Clausal Gerund in Manipuri

Amom Nandaraj Meetei
Central Institute of Indian Languages
amomcha@gmail.com

Chungkham Yashawanta Singh
Manipur University
chungkhamyash@gmail.com

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Abstract

This paper explores the basic structures of Clausal Gerund (henceforth CG) in Manipuri within the core idea of Minimalist Program (1995). The idea of AGREE in the syntactic derivation is built-in between the verbal domain, *the probe*, and the argument DP, *the goal* through valuation approach. Examining the behavior of these gerunds in respect of how they license overt or covert DPs most often marked with accusative Case (for internal arguments) as well as nominative case (for external arguments) are blocked from Case-less positions, this paper climaxes the insights for the researchers to embody some ultimate understanding of the syntax of defective sentential domains in general. Primarily, the paper will consider two gerund structures to be (i) the subject must be PRO and (ii) the subject must be lexical one. In order to defend the idea of CGs, a theoretical approach along with the supporting empirical examples will be provided and so reaching the finale juncture where the distributive restrictions of CGs on the source of the interaction between Case and AGREE valuation will be shown on the ground of limited possibility of A-movement out of a CG.

Key words: Verbal noun, Case, Agree

1.0   Introduction

This paper makes an attempt to concretize the mystifying category of verbal noun in the literature of nominalization constructions. They are very peculiar in that the arguments (subject or object) of a verbal noun can be realized with verbal case marking system such as nominative or accusative at the clausal level. Following the linguists propounding the syntactic VP projection of verbal nouns (Valoi 1991, Borer 1993, Hazout 1995, Marantz 1997, van Hout &

Roeper 1998, Fu, Roeper & Borer 2001, Borer 2005a, 2005b, Park 2008) within the exo-skeleton approach, we also argue that verbal nouns are categorially verbs not nouns and they can be embedded within nominalizing structures in which a derived nominal structure or a gerund structure gets surfaced. Further, this paper explores some of the basic similar properties a clausal gerund behaves in the sense of Pires (1999, 2000, 2001a, 2001b, 2001c) within Minimalist Program approach, dictating that the subject can be either a PRO or an overt DP Case-marked with accusative case or nominative case in a class of gerund, hence Clausal Gerund. Section 2 will be about the structure of verbal nouns where derived nominal structures, i.e., a clausal gerund structures are briefly introduced. Section 3 is on verbal nouns as verbs, exploring the properties of verbal noun structures in which adverbial modification and verbal nouns stacking are analyzed. Constituent structures of verbal nouns in respect of the topicalization and scrambling are also sightseen hereafter. Section 4 introduces the new thoughtful level of clausal gerund structure where some properties of clausal gerunds are displayed and syntactic derivation of clausal gerunds is also proven under the literature of minimalist program. Section 5 concludes the paper.

2.0   The Structure of Verbal Nouns

There are three structures (generally two only) that a verbal noun can take. They are given below:

  (i).   Derived nominal structure
(ii).   Gerund structure
(iii).   Clausal gerund structure

2.1   Derived Nominal vs Gerund Structure

When a verbal noun takes the transitive argument structures consisting of an agent and a theme arguments, the structure in which the theme argument is genitive-marked is the Derived Nominal one; whereas, the structure in which the theme argument is accusative-marked is that of Gerund one. This case is illustrated below:

		GEN	ACC	
(1)	a.	yeknəbə-nə [_DP_khuŋgəŋ-**gi**	maŋnəbə]-bu	təukhi
		enemy-NOM village-GEN	destruction-ACC	did

‘The enemy destroyed the village’

		ACC	ACC	
	b.	yeknəbə-nə [_DP_khuŋgəŋ-**bu**	maŋnəba]-bu	təukhi
		enemy-NOM village-ACC	destruction-ACC	did

‘The enemy destroyed the village’

One may find it weird when the accusative marker is added to the verbal noun *maŋnəbə* 'destroying'. No matter, it can be either omitted or added in the sense that the verbal noun without the accusative case provides a general reading while that of marked one simply drags one's mind to focus on the action of destruction.

