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Morpho-syntax governs the embeddability of Utterance Honorifics: Evidence from Burmese

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Utterance Honorifics

- *Utterance Honorifics* (aka. Addressee Honorifics; henceforth, UHs) give an honorific character to the entire speech act associated with the sentence, indicating that the speaker is being respectful to the addressee/audience (McCready 2019, Chap 4).

(1) Japanese *mas*

    a. Maria-wa gakko-ni it-ta.   b. Maria-wa gakko-ni iki-**mashi**-ta.
       Maria-TOP school-LOC go-PAST   Maria-TOP school-LOC go-UH-PAST

       'Maria went to school.'   'Maria went to school.'
       Honorific Meaning: ∅   The speaker respects the addressee.

(2) Korean speech style particle *supnita*
    Ecey   pi-ka   o-ass-**supnita**.
    yesterday rain-NOM come-PAST-DECL.FORM

    'It rained yesterday.'
    Honorific Meaning: The speaker respects the addressee. (Portner et, al 2019: (5))

UH marking as a root clause phenomenon

- Since the interpretive effect of an utterance honorific marker concerns the speaker's attitude towards the addressee/audience, its relevance is computed at the utterance level.
    - Miyagawa (2012) analyzes Japanese *mas* as an instance of addressee agreement on a par with the allocutive agreement in Basque.
    - Portner et, al (2019): 'a key grammatical difference between content-oriented and utterance-oriented markers is that the former can be readily embedded, but in many cases the latter cannot be.'
- This view is true for languages like Korean or Thai which never allow UH markers to be embedded (McCready 2019; Portner et al. 2019).
- However, some languages like Magahi, Punjabi or Japanese can embed UH markers under some subordinate clauses (Alok and Baker 2018; Yamada 2019; Kaur and Yamada 2021; Tomioka and Ishii 2022).
- **Question: What allows/prohibits languages to embed UH markings?**

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Overview

- To provide cross-linguistic data to the debate, we conducted fieldwork on UH embedding in Burmese.

- We argue that embeddability of Burmese UH depends on the syntactic size of the embedded clause, which is in the same line with Tomioka and Ishii's (2022) proposal for Japanese UH embedding.

- The key observation is that subordinators selecting a clause with verb syntagma Allott (1965) can host *pa*, while those selecting a smaller clause cannot.

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Basic Syntactic Properties of Burmese

- Burmese is a nominative-accusative language which has morphological case markers.
- The canonical word order is SOV, but a scrambled word order OSV is also possible.
- Root clause in Burmese require a verb syntagma (see Allot 1965) at the end of a sentence, which encodes polarity, tense, aspect, and mood of the clause.

   (3)   a. Susu-ga   dine dʒawn-go twa de
               Susu-NOM today school-ACC go   AFF.NFUT
               'Susu goes to school today.'

         b. Susu-ga   dine school-go twa me
               Susu-NOM dine school-ACC go   FUT
               'Susu will go to school today.'

         c. Susu-ga   dine dʒawn-go ma-twa bu
               Susu-NOM today school-ACC NEG-go NEG.NFUT
               'Susu does not go to school today.'

Burmese UH marker *pa*

- Burmese UH marker *pa* occurs before the verb syntagma.

  (4) a. Susu-ga   dine d͡ʒawn-go twa **pa** de
           Susu-NOM today school-ACC go   UH AFF.NFUT
           'Susu goes to school today.'
           Honorific Meaning: The speaker respects the addressee.

       b. Susu-ga   dine d͡ʒawn-go twa **pa** me
           Susu-NOM dine school-ACC go   UH FUT
           'Susu will go to school today.'
           Honorific Meaning: The speaker respects the addressee.

       c. Susu-ga   dine d͡ʒawn-go ma-twa **pa** bu
           Susu-NOM today school-ACC NEG-go UH NEG.NFUT
           'Susu does not go to school today.'
           Honorific Meaning: The speaker respects the addressee.

Embedding of *pa*

- Like Japanese and Magahi, Burmese allows embedding of UH *pa*.
- *Pa* can occur under a complement clause of attitude verbs (5), *if*-conditionals (6), and *because*-clause (7).
- The *pa* marking in the matrix clause is obligatory to embed *pa* same as Japanese (see Miyagawa 2012; Tomioka and Ishii 2022).

