Morphosyntactic Analysis of Noun Phrase in Manipuri

Dhanapati Shougrakpam, Ph.D.

Abstract
Morphosyntactic is a term in linguistics used to refer to grammatical categories or properties for whose definition the criteria of morphology and syntax both apply, as in describing the characteristics of words. (Crystal - 1980:234)

Manipuri is a morphologically rich agglutinative language, in which words are inflected with various grammatical functions. The language has no watertight compartment between morphology and syntax: the concept of subject is not so distinct (in other words, subject can be deleted or understood) and different word classes are formed by affixation of the respective markers.

Key words: Manipuri language, morphosyntactic analysis, agglutivative, subject, affixation

Introduction
Noun phrase (NP) is a prototypical part of every sentence and a vital topic in any natural language processing task. The description of NP is implicitly based on the idea that constituents are built up of a continuous sequence of words.

A formal representation of noun phrase based on speaker’s syntactic knowledge includes:

A. Morpheme identification.
B. Aspects of syntactic analysis are explicitly represented:
   i. Hierarchical structure of the syntactic category in a tree diagram.
   ii. The syntactic structure into sequences of syntactic categories or classes established on the basis of syntactic relationships linguistic items have with other items in a construction.
Analysis of Noun Phrase - Morphosyntax

Morphosyntactic information are represented not only for the target noun phrase contexts but for the whole sentence.

1. Head Noun (HN) Identification

\[ \text{jon-} \quad \text{әәәә} \quad \text{layrik} \]
John-GEN red book

‘John’s red book’.

\[
\begin{array}{c}
S \\
NP \\
Case \\
NP \\
\text{John} \\
\text{gi} \\
\text{әәәә} \\
\text{layrik}
\end{array}
\]

Here in \([\text{NP}[\text{N}\text{John}[\text{Case}[\text{NOM gi}]]][\text{A әәәә}][\text{NP} [\text{N layrik}]])\]

- The HN is layrik ‘book’.
- Proper names precede HN.
- Adjective әәәә ‘red’ can either precede or follow HN.
- Case is used to indicate the link between noun phrases.

2. Case in NP

\[ \text{әә-} \quad \text{gi} \\
\text{layrik} \]
I-GEN book

‘My book’.

\[
\begin{array}{c}
S \\
NP \\
CASE \\
NP \\
\text{әә} \\
\text{gi} \\
\text{layrik}
\end{array}
\]

Here in \([\text{NP}[\text{PRO әә}][\text{CASE}[\text{GEN gi}]]][\text{NP} [\text{N layrik}]]\),

- Genitive case linked two NPs.
- Possessive pronouns precede HN
3. **Headless Noun Phrase**

This is context sensitive and is possible only when the context is understood both by the speaker and the hearer and there is enough referent capable of standing for the deleted head noun.

The different types of constructions that lacks a head noun, that is noun phrase with only modifying words are drawn as below:

3.i. әmubә әdu pi-rәk-u

black DET give-DTC-CMD

‘Give that black one’.

Here in \([\text{NP}[\text{A әmubә}][\text{DET әdu}]][\text{VP pi-rәk-u}]\)

- NP and VP can occur interchangeably.
- NP without HNs, when context understood both by the speaker and the hearer.
- the adjective әmubә ‘black’ is enough referent that can stand for the deleted HN.

3.ii. Adjective occurs with a possessive (which is also possible when the adjective is modifying a noun) and determiner.

әәŋ gi әәŋәәŋбә әdu set-lu

you-GEN red DET wear-CMD

‘Wear that red one of yours’.

\([\text{NP}[\text{N PRO әәŋ}][\text{DET gi}][\text{A әәŋәәŋбә}][\text{DET әdu}]][\text{VP set-lu}]\)
3.iii. Adjective occur with numeral, determiner and a verb form with a command suffix.

\[ p^b_{\text{әәбә}} \text{әәні дү } \text{пүрәқ-у} \]

beautiful two DET bring-CMD

‘Bring the two beautiful ones’.

3.iv. NP consists of an adjective, determiner and a coordinate conjunction.

\[ әәнәбә дү гә үәә-рәәқ-і \]

tall DET CONJ meet-DTC-ASP

‘I met with the tall one’.