What is shown here is that the sentence (1a), where a theme argument is genitive-marked, instantiates the case in which a verbal noun takes a derived nominal structure while the sentence (1b) with an accusative-marked theme illustrates the case where a verbal noun takes a gerund structure.

Numerous linguists (Chomsky 1970, Abney 1987, Grimshaw 1980, Valoi 1991, Harley & Noyer 1997, Borer 1999, Alexiadou 2001) have stipulated contrastive properties of derived nominals and gerunds.

(2)   a.   Derived nominals exhibit properties similar to a typical NP and   they can take adjectival modification, but they do not have the ability of verbal case marking.
      b.   Gerunds have the properties of VP and they cannot take adjectival modification but take adverbial modification. They can assign accusative case to an object if present.

Before the feat of a proper analysis of the so-called 'Clausal Gerund', we can initially say that it is a class of gerund, in which the subject can be either a PRO or an overt DP Cased-marked with accusative Case (acc-ing) or with nominative Case (Pires 2006:15). Let us briefly see the following examples:

(3)   a.   Jack worried about ***PRO being*** late for dinner
      b.   Jack worried about ***John/him being*** late for dinner.

We now see that there are two gerund structures that in (3a) above, the subject is PRO (TP-defective gerund in the sense of Pires, 2006) and, (3b) above, the subject is lexical. There is no alternation between PRO and overt subject in either type of structure. Let us see the following Manipuri examples:

(4)   a.   Tomba-nə   ***PRO*** ca-bə   pam-de
           Tomba-NOM   eat-NMLZ   like-NEG
           Tomba does not like (PRO) to eat.

      b.   Tomba-nə   ***ma-bu*** ca-bə   pam-de
           Tomba-NOM he-ACC   eat-NMLZ eat-NEG

Tomba does not like him to eat.

In the similar fashion, the verbal noun *ca-bə* 'eating/to eat', realizes the subjects as PRO or overt accusative-marked DP subject **ma-bu 'He-ACC'**. The account of clausal gerund structure is postponed on the section 4 since we think that it is better to confirm the nature of verbal nouns in its step by step understanding of argument realizing verbal behavior.

3.0   Verbal Noun as a Verb

There are two possible options as far as the grammatical category of a verbal noun is concerned:

(5)   a. Verbal Noun as Noun, as the term 'verbal noun' advocates,
        b. Verbal Noun as Verb, as suggested from the morpho-syntactic   properties.

3.1   Verbal Noun as Noun

Many linguists (Baker 1988, Ahn, Kageyama 1991, Miyamoto 1999) consider the syntactic incorporation account, suggesting that verbal nouns as nouns incorporate into a light verb at the level of syntax. Let us see the example (3) below (example 1b above):

(6)   yeknəbə-nə   [khuŋgəŋ-**bu**   [maŋnəba   təukhi]
          enemy-NOM village-ACC   destruction   did
        'The enemy destroyed the village'

Under this analysis, verbal noun maŋnəbə 'destruction' raises to a verb head təu 'do' at the level of syntax and adjoins to it, which results a complex predicate formation. But, the arguments of verbal noun become free to raise up to the verbal domain to get case.

Another approach (Miyagawa 1989) suggests that incorporation whereby a verbal noun bonds with a light verb takes place in the lexicon, as given in the structure 7(a) & (b) below:

7a.   V   V
        2   2
        N   V   N   V
    maŋnəbə   təu-khi   hatnəba   tə-ukhi (attempted to kill)

It says that the complex predicate s as one word are inserted into a syntactic structure under a V node, predicting that the N-part corresponding to a verbal noun would not be

syntactically visible, since the predicates are found derived in the lexicon and thus inserted under V nodes in syntactic structures.

