives.

/ronzona ary onzona boga/
Ranjana and Anjana are fair.

7.4.5 An equational clause may be in parataxis with a non-equational clause.

/ram beγa holeu kamot bʰal asil/
Although Ram was deaf and dumb he was efficient in duties.

/ram beγa/ Ram (was) deaf and dumb is an independent equational clause in parataxis with another independent non-equational clause /ram kamot bʰal asil/ Ram was efficient in duties. Parataxis has been effected by deleting the second subject noun and by conjoining the predicates by the appropriate linkage word /holeu/.

7.4.6 In a complex sentence an equational clause may be independent while a non-equational clause may be dependent.
The girl was expert in domestic chores yet she could not be married to anybody.

The sentence has an independent equational clause

/apita sob kamote bhal/ the girl was expert in domestic chores

and a hypotactic non-equational clause /tothapi tar bija noha/ yet she could not be married to anybody.

7.4.7 Non-equational clauses, in the relationship of one in hypotaxis to the other, both must have verb forms — non-finite or finite, as the case may be.

/tae bhat khai mas mariba zabo/
He/she will go to catch fish after taking his/her meal

In the sentence above, the dependent clause /tae bhat khai/ he/she taking his/her meal has the verb /khai/ taking, in a non-finite form, and the following independent clause /tae mas mariba zabo/ he/she will go to catch fish, has the verb /zabo/ will go, in the finite form.

7.4.8 Non-equational clauses enter into hypotactic and paratactic relations with one another /tami ahile ami zam/ If they come we will go.
The sentence has the dependent clause /tami ahile/ if they come followed by an independent clause /ami zam/ we will go. The verb in the dependent clause assumes characteristic non-finite form signalling the syntax of bondage.

Hypotaxis of clauses effected by bondage is responsible for the characteristic morphology of the non-finite verb forms as established by the examples below:

(a) /rame deuri ahise/ Ram has come running
(b) /mui k'awate tae ahise/ He arrived when I ate up.
(c) /tul lole mui nolay/ If you take I will not.

In the three complex sentences above the hypotactic clauses have different non-finite forms (the underlined ones) owing to various related grammatical features. The list is by no means exhaustive. The syntax of bondage is responsible for many more non-finite forms of verbs in hypotactic clauses in DD.