

Relative Clauses in Puxi Qiang

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[Abstract] We analyze different types of relative clause in Puxi Qiang. There are head-external relative clauses, which may be preposed to the head NP, or follow the head NP, and omit the head in recoverable context, and head-internal relative clauses in terms of position of the head NP. Head-internal relative clauses are interesting and important cross-linguistically. Two different nominalizers and definite marking or indefinite marking are used as relative clause markers; the choice depends on the semantic role of the head in the relative clause. There are also some relative clauses that are not marked by nominalization, but marked by person with aspect marking. It is similar to English and Mandarin Chinese that almost all NP, like actor, undergoer, experiencer, destination, instrument, source, location, and time, etc. may be relativized, therefore, there is restricted neutralization in relative clauses, which means no pivot (S/A pivot, or S/P pivot) in Puxi Qiang.

1. Introduction

The Puxi variety of Qiang is spoken in Puxi Township (蒲溪鄉), Li County (理縣), Aba Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture (阿壩藏族羌族自治州), Sichuan Province (四川省), China. It has about 2,000 speakers. The Puxi variety of Qiang belongs to the Daqishan subdialect (大岐山土語) of the Southern dialect of Qiang (羌語南部方言). It is mutually intelligible with other varieties within the Daqishan subdialect, but mutually unintelligible with other subdialects in the Southern dialect or the Northern dialect (Huang 2004).

In this paper, we describe and analyze how to form relative clauses in the Puxi variety of Qiang. Relative clauses in the Puxi variety of Qiang can be quite complex.

We find that there are head-external relative clauses, including pre-head relative clauses, post-head relative clauses, and headless relative clauses, and head-internal relative clauses (cf. Lehman 1986). Two different nominalizers and definite marking or indefinite marking are used as relative clause markers; the choice depends on the semantic role of the head in the relative clause. There are also some relative clauses that are not marked by nominalization, but marked by person with aspect marking.

2. Head-external relative clauses

Head-external relative clauses may be subclassified into pre-head relative clauses, post-head relative clauses and headless relative clauses.

2.1. Pre-head relative clauses

In the Puxi variety of Qiang pre-head relative clauses are very common, often composed of several clauses, or a head noun which is a nominalized expression itself. The nominalized clause does not take the aspect marking or person marking. In (1)-(3), the relative clauses are in square brackets.

- (1) a. *kebzə phu ʂən guə.*
 child dress red wear
 ‘The child wears a red dress.’
 b. [*phu ʂən guə-m*] *kebzə*
 dress red wear-NOM child
 ‘the child who wears a red dress’
- (2) a. *kebzə a-n-la phu ʂən guə.*
 child one-two-CL dress red wear
 ‘Several children wear red dresses.’
 b. [*phu ʂən guə-m*] *kebzə a-n-la*
 dress red wear-NOM child one-two-CL
 ‘several children who wear red dresses’
- (3) a. *kebzə tha-la phu ʂən guə.*
 child that-CL dress red wear
 ‘That child wears a red dress.’

- b. [*phu* *ʃən* *guə-m*] *kebzə* *tha-la*
 dress red wear-NOM child that-CL
 ‘that child who wears a red dress’

As seen in (1a), (2a) and (3a), all sentences are basic structures in the Puxi Variety with typical constituency order within the transitive clause. In (1b), (2b) and (3b), however, they are all the same relative clause even though each takes a different modifier, which takes the agentive nominalizer *-m* to express the fact that the actor of the relative clause needs to be a human being. It is a head-external relative clause; in (1b) the relative clause [*phu ʃən guə-m*] precedes the noun and modifies the noun *kebzə* ‘child’, while in (2b) the head of the relative clause *kebzə* ‘child’ takes the pre-head nominalized relative clause [*phu ʃən guə-m*] and the post-modifier *a-n-la* ‘several’. In (3b) the nominalized relative clause modifies the noun *kebzə* and the demonstrative-classifier phrase *tha-la* ‘that’ follows the head which it modifies.

If the topic of the relative clause is an inanimate object, the relative clause is nominalized by the instrumental nominalizer *-sa*, as in (4)-(6):

- (4) [*si* *tshua-sa*] *pan̩i*
 firewood cut-NOM thing
 ‘thing used for cutting firewood’
- (5) [*zedə* *si-sa*] (*pan̩i*)-*lei*
 book write-NOM (thing)-DEF
 ‘the thing used for writing’
- (6) a. [*ama* *z̩mu* *pzə-sa*] *si*
 mother corpse burn-NOM firewood
 ‘the firewood used for cremating (our) mother’s corpse’
- b. [*ama* *z̩mu* *pzə-sa*] *a-n-t̩ei*
 mother corpse burn-NOM one-two-CL
 ‘some (firewood) used for cremating (our) mother’s corpse’

Note that these examples all have instrumental semantics, and the head nouns are not human beings. In example (4) the relative clause [*si tshua-sa*] modifies the noun

- (10) a. [*ŋa-i* *lie-u-a*] *pho* *tha-pho* (prospective)
 1sg:TP-AGT plant-PROS-1 tree that-CL
 ‘the tree I will plant’
- b. [*ŋa-i* *lie-si*] *pho* *tha-pho* (change of state)
 1sg:TP-AGT plant-CSM:1 tree that-CL
 ‘the tree I planted’