3.2. Verbal Noun as Verb

We follow the linguists propounding the syntactic VP projection of verbal nouns (Valoi 1991, Borer 1993, Hazout 1995, Marantz 1997, van Hout & Roeper 1998, Fu, Roeper & Borer 2001, Borer 2005a, 2005b, Park 2008) within the exo-skeleton approach, and also argue that verbal nouns are categorily verbs not nouns and they can be embedded within nominalizing structures in which a derived nominal structure or a gerund structure gets surfaced. Following are some of the main factors:

(i) Adverbial modification (ii) Verbal Noun Stacking (iii) Constituent Structures

3.2.1 Adverbial Modification

According to Baker 1983 et., the verbal noun part is not syntactically visible within the complex predicate. Let us see the examples 8(a) & (b) below:

(8)   A.   yeknəbə-nə   konung-du-bu   loyna koisinbə   ŋəm-khə-re
              enemy-NOM   fort-DST-ACC   completely round can-CERT-PERF
              'The enemy could round the fort completely'

        b.   * yeknəbə-nə konuŋ-du-gi   koisinbə ŋəm-khə-re
              enemy-NOM fort-DST-GEN   completely round can-CERT-PERF
        'The enemy could round the fort.'

In 8(a) above, the verbal noun can't take an adjective, and instead, it takes an adverb. And, the syntactic incorporation account predicts that the verbal noun, as a noun, can take a genitive argument as its complement, but the finding the fact is contradictory to the prediction as shown in 8(b) above. This shows that the verbal noun part of complex predicate is syntactically not visible, and hence the assumption that verbal nouns are nouns is incorrect.

Again, regarding Miyagawa (1989)'s account of lexical derivation in the lexicon, let us see the following examples (9) & (10):

(9)   lalmisiŋ-nə thoŋ-bu   yankhaibə təu-khi, adugə yum-di təu-khi-de.
        soldiers-NOM   bridge-ACC breaking do-CERT, but   house-TOP do-CERT-NEG
         'The soldiers broke the bridges but did not the house.'

(10)   a.   lalmisiŋ-nə   thong-bu   yankhaibə   təu-khə-rə-bə-rə?
           soldier-PL-NOM bridge-ACC breaking do-CERT-PROS-NMLZ-INT
           'Did the soldiers break the bridge?'

       b.   hoi, Φ_i təu-khə-re.
           Yes   do-CERT-PERF
           'Yes, they did.'

We now see that only the verbal noun part in complex predicates can undergo the syntactic operation of ellipsis to the exclusion of a light verb, which is in contrast to the prediction of lexical incorporation account. Hence both the syntactic incorporation and lexical derivation analyses are inconsistent with the Lexical Integrity Hypothesis (LIH) (Lapoite 1979), stating that the internal structure of a word cannot be relevant in syntax. Hence, verbal nouns are actually verbs and they take their arguments simply because they are verbs (Park 2008).

3.2.2   Verbal Noun Stacking

As an evidence for the existence of syntactic VP, verbal nouns also exhibit verbal properties such as assigning accusative case to their arguments and licensing adverbial modification. It so happens when one verbal noun follows another verbal noun, i.e., verbal noun stacking, a bare verbal noun shows the ability to assign accusative Case similar to a verb, as shown in (9) below:

(11) Hajari-nə   [[kərəpsən-**bu**   thijinbə]-**bu**   **mapuŋphan**ə   səugətpə]-bu
     Hajari-NOM   corruption-ACC   investigation-ACC completely   supporting-ACC
      thagətpə-bu   təukhi
      thanking-ACC   did
        'Hajari appreciated the complete support for the investigation over the corruption'.

In (11) above, the verbal noun *thijinbə* 'investigation' assigns accusative case on *kərəpsən* 'corruption'. The verbal noun *səugətpə* 'supporting' licenses the modification by the adverbial *mapungphanə* 'completely'. Since there is no intervening light verb to support the verbal nouns to take verbal properties and it obeys the Head-to-Head movement constraint (HMC), it signals the presence of a syntactic VP element.

3.2.3   Constituent Structures

Following examples show that verbal nouns can be explained as derived nominals or gerunds. < **Topicalization** >

(12)   a.   *[maŋnəbə]-di yeknəbə-nə khungəŋ-gi təukhi
           destruction-Top enemy-NOM   village-GEN   did

b.   [khungəŋ-**gi** maŋnəbə]-di yeknəbə-nə   təukhi
village-GEN destruction-Top enemy-NOM   did

(13)   a.   *[maŋnəbə]-di yeknəbə-nə khungəŋ-bu   təukhi
destruction-Top enemy-NOM   village-ACC   did

b.   [khungəŋ-**bu** maŋnəba]-di yeknəbə-nə   təukhi
village-ACC destruction-Top enemy-NOM did

