CHAPTER IX

9.0.0 Noun phrases and Verb phrases:

9.0.1 Prolegomena:

This chapter analyses the structures of Noun phrases and Verb phrases in DD and explores the tactics of the embedded constituents therein.

9.1.1 The noun phrases:

A syntactic unit with a noun as the head (actually/potentially) functioning either in the subject or in the object or in the complement slot is designated a noun phrase.¹

A noun phrase is an endocentric construction—sub-ordinating or co-ordinating with one or more noun/nouns as head/heads (actually/potentially). /saura apa/ tall boy is a sub-ordinating endocentric construction whereas /apata aru apita/ the boy and the girl is co-ordinating endocentric construction.

1. /mui bʰal paŋ/ I love (somebody)
2. /rame kala guruta kinise/ Ram bought the black cow
3. /amìtak nutun gaⁿbura patiluŋ/ We elected him the new village head.

In the examples 1, 2 and 3 above, the word /mui/ I is the single-word subject noun phrase, /kala guruta/ the black cow is the two-word object noun phrase and /nutun gaⁿbura/ the new village head is the two-word complement noun phrase respectively.

9.1.2 Morphological characteristics of noun-heads in DD:

9.1.2.1 Noun-heads of subject noun phrases in transitive sentences of DD are inflected for the nominative case. The morpheme posited is \( \{\text{Nom}\} \) which has two allomorphs — \( \{-e\} \) and \( \{-ə\} \) and the selections of these are phonologically conditioned. If the final sound of the noun is a consonant or a vowel
other than /e/, the allomorph selected is \{-e\}. If the final sound is /e/, the allomorph chosen is \{-\emptyset\}.

1. /lale bʰat kʰal/ Lal ate rice
2. /hore bʰat kʰal/ Hare ate rice

The underlined nouns exhibit the structures:
\(\{lal\} + \{e\}\) and \(\{hore\} + \{\emptyset\}\)

9.1.2.2 In intransitive sentences the noun-heads are characterized by \{\emptyset\} suffixation in most sentences.

1. /lal gel/ Lal went
2. /hore gʰumaise/ Hare is sleeping

The exceptions to this rule are seen whenever the intransitive verbs belong to the conjunct category and their single-word realizates:

/lale hator marise/ Lal swam
/la la ʰatgrise/ Lal swam

(Vide Chapter X)

9.1.2.3 In bitransitive sentences the noun-heads of indirect object noun phrases are inflected for the Accusative case. The Accusative morpheme has two allomorphs — \{-k\} and \{-ok\}, and the selections of these are phonologically conditioned.
If the final sound of the noun-root is a vowel, the allomorph chosen is \{-k\}. If the final sound of the noun-root is a consonant, the allomorph chosen is \{-ok\}.

1. \(/\text{tae gurutak g}^{\text{has}}\text{ dise}/\) He/she gave grass to the cow
2. \(/\text{tae ram}_\text{ok} \text{ taka dise}/\) He/she gave money to Ram

9.1.2.4 Noun-heads of direct object noun-phrases (other than + PROPER + HUMAN) are characterized by zero formatives. The words \(/\text{g}^{\text{has}}\text{/} grass and \(/\text{taka/} money in 1 and 2 above conspicuous by zero affixation (Vide Chapter X).

In DD, if there is an indirect object, the direct object must be present in the sentence.  

9.1.2.5 Noun-heads of complement noun-phrases do not exhibit any overt morphological change.

9.2.1 Modification of Nouns:

Most modifiers of nouns in noun-phrases are attributively used. Only a limited number of modifiers pertaining to professions and occupations are predicatively used.

/saura apa/ tall boy

In the example above the modifier /saura/ tall is attributively used preceding the noun-head /apa/ boy.

/konok mondol/ Kanak the Mandal

In the example above the modifier /mondol/ Revenue official is predicatively used, following the noun-head /konok/ (Vide Chapter VIII, Section 8.5.0 of this study).

9.2.2 When noun-heads are modified predicatively, the nominative and accusative markers are suffixed to the modifiers and not to the nouns.

/konok mondole khaise/

Kanak the Mandal has eaten

In the example above the predicative modifier /mondole/ exhibits the nominative inflection.

9.2.3 The classifier/determiner^3 morpheme in DD is suffixed to the noun-heads.

1. /manuta/ the man

2. /hatk'han/ the hand

(b). Quirk, R. & : A University Grammar of English, 1985, Greenbaum, S. pp. 61-65
In the examples above the allomorphs \{-ta\} and \{-kʰan\} of the classifier morpheme are suffixed to the nouns /manu/ man and /hat/ hand respectively. The selections of the allomorphs are lexically conditioned and hence unpredictable. (Vide Chapter VIII, Section 8.4.5 of this study).

