

Word Order in Ranglong

L. Pratima Devi, Ph.D. Scholar

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Abstract

The paper is an attempt to study the word order of Ranglong in a sentence or phrase level. Ranglong is mainly spoken in two states of North Eastern India, namely, Tripura and Assam and with a few speakers in Mizoram. The paper highlights the word order of Ranglong such as the order of noun and adjective, demonstrative and noun, degree word and adjective, noun and numerals, etc.

Key words: Ranglong language, Tibeto-Burman, North Eastern India, word order

Introduction

Ranglong (or Langrong as mentioned by Soppit in *Linguistic Survey of India*) are the Kukis of Hill Tipperah (Tripura) and are identical to the Rangkhols. Ranglong is a Tibeto-Burman language of Kuki-Chin sub-group spoken mainly in Tripura, Assam and Mizoram. The Ranglong language has close affinities with many other Tibeto-Burman languages like Aimol, Chiru, Kharam, Darlong, Molsom, Hrangkhoh, Bongcher, Kuki, Mizo, etc. According to the *Ethnologue* (2016), the total population of Ranglong is 8000 approximately.

Word order

Strictly speaking ‘word order’ actually refers to constituent order, and concerns constituents on both clausal and phrasal level. The word order of Ranglong is discussed below:

Order of Subject, Object and Verb

There are six logically possible orders of the three constituents subject (S), verb (V) and object (O) viz. SOV, SVO, VSO, VOS, OVS, and OSV.

The basic word order of Ranglong is SOV as can be seen in (1).

- (1) David-in marul a-t^hat

David-NOM snake 3SG-kill

‘David killed (a) snake’

Order of Direct and Indirect Object

If both the direct and indirect objects are present in a sentence the indirect object precedes the direct object as shown below in (2) and (3).

- (2) *Amar-in David-raŋ mot a-pek*
amar-NOM david-DAT banana 3SG-give
‘Amar gave a banana to David’

- (3) *Anil-in David-rang lek^habu ahon mat^huan*
Anil-NOM David-DAT book come give
‘Anil sent a book to David’

Order of Conditional and Main Clauses

Ranglong agrees with Greenberg’s Universal 14 i.e., the conditional clause precedes the main clause.

- (4) *koini na-se ənten əmani-in se-unti*
we 2SG-go COND they-NOM go-FUT
‘If we go, they will go’

- (5) *koi ka-se ənten əma-in se anti*
I 1SG-go COND he-NOM go 3SG-FUT
‘If I go he will go’

Order of Time Adverbial and Place Adverbial

In Ranglong, like other verb final languages time adverbials (T) precede place adverbials (P).

- (6) *koi t^ha-t^har-a silchar-a nan-tonpui ka-ti*
I month-new-in silchar-LOC 2SG-meet 1SG-FUT

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‘I will meet you in Silchar next month’

Order of Adjective and Noun

The adjective usually follows the noun they modify. Adjective can also precede the noun in the language as in (9).

- (7) *lek^habu* *asa*
 N Adj
 ‘Good book’

- (8) *ŋa* *asin*
 N Adj
 ‘Small fish’

- (9) *asin* *ŋa*
 Adj N
 ‘Small fish’

Order of Adverb and Verb

Like many other Tibeto-Burman languages, adverbs precede the verbs in Ranglong.

- (10) *əma* *zam-zama* *a-se*
 he Adv 3SG-go
 ‘He went slowly’

- (11) *əma* *ənlaiseka* *a-hoŋ*
 he Adv 3SG-come
 ‘He came suddenly’

Order of Degree Word and Adjective

Degree refers to words like ‘very’, ‘more’, or ‘little’ that modify the adjective. Degree word follows the adjective in Ranglong. The order cannot be reversed.

- (12) *ant^huk* *sabak*
 Adj Deg

‘Very deep’

(13) *asa sabak*

Adj Deg

‘Very good’

Order of Noun and Numeral

In Ranglong numerals follow the noun as in many Tibeto-Burman languages do. However, numerals can also precede the nouns as in (16).

(14) *mot anni*

N Num

‘Two bananas’

(15) *ui ənt^hum*

N Num

‘Three dogs’

(16) *ənt^hum ui*

Num N

‘Three dogs’

Order of Quantifier and Noun

Like numerals, the quantifiers in Ranglong always follow the nouns.

(17) *ui atampa*

dog many

‘Many dogs’

(18) *lek^habu atom*

book few

‘Few/some book’

Order of Demonstrative and Noun

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Unlike numerals and quantifiers, the demonstrative always precedes the noun.

- (19) *hiva* *ui*
 DEM N
 ‘This dog’

- (20) *sova* *t^heihai*
 DEM N
 ‘That mango’

Order of Noun and Postposition

Postpositions in Ranglong follow noun phrases (or single nouns) to form a single constituent structure of sentence. The post-positions can occur independently without being added to any noun.

- (21) *koi* *silchar* *tena* *se* *ka-ti*
 N PostP
 I Silchar upto go 1SG-FUT
 ‘I will go upto silchar’

- (22) *p^hai* *mala-a* *se-ro*
 N PostP
 paddy field middle-LOC go-IMP
 ‘Go in the middle of the paddy field’

Conclusion

On the basis of above discussion, it can be concluded that Ranglong is a verb final language with an SOV word order. As an SOV language, Ranglong has postposition. Conditional clause precedes the main clause, time adverbial precedes place adverbial in the language. Adjective follows as well as precedes the nouns they modify. Degree word usually

follows the adjective in Ranglong. Numerals and quantifiers follow the noun. Demonstrative precedes the nouns in the language.

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Abbreviations used

1-1st person

2-2nd person

3-3rd person

Adj-adjective

Adv-adverb

DAT-dative

COND-conditional

Deg-degree

FUT-future

IMP -imperative

LOC-locative

Num-numeral

PostP-postposition

SG-singular

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L. Pratima Devi, Ph.D. Scholar
Department of Linguistics
Assam University
Silchar-788011
Assam, India
pratimadevi67@gmail.com