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A grammar of Lumun : a Kordofanian language of Sudan

Smits, H.J.; Smits H.J.

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Author: Smits, H.J.

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9. The restrictor

The “restrictor” (the proclitic element *í-*) turns adjectival and verbal predicates into attributive modifiers that restrict the reference of the head noun to a subgroup with the properties or qualities expressed by the adjectival or verbal predicate. Verbal predicates with the restrictor function as restrictive relative clauses (see chapter 11).

The restrictor brings a high tone to a following verb in the way described by the rules of Tone Shift (and Tone Reappearance sub-Rules) and Contour Simplification, cf:

pul **p-ɔparí**

person C-female

the person is female

pul **ɪ-p-ɔparí**

person RES-C-female

the woman (the person who is female)

It cannot itself receive a high tone from a preceding element, but it can have a high realization due to tone bridge. In view of these properties I represent it with a high tone: *í-* (a rising tone would have been possible as well, see 3.8). It has no prepausal realization.

A least some adjectives, however, have a tonal realization that is different from what would be expected, when preceded by the restrictor. Examples include *C-ɔɲí* ‘black’, *C-ɔttê* (or *C-ɔttê*) ‘small, little, young’, *C-ərík* ‘big, important’ and *C-ɔkítak* ‘bad’. The restrictor brings a high tone to their initial mora replacing their own tone pattern, as, for example in **pul** **ɪ-p-ərík** ‘person who is important’. This is, however, not the case for all adjectives (nor for all adjectives with a L.HL or L.H.L tone pattern).

Morpho-phonologically the restrictor behaves in a regular way: when attached to an adjective or verb with +ATR vowels, its realization may change slightly in the direction of a +ATR realization. Preceding an *ɪ*-initial element a little length is generally retained.

An example with an adjective and a verb phrase preceded by the restrictor follow here:

kəret **ɪ-k-ípe** **k-á.ík** **cóné**
 cloth RES-C-old C-be:PR here

the old cloth is here

ɬok **ɪ-ɬ-ɔkkwá.t** **ɬ-á.ík** **cóné**
 dog RES-C-become_old:COMPL C-be:PR here

the old dog is here

The following examples concern modification of object nouns through modifiers with and without the restrictor, and placed inside and outside the noun phrase.

cɔrâŋ ‘stick’ in the first example below in principle allows for a definite as well as an indefinite reading. This is the same when the ‘stick’ is modified by an adjective or verb phrase with the restrictor, provided that this modifier is positioned within the noun phrase, i.e. used attributively (second example below):

k-kw-ɬɬúkw.áɬé **cɔrâŋ** **n.tɪ** **ɪ-wét**
 3-C-grab:PST stick from in-horizontal_bamboos_of_roof

s/he grabbed a/the stick from the inside of the roof

k-kw-ɬɬúkw.áɬé **cɔrâŋ** **ɪ-c-ɬɬɪ** **n.tɪ** **ɪ-wét**
 3-C-grab:PST stick RES-C-black from in-horizontal_bamboos_of_roof

s/he grabbed a/the black stick from the inside of the roof

It is different when the adjective with restrictor is positioned at the end of the clause, outside of the noun phrase. Now, the adjective (**ɪcɬɬɪ** ‘black’) gives a definite reading to the noun (**cɔrâŋ** ‘stick’), identifying it as the black one among other sticks:

k-kw-ṣṭók-w.áṭé cṵṛán n.ti i-wet i-c-ṣṇi
 3-C-grab:PST stick from in-horizontal_bamboos_of_roof RES-C-black

s/he grabbed the black stick from the inside of the roof (implies that there are one or more other sticks: it is the black one that is taken)

The first example below is syntactically comparable to the example above, but lacks the restrictor on the adjective (**cṵṛṣ** ‘red’). Providing some information about the necklace (**cuccú**), namely that it is red, the adjective establishes an indefinite reading of it. Unlike its counterpart with restrictor, an attributive adjective or verb phrase without restrictor is not placed inside the noun phrase, but comes at the end (second example below).

k-kw-ákó.t cúccú i-cəlák c-ṵṛṣ
 3-C-wear:COMPL bead in-neck C-red

she has put a red necklace around her neck

***k-kw-ákó.t cúccú c-ṵṛṣ i-cəlák**
 3-C-wear:COMPL bead C-red in-neck

Two examples contrasting a clause with and without the restrictor modifying an object noun follow here. The first is the opening line of a story, introducing the main character, the second identifies a certain jackal amongst others:

m-p-a.ik p-a.ṭ-éret áləpaccúṭ
 1-C-be:PR C-IT:INCOMPL-speak_about:DEPINCOMPL jackal

w-ṵṇá.t mərə
 C-bring:COMPL cultivating_party

I am going to talk about a jackal who organized a cultivating party (‘The story of the jackal’)

m-p-a.ik p-a.ṭ-éret áləpaccúṭ
 1-C-be:PR C-IT:INCOMPL-speak_about:DEPINCOMPL jackal

i-ṵṇá.t mərə
 RES-(C-)bring:COMPL cultivating_party

I am going to talk about the jackal who organized a cultivating party (implies that there are other jackals who did not organize such a party)

Adjectives which are used independently have the restrictor. In the example below the concord **c** agrees with **corâŋ** ‘stick’:

εῤ-ḡn **ḡ-c-ḡŋḡ**
 give:IMP-O1 RES-C-black
 give me the black one!

The earlier given example with **ḡcḡŋḡ** at the end of the clause in fact allows for a reading like this as well (‘s/he grabbed the stick from the inside of the roof, the black one’).

The use of the restrictor on adjectives (and numerals) and on relative clauses is further exemplified in the chapters 10 and 11. The restrictor is not used on connexive constructions, possessors and demonstratives, with the exception of the anaphoric demonstrative **C-εn**. **ḡ-c-εn** ‘the one’ was discussed in chapter 8.2.4.

The restrictor furthermore forms a fixed combination with **ḡkkwí**, giving **ḡkkwí ḡ-** ‘(the one) who’ (see chapter 6.1.5).