9.2.4 In noun-phrases without overt noun-heads, the classifier is suffixed to the last attributive modifier in the sequence.

/kala saura petlata mor bʰai/

The tall obesed dark (man) is my brother.

In the sentence above the classifier \{-ta\} is suffixed to /petlə/ obesed, the last attributive modifier in the sequence.

9.2.4.1 In such contexts the last modifier with the classifier suffix is inflected for the various categories of cases like nominative and accusative.

/kala digʰila澤one marise/

The tall dark (man) has beaten (the man)

In the example above, the last attributive modifier /digʰila/ tall is inflected for the nominative case.
9.2.5 The noun modifiers may be single words stringed together or they may be clauses.

Adjectives are distinguished from Adjectivals on the criterion of their colligatability with intensifiers. Adjectives colligate with intensifiers and also syntactically convey the contrast of degree.

1. /mosto sayra manu/ Very tall man
2. /sobse sayra manu/ The tallest man

In the examples above, the attributive modifier /sayra/ tall, colligates with the intensifiers /mosto/ and /sobse/ respectively (Vide Chapter VIII, Section 8.5.2 of this study).

But in the example /dutnai kolez/ Dudhnoi College, the attributive modifier /dutnai/ cannot colligate with an intensifier, and hence an Adjectival.

9.2.5.1 Clauses may also function as modifiers. Clauses get embedded within the noun-phrases and modify the noun-heads.

1. /tat g^{has} k^{h}ai t^{h}aka gaitar basurta moril/
   The calf of the cow grazing there is dead.

   The dependent clause /tat g^{has} k^{h}ai t^{h}aka gaitar/ of the cow grazing there, functions as an Adjective clause, modifying
the subject noun of the independent clause /basurta moril/
the calf is dead.

9.2.5.2 Adjective clauses function in object and complement noun
phrases as well.
1. /mui kitap pori tʰaka apitar kolomta anisu)/ I brought
the pen belonging to the girl who is reading a book.
2. /tae rati por dija rokʰia/ He is a watchman guarding
at night.

In the sentences above /kitap pori tʰaka apitar/ of the
girl reading a book, is an adjective clause modifying the
object noun /kolomta/ the pen, while /rati por dija/ guard­
ing at night, is an adjective clause modifying the noun-head
/rokʰia/ a watchman.

9.3.0 In a noun-phrase with a sequence of noun-heads it is the
last noun which is inflected for the nominative or for the
accusative case.

/manutar beta biti bʰai bʰantizae kʰaise/
The son, daughter, brother and nephew of the man have eaten.

In the example above, the nominative marker {-e} is suffixed
to the last noun-head in the sequence /bʊatɪza/ nephew.

9.4.0 A string of noun-heads may or may not have intervening conjunctives.

1. /ram zam hori lal gel/ Ram, Jam, Hari (and) Lal left.

2. /ram zam hori aru lal gel/ Ram, Jam, Hari and Lal left

The two examples above show sequences of noun-heads without a conjunctive in 1 and with a conjunctive in 2.

9.4.1 If there are more than two noun-heads the last noun-head is a conjunctive:

1. /zusi ukʰa ary tule kʰaise/ Jushi, Usha and Tul have eaten.

In the example above with three noun-heads the last one /tul/ is preceded the conjunctive /ary/ and.

9.5.0 The Verb Phrases:

The Verb phrase in DD is the syntactic unit functioning typically in the predicate slot of the sentence or clause with


a noun phrase as the subject. The unit verb either in the overt or covert form is the head of a verb phrase.

/dole b hat k hal/ Dele took her meal.

In the example above, the verb phrase is /b hat k hal/ took meal colligating with the subject noun phrase /dole/ and comprising the structure object noun phrase + verb.

9.5.1 DD equational sentences (vide Section 6.1.4 of Chapter VI) are conspicuous by the absence of verbs in the predicate slots.

1. /apata boga/ The boy is fair complexioned.
   
   In the sentence the verb is missing from the verb phrase /boga/ fair complexioned. But the verb becomes overt in negative, past and future tense forms of this sentence —

1. /apata boga nohaj/ The boy is not fair complexioned
2. /apata boga asil/ The boy was fair complexioned
3. /apata boga hobo/ The boy will become fair complexioned

9.5.2 Classification of verb-heads in terms of constituent compositions:

In terms of constituent compositions DD verbs are classified as belonging to Monoconstituent (MC) and Polyconstituent (PC) sub-categories.
9.5.2.1 Monoconstituent Verbs:

Single-word verbs in DD are designated MC verbs.

