CHAPTER 5

CLAUSE TYPES

5.0 Introduction

The ordering of constituent units in clauses varies in languages, however, every language may have the unmarked ordering of constituents. Ngo Chang clauses have a basic ordering of constituents; however, some clauses can change their basic ordering of constituents due to certain factors, such as emphasis or focus on certain constituent or coherence of discourse. When some clauses change their basic constituent order, case markers ga^3 and li^{31} take on an important role for avoiding ambiguity. Also, case markers ga^3 and li^{31} are obligatory with certain noun phrases depending on the semantic classification of the noun phrases under some conditions. Every culture has a different system of classification for linguistic entities. The Ngo Chang classification of entities is mainly divided into animate/inanimate. Within animate beings, entities are mainly classified into human, animal, insect and plant. The verbs that are chosen by noun phrases with this semantic classification is examined in 5.2 Locative Intransitive Clause. The case markers, ga^3 and li^{31}, which are obligatorily marked according to the semantic classification are discussed in 5.3 Transitive clause.

Structurally types of clauses in Ngo Chang can be classified into seven types : Intransitive Clauses, Locative Intransitive Clauses, Transitive Clauses, Ditransitive Clauses, Locative Transitive Clauses, Equative Clauses and Stative Clauses. This chapter discusses each type of clause, while Chapter 6 discusses modifications to the basic clauses.

5.1 Intransitive clauses

In examples 147 and 148, shown below, there is only one nominal argument; thus these clauses are considered to be intransitive clauses. Examples 147 and 148 do not

have an object, and the verbs do not occur with a noun phrase marked by the object marker. The noun argument is defined as the subject in this clause type.

147.

njan³ t͡ʃʰɔ³t͡su⁵
3S   walk

'She/He walked.'

148.

lɔ⁵niɛ³ njap⁻³¹-ʃɔ⁵   d͡zi³ʃap⁻⁶ʃap⁻⁶
girl   fast-ADVLZR swim

'A girl swam fast.'

In examples 147 and 148, the nominal arguments, *njaŋ³* 'she/he' and *lɔ⁵niɛ³* 'girl' are the subjects.

If the nominal argument in intransitive clauses is marked by the topic marker, it replaces the subject marker as in the following examples.

149.

njaŋ³ gaʔ³¹ win³
3S   TOP   run

'She/He ran.'

150.

ŋɔʔ³¹ gaʔ³¹ daŋ³
bird   TOP   fly

'A bird flew.'

The nominal arguments *njaŋ³* 'she/he' and *ŋɔʔ³¹* 'bird' in examples 149 and 150 are marked by the topic case.

5.2 Locative intransitive clauses

Many languages have an existential clause that has a particular form to express the existence of entities. For example the English existential clause uses "There is" to express the existence or the non-existence of entity. In Ngo Chang, the idea of existentials is expressed by the locative intransitive clause as in the following sentences. There is no Ngo Chang expression similar to English "There is".

151.

ban^3	$tan^5p^ha^3\ ma^3$	$\widehat{dj\jmath}\jmath^{31}$
flower	field LOC	exist

'There are flowers at the field.'

152.

$njaŋ^3$	$ga\jmath^{31}$	gai^{31}	ma^3	$njei^{31}$
3S	TOP	market	LOC	exist

'She/He is at the market.'

In example 151, the existence of the entity ban^3 'flower' at a specific location is expressed by the existence verb $\widehat{dj\jmath}\jmath^{31}$ 'exist' in the locative intransitive construction. In example 152, the existence of the entity $njaŋ^3$ 'she/he' at a specific location is described by the existence verb $njei^{31}$ 'exist' in the locative intransitive construction. In Ngo Chang, statements about the existence of plants and inanimate entities utilize the existence verb $\widehat{dj\jmath}\jmath^{31}$ 'exist', while statements on the existence of animate entities including human, animals and insects utilize the existence verb $njei^{31}$ 'exist'.

