

The focus of this paper will be on internally-headed relative clauses (IHRCs) and their relationship to nominalization in T̥ch̥o Yat̥i, a Northeastern Dene language of the Northwest Territories, Canada. IHRCs like the ones found in T̥ch̥o Yat̥i (1a) contrast with the externally-headed relative clauses (EHRC) that are seen in languages like English (1b); the realized pivot token in IHRCs is internal to the subordinate clause rather than the matrix clause. Contrastive examples can be seen in (1) below, where the pivot is marked with a dashed underline and the subordinate relative clause with an unbroken underline;

- (1) a. [Ts'èz̥ò̥ wən̥h̥beàawò̥a ts'ò̥ [DP t̥l̥] n̥iʔḁ̀-a] k'èè̥ l̥egeè̥ht̥la
 Old.woman 3.tepee to path 3.extends-NMLZ along 3DS.PF.leave
 'They started out along the path which extends to Old Woman's tepee.' (Saxon, 2000, 3)
- b. [[DP My younger brother], [CP [DP whom]_i you met [e]_i last night]], has just left. (Grosu, 2012, 1)

Also of note in the T̥ch̥o Yat̥i example in (1a) is the fact that the IHRC is being marked with a morpheme that is frequently glossed as the nominalizer (NMLZ). The syntactic status of this morpheme is of interest because of its use in two other constructions in T̥ch̥o Yat̥i; the nominalized complemented clause (NCC), seen in (2) and the characterizing relative clause (CRC), seen in (3b)

(2) **Nominalized Complement Clause**

[D̥u ʔelḁ̀ ho̥lè̥-e] ts'ò̥h̥k'e ʔas̥i̥ w̥egh̥o̥ haah̥d̥i ha dahw̥o̥...?
 this boat 3.be.built-NMLZ regarding YNQ 3.about 2PS.say FUT 2PS.want

'Regarding the building of this boat, do you want to talk about it?' (Saxon, 2000, 5)

(3) a. **IHRC**

d̥o̥ nḁ̀z̥è̥
 d̥o̥ nḁ̀-z̥è̥-e
 person THM-hunt-NMLZ
 'person who hunts'

b. **Characterizing Relative Clause**

nḁ̀z̥è̥ d̥o̥
 nḁ̀-z̥è̥-e d̥o̥-ò̥
 THM-hunt-NMLZ person-PNS
 'hunting-person, hunter'

This paper will propose that the similarities between these three constructions can be captured by appealing to what level in the verbal spine (CP, TP, vP, VP) nominalization is occurring at. CP level nominalization yields the IHRC construction, which has a relative clause/entity interpretation. Nominalization that occurs at the level of TP results in the eventive/factive interpretation of the NCCs. The contrast between the structure of the CRC seen in (3b) and the IHRC seen in (3a) is captured by the fact that nominalization in the CRC is occurring much lower in the verbal spine, above an AspP, and this prevents an external argument from surfacing as an internal head. The agent must then be expressed in the possessive construction, similar to vP/VP level nominalizations in English (Harley, 2009).

An approach that analyzes T̥ch̥o Yat̥i IHRCs as preceding via nominalization reaps the benefit of being able to unify an account of the formation of IHRCs with other constructions bearing the nominalizer morpheme. Variation in interpretation of the nominalized constructions may be attributable to a distinction between the various clause types with regards to what phrasal level in the verb spine the nominalization occurs at.

References

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