4. NP Modified by Relative Clause

\[ әәңә \text{п}^\text{ш} \text{әәит әәңәбә гә искәт әәмұә гә setzenдү } \text{са } \text{т}^\text{бәқ-и} \]

child shirt red-CONJ skirt black-CONJ wear DET tea drink-PRG

‘The child wearing red shirt and black skirt is having tea.’
Here in [NP [N әŋaŋ] [RC pʰurit әŋaŋbә әŋkәt әmubә әŋ setpә] [DET du]] [NP[N ca]] [VP tʰәk-i]

- The subject head noun әŋaŋ ‘child’ is modified by the relative clause pʰurit әŋaŋbә әŋkәt әmubә әŋ setpә ‘wearing red shirt and black skirt’.
- RC can either precede or follow the HN.

5. **Relativized NP with Quantifying Words**

әɾakpә әŋaŋ kʰudiŋmәk tu layrik pi come child QTF DET book give

‘Every child that came were given books’.

```
S
  NP
    A N QTF EMP N
    әɾakpә әŋaŋ kʰudiŋmәk tu layrik pi
```

Here in [NP[A әɾakpә][N әŋaŋ][QTF kʰudiŋmәk][EMP tu]][NP[N layrik]][VP pi]

- Head noun is әŋaŋ ‘child’.
- The head noun әŋaŋ ‘child’ can either precede or follow the derived noun.
- The occurrence of quantifier is fixed; it can only follow the head noun.
- The head noun can also be deleted when there is sufficient referent capable of standing for the deleted head noun; this is context sensitive. Here, the quantifying word kʰudiŋmәk ‘all/every’ is enough referent capable of standing for the deleted head noun.

6. **Relativized NP Formed Derived Noun**

manә lәy-rәk-pә pʰurit әdu mәcanupa nә lәw-kʰre
he-NOM buy-DTC-NZR shirt DET son-NOM take-ASP

‘The son took the shirt that he bought’

```
S
  NP
    V
    әɾakpә әŋaŋ kʰudiŋmәk tu layrik pi
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Here, the noun ‘pʰurit’ shirt can either precede or follow the relative clause ‘manɔ ləyərkə’ that he bought.

The NP ‘mācanupa na’ by the son can either precede or follow the relativized noun phrase ‘manɔ ləyərkə pʰurit ədu’ the shirt that he bought.

An instance of headless RC can also be drawn;
(i) This is possible when the context is understood both by the hearer and the speaker, i.e., context sensitive.
(ii) When there is sufficient referent for the deleted head noun.
(iii) Here, the derived noun ləyərkə ‘bought’ is a sufficient referent capable of standing for the deleted HN.

7. Ambiguous Noun Phrase

\[ pʰəjəbo lay yonbə dukan du yəw-re \]

‘( ) reached the shop that sells beautiful flowers’.

Here in \[[NP[RC[NP[PRO ma][CASE[NOM na]][DN ləyərkə]][N pʰurit][DET ədu]][NP[N mācanupa][CASE[NOM na]]][VP ləwkʰre]]\]
• There is no clear indication as to whether the adjective phәjәbә ‘beautiful’ modifies the noun lay ‘flower’ or the HN dukan ‘shop’.

• This may sometimes create ambiguity in the implied meaning. It could either mean ‘a beautiful shop that sells flowers’ or ‘a shop that sells beautiful flowers’.

• Several interpretations can be drawn:
  i. lay phәjәbә yonbә dukan du
     It only means ‘the shop that sells beautiful flowers’.
  ii. dukan phәjәbә lay yonbә du
     It could either mean ‘the beautiful shop that sells flowers’ or ‘the shop that sells beautiful flowers.
  iii. phәjәbә dukan lay yonbә du.
     It only means ‘the beautiful shop that sells flowers’.

Conclusion

The NP structure analysed as above is a clear indication that an exhaustive morphosyntactic analysis of Manipuri noun phrase can be envisioned. It will be possible to devise an NP model of the language by knowing the pattern of NP in Manipuri. The NP pattern may be used to envisage or relate various NP constructions.

An attempt has been made to conceptualize the NP morphosyntax as fundamental element in the construction of Manipuri sentences. The present paper provides possible linguistic cues and a detailed examination could be managed to come up with some categorization.

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Abbreviations

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Adjective</td>
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<td>ASP</td>
<td>Aspect</td>
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<td>CMD</td>
<td>Command</td>
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<td>Conjunction</td>
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<td>Determiner</td>
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<td>DN</td>
<td>Derived Noun</td>
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<td>DTC</td>
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<td>EMP</td>
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Dhanapati Shograjram, Ph.D.
Morphosyntactic Analysis of Noun Phrase in Manipuri
Dhanapati Shougrakpam, Ph.D.
Department of Linguistics
Manipur University
Canchipur
Imphal – 795 003
Manipur
India
dippi1117@yahoo.co.in

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