5.3 Transitive clauses

A transitive clause has two nominal arguments; in one the participant performs the action, and in the other the participant has the action done toward or upon it. In semantic roles, the former nominal is called the Agent, the latter is called the Patient. In an unmarked transitive clause, the agent is the subject and the patient is the object.

In the Ngo Chang transitive clause, the agent may optionally be marked by the topic case marker $ga\textipa{P}^{31}$; the patient object is marked by the accusative case marker li^{31}.

153.

η^3	$m\textipa{o}^3sa\textipa{o}^5$	li^{31}	$lijam^5$
1S	notebook	ACC	cut

'I cut notebook.'

In example 153, the subject η^3 'I' is unmarked and the object $m\textipa{o}^3sa\textipa{o}^5$ 'notebook' is marked by the accusative case li^{31}.

As can be seen from example 153, in Ngo Chang, the unmarked constituent order for transitive clauses is SOV. In example 153, the accusative case marker li^{31} can be omitted because the subject and the object occur in their normal position by the constituent order. However, if the subject and the object are of the same saliency class[3], the accusative case marker is obligatory in order to make the Agent/Patient distinction clear as in the following sentence.

154.

$la^3k^hui^5$	$la^3nja\textipa{o}^3$	li^{31}	sat^6
dog	cat	ACC	kill

'The dog killed the cat.'

In example 154, the agent $la^3k^hui^5$ 'dog' and the patient $la^3nja\textipa{o}^3$ 'cat' are of the same saliency class; therefore, the accusative marker is obligatory.

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[3] In this case, saliency refers to degree of animacy. A generally accepted order in the animacy hierarchy is speaker / addressee > 3rd person pronouns > human proper nouns > human common nouns > other animate nouns > inanimate nouns (Foley and Van Valin 1985:288)

Although the subject and the object are the same saliency class, the accusative case marker can be omitted, when Agent/Patient distinction is obviously understood, as in the following sentence.

155.

$la^3k^hui^5$	$\eta\mathfrak{d}\mathfrak{l}^{31}$	$\eta\mathfrak{l}^{31}$	$\widehat{dz\mathfrak{d}}^3$
dog	bird	small	eat

'A dog ate a small bird.'

In example 155, the subject $la^3k^hui^5$ 'dog' and the object $\eta\mathfrak{d}\mathfrak{l}^{31}\eta\mathfrak{l}^{31}$ 'small bird' are of the same saliency class in Ngo Chang, but the object is unmarked. However, it will be normally understood that 'A dog ate a small bird', not 'A small bird ate a dog', because small birds usually do not eat other animals that are bigger than them. Therefore, the accusative marker can be omitted.

If the agent is marked by the topic case $ga\mathfrak{l}^{31}$, it is the topic, not the subject. The accusative case is optionally marked as in the following sentence.

156.

ηa^5	$sa^3l\dot{a}^3$	$ga\mathfrak{l}^{31}$	$ma^3\tilde{n}ie^5$	(li^{31})	lai^5
1Sposs	teacher	TOP	story	(ACC)	write

'My teacher wrote a story.'

In example 156, the subject sa^3la^3 'my teacher' is marked by the topic case $ga\mathfrak{l}^{31}$ and the object ma^3nie^5 'story' is optionally marked by the accusative marker li^{31}.

There is also a marked constituent order in the Ngo Chang transitive clause. The object can be located at the beginning of the clause, resulting in OSV word order. When the object is emphasized, speakers tend to make sentences in this order. Also, when the object is focused due to the coherence of discourse, the object is placed in

the initial position of the clause. In this case, the object is obligatorily marked by the accusative marker li^{31} as in the following sentence.

157.

$la^3nja\mathfrak{I}^3$ li^{31} $la^3k^hui^5$ sat^{-6}
cat   ACC   dog   kill

'It was a cat the dog killed'

Example 157 has the constituent order of OSV. In this constituent order, the object $la^3nja\mathfrak{I}^3$ 'cat' requires the accusative marker li^{31}. Also, in this constituent order, the agent $la^3k^hui^5$ 'dog' cannot be marked by the topic case $ga\mathfrak{I}^{31}$. This sentence differs from the passive clause, which is discussed in section 6.3.1.

