

## Chapter 6

### Conclusion

This thesis has given a short survey of Bru KS phonology and grammar. It has compiled a corpus of referring expressions and examined their various functions in Bru KS discourse. It has also described how these referring expressions identify participants in Bru KS narrative text. The following sections will summarize these findings, will evaluate the methodology of this study and will discuss the significance of these findings along with suggestions for further research.

#### 6.1 Summary of findings

Bru KS has a variety of referring expressions which include NPs plus an appositional NP, NPs with a relative clause, NPs with an embedded ClfP, NPs with embedded modifiers, unmodified simple NPs, kin terms, proper names, pronouns, classifier phrases, demonstratives and zero anaphora. Each of these forms has a function which signals the identifiability, activation status and thematic salience of participants in a discourse.

These referring expressions are used in narrative text to weave a pattern of identification which introduces new participants, tracks participants when they are on stage, and reintroduces them after they have left the stage. There are two distinct patterns of identification: one follows the VIP strategy and the other follows a sequential strategy. These patterns interact with each other in narrative texts and can be described with some degree of accuracy with default encoding rules.

Default encoding rules do not cover 100% of the instances due to a variety of factors such as: promoting the salience of a participant, textual boundaries or discontinuities, and cultural schemas. Factors such as text boundaries and VIP coding can be described with additional rules while factors such as promoting or demoting salience cannot.

## **6.2 Evaluation of methodology**

Givón's (2001b) method of topic persistence and decay was helpful in objectively determining participant rank. While not always clear due to some skewing of the percentages when a participant is reintroduced after a long absence, it does point accurately to which participants are central, major, minor or peripheral. It was important to rank the participants in this way as their respective rankings were one factor that determined the encoding pattern used.

Dooley and Levinsohn's (2001) method was useful in discerning sequential participant reference patterns. There are some methodological questions of what to do with multiple participants referred to as a group and then as individual representatives of that group. It was also difficult to determine if sentence initial adverbial clauses were considered independent and considered in the sequential strategy or if they should be included. This thesis included them when there was an explicit or implied participant referred to. They were not included when the adverb was one strictly of time.

The combination of these two methodologies revealed useful insights into some of the difficulties of identifying the referents for the non-native Bru KS speaker. Particularly in following a participant encoded with zero reference over a number of sequential clauses.

## **6.3 Significance of findings**

The findings of this analysis will add to the knowledge of under-analyzed languages. The six interlinearized texts can be a source of study for other aspects of Bru KS grammar and discourse. This thesis can inform the study of related dialects and languages like So and Katang.

The description of referring expressions and participant referent patterns will add to the knowledge of Katuic languages and aid in the translation of materials into Katuic languages.

## **6.4 Further research**

Further research in other areas of discourse analysis is needed. Particularly in the areas of information structure and cohesion. Other genres of text such as expository and hortatory texts need to be analyzed using discourse methods. This would entail collecting and interlinearizing new texts of these genres. Also, a more in-depth

sentence level grammar is needed for a more complete description of the Bru KS language.

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