1. /mʌi kʰaŋ/ I eat

In the sentence above the verb /kʰaŋ/ eat belongs to the MC group.

9.5.2.2 Polyconstituent Verbs:

DD verbs with more than one constituent are designated PC verbs. The structure of a PC verb is Initiator + Helping verb. The Initiator conveys the lexical—semantic meaning whereas the Helping verb conveys grammatical meanings like tense, person, aspect etc.

/tui dʰap mar/ You jump, /dʰap mar/ is a PC verb where /dʰap/ is the Initiator and /mar/ the Helping verb which is inflected for the tense-person categories (vide Chapter VIII of this study).

9.5.2.2.1 Classification of the Helping Verbs:

Helping verbs in DD need to be sub-categorized and properly labelled as shown by the diagram below:
9.5.2.2.2 The **operator class**:

Operators are integral parts of PC verbs of the conjunct and phrasal types. As against this functors colligate with verbs — MC and PC to fulfil syntactic needs. Thus, DD verbs exhibit the following structural possibilities:

(a) MC,
(b) MC + Functor,
(c) PC - Initiator + operator,
(d) PC - Initiator + operator + Functor

The following sections describe the grammar of these units.
9.5.2.2.3 PC verbs are either conjunct with nominoid Initiators, or phrasal with verboid Initiators. The operators in the conjunct classes belong to the Satellite sub-class while those in the phrasal classes belong to the peripheral sub-class.

/tae nātur dil/ He swam
/tae dʰuki pal/ He reached (it)

In the sentences above, the operators /dil/ and /pal/ belong to the satellite and peripheral sub-classes.

9.5.2.2.4 The operators function in terms of various syntactic categories like time-tense and person, negative, interrogative and so on.

/tae bihane dut duwae/ She milks (the cows) every morning

In the affirmative sentence above the operator /duwae/ is inflected for the Tense-1, 3rd person categories.

/mui kodal namarəg/ I, not hoe.

In the negative sentence above the operator /namarəg/ exhibits inflections for Tense 1, 1st person and negative categories.
9.5.2.2.5 The operators are susceptible in morphological terms to the syntactic processes of linkage and bondage:

/mui la\th\i mari b^a\yai dilug/ I broke (it) down by kicking

The operator /mari/ denotes the bondage of the dependent clause in the sentence.

9.5.2.2.6 The Functor class:

DD Functors comprise Modal, Auxiliary and Passivizer sub-classes.

9.5.2.2.7 Modal Functors:

Modal Functors operate in terms of what may be denoted moods of the speaker — like necessity, possibility, probability, likelihood, ability, intention, suggestion, permission and so on.5

9.5.2.2.8 Concatenation of the Modal unit renders the ante-modal unit assume a characteristic form with a /ba/ final syllable:

(a) MC + Modal : /zaba paro/ I can go
(b) Conjunct + Modal : /hal babakhuze/ (He) wants to plough
(c) Phrasal + Modal : /somkai uthiba para/ You may get scared

Modals in the finite forms of verbs are inflected for tense-person, negative, interrogative categories and exhibit concordial relation with the subject nominal in terms of the category of person. One example would support this statement:

/tui zaba para/ You can go —
an affirmative sentence, the modal /para/ being inflected for Tense 1, 2nd person.

9.5.2.2.9 Modals in DD Colligate with Models, Auxiliaries and Passivizers.

1. /mui pori takiba paro/ I may keep reading
2. /mui koribo pariba paro/ I can do it
3. /mor khawa hobo pare/ The act of eating by me might take place.

The examples above exhibit the concatenation of (1) a modal with an auxiliary, (2) a modal with a modal and (3) a modal with a passivizer. This statement is valid for conjunct
and phrasal subcategories of verb as well.

9.5.2.2.10 Auxiliary Functors:

In DD all the aspectual denotata like progression, categoricalness etc. are correlatable to the Auxiliaries comprising — (1) Progressive and (2) Pluperfective or categorical sub-classes.

The progressive and pluperfective sub-classes are mutually exclusive in that the former sub-class cannot function in the latter's syntactic slot.

9.5.2.2.11 The following are some examples of Progressives and pluperfectives in DD.

1. Progressives: Progressives are morphologically susceptible to the fused categories of tense and person:

/mui kori asuŋ/ I am doing it

The progressive /asuŋ/ is inflected for Tense 1 and 1st person.

2. Pluperfectives: Like the progressives, pluperfectives are also inflected for the fused categories of Tense and person:
/mui marl diluj/ I (did) beat him up

The pluperfective /diluj/ is inflected for the fused categories of Tense 3 and 1st person.