Dik (1997:327) introduces four focalizing devices, (i) prosodic prominence, (ii) special constituent order, (iii) special focus markers and (iv) special focus constructions. Example 157 utilizes (ii) special constituent order in order to identify the focality. The constituent order for Focus in Example 157 assigns the initial position for the Focus element.

5.4 Ditransitive clauses

A ditransitive clause has three core arguments, subject, primary object and secondary object. In the Ngo Chang ditransitive clause, the primary object (PO) is marked by the accusative case li^{31}, and the secondary object (SO) is unmarked. The accusative case li^{31} marks the primary object, not the secondary object, because the primary object usually has a higher level in the saliency hierarchy. The topic marker $ga\mathfrak{I}^{31}$ can be omitted, while the accusative li^{31} normally marks the primary object, although it is not obligatory. In the Ngo Chang ditransitive clause, the nominal arguments adjoined in a row, so the primary object tends to be marked in order to avoid confusion.

158.

$n̩^3$ $Ɂa^3ŋũɛ̃^5$ li^{31} $mɔ^3saɔ^5buɁ^{32}$ $taɁ^{32}$ $buɁ^{32}$ $djiɛ^3$
1S   mother   ACC   book   one   CLF   give

'I gave a book to (my) mother.'

In example 158, the primary object $Ɂa^3ŋũɛ̃^5$ 'mother' is marked by the accusative marker li^{31}, and the secondary object $mɔ^3saɔ^5buɁ^{32}$ 'book' is unmarked. Moreover, the subject $n̩^3$ 'I' and the primary object $Ɂa^3ŋũɛ̃^5$ 'mother' are same saliency class; therefore the accusative marker li^{31} must occur to mark the primary object so as to avoid confusion. The unmarked constituent order in the ditransitive clause is S PO SO V when the grammatical features occur in their normal constituent position. When the subject and the secondary object are in the same saliency class, the accusative marker li^{31} is obligatory.

The Ngo Chang ditransitive clause has additional constituent orders, (a) PO S SO V and (b) SO S PO V. The primary object and secondary object can come before the subject when they are in focus, or they have a cohesive function to previous sentences in the discourse. In constituent order (b), the primary object and the secondary object require the accusative marker li^{31} in all cases. Examples 159 and 160 occur in the constituent order, PO S SO V and SO S PO V respectively.

159.

$Ɂa^3ŋũɛ̃^5$ li^{31} $n̩^3$ $mɔ^3saɔ^5buɁ^{32}$ $taɁ^{32}$ $buɁ^{32}$ $djiɛ^3$
mother   ACC   1S   book   one   CLF   give

'To mother I gave a book.'

160.

$mɔ^3saɔ^5buɁ^{32}$ $taɁ^{32}$ $buɁ^{32}$ li^{31} $n̩^3$ $Ɂa^3ŋũɛ̃^5$ li^{31} $djiɛ^3$
book   one   CLF   ACC   1S   mother   ACC   give

'It was a book I gave to mother.'

The primary object $\textit{Pa}^3\textit{ŋ}\tilde{\textit{u}}\tilde{\varepsilon}^5$ 'mother' in example 159 and the secondary object $\textit{mɔ}^3\textit{saɔ}^5\textit{buʔ}^{32}\textit{taʔ}^{32}\textit{buʔ}^{32}$ 'a book' in example 160 are in focus, and appear in the initial position of the clauses. The object arguments which are focused obligatorily occur with the accusative marker $\textit{li}^{31}$. Additionally, in these constituent orders, the topic marker $\textit{gaʔ}^{31}$ cannot occur.

5.5 Locative transitive clauses

A locative transitive clause occurs with three arguments: subject, object and location. The normal constituent order in the locative transitive clause is S O L V. When the subject and the object are not in the same saliency class, the accusative case marker $\textit{li}^{31}$ can be omitted. The locative marker $\textit{ma}^3$ is obligatory.

161.