< Scrambling >

(14)   a. *[maŋnəbə]-bu yeknəbə-nə khungəŋ-gi   təukhi
destruction-ACC enemy-NOM   village-GEN   did

b. [khungəŋ-**gi** maŋnəba]-bu   yeknəbə-nə təukhi
village-NOM   destruction-ACC   enemy-ERG did

(15)   a. *[maŋnəbə]-bu yeknəbə-nə khungəŋ-bu təukhi
destruction-ACC enemy-NOM   village-ACC   did

b. [khungəŋ-**bu** maŋnəbə]-bu   yeknəbə-nə   təukhi
village-ACC   destruction-ACC   enemy-NOM did

We follow Park (2008) in that the theme argument *khungəŋ* 'village' and the verbal noun *maŋnəbə* 'destruction' form one single constituent DP. Since movement should observe a constituent structure, the ungrammaticality of each (a) sentence obtains a straightforward account. Hence, each (b) sentence should be grammatical as it observes a constituent structure. This shows that verbal noun phrases can be analyzed as derived nominals or gerunds and such prediction is done through the movement operations such as topicalization or scrambling.

4.0   Clausal Gerund (CG) Structure

Before we come to the stage of derivational account which will be analyzed in section 4.1 below, let us see the following properties of clausal gerunds.

4.1   Some Properties of CGs

Pires (2006) proposed the analysis of the syntax of CGs attempting to account for five core syntactic properties of clausal gerunds, regarding especially their distribution and licensing

of subjects within Case checking/valuation approach under the Minimalist program (Chomsky 2000, 2001).

i) **The subject of a CG may be an empty category (standardly analyzed as a PRO) or an overt DP:**
English:

(16) a. Jack worried about ***PRO being*** late for dinner
 b. Jack worried about ***John/him being*** late for dinner.
 Manipuri:

(17) a. Tomba-nə   ***PRO*** ca-bə   pam-de
       Tomba-NOM   eat-NMLZ   like-NEG
     Tomba does not like (PRO) to eat.

 b. Tomba-nə   ***ma-bu***   ca-bə   pam-de
   Tomba-NOM he-ACC   eat-NMLZ eat-NEG
   Tomba does not like him to eat.

ii)   **CGs need to satisfy a Case requirement:**
 English:

(18) a. *Mary talked about [(that) John moved out]

 b. Mary talked about [John moving out]
 Manipuri:

(19) a. *Tomba-nə   [əi-nə   catpə   haibə]   pammi
        Tomba-ACC   I-NOM   going   say-Quatative   like

 b. ma-nə   [Tomba-nə   cətpə-gi mərəmdə]   wari sai
    I-NOM   Tomba-Nom   going-Gen about   story tell

iii)   **CGs do not behave as Exceptional Case Marking (ECM) complements:**
 English:

(20) a. Mary believes [Paul to be smart]

 b. *Mary believes [John being smart]
 Manipuri:

(21)   a. Tomba-nə   Ibemma-bu phəjə-i thajə-i

       b. *Tomba-nə   Ibemma-bu phəjəbə thajə-i

iv)   **CGs can never occur as complements of subject raising verbs although they can occur as a single constituent in the subject position of raising predicate:**
      English:

(22)   a. *John appears [liking Mary]

       b. [(John) talking to Mary] seems impossible.
       Manipuri:

(23)   a. *Tamcha-nə   Chaobi-bu pambə   ui
          Tomcha-NOM   Chaobi-ACC liking   appear

       b. Tomcha-nə   Chaobi-də   phubə oithok-te
         Tomcha-NOM   Chaobi-DAT   beating   possible-NEG
             It seems impossoble [that Tomcha beats Chaobi]

v)   **The subject position of a CG must be filled in the course of derivation, either by a lexical DP (a) below, or by a pure expletive (b) below to satisfy the EPP requirement:**

(24)   a. Paul prefers [Paul$_i$ swimming in the morning].

       b. Bill enjoys [there being many people at the party]
       Manipuri:

(25)   Khomei [ayuk-tə   Khomei$_i$ iroibə]   pammi
        Khomei   morning-LOC   swimming   prefer

4.2   Minimalist Approach of CG

Pires (2006: 39) proposed three hypotheses regarding the properties of CGs in English:

(26)   a. The inflectional head corresponding to -ing in English in CGs carries a feature specification that forces the occurrence of CGs in positions accessible to Case valuation;

b. In the derivation of a CG, the Case feature of its external argument DP can be valued within the CG itself (25a & 26a below);

c. The external argument DP can move out of the CG before the CG can value the Case feature of this DP. This yields a null-subject CG (a CG with a control PRO subject, in standard term) (25b & 26b below).