Note that in example (7) the relative clause is marked by the change of state marker. In (8a) the relative clause is marked by the prospective aspect marker *kuetsi* ‘be about to’ with the change of state marker *-i*, while example (8b) is marked by the change of state marker *-i*, and the head of the relative clause in both is the experiencer *me* ‘person’. In (9) the verb of the relative clause agrees with the actor in terms of the combined person/aspect marking. Example (9a) is marked by the first person imperfective aspect marker, whereas (9b) is marked by the first person prospective aspect marking, and (9c) is marked by the first person change of state aspect marker. In both (10a) and (10b) the verbs of the relative clauses are marked by aspect marking, and the actor takes the agentive marker *-i* to mark the clause as an actor-undergoer construction.

In example (11a) the head of the relative clause, representing the source role, is the noun *me* ‘person’, and the actor of the relative clause is represented by the first person topic pronoun *ŋa* ‘I’ and the verb is marked by the first person change of state marker *-si*. In (11b), however, the actor is represented by the head of the relative clause, and so the verb takes the agentive nominalizer. In (12) the head of the relative clause is the actor *me* ‘person’, so the verb of the relative clause is marked by the agentive nominalizer.

- (11) a. [*ŋa-(i)* *ɕtɕindzi* *te-ŋa-si*] *me* *tha-la*
 1sg:TP-AGT money DIR-borrow-CSM:1 person that-CL
 ‘the person I borrowed money from’
- b. [*qa-si* *ɕtɕindzi* *te-ŋa-m*] *me* *tha-la*
 1sg:NTP-COMIT money DIR-borrow-NOM person that-CL
 ‘the person who borrowed money from me’

- (12) [ʋlozgue ʋua^l-m] me tha-la
 ʋlozgue call-NOM person that-CL
 ‘the person called ʋlozgue’

2.2. Post-head relative clauses

In the Puxi variety of Qiang post-head relative clauses are unlike pre-head relative clauses, as they are in apposition to the head and non-nominalized. If the head of the relative clause is a non-human actor, then the verb of the relative clause takes the change of state marker, as in (13). The actor of the relative clause takes the agentive marker-*i* when the head of the relative clause is a non-human undergoer, as in (14):

- (13) *khue* [qa ə^l-χtʂi-i] tha-zi
 dog 1sg:NTP DIR-bite-CSM that-CL
 ‘the dog that bit me’

- (14) *khue* [ŋa-i te-tʂu-si] tha-zi ŋ bzi.
 dog 1sg:TP-AGT DIR-see-CSM:1 that-CL very big
 ‘The dog that I saw is very big.’

- (15) *tse* me [me mi-se-tʂi].
 this:CL man man NEG-good-INDEF
 ‘This man is one who is bad.’

- (16) *tʂi* [χan-mi bzu] a-gu
 house twelve-meter tall one-CL
 ‘a house that is twelve meters high’

In example (13), *khue* ‘dog’, which is the head of the relative clause, is the actor of the relative clause, while in (14), *khue* ‘dog’ is the undergoer of the relative clause. The actor of the relative clause in (14), *ŋa* ‘I’, takes the agentive marker, and the verb of the relative clause takes the first person change of state marker. In both (13) and (14) the relative clauses follow the head of the relative clause and precede the demonstrative-classifier phrase *tha-zi* ‘that one’. The relative clause of example (15) takes the indefinite marker. In (16) the relative clause *χan-mi bzu* ‘twelve meters

high' follows the head of the relative clause *tsi* 'house' and precedes the numeral-classifier phrase *a-gu* 'one'.

Unlike the pre-head relative clause, in which the first noun phrase modifies second noun phrase, the post-head relative clauses are appositive clauses, and so are two noun phrases, as can be seen from (17):

- (17) [*kadzʉ a-χa*] *tsal* [*βua-βua-lu-m*] *kue-lu-i*.
 relatives one-PL now help-REDUP-come-NOM DIR-come-CSM:3
 'Some of his/her relatives came to help (him/her).' (lit.: Some relatives who came to help her/him have come.)

In (17) it is not the case that the first noun phrase is modifying the second or the second noun phrase is modifying the first one. The adverb *tsal* 'now' can be placed between the first noun phrase [*kadzʉ a-χa*] and the second noun phrase [*βua-βua-lu-m*], therefore, these two noun phrases are appositive. The sentence (17) may be separated into two clauses, as in (18a) and (18b):

- (18) a. [*kadzʉ a-χa*] *tsal* *kue-lu-i*.
 relatives one-PL now DIR-come-CSM:3
 'Some relatives have come.'
 b. [*βua-βua-lu-m*] *kue-lu-i*.
 help-REDUP-come-NOM DIR-come-CSM:3
 'Helpers have come.'