9.5.2.2.12 MC or PC verbs while colligating with the Auxiliaries assume the characteristic forms having /i/ final syllables. In case of the PC verbs the operators in the sequence assume the specific morphological shape. The following are a few examples:

/korī asuŋ/ (I) am doing (it) — MC + Progressive
/khuli disuŋ/ (I) have opened it up — MC + Pluperfective
/hal bai asuŋ/ (I) am ploughing — Conjunct + Progressive
/khula korī disuŋ/ (I) declared it outside — Plurasal + Pluperfective

9.5.2.2.13 Passivizer Functors:

The postulation of the passivizer Functor sub-class is justified on syntactic and morphological grounds:

The ways in which DD expresses the relationship between a verb and a subject and object noun phrases associated with it, would necessitate the postulation of a two-term voice system — Active and Passive. Active sentences have subject
noun phrases with overt or covert nominative inflections. As against this the erstwhile subject noun phrases assume a characteristic morphological shape congruent with genitival forms and may be or may not be followed by structural words like /dara/, /zuqe/ etc. The full/finite verbs in active sentences are in their full forms with overt tense-person inflections. But in passive sentences the verb assumes a characteristic passive form with syntactic support from one of the closed set of passivizer Functors. The following two sentences would exemplify the statement above:

1. Active: /mui b^hat k^halu^/ I ate my meal
2. Passive: /mor^hat k^awa holi/ I ate rice (Passive)

It is obvious that the Active subject /mui/ has been transformed to /mor/ in the passive one and this form is congruent with the genitival form of /mui/. The verb /k^halu^/ in the Active sentence is transformed to a verbal group /k^awa holi/ in the Passive counterpart. The form /k^awa/ is in the characteristic ante-passive form whereas the form /holi/ has been accorded the syntactic status of passivizer Functor in this study.
Unlike the other functors — Modals and Auxiliaries — the Passivizers are characterized by tense inflection only.

9.5.2.2.14 In a passive sentence the MC verb itself assumes the characteristic ante-passivizer form and to which is tagged up the appropriate passivizer (vide the examples in the earlier section).

In sentences with PC verbs — conjunct and phrasal — the operators (satellite and peripheral) assume the characteristic ante-passive forms and to which is concatenated the passivizer. The following examples would support this statement.

1(a). Active (with conjunct verb): /tae kodal marise/ He hoed
(b). Passive : /tar kodal mara hoi/
   He hoed (Passive)

2(a). Active (with phrasal verb): /tae d'huki paise/
   She reached it
(b). Passive : /tar d'huki pawa huise/
   She confessed (Passive)

The passivizers exhibit tense inflections only — in 1(b) for Tense 3 and in 2(b) for Tense 2 respectively.
9.5.2.2.15 Passivizers can be concatenated with Modals, Auxiliaries and Passivizers:

/tor kamta kora hobo pare/

Your task may be completed (by me)

Structure of the verbal group:

ante-passive + passivizer + Modal

2. /mor dine mod kʰawā hui ase/ I have been drinking everyday (Passive)

Structure of the verbal group:

ante-passive + passivizer + Auxiliary

3. /sompar bijaṅ hūna kori dibo para zawa zabo /

We will arrange to have Champa married (Passive)

Structure of the verbal group:

Verb (non-finite) + pluperfective auxiliary + modal (in the ante-passivizer form) + passivizer (in the ante-Modal form) + Modal.

9.6.0 Modification of verbs:

Adverbial modifiers of verbs in DD verbphrases are normally attributively used. However, predicative use of modifiers, though rare, is also permissible (vide Chapter VIII).
1. /mui zore zam/ I shall go fast
2. /kor aste aste/ Do it slowly!

Sentence 1 and 2 exhibit attributive and predicative modification of the verbs /zam/ and /kor/ respectively.

9.7.0 The canonical order of occurrence of DD sentence constituents is subject + object + verb (S + O + V). But word order in DD is not rigid as it is in English. Other orders of occurrence like O + S + V, V + S + O and so on, are also equally permissible but relatively less common.

9.7.1 With the (object) noun complement in a sentence the most frequent order of occurrence of the constituents in DD is subject + object + (object) noun complement + verb. — S + O + (O) Ncomp + V,

where (O) Ncomp = Object Noun Complement.

/ami tak ga^bura patilu/) We appointed him the village head

With a (subject) Noun Complement in the sentence the most frequent order of occurrence of the constituents is — S + (Sub) NComp + V,

where (sub) Ncomp = subject Noun complement

/tae ga^bura asil/ He was the village head.