- Note 'aa' represents an open, central unrouded vowel, while 'a' is a mid, central unrounded vowel. ? is a phoneme anaylysed as glottalic, sometimes realised as a plosive, sometimes by glottal tension and/or a high falling pitch.

Some Restrictions on Focus in Chepang

R. Caugbley
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Ever since we began work on Chepang, conjugation of the verb with respect to variations in person and number of the actor (or agent) and goal participants has remained a problem.

As mentioned in an earlier paper on pronominalîsation (*Chepang as a pronominalised language. Caughley, R 1971b), verbal concord with actor and goal is realized by the prescence of bound pronoun forms suffixed to the verb base. For intransitive verbs such conjugation is not too difficult but with transitive verbs many problems can arise. These centre around the fact that for a gien verb stem the bound pronominal affixes sometimes agree with the person and number of the actor, sometimes with the person and number of the goal while in other instances agreement is apparently with both actor and goal. Often there are no agreemcnt affixes at all.

Êxamples. l (For gloss abbreviations see attached list)

î)   ?o-nis-?i ?u-may-kaay ghaan-naa-# -c -u Actor focus
        3c- D-Ag..3b-Pl - G   hit   -Pr -3A -D-Af (Here actor
'   Those two hit these.   is an agent)

ii)   ?o-nis-?i ?u-may-kaay ghaan-naa-thaa- sa   Goal focus
        3c- D- Ag 3b-Pl -G   hit   -Pr -3G- - P
        Those two hit these.

.iii)   ngaa- ?i ?u-may-kaay ghaan-naa-ng-s- u   Actor and goal
        I-   A 3b- Pl - G   hit- Pr- 1 P Af
        I hit these.
.
iv)   ngaa-?i* ?u-may-kaay ghaan~naa   no focus or
I   A 3 p Pl - G ~ hit-   Pr..   agreement
        l hit these.

*In fact is is highly unlikely that the agent would actually be expressed. This is indeed, a form of passive 'They were hit'.

Because i) and ii) have essentially the same meaning it was proposed that the different verb structures represented a difference in focus. Example i) focusses on the actor, example ii) focusses. on the

goal while the third cxaxnple iii) appears to be focussing on both roles.

   Since both roles may be marked on the verb we set about eliciting, for a single transitive verb, all the possible combinations of actor and goal. The person and number of these participants was varied while the variables in all other dimensions : tense, aspect, mood, etc, were kept cons:tant.

   Because. there are three degrees of number (singular, dual, and plural) for each person relation (first second and third) p1us an inclusive/exclusive for first person dual and plural,

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the total number of possible combinations is 121, (11 actor person-number possibilities x 11 goal person-number possibilities). Each of these 111 combinations had to be elicited in both goal and actor focus forms giving a total of 242 combinations.

   Elicitation of all these forms for the present indicative-affirmative of: a verb such as /ghaan-/ 'to hit', proved to be very complicated. This was partly because there was no obvious way to ensure that the informant would focus on the required participant (or on any participant at all). However it gradually became evident that this problem of eliciting forms with correct focus had an additional complicating factor. Convention required that in some combinations focus must be on the. actor, while in others it must be on the goal. Such a convention ex:plained why attempts to elicit some of the potential forms drew a blank or the wrong form. The term convention is used because at the present it is not clear whether the placing of focus is governed by strictly grammatical rules or whether it is a matter of' politeness (compare 'I and you go ' and 'You and:I go' in English where the latter is regarded as the 'polite form), at least where speaker-hearer relations are concerned.

   Elicitation of all the allowable forms gave the following chart, where a symbol in the appropriate half of the box means that the particular role may be focussed upon. Thus a plus sign in the upper (goal) half of the middle box of the top row means that with first person actor and second person goal, focus must be on the goal.

Matrix 1*

Goal Actor	1st Pn	2nd Pn	3rd Pn
lst Pn	x x	x	 x
2nd Pn	 x	x x	 x
3rd Pn	x	x	x x

*Note that where both the actor and goal are the same person, for 1st person and second person, then the form is reflexive. This, of course, is not necessarily true for 3rd person actor and goal (see below).

Examples 2

î)   ?o-?i   ning-ji-.kaay   ghaan-te- naa-ja
        3c-Ag you-2D-G   hit- -X- Pr -2D
        He beats you two.

î1)   *?o-?i   ning-ji-.kaay   ghaan-te- n- w
        3c-Ag you- 2D -G   hit-   -X- Pr -Af
        He beats you two.

Example ii) was disallowed by the informant as being 'not quite correct' an expression that he has at other times used to describe shortened forms of the verb without pronominl agreement affixes. However shortened forms do occur in text whereas no examples like 2ii) above have yet been found. The gaps in matrix 1 therefore appear to definitely represent forms that are forbidden, even although these same forms can be constructed by parallelism with allowed forms .

Conventions:

    Examination of the above matrix shows that one of the most important factors governing focus is the person of the actor or goal. There is clearly a ranking of person, with second person ranking in first position, first person in the intermediate position. and third person in the last position. T'hus the participant whose rank is highest has his role focussed on in the verb, in preference to others. If the hearer has a role in the action therefore, his role ,whether actor or goal, is in focus. Similarly if the speaker but not the hearer, has a role then this, role is in focus .
 If the rows and columns of matrix l are re-arranged in order of the ranking then the matrix becomes symmetrical, as Austin Hale pointed out.