(27)   a. Sue   prefers [John/him   swimming]

       b. John prefers [swimming]

(28)   a. Tomba-nə [Khomei-bu/ma-bu irujəbə] pammi

       b. Tomba-nə [irujəbə] Pammi

Under this approach, the head T of the CG itself will be a goal for Case valuation, i.e., the -ing in English and the suffix -pə/-bə in Manipuri and the nominative case is assumed to be realized as a default case marker in this non-finite gerundial clauses.

At this stage, adopted approach to overt syntax explores certain core aspects of the architecture proposed in Chomsky (2000, 2001) in terms of phrase structure, Case, Φ-feature and A-movement to subject position. Case and Φ-feature valuation are taken to apply as a consequence of the operation *Agee:*

Agree "establishes a relation (agreement, case checking) between an LI [lexical item] α and a Feature F in a search space (its [the LI's] domain)"
                      (Chomsky 2000:102); (LI α is the Probe; Feature F is the Goal).

Match: Probe and Goal need to have a subset of their features in common (Φ-feature here).

Now let us derive the following CG:

(29)   John prefers   [John   swimming]   (English)
       Tomba-nə   [Tomba-nə   iroiba]   pammi   (Manipuri)
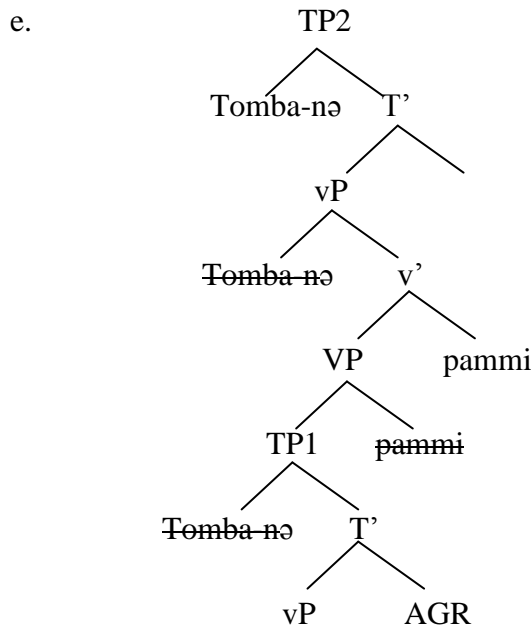   Tomba-Nom Tomba-Nom   swimming like

It is proposed that the null subject in such cases results from A-movement of the embedded CG subject to the matrix clause. The Ө-roles can be assigned through movement and not only by first merge (cf. Boskovic 1994, Lasnik 1995, Boskovic and Takahashi 1998). Ө-roles

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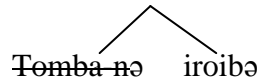Clausal Gerund in Manipuri   305

can also be assigned in the course of derivation, and are satisfied not in a configuration, but in a set of configurations (i.e. transformationally).

(30)   Tomba-nə iroibə   pammi

a.   [$_{T'}$ AGR [$_{vP}$ ~~Tomba-nə~~ iroiba]]
                                       [Φ/Case$_{AGR}$ Ө/Case
b.   [$_{TP1}$ Tomba-nə [$_{T'}$ AGR [$_{vP}$ ~~Tomba-nə~~ iroibə]]]
                             [~~EPP/~~ Φ/Case$_{AGR}$ [Ө/Case   ]]]

c.   [$_{vP}$ Tomba-nə [$_{v'}$ [$_{TP1}$ ~~Tomba-nə~~ [$_{T'}$ AGR [$_{vP}$ ~~Tomba-nə~~ iroiba] pammi]]]]]
                [2Ө/Case   ~~EPP/~~ Φ   [Ө   ] ~~Case~~ $_{AGR}$]]]]]]
d.   [$_{TP2}$ Tomba-nə   [$_{T'}$ [$_{vP}$ ~~Tomba-nə~~ [$_{v'}$ [$_{TP1}$ [$_{T'}$ AGR [$_{vP}$ iroibə] pammi]]]]]]]
      [~~Φ/Case/~~ ~~EPP~~   [2Ө   [~~EPP~~ /Φ   [$_{vP}$] ~~Case~~$_{AGR}$]]]]