   (5)   a. [_{CP} Susu-ga dine dʒawn-go twa **pa** de   lo] ŋa-ga tiʔ **pa** de.
               Susu-NOM today school-ACC go UH AFF.NFUT that I-NOM know UH AFF.NFUT
             'I know that Susu goes to school today.'

        b. [_{CP} Susu-ga dine dʒawn-go twa **pa** me lo] ŋa-ga tiʔ   **pa** de.
               Susu-NOM dine school-ACC go UH FUT that I-NOM know UH AFF.NFUT
             'I know that Susu will go to school today.'

        c. [_{CP} Susu-ga dine dʒawn-go ma-twa **pa** bu   lo] ŋa-ga tiʔ **pa** de.
               Susu-NOM today school-ACC NEG-go UH NEG.NFUT that I-NOM know UH AFF.NFUT
             'I know that Susu does not go to school today.'

Embedding of *pa*

(6) [CP Mandale-go   twale **pa** me solejʔẽ/sojẽ], pejadʒi-go twa teʔ   **pa** de.
     Mandalay-ACC visit UH FUT if/when,   peyaji-ACC go should UH AFF.NFUT
'If/When you visit Mandalay, you should go to Peyaji-temple.'

(7) [CP baj   pje ne   **pa** bi   mo]   taʔ ma-sa to **pa** bu
     stomach full PROG UH PERF because more NEG-eat any UH NEG
'Because I'm full, I don't need anymore.'

- The subordinators hosting *pa* selects a clause with a verb syntagma.

Embedding of *pa*

- In contrast, *pa* cannot be embedded under relative clauses (8) and temporal adjuncts (9).

  (8) a. [CP mjẽ pej ke (*pa) (*de)   de?] taja?-go ŋa amandage tʃaj pa de
         you give JUNC UH AFF.NFUT RC mango-ACC I truly   enjoy UH AFF.NFUT
         'I truly enjoyed the mango that you gave me.'

  b. [CP mjẽ dʒe ke (*pa) (*de)   de? sao?]-go ŋa pʰa ke   pa de
         you write JUNC UH AFF.NFUT RC book-ACC I read JUNC UH AFF.NFUT
         'I read the book that you wrote.'

  (9) [ŋa ma-jaw (*pa) (*bu)   kẽ], ŋa ape-ko ponsa pa de
      I NEG-arrive UH NEG.NFUT before, I father-ACC call UH AFF.NFUT
      'Before I arrive, I called my father.'

- *Pa* cannot be hosted by a subordinate clause which does not contain a verb syntagma.

Embedding of *pa*

- The embedding of *pa* does not seem to be constrained by some semantic/pragmatic attributes of subordinators.

- Relative clause example (10) (see Jenny and San San 2016) cannot host *pa* though it is functionally equivalent to (6).

(10) [CP Mandale-go   twale (***pa**) (*me) doaka], pejadʒi-go twa teʔ   pa de.
          Mandalay-ACC visit   UH   FUT   RC.time, peyaji-ACC go should UH AFF.NFUT
       Lit: 'For the time when you visit Mandalay, you should go to Peyaji-temple'

(11) (6) repeated

      [CP Mandale-go   twale **pa** me solejʔẽ/sojẽ], pejadʒi-go twa teʔ   **pa** de.
          Mandalay-ACC visit UH FUT if/when,   peyaji-ACC go should UH AFF.NFUT

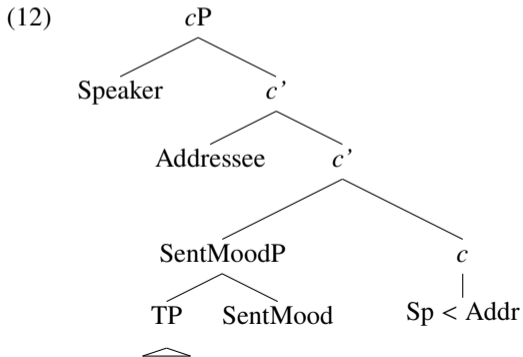   'If/When you visit Mandalay, you should go to Peyaji-temple.'

Interim Summary

- The subordinators hosting *pa* selects a clause with a verb syntagma.
- *Pa* cannot be hosted by a subordinate clause which does not contain a verb syntagma.
- We opt for a morpho-syntactic account of Burmese UH embedding.

Prerequisite for our proposal

- Following Portner et al. (2019; 2022), we assume that a functional projection for UH markings *c*P at left periphery.
- In (12), the SendMood head determines the clause type.
- Portner et al. (2019) proposed that Korean speech style particle *supnita* is a realization of *c*-head and SentMood.