Matrix 2

Goal Actor	2nd Pn	1st Pn	3rd Pn
2nd Pn	x x	x	x
lst Pn	x	x x	x
3rd Pn	x	x	x x

AD 4

Although these conventions determine focus placement in many cases, there still remain instances where they do not apply. Such instances occur when the person of actor and goal are the same . These are represented by the boxes on the descending diagonal of Matrix 2 where both halves of each box are alllowed. The first two of these boxes: representing 2nd-2nd and 1st-lst person relations are essentially reflexive. For the second person plural reflexive there are two forms of the verb, possibly representing a difference in focus although this is not yet c1ear .These two forms are:

Example 3
i}   ning- ?i pheng- te-naa-si
         you-Ag move- X -Pr -Rf
         You (all) move (yourselves) aside, (spoken to one of a crowd)

ii)   ning-?i   pheng- te-naa-ning-si
         you -Ag move-   X -Pr -2P -Rf
          You (all) move (yourselves) aside (spoken to the who1e crowd)

    Alternatively this may represent some sort of inclusive/exclusive distinction though such a distinction does not appear to exist for non-reflexive forms of second person.

    The third of the diagonal boxes, that representing 3-3rd person relations, is not neccssarily reflexive and here there are other rules governing focus placement, since pcrson ranking cannot apply. One such rule involves proximity of the participants to the speaker. The participants nearest the speaker are in focus.
Examples 4
i)a.   ?i-?i   ?o-nis-kaay ghaan-na-w
         3a-Ag 3b-two-G   hit-   Pr-Af
         <u>This one</u> hits those two

ii)b.   * ?i-?i   ?o-nis-kaay ghaan-na- thaa-ca
          3a-Ag   3b-two-G   hit-   Pr- 3G -D
         This one hits <u>those two</u>

iii)a   ?o-?1 ?i-nis-kaay   ghaan-na-thaa-ca
          3b-Ag 3a-two-G   hit   -Pr -3G --D
         That one hits <u>these two</u>

iv)b   *?o-?1 ?i-nis-kaay ghaan-na-w
          3b-Ag 3a-two-G   hit-   Pr-Af
         <u>That one</u> hits these two

AD 5

.

Ex4
iv)b   *?o-?1 ?i-nis-kaay ghaan-na-w
         3b-Ag 3a-two-G   hit-   Pr-Af
         <u>That one</u> hits these two

Examples i)b and ii)b are disallowed .

   This rule of course app1ies only if the participants were actually present at the time of speaking. If they are not, then presumably focus is deterruined by whichever participant is nearest, as picturcd in the speaker's mind, or is in some other way the most sigificant.

Simplified Forms

   With the operation of the above restrictions the 242 possibilities decrcase to some 40 actual forms for a single verb, with the variables of tense, aspect, etc. kept constant. In practice however, it is not even necessary to use alI the 40 forms. The pronominal agreement affixes filling the focus slot may be omitted completely, as in exampIe 1iv (compare with 1iii). Alternatively the affixes may be partIy omitted, with the person affix but not the number affix prcsent.

Examples 5
i)   ngi- ?I ?u-kaay ghaan-naa,-ng-s- u   Full form
         we--Ag 3c-G   hit-   –Pr –I -P-Af
         W'e hit him.

ii)   ngi-?I   ?u-kaay ghaan-naa.-ng
         we Ag 3c-G   hit   Pr   -I   Partial form
         We hit him.

iii)   ngi-?I   ?u-kaay ghaan-naa   Reduced form
         We –Ag 3c-G   hit   -Pr
         We hit him.

   Note that complete omission of the focus affixes reduccs the nutmber of forms to one for all persons of actor and goal. This optional nature of focus gave a great deal of trouble in elicitation as sometimes the informant would switch to the reduccd or partly reduced form, either of 'which are aceptable. At first we thought there might be undiscovered rules governing omission of focus but it seems now that the main factor is cxplicitness - the full forms are used if one wants to be more explicit.

   AD 6

   The informant calls the full forms /klon?-?o/ speech, where the stem /klon?-/ means 'to flow rapidly or 'to tumble '. However he

explained that the /klon?-?o / speech is required if the hearer does not underrstand an utterance in the reduced form.

   The prescence of focus could be used to define the notion 'subject ' for Chepang as 'the thing focussed upon in the verb'. That is, subject is the slot which has person -number concord with the vcrb. However such a definition would mean that in many cases the choice of subject uould not be a free one, but rather governed by the external situation. Also many clauses would have no subject at all.

   The prescence of the reduced forms of the verb explains why we werc able to speak the language with a reasonable degrce of acceptability long before we hnd analysed the full complex pronominal system describcd in part in this and the preceding papers with the reduced forms the role of participants can be made explicit by using the appropriate nouns or pronouns plus the agent and goal markers /-?i/ and/-kaay/ (see example 5iii.).
However a knowledge of the full system is necessary in order to understand other speakers bccause in normal speech free pronouns are often omitted and participant information is carried in the verb alone. In other words there are two overlapping systems with a considerable degree of redundancy between them.

Chepang Gloss Abbreviations AB 10

1	First person
1G	" " as goal
2	Second person
2G	" " as goal
3a	Third person or demonstrative (close)
3b	" " (middle distancc)
3c	" " (Distant)

Af	Agent !ocus
Ag	Agent

D	Dual number
Ex	Exclusive
F	Future indefinite
In	Inclusive

G	goal
Gf	Goal focus

N	Negative

P	Plural
Pl	"
Pr	Prescnt or non-past

Pt   past tense