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CONTEXTUAL CONVERB IN KINA RUTUL:
Criteria for structural (in)dependence

According to [König 1995: 58] and [Nedjalkov 1995], contextual converb is a converb that may have different interpretations depending on the context. In Rutul (Lezgic < East Caucasian) there is a perfective contextual converb in *-r* that (i) may head a subordinate[1] clause and (ii) can be combined with auxiliaries to form finite verbforms. But *-r* converb (iii) can also head an independent predication without any auxiliary cliticized to it.

(1) *ʒamaʔat* **jaʁmiš** **w-iši-r**=*xʷa*   *kasib-ar*
     people   gather   3-become.PFV-CVB=ADD   poor-PL
     d-iʔi-j=xʷa
     HPL-COP1-PST=ADD
     'People gathered; they were poor'.

As the form in *-r* can head both subordinate and independent clauses, it is not clear how to interpret complex sentences where this converb is used, such as the following:

(2) **q-irq'i-r**   *χal-a*   *rasul* *aa*
     BACK-come.PFV-CVB   home-IN.EL   R.   down
     luku-r=a-j
     1.lie.down.PFV-CVB=be-PST
     'Rasul came back home and lay down'.

Is *-r* converb in (2) a subordinate verbform, or does it head an independent predication? To answer this question, clausal relation tests may be applied. I used (primarily) some of the tests discussed in [Bickel 2010], namely (i) tense-iconicity test, (ii) center-embedding

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[1] The notion of subordination is not unproblematic, since "subordinate" constructions are not uniform across the languages; see [Bickel 2010].

test (when possible) and (iii) extraction test. They show that in (2) *-r* converb is a subordinate verb form:

i. Tense-iconicity test: non-iconic (→ subordination)

(3)   *rasul   aa   luku-r=a-j*
      R.   down 1.lie.down.PFV-CVB=be-PST
      q-irq'i-r   ***χal-a***
      BACK-come.PFV-CVB   home-IN.EL
      i. 'After coming home, Rasul lay down'.
      ii. *'After lying down, Rasul came home'.

ii. Extraction in the form of relative clause test: possible (→ subordination)

(4)   *fatima-ra   lut'a   h-iʔi-r*   [*χal-a*
      F.-ERG   wake.up.IMP   1-do.PFV-CVB   home-IN.EL
      q-irq'i-r   *aa   luku-d*]   *rasul*
      BACK-come.PFV-CVB down 1.lie.down.PFV-ATR   R.
      'Fatima awoke Rasul, who after coming home had lay down'.

Drawing upon these tests, I have established that the major criterion playing a role in determining the syntactic structure of complex sentences with *-r* converb is as follows:

iii. Semantic relationship between clauses

Event described by *-r* converb construction **must** be the **ground** for the event in the main clause (hence a **figure**) in terms of [Talmy 1975]. In other words, the event described in converb clause must be "conceptualized as a cause, precondition, or reference point" [Cristofaro 2003: 44] for the main clause.

This criterion is to be satisfied in **any** subordinate clause governed by *-r* converb; still, it is not enough. One of the other criteria should be met, too:

iv. Subject coreference

-r converb construction needs to share the subject with the main clause to be interpreted as (uniformly) subordinate clause.

v. Negation used with non-finites

> *ǯV-* is an affix that can only be used with non-finite verbforms in Rutul.

> *-r* converb construction needs to contain this negation marker to be interpreted as (uniformly) subordinate clause.

The criterion (iv) is illustrated by the examples (2)–(4). Let us consider criterion (iii) in more detail. When it is not clear which of the two events is the ground for another event, the converb construction is an independent predication:

(5) *patimat-a   ile-s-dɨ   h-iʔi-r   χɨris=xa*
     P.-ERG   eat.IPFV-INF-ATR   4-do.PFV-CVB   besom=ADD
     ji<w>χɨ-r=a
     <3>sweep.PFV-CVB=be
     'Patimat cooked the meal and swept the floor'.

vi. Tense-iconicity test: iconic (→ no subordination)

(6) *χɨris   ji<w>χɨ-r=a   patimat-a   ile-s-dɨ*
     besom   <3>sweep.PFV-CVB=be   P.-ERG   eat.IPFV-INF-ATR
     h-iʔi-r
     4-do.PFV-CVB
     i. 'Patimat swept the floor and {then} cooked the meal'.
     ii. 'Patimat swept the floor after cooking the meal'.

The event of cooking the meal and the one of mopping the floor are not related in any (expected) way; the former event is not a cause or a reference point for the latter event, unless in a very special context. That is why in (5)–(6) we have an instance of parataxis.

Abbreviations

1, 3, 4 — 1, 3, 4 gender; ADD — additive particle; ATR — attributive; BACK — preverb 'back'; COP1 — independent allomorph of copula; CVB — specialized converb; EL — elative; ERG — ergative; HPL — human plural; IMP — imperative; IN — localization 'in'; IPFV — imperfective; PFV — perfective; PL — plural; PST — past.

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