$\textit{ŋ}^3$	$\textit{mɔ}^3\textit{saɔ}^5\textit{buʔ}^{32}$ $(\textit{li}^{31})$	$\textit{sa}^3\textit{bue}^5$ $\textit{tɔ}^{31}$	$\textit{ma}^3$	$\textit{t}^h\textit{ɔ}^3$
1S	book (ACC)	table on	LOC	put

'I put the book on the table.'

In example 161, the accusative case marker $\textit{li}^{31}$ can be omitted, because the subject and the object are not same saliency class. The locative marker $\textit{ma}^3$ is obligatory.

5.6 Equative clauses

In Ngo Chang equative clauses, the nominal which is the topic of the clause and the complement nominal refer to the same participant. The topic is obligatory marked by the topic marker $\textit{gaʔ}^{31}$. The copula verb $\textit{ŋɔat}^6$ is regarded for equative clauses.

162.

njaŋ³¹	da³	ʔa³bu³bi³¹	gaʔ³¹	ŋa⁵	ʔa³ba³ŋue⁵	ŋɔat⁵
tall	REL	man	TOP	1Sposs	father	COP

'The man who is tall is my father.'

163.

njaŋ³	gaʔ³¹	ŋa⁵	ʔa³ba³ŋue⁵	ŋɔat⁵
3S	TOP	1Sposs	father	COP

'He is my father.'

The Ngo Chang equative clause consists of the topic, the complement and the copula *ŋɔat⁵* as in example 162 and 163. In Ngo Chang, the copula is considered to be a verb, because it has the same general functions as the verb and occurs in the same position as the verb. (See copula verbs in section 3.6.1.)

Moreover, like other Ngo Chang verbs, the copula can be modified by auxiliaries which express tense, aspect and modality.

164.

njaŋ³	gaʔ³¹	ŋa⁵	sa³la³	ŋɔat⁵	gu³¹
3S	TOP	1Sposs	teacher	COP	PERF

'She/He used to be my teacher.'

In example 164, the copula verb *ŋɔat⁵* is modified by the additional verb phrase element *gu³¹* that is the perfect aspect marker.

5.7 Stative clauses

A stative clause occurs with a subject and a complement that describes a characteristic of the subject. Stative clauses express the subject's state of being rather than an event. Some languages have a linking verb between the subject and the complement; other languages do not have a linking verb. Ngo Chang stative clauses

are expressed by stative verbs which describe a characteristic of the subject as in the following sentence.

165.

hai⁵   mɔ³tʰɔ³   njap⁻³¹
This car   fast

'This car is fast.'

In example 165, the stative verb *njap⁻³¹* 'fast' tells the characteristic of the subject *hai⁵ mɔ³tʰɔ³* 'this car'.

Some Ngo Chang stative verbs can occur in the noun phrase. In this case, stative verbs function as adjectives and modify the head noun. Compare the following sentences.

166.

la³kʰui⁵ tʰi³ju⁵
dog   white

'The dog is white.'

167.

la³kʰui⁵ tʰi³ju⁵   wui³
dog   white run

'The white dog ran.'

Example 166 is a the stative clause, and *tʰi³ju⁵* 'white' functions as the adjective. On the other hand, *la³kʰui⁵ tʰi³ju⁵* 'white dog' in example 167 is the noun phrase, and *tʰi³ju⁵* 'white' functions as the adjective. The structure of the stative clause *la³kʰui⁵ tʰi³ju⁵* 'The dog is white' and the noun phrase *la³kʰui⁵ tʰi³ju⁵* 'the white dog' is same; therefore, sometimes the interpretation is ambiguous as in the following sentence.

168.

la³kʰui⁵ tʰi³ju⁵
dog   white

'Dog is white.' or 'White dog'

Many languages have no distinct adjective class. In such languages, property concepts are expressed by nouns or verbs. In languages which have a distinct adjective class, stative sentences include linking verbs or a copula. In Ngo Chang, stative sentences occur without linking verbs or a copula. Note that in Ngo Chang the copula is not used to attach adjectives to the subject; it is used to connect nouns.