3. Head-internal relative clauses

Apart from the head-external relative clauses, Puxi Qiang also has head-internal relative clause constructions, that is, the head of a relative clause appears between the actor and the verb of the relative clause. It is part of the relative clause in terms of linear order, as in (19):

- (19) a. *ŋa* [*thaχa tshu te-pu-i*] *tha-laqua*
 1sg:TP 3pl food DIR-do-CSM:3 that-CL
qen̩i se-dze-si.
 all DIR-eat-CSM:1
 ‘I ate all the food that they cooked.’
- b. [*thaχa tshu te-pu-i*] *tha-laqua*
 3pl food DIR-do-CSM:3 that-CL
ŋa qen̩i se-dze-si.
 1sg:TP all DIR-eat-CSM:1
 ‘I ate all the food that they cooked.’
- c. [[*thaχa te-pu-i*] *tshu tha-laqua*]
 3pl DIR-do-CSM:3 food that-CL
ŋa qen̩i se-dze-si.
 1sg:TP all DIR-eat-CSM:1
 ‘I ate all the food that they cooked.’

Example (19a) is an actor-undergoer construction, with the actor represented by the first person topic pronoun *ŋa*, and the undergoer by the noun phrase [*thaχa tshu te-pu-i tha-laqua*] ‘that pan of food they cooked’. The predicate is the verb complex *se-dze-si* ‘I have eaten’. The undergoer involves a head-internal relative clause; the head of the relative clause *tshu* ‘food’ appears between the actor of the relative clause *thaχa* ‘they’ and the verb complex of the relative clause [*te-pu-i*] ‘cooked’. Example (19b) is a topicalized construction, where the head-internal relative clause [*thaχa tshu te-pu-i tha-laqua*] is fronted to sentence-initial position to function as the topic. In example (19c) the head appear externally; The relative clause [*thaχa te-pu-i*] ‘they did’ precedes the head of the relative clause *tshu* ‘food’, and the relative clause [[*thaχa te-pu-i*] *tshu tha-laqua*] functions as the topic; while the clause [*ŋa qen̩i se-dze-si*] ‘I ate all (food)’ functions as the comment.

4. Headless relative clauses

In this section we will look at headless relative clauses. The nominalized relative clause may appear without the head of the NP if the head of the relative clause is

recoverable from the context. In the examples (20)-(22) relative clauses appear without the head *me* ‘people’.

(20) *tepəi* [*petsu* *ke-m*]Ø *taŋ-la* *zə* *me?*
 tomorrow Xuecheng.Town go-NOM how.many-CL exist QUES
 ‘How many people will go to Xuecheng Town tomorrow?’

(21) *peti* [*dzua* *pa-m*]Ø *taŋ-la* *zə* *me?*
 now soldier do-NOM how.many-CL exist QUES
 ‘How many people are taking part in the army now?’

(22) *ŋa* [(*me*) *zedə* *tsi-m*] *te-tɕu-si*.
 1sg:TP person book look.at-NOM DIR-see-CSM:1
 ‘I saw someone who was reading a book.’

Headless relative clauses may be without nominalizer or aspect marker, as in (23a) and (23b):

(23) a. [*sim* *ɸuaʹ-lei*]
 fruit call-DEF
 ‘the one called fruit’
 b. [*balu* *ɸuaʹ*] *tha-tshue*
 Balu call that-village
 ‘the village called Balu’

In headless relative clause the relativized item equals the non-relativized NP. In (23a) *sim* ‘fruit’ is not only interpreted as the relativized NP (undergoer), but refers to entity ‘fruit’ as well. In this case, it omits the head of relative clause ‘specific fruit’. In (23b) *balu* refers to the ‘Balu village’, and the head of relative clause *tshueɣe* ‘village’ is omitted.

5. Conclusion

In Puxi Qiang there are head-external relative clauses, which may be preposed to the head NP (pre-head relative clauses), or follow the head NP (post-head relative clauses), and omit the head in recoverable context (headless relative clauses) in terms of pragmatics, and head-internal relative clauses, which is interesting and important cross-linguistically. Two different nominalizers and definite marking or indefinite marking are used as relative clause markers; the choice depends on the semantic role of the head in the relative clause. The agentive nominalizer-*m* expresses the fact that the actor of the relative clause needs to be a human being. If the topic of the relative clause is an inanimate object, the relative clause is nominalized by the instrumental nominalizer-*sa*. There are also some relative clauses that are not marked by nominalization, but marked by person with aspect marking. It is similar to English, Mandarin Chinese, and Tibetan (Delancey 1999) that NPs, like actor, unergoer, experiencer, destination, instrument, source, location and time, etc. may be relativized (cf. Keenan & Comrie 1977; Comrie 1989), therefore, there is no restricted neutralization in relative clauses, which means no pivot (S/A pivot, or S/P pivot) in Puxi Qiang (cf. Dixon 1994, Ch. 6, Van Valin & LaPolla 1997, Ch. 6). The properties of relative clauses in Puxi Qiang are given in the following Table:

Table: *The Properties of relative clauses in Puxi Qiang*

<i>Property</i>	<i>prenominal</i>	<i>postnominal</i>	<i>circumnominal</i>
Head-internal	no	no	yes
Head-external	yes	yes	no
Nominalized	yes	yes	yes
Aspectual (finite clause)	yes	yes	yes

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