

Pragmatic issues in Fox relative clauses

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In this paper I look at some of the choices available to speakers of Fox in producing relative clauses, and the discourse pragmatic factors involved in preferring one construction over another. I will first discuss an evidential distinction conveyed by choice of verb inflection; second, conditions influencing the order of elements within the subordinate clause; and third, whether the relative clause appears to the left, or to the right, of a head noun. Before turning to these issues, however, I'll begin with a brief introduction of relative clause formation in Fox.

1 INFLECTION OF VERBS IN RELATIVE CLAUSES

The verb in a relative clause in Fox is inflected either as a conjunct participle, or as an interrogative participle. I will here give a brief account of these inflectional patterns: see Goddard 1987 for a more complete description of the conjunct forms. The conjunct participle is the more frequently encountered form in relative clauses, and a simple example is given in (1) on the handout.

- (1) me·hkate·wi·ta ← /IC + mahkate·wi·- + t + a/
fast 3/part/3
'the one who is fasting'

Initial change applies to the first syllable of the verb stem, changing *a* to *e*, and the stem is suffixed with *t*, indicating third person subject, and a final suffix *a*, indicating that the head of the relative clause is third person proximate animate singular.

Verbs in relative clauses may also be inflected as interrogative participles, to convey evidential distinctions which will be discussed in the following section. Here I just want to illustrate the formation of the interrogative participle; The interrogative participle corresponding to (1) would be as follows:

- (2) me·hkate·wi·kwe·na ← /IC + mahkate·wi·- + w + k + e·n + a/
fast 3/int.part/3
'whoever fasts'

Again, initial change applies to the first syllable of the verb stem. The complex of suffixes includes *-w* and *-e·n*, which mark the interrogative order; the third person suffix follows *w* and is realized as *k* since it follows a consonant; *w* and *k* then metathesize, as explained in Goddard 1979, to give *kw*. The final suffix *a* indicates features of the head of the relative clause, just as we saw with the conjunct participle in (1).

2 INTERROGATIVE PARTICIPLES AS EVIDENTIALS

I will now turn to a discussion of the functions of the interrogative participles when used in relative clauses. Like the other Algonquian languages, Fox has a well-developed system of indicating evidential distinctions in main clauses: notions such as 'hearsay', deduction, and supposition may be conveyed in main clauses by the choice of a particular inflectional paradigm for the verb, or by the use of certain

enclitic particles. This system of evidential distinctions is carried over into the formation of relative clauses as well: the interrogative participles are used when the speaker wishes to indicate that he does not have first hand knowledge that the referent of the NP containing the relative clause exists. Consider examples (3) and (4), taken from texts. (In examples containing more than one word I have underlined the participle.)

- (3) we·meso·ta·niwane·hiki
 have.O2.as.parent 2/int.part/3p
 ‘whoever your parents were’ W19B
 (said by a young man to an old woman)
- (4) e·h=owi·kikwe·hiki=mekoho ma·hiye·ka mehtose·neniwaki
 aor=dwell 3p/int.part/loc.obl=emph these.absent people
 ‘wherever these (absent) people might be living’ W108D

In (3), the speaker presumes that the addressee, like everyone else, had parents, but since he is too young to have known her parents he uses an interrogative participle to refer to them. Similarly, in (4) the people who have left (referred to with an absentative demonstrative pronoun) are presumably living somewhere, but the speaker does not know where that place is.

Interrogative participles are also used if the speaker does not presuppose the existence of the referent:

- (5) ne·sa·kwe·na
 kill 3-3'/int.part/3
 ‘whoever kills him’ [if anyone] L120
- (6) wi·h=ona·pe·miwane·na
 fut=have.O2.as.husband 2/int.part/3
 ‘whoever you may marry’ [if anyone] A66F
- (7) e·h=čahkwi·temya·hikwe·ni
 aor=be.shallow.water 0/int.part/loc.obl
 ‘wherever the water might be shallow’ [if anywhere] O7C

In this use an interrogative participle is often found as the object of verbs like *natone·h-* ‘search for’, where the existence of the object need not be presupposed:

- (8) e·h=natone·hamowa·či=ke·hi wi·h=pwa·wi·taši·kemiya·nikwe·ni
 aor=search.for 3p-0/aor=and fut=not-there-rain 0'/int.part/loc.obl
 ‘And they were looking for a place where it would not rain’ R138.47

Notice, though, that in examples like (8) the evidential distinction conveyed by the interrogative participle represents the point of view of the subject of the higher verb ‘search for’, not the narrator of the story.

