Word Order And Scrambling In Punjabi Language

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Abstract: Word order is the sequence of words in a sentence, clause or phrase, especially governed by grammatical rules. Word order typology is the study of the order of the syntactic constituents of a language and how different languages can have different word orders. The primary word order is the order of constituents in the phrase, clause and sentence. The assumption within the Government and Binding framework is that all languages have a 'Fixed Word Order' at base. 'Free word order' languages differ from 'Fixed word order' languages, in allowing an instance of move alpha, namely Scrambling.

Keywords: SIWES, placement, supervision, facilities, students.

I. INTRODUCTION

Most languages are generally assumed to have a basic word order, called the unmarked word order; Word order refers to the systematic arrangement of constituents in a sentence based on their configurational relation and when constituents in a sentence move from one place to another without affecting the structure and meaning of sentence, it is called Scrambling.

II. PUNJABI WORD ORDER

The unmarked word order of Punjabi is SOV. Its word order is fairly fixed. In given example, the Subject 'mUndIa ne' '(the boys) is placed in sentence initial position. The object 'jəlebi' (jalebi) follows the Subject. The verb 'kʰaˈdi' (ate) and the tense auxiliary 'si' (was) follow the object:

1. mUndIa ne   jəlebi   kʰaˈdi   si
     S   O   V
Boys- ergative   jalebi   ate   was
'The boys ate jalebi.'

However, Punjabi shows a relative freedom of word order. In this example, the object 'jəlebi (jalebi) is placed in sentence initial position and thus precedes both Subject ''mUndIa ne' (the boys) and the verb 'kʰaˈdi (ate). OSV is marked word order in Punjabi.

2. jəlebi   mUndIa ne   kʰaˈdi   si
    O   S   V
    jalebi   boys   ate   was
'The boys ate jalebi.'

According to Joga Singh (1993), there are certain constraints on this relative freedom of word order. For instance, in (4) placing of the object 'admi' (man) in sentence initial position results in an ungrammatical sentence (in the respective reading), whereas its normal counterpart is perfect.

3. ʂer   admi   kʰãda   hɛ
   Lion   man   eat   is
'(The) lion eats man.'

4. admi   ʂer   kʰãda   hɛ
   man   lion   eat   is
'Man eats lion.'

In many languages, changes in word order occur due to Topicalization or in questions. Marked word orders can then be used to emphasize a sentence element, to indicate modality (such as an interrogative modality), or for other purposes.

For example, English is SVO, as in (5.a) but OSV is also possible:

5.a). I don't know that.
b) That I don't know.

This process is called Topic Fronting (or *Topicalization*) and is common. Non-standard word orders are also found in poetry in English. In English, OSV is a marked word

order because it emphasizes the object, and is often accompanied by a change in intonation.

An example of OSV being used for emphasis:

6. a). *I can't eat burger.* (SVO)

b). *What about pizza?*

A. *Pizza I can eat.* (OSV, rather than *I can eat pizza*, SVO)

English is a 'fixed word order' language while Hindi like Punjabi is a 'free word order' language, from the point of view of generative linguistics.

III. SCRAMBLING

The lexeme 'scramble' has been used in the discussions of the syntax of a variety of languages with different meanings. Scrambling is a term employed in the literature for a phenomenon called free word order. Ross (1967), the first to use this term, had considered Scrambling a stylistic rule that applies optionally, a view that was adopted later by other linguists as well (Karimi: 2003). Scrambling is a common term for pragmatic word order. In the Chomskyan tradition, every language is assumed to have a basic word order, which is fundamental to its sentence structure, so languages, which exhibit a wide variety of different orders, are said to have 'scrambled' them from their 'normal' word order. The word has also been used to refer to syntactic processes that result in discontinuous NPs without necessarily 'moving' any phrases.

IV. APPROACHES TO SCRAMBLING

In early stages of research, in the area of free word order and Scrambling, there were two major approaches to this phenomenon; some authors considered it as a result of base generation and others viewed it as a syntactic operation. From a base generation point of view, languages were divided in to two types, those with a flat structure and thus *Non-Configurational* and those with a structural hierarchy and thus *Configurational.*

A. BASE GENERATION APPROACH

✓ From a non- transformational point of view, scrambling is considered to be free word order at the level of D-structure.

✓ From an MP point of view, scrambling is considered to be the result of Merge.

B. MOVEMENT APPROACH

Scrambling is the result of Move α (or simply Move). In the government and binding theory it was assumed that all movement is strictly optional. There is only movement rule, move α and it moves anything, anywhere, any time without any restriction. But in minimalist program, movement is not optional and free, it must be triggered by a specific morphological feature on a head.

V. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In Punjabi, there is a lack of modern theoretical work in the area of syntax. John Ross was the first to use the term Scrambling. Gill and Gleason (1969: 139-145) discussed many possibilities of Punjabi sentence structure and according to them word order of Punjabi is free. The primary issue of Kamboj (1996) is the word order in Punjabi yet this study remains limited to order of words in essence. The examples cited in this study about phrase order also had to conclusion that phrase order is free in Punjabi. Although for Kamboj different orders of phonetic structure relates to topic and presupposition, not with agent patient relation. Cheema (1994) is also of the view that Punjabi word order is free. Singh (1999: 87-94) proved that Punjabi is SOV language but shows a relative freedom of word order with certain constraints on this freedom.