(12)

```
                    cP
                  /    \
            Speaker     c'
                      /    \
              Addressee     c'
                          /    \
                  SentMoodP     c
                  /      \      |
                TP    SentMood  Sp < Addr
                /\
```

Proposal: Morphological Realization of *pa* below SentMood

    (13) Proposal
        a. The verb syntagma is a morphological instantiation of SentMood head by Portner et, al (2019).
        b. Burmese UH is realized at a lower position than SentMoodP via node-sprouting (Embick 1997; a similar idea was proposed by Yamada 2019).
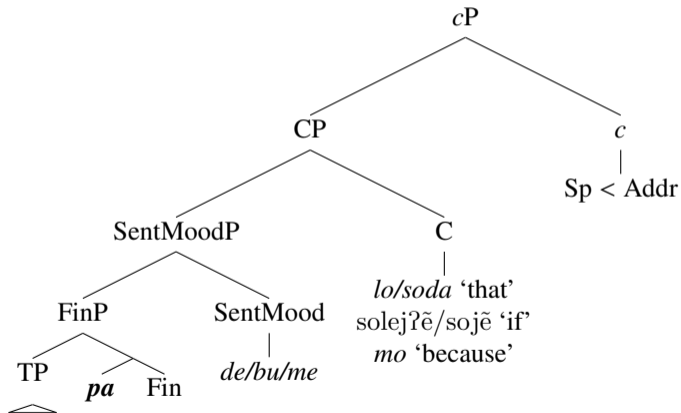
    (14) Node Sprouting Rule for *pa*: Fin → [$_\text{FinP}$ [UH] Fin] / [$_{cP}$ ...___... c $_{\text{Sp} < \text{Addr}}$]

- The assumption (13a) is based on the fact that the verb syntagma seems to be encoding clause-typing information.
- The proposal (13b) enables *pa* to be realized at lower position than the verb syntagma.
- In (14), we tentatively assume that *pa* is realized at Fin-head following to Tomioka and Ishii's (2022) analysis of Japanese UH copula *des-u* 'UH.COP-PRES' because *pa* behaves similar to *des-u* in terms of its embeddability.

How our proposal works 1

- Subordinators which select SentMoodP (i.e., complement of attitude verbs, *if*-clause, and *because*-clause) can embed *pa* because it is realized at Fin head via Node Sprouting (14).
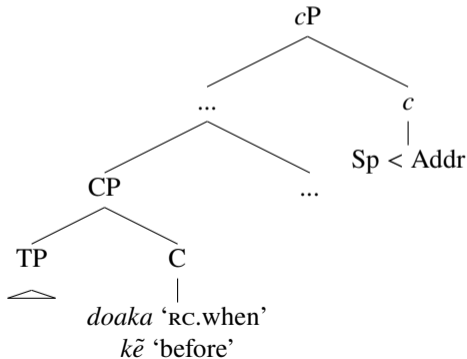
(15)

*c*P
├── CP
│   ├── SentMoodP
│   │   ├── FinP
│   │   │   ├── TP
│   │   │   ├── *pa*
│   │   │   └── Fin
│   │   └── SentMood
│   │   └── *de/bu/me*
│   └── C
│   ├── *lo/soda* 'that'
│   ├── solej?ẽ/sojẽ 'if'
│   └── *mo* 'because'
└── *c*
    └── Sp < Addr

How our proposal works 2

- We suggest that relative clauses and temporal adjuncts cannot host *pa* because they select a bare TP as in (16).
- Since there is no position to morphologically realize *pa*, it cannot occur under relative clauses and temporal adjuncts.

(16)

```
                              cP
                        ┌──────┴──────┐
                      ...              c
                   ┌───┴───┐           │
                  CP      ...       Sp < Addr
               ┌──┴──┐
              TP      C
             ╱‾‾      │
                  doaka 'RC.when'
                   kẽ 'before'
```

Implications of our proposal

- Our proposal contributes to explaining the cross-linguistic variations in the embeddability of UH markings.
    - Portner et, al (2019) claimed that Korean speech style particle *supnita* cannot be embedded under any subordinate clause because *c*-head which is restricted to root clauses.
    - Yamada (2019) and Tomioka and Ishii (2022) argued that Japanese UH *mas* can be subordinated under relative clauses because *mas* sits below TP.
- The position where the UH markings is morphologically realized determines the embeddability of UH in that language.