3 INTERNAL SYNTAX OF RELATIVE CLAUSES

In the remainder of the paper I take up two problems of word order involving relative clauses. The first concerns the internal syntax of the relative clause: if the subordinate clause contains more than just the verb, what determines the order of the elements?

Elsewhere I have argued for a templatic structure of main clauses in Fox, with the following positions available to the left of the verb:

(9) TOPIC - NEGATIVE - FOCUS - OBLIQUE - VERB

To the right of the verb is the unmarked position for subject NPs, object and second object NPs, and complement clauses. For the most part, these postverbal elements may occur in any order relative to one another. This template has also been found to hold for the structure of complement clauses in Fox. A further question then arises, of whether this structure is also available for the elements of the relative clause. The answer seems to be yes: if an NP subject or object appears in the relative clause, the unmarked position for these NPs is to the right of the verb:

(10) i-nini [ne-sa-čini pačana]
that.anim.obv kill 3-3'/part/3' Lazybones
'that one (obv) whom Lazybones (prox) killed' L306

(11) kehči-ma-wa-ka-ni [e-h=ma-nwikamikesiniči aša-hahi]
great-winter.camp aor=have.many.houses 3'/part/loc.obl Sioux.obv
'a big winter-camp where the Sioux (obv) had many houses' M7D

(12) [me-wi-pesetawa-čiki te-powa-ničihi]
go.to-listen.to 3p-3'/part/3p hold.council 3'/part/3'p
'the ones (prox) who went to listen to the ones (obv) holding a council' W326F

(13) e-h=ne-taki [e-h=tašihemetehē okwisani]
aor=see 3-0/aor aor=attack X-3'/past.part/loc.obl his.son.obv
'He (prox) saw the place where his son (obv) had been attacked.' L103

If an oblique argument appears in the relative clause, it occurs immediately to the left of the verb:

(14) kehči-maneto-wa [ahpemeki e-wita]
great-spirit up.above be.[there] 3/part/3
'the Great Spirit, who is up above' W308D

[TOPIC in relative clause - when head is coref to possessor ??]

(15) i-na ihkwe-wa [ona-pe-mani ne-hi-mi-hkečihiwa-nita]
that woman her.husband.obv know.how-doctor.people 3'/part/3

‘that woman (prox) whose husband (obv) was a doctor’ M30M

- (16) [o·swa·wahi ne·peničiki] apeno·haki
their.fathers.obv die 3’/part/3p children
‘the children (prox) whose fathers (obv) have died’ R268.18

- (17) okahkwanwa·wani=‘yo·we po·hkote·nikiki
their.legs=past be.broken.by.fire 0’/part/3p
‘those whose legs had formerly been broken by gunfire O47B

[example of FOCUS - Verb in relative clause? (kekya contrasted with uncle??)]

- (18) ke·waki=koči kenenehke·neta·petoke
still=of.course think.about 2-0/dub

[kekya e·nahina·čimohenokwe·ni]
your.mother redup.instruct.thus 3-2/int.part/obl

‘I suppose, of course, you must still think about
whatever your mother used to tell you.’ A139D

4 EXTERNAL SYNTAX OF RELATIVE CLAUSES

As seen above, a verb inflected in the conjunct participle or interrogative participle modes may stand alone, with no accompanying head noun. If, however, a relative clause is used with an overt noun, the speaker has a choice in word order: either the relative clause may precede the head noun, or it may follow it.