As *Tomba* enters Match/Agree with AGR in (27b), *Tomba* values the Φ-set of AGR by Agree and moves to Spec TP1 for EPP satisfaction. But, since AGR still has an uninterpretable Case feature at the point in (30b), Case valuation of the embedded subject DP remains to take place. When the matrix v is inserted in the derivation, the embedded CG is assigned the propositional internal Ө-role of the matrix verb (30c). When the matrix v enters the derivation, it attracts the embedded DP *Tomba* and assigns an experiencer Ө-role to it. The matrix v then Matches/Agrees in Φ-features with the AGR in CG and values the uninterpretable Case feature (C$_{AGR}$) that AGR still carries (30c). Finally, *Tomba* moves from matrix [Spec, vP] to check/value its own uninterpretable Case feature and the EPP and Φ-features on TP2 (30d).

e.   TP2
                   ╱   ╲
            Tomba-nə   T'
                         ╱   ╲
                       vP
                    ╱   ╲
             ~~Tomba-nə~~   v'
                           ╱   ╲
                         VP   pammi
                      ╱   ╲
                   TP1   ~~pammi~~
                 ╱   ╲
          ~~Tomba-nə~~   T'
                        ╱   ╲
                      vP   AGR

Tomba-nə iroibə

What can be further explained from the above literature is that the Nominalizer -ba carries a feature specification that forces the occurrence of CGs in positions accessible to Case valuation and the external argument DP, i.e., *Tomba-nə* of the CG carry an uninterpretable Case feature that needs to be valued. Manipuri has no Φ-features on TP and the Φ-features agreement is not taken into consideration. We assume that the Nomializer is the head of the CG and the CGs lack CP projection as shown in (17a). The embedded subjects of CG display the same case marking as subjects of tensed clauses. The clausal gerunds depend upon an ouside functional head (T) to licence the overt subject via sequential derivation.Here, the head T of the CG is the goal for Case valuation. Specifically, when the matrix v is inserted in the derivation (30c), it carries an external Ɵ-role and an uninterpretable Case features allowing it to enter into the Match/Agree operation that will value the case of the embedded CG. As Pires (2006: 46) suggests, the ordering steps in the derivation above can be fully compatible with cyclicity as defined in Chomsky (1995a:233), satisfying at all points: At the point where v is inserted in the derivation (30c), v assigns a thematic role to the embedded DP, which further moves to the external argument position of matrix vP. What is to be noted is that before the derivation leaves the matrix vP cycle, the matrix v values its uninterpretable Case feature of the embedded CG. Furthermore, the embedded DP and the embedded AGR (being in the same minimal domain within the embedded clause) are equidistant from the probing matrix v, being accessible to the operations that take place at the point where matrix v is inserted in (30c). And, the strong phase contains AGR, the embedded DP, and the matrix v, providing the clue that these three elements are responsible for the derivation to converge in an effective way. The fact that sequential derivational steps of Ɵ-role assignment and Case valuation are entirely restricted shows that this is the convergent derivation.

5.0   Conclusion

This paper shows that verbal nouns also exhibit verbal properties and they are clausal. Also it is shown the distributive restrictions of CGs on the source of the interaction between Case and AGREE valuation is on the ground of limited possibility of A-movement out of a CG.

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Amom Nandaraj Meetei
Lecturer/Resource Person
Linguistic Data Consortium for Indian Languages (LDC-IL)
Manasagangothri
Mysore-570007
Karnataka
India
amomcha@gmail.com

Ch. Yashawanta Singh
Professor
Department of Linguistics
Manipur University
Canchipur-795003
Manipur
India
chungkhamyash@gmail.com