VI. SCRAMBLING IN PUNJABI

Punjabi is one of these free word languages and its basic word order is subject- object- verb. As a SOV language, Punjabi is characterized by a verbal predicate that comes at the end of the sentence and generally, a head final language as dependent elements usually precedes their heads.

Punjabi allows scrambling among constituents without changing the meaning of the sentence. Examples are given in (7) and (8), where (7) is in the canonical order and (8) is its "scrambled" counterpart. The two sentences have the same meaning in the sense that if one is true, the other is true as well.

7. ram ne   ravəɳ nũ   marIa
   S   O   V
Ram-nominative.   Ravan- accusitive   killed- verb
"Ram killed Ravan."

8. ravəɳ nũ   ram ne   marIa
   O   S   V
Ravan- acc   Ram-nom.   killed- verb
"Ram killed Ravan."

We can say (7) is the canonical word order in contrast to (8) from the fact that the 'ram' (Ram) is agent that is in nominative case and 'ravəɳ' (Ravan) is patient and in accusative case. In unmarked word order nominative comes at subject position and accusative at object position.

In the sentences where there is no case marker, there is difficulty in interpretation whether the sentence is in canonical word order or it is scrambled. The natural interpretation is that the first noun phrase is the subject and the second noun phrase is object. In sentences (9) and (10), it is easy to identify unmarked and marked word order.

9. Ó   kItab   pəɽda hɛ
   S   O   V
he- nom.   book-acc.   read- verb
"He reads the books."

10. kItab   Ó   pəɽda hɛ
    O   S   V
he- nom.   book-acc.   read- verb
"He reads the books."

Sentences (8) and (10) have been taken to be less basic or fundamental than (7) and (9).

Since the interpretation is different in the case of (11) and (12). Both sentences are syntactically and semantically correct but when constituents change their positions, meaning of sentence also change.

11. gUŋde   məntri   rəkʰde hən
    mobster   minister   keep
"Mobsters keep ministers."

12. məntri   gUŋde   rəkʰde hən
    minister   mobster   keep
"Ministers keep mobsters."

VII. RESTRICTIONS ON SCRAMBLING IN PUNJABI

Scrambling is often thought of as a process that applies without any constraint. However, there are some restrictions on scrambling which implies that scrambling is not free.

✓ No leftward Scrambling over the same Case-Marker

In Punjabi, scrambling of NP over another NP when they are assigned the same Morphological Case is prohibited. Sentence becomes ungrammatical or may be grammatical in different context.

13. a). bəddəl   mí   bənaUnde hən
    clouds(nom .)   rain(nom.)   make
"Clouds make rain."

13. b). * mí   bəddəl   bənaUnde hən
    rain(nom.)   clouds(nom.)   make
"Clouds make rain."

In (13a), the sentence has two nominative Case- marked constituents. When scrambling is applied to produce the sentence (13b), the sentence becomes ungrammatical semantically.

The example (14a) illustrates the double accusative construction. (14b) and (14c) demonstrate that in the double accusative construction sentences, scrambling is not permissible.

14. a). mɛ̃ ram nũ   jit nũ   bulaUŋ ləi kía
        I to ram   Jeet   called   say
"I   asked Ram to call Jeet."

14. b).*mɛ̃   jit nũ   ram nũ   bulaUŋ ləi kía
        I   Jeet   to Ram   called   say
I asked Jeet to call Ram."

14. c). *jit nũmɛ̃   ram nũ   bulaUŋ ləi kía
        Jeet I   to Ram   called   say
"I asked Ram to call Jeet."

In (14b) and (14c), sentences have two accusative morphological case realized by Case- marker 'nũ'. When leftward scrambling over the same case-marker occurs, the sentences become ungrammatical. However, even in the double accusative construction, scrambling may occur if the first accusative NP, as in (14d) and (14e), precedes the second accusative NP.

14. d). ram nũ   mɛ̃   jit nũ   bulaUŋ ləi kía si
        to ram   I   Jeet   called   say
"I asked Ram to call Jeet."

14. e). ram nũ   jit nũ   bulaUŋ ləi   mɛ̃   kía si
to Ram   Jeet   called   I   say
"I asked Jeet to call Ram."

✓ Scrambling and Small Clauses

Small clauses have the subject- predicate constituent without a finite verb. Instead, a NP, PP or AP serves as the predicate in such constituents (Lee: 2007). In Punjabi, within a small clause scrambling between the subject and object is not acceptable.

15. a). lokã ne   (ram nũ əmir)   sə́mjIa
        people   ram to rich   think
" People thought Ram as a rich man."

15.b). *lokã ne   (əmir ram nũ)   sə́mjIa
        people   (rich ram to)   think
" People thought Ram as a rich man."

15.c).*əmir   lokã ne   ram nũ   sə́mjIa
        rich   people   ram to   think
" People thought Ram as a rich man."

In (15b) and (15c), when two constituents of small clause are scrambled, the sentences become ungrammatical. However, in (15d) when constituents of small clause preserve their sequence, then the scrambled sentences are acceptable.

15.d). ram nũ   lokã ne   əmir   sə́mjIa
        ram to   people   rich   think
"People thought Ram as a rich man."

VIII.   COCLUSIONS

Scrambling is considered as optional but as we have gone through above discussion, we can say it is not absolutely free. It has clear that there are restrictions on scrambling in Punjabi like Punjabi does not allow leftward scrambling over the same case – marker or scrambling within small clauses. The aim of this paper has been to present basic assumption and restrictions on scrambling in Punjabi in the framework of generative grammar.

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