From the data I have examined so far, I believe that the unmarked order is for the relative clause to follow the head noun. The marked possibility, where the relative clause precedes the head noun, is found in definite NPs, as seen below:

Definite NPs, with prenominal relative clause:

- (19) e·h=se·kesiwa·či [e·taši·nana·hi·hkawičiki ihkwe·waki]
be.frightened 3p/aor prog.-attend.to 3p-1/part/3p women
‘the women who were attending to me became frightened’ A110I

- (20) i·nini [we·nekwi·kaniničini neniwani]
that.anim.obv have.wings 3’/part/3’ man.obv
‘that man (obv) with wings’ N14G

- (21) ma·haki [ni·šo·pičiki owi·hka·neti·haki]
these sit.as.two 3p/part/3p friends
‘these two friends who are sitting together’ W409

Prenominal relative clauses are also found in NPs denoting an entity which is inferrable based on general knowledge, or from the specific context, though that entity may not have been mentioned before in the discourse:

- (22) “...” e·h=inaki [či·nawe·makiki neniwaki]
 aor=say.to 1-3(p)/aor be.related.to 1-3(p)/part/3p men
 ‘I said “...” to the men who were my relatives.’ A164H
- (23) ni·na=ke·h netanemo·ta [ki·šahama·nini papi·wi·mese·he·hani]
 I=and carry.along.on.back 1-0/ind.ind chop 1-0/part/0p little-firewood.pieces
 ‘I would carry on my back the little pieces of wood that I had chopped.’ A20B
 [previous context discusses her axe, uses verb for ‘gather firewood’]

In indefinite NPs, a relative clause follows the head noun:

- (24) wi·na mana ni·hka·na wi·h=ašihe·wa [neniwani
 he this my.friend fut=make 3-3’/ind.ind man.obv
 wi·h=okima·winičini]
 fut=be.chief 3’/part/3’

‘My friend here will make a man who will be chief.’ W417

- (25) o·ni [nekoti meškawahki·hi·pašito·ha wi·sahke·hani mi·nekota
 and.then one Mesquakie-old.man Wisahkeha.obv give 3’-3/part/3
 omi·ša·mi] e·h=mehkwe·netaki
 his.sacred.bundle remember 3-0/aor

‘And then a certain Mesquakie old man who had been given his sacred bundle by Wisahkeha remembered it’ W909

- (26) e·h=mawi·mama·toma·či [ihkwe·wani ne·hi·no·še·hčika·ničini]
 aor=go-request.help 3-3’/aor woman know.how-be.midwife 3’/part/3’
 ‘She went to request help from a woman who was skilled as a midwife.’ A111C

- (27) na·tawino·ni [menoke a·mi·kaški·oni·ča·nesiki]
 medicine drink X-0/subjunct would-able-have.child X/part/0
 ‘a medicine that, if one drinks it, one would be able to have children’ A192F
 (discussed in Goddard 1987)

Postnominal relative clauses are also found in nonspecific NPs:

- (28) na·hka [owiye·he·ha e·škepya·ta] e·h=mešeneči
 also some.animal drown 3/part/3 aor=touch X-3/aor
 ‘And when one touches a drowned animal, ...’ A102C

- (29) sanakesiwa=koh=e·yi·ki [neniwa mya·šawita]
 be.difficult 3/ind.ind=you.know=also man be.mean 3/part/3
 ‘Then too, as you know, a mean man is difficult to deal with.’ A182A

Postnominal relative clauses in definite NPs

Reintroducing a previously mentioned character:

- (30) keye·hapa=ke·h [i·niya ihkwe·he·ha=‘yo·we e·ye·h·pwa·wi·ona·pe·miya·ni
 in.fact=and that.absent woman.dim=past still-not-have.husband 1/ch.conj
ka·ki·wite·maka] ke·ko·h e·nahina·čimoha·tehe
 redup.go.around.with 1-3/part/3 something redup.tell.thus.to 3-3'/ch.unreal

‘And as a matter of fact that young woman that I had gone around with before I got married had been telling him something.’ A119C

- (31) [i·niya=ke·hi neniwa pe·mi·manemaneto·wa·čimota]
 that.absent=and man along-redup.talk.like.spirit 3/part/3

e·h=pemi·we·pose·či
 aor=along-start.walking 3/aor

‘And that man who kept talking like a manitou started walking...’ Goddard 1990:329

First NP in equational sentence:

- (32) [i·naka ni·hka·na ahpeme·heki e·wita]
 that.yonder my.friend above.dim be.[there] 3/part/3
 ‘My friend yonder who is above (is the one you should take them to)’ W944

- (33) [mana okima·wa me·hkwisota]
 this chief have.a.Bear.name 3/part/3
 ‘This chief who is of the Bear clan...’ W420

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