Conclusion

Take-home messages

- Embeddability of Burmese UH depends on the syntactic size of the embedded clause.
- Embedded clauses do not behave homogeneously, even within a single language.
- We suggest that the within-language variation could be used as a lens to understanding why there is cross-linguistic variation in embeddability of UH markings.

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Haegeman (2006)

- Haegeman (2006) claimed that central/event conditionals cannot host embedded root clause phenomena while peripheral/premise conditionals can.
- Peripheral/premise conditionals carry the presupposition that someone (other than the speaker) believes the proposition expressed by the if-clause to be true.

(17) Central/Event conditionals
    a. If you build it, they will come.
    b. If it rains, then, I think we should stay at home.

(18) Peripheral/Premise conditionals
    a. A: This book I am reading is really stupid.
       B: I haven't read it, but if it is so stupid you shouldn't read it.
    b. A: My friend Joe is very smart.
       B: Oh yeah? If he's so smart, why isn't he rich?   (Heycock 2017: (19), (20))

Event conditionals hosting *pa*

- Event conditionals can host *pa* markings as shown in (19).
  → The embedding of *pa* does not seem to be an embedded root clause phenomenon which can be explained by the semantic/pragmatic attributes of subordiators.
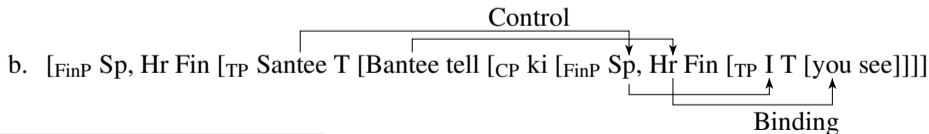
(19) a. [_{CP} manapã mojua pa lejẽ], ŋa satidajP twa pa me
            tomorrow rain   UH if,   I   library go UH AFF.NFUT.FUT
        'If it rains tomorrow, I will go to the library.'

    b. [_{CP} mjẽ merigan-ma nej pa lejẽ], mjẽ engale saga   pjo   naj'ja pa de
            you America-LOC live UH if,   you English language speak can   UH AFF.NFUT
        'If you live in the US, you must be able to speak English.'

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Are Speech Act layers embeddable in Burmese?

Respect Shift and Indexical Shift in Magahi Object Control

- Alok and Baker (2018) proposed that Speaker and Addressee are embeddable based on the allocutive agreement in Magahi object control in (20).
- The respect expressed by the embedded allocutive marking is directed to the addressee in the *reported* speech context.
- The embedded indexicals automatically shift to the speaker/addressee in the reported speech context along with the respect shift.[1]

(20) a. Santeeaa Bantee-ke kohl-**ain**   [ki **ham toraa** dekh-l-i-**au**   hal].
        Santee Bantee-ACC told-ALLOC:HH that I.NOM you.ACC saw-1s-ALLOC:NH be

        'Santee told Bantee that I (=Santee, not speaker) saw you (=Bantee, not addressee)'

                                        Control

   b. [$_{FinP}$ Sp, Hr Fin [$_{TP}$ Santee T [Bantee tell [$_{CP}$ [ki [$_{FinP}$ Sp, Hr Fin [$_{TP}$ I T [you see]]]]]

                                                            Binding

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[1] The indexical shift is obligatory when the embedded predicate gets an allocutive marking.

Indexical Shift in Burmese

- Both shifted and non-shifted readings are possible in Burmese even if UH marking is embedded.
- This was not observed in Magahi, Punjabi, and Japanese (see Kaur and Yamada 2019 for Punjabi and Ishii 2023 for Japanese)
- One possibility is that Burmese may optionally embed Speaker and Addressee.

(21) a. ŋa-ga Zozo-go [$_{CP}$ Susu-ga mjẽ-go twe ke de   lo] pjo ke pa de.
          I-NOM Zozo-DAT   Susu-NOM you-ACC see JUNC AFF.NFUT that tell JUNC UH AFF.NFUT
          'I told Zozo that Susu saw you (= either Zozo or Addressee in utterance context)'

      b. ŋa-ga Zozo-go [$_{CP}$ Susu-ga mjẽ-go twe ke **pa** de   lo] pjo ke pa
          I-NOM Zozo-DAT   Susu-NOM you-ACC see JUNC UH AFF.NFUT that tell JUNC UH
          de.
          AFF.NFUT
          'I told Zozo that Susu saw you (= either Zozo or Addressee in utterance context)'