



ENGLISH VS SHUPAMEM RELATIVE CLAUSES: A CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS

Abass Ngoungouo Yiagnigni

PhD student, Department of African Languages and Linguistics in University of Yaounde 1, Cameroon. E-mail: abassngoungouo@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This paper outlines the major structural differences between the English and Shupamem (an SVO Bantu language spoken in western part of Cameroon) relative clauses. It examines the structure of the relative morphemes, the relative clause types, and the relativization strategies in these two languages. In English, relative clauses are introduced by pronouns which indicate the position relativized and the syntactic/semantic role of the head noun (Comrie 1998). Also, English relative pronouns can be omitted in object relative clauses without affecting the sentence grammaticality and semantic interpretation. In Shupamem however, the relativizer is a discontinuous morpheme which encircles the relative domain: the first item (jɛ́ for singular or jɛ́ for plural) introduces the relative clause while the second one (ná) closes the relative domain. Unlike the English relative pronouns, none of these morphemes encodes the syntactic/semantic role of the antecedent. Similarly, the deletion of a relative morpheme in Shupamem renders the sentence ungrammatical.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

- [1] AH: Accessibility Hierarchy;
- [2] CA: Common argument;
- [3] CP: Complementizer phrase;
- [4] Def. Definitivizer;
- [5] F1: Immediate future tense;
- [6] F2: Intermediate future tense; F3:
- [7] MC: Main clause;
- [8] Neg. Negation;
- [9] NP: Noun phrase;
- [10] NP_{REL}: Relativized noun phrase;
- [11] OM: Object marker;
- [12] P1: Immediate past tense;
- [13] P2: Recent past tense;
- [14] P3: Intermediate past tense;
- [15] P4: Remote past tense;
- [16] Prog. Progressive aspect;
- [17] Prs. Present tense;
- [18] RC: Relative clause;
- [19] Rel. Relativizer;
- [20] Remote future tense;
- [21] Res. Resumptive pronoun;
- [22] sg. Singular;
- [23] SM: Subject marker;
- [24] Spec: Specifier;
- [25] SVO: Subject-Verb-Object;
- [26] *: Ungrammatical;

INTRODUCTION

A relative clause (RC) is a subordinate clause that contains an element whose interpretation is provided by an antecedent on which the subordinate clause is dependent. The result is an anaphora between the relativized element in the relative clause and the antecedent on which it depends (Huddleston and Pullum, 2005). A subordinate clause characteristically functions as dependent within some larger construction (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002: 949). For Andrews (2007:206), a relative clause is a clause which modifies a noun phrase (NP) by specifying the role of the referent of that NP in the situation described by the RC.

Existing literature on the typology of relative clauses reveals the following types: restrictive, non-restrictive, free or headless, bound or embedded, finite and non-finite relative clauses. Reviewing the branching configuration between the relative clause and the antecedent, Hirawa (2014) identified pre-nominal and post-nominal relative clauses. Dixon (2010: 314) assigns the following four characteristics to a canonical relative clause construction:

- It involves a main clause – MC – and a relative clause – RC – which form a complex sentence with a single unit of intonation;
- The underlying structure of these two clauses must share one common argument; This CA functions both as an argument in the main clause and in the relative clause and may occur in both clauses, in one of them, or in neither of them.
- The relative clause modifies the common argument of the main clause. It may either provide information which is essential for the identification of the reference of the common argument –in a restrictive relative clause– or it provides additional information about the common argument –in a non-restrictive relative clause.
- The relative clause must have the basic structure of a clause with at least a predicate and the core arguments required by this predicate. It may also have additional arguments and is sometimes not marked with respect to tense, aspect, modality, etc.

In addition to the typological classifications mentioned above, various theories and approaches are proposed for the analysis of relative clauses in world languages. Salient ones include the Head External Analysis, the Head Raising Analysis, the Matching Analysis and the Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy.

Based on the traditional view of the Head External Analysis postulated by Quine (1960), Ross (1967), Chomsky (1977), Jakendoff (1977), and Meinunger (2000), the RC is adjoined to the head noun base-generated outside it. The head noun is selected by an external determiner, which takes scope over the head noun and the RC. There is no representation of the head noun inside the RC. In other words, the relativizer or the empty operator moves to [Spec, CP] from inside the RC and there is coindexation between the head noun and the relativizer or the operator.

According to the Head Raising Analysis (Brame 1968; Schachter 1973; Vergnaud 1974; Carlson 1977; Kayne 1994; and Bianchi 1999, 2000), the head noun is base-generated in the RC in its usual position, and then raises, possibly with the relative pronoun, to an operator position, [Spec, CP] within the RC to be adjacent to the external determiner (if there is one), which selects the CP (Kayne 1994:87).

The Matching Analysis, (Lees 1960; Chomsky 1965; Munn 1994; Sauerland 1998, 2003; Cresti 2000; and Citko 2001) posits that the RC is adjoined to the external head noun while in the RC there is an internal head noun as the complement of the relativizer or the empty operator. The internal head noun is moved with the relativizer or the operator to [Spec, CP]. Finally, the internal head noun is deleted under identity.

Based on a sample of 50 languages, Keenan and Comrie (1977) demonstrate that certain limitations apply to the syntactic positions that can be relativized. Strategies that apply at one point of the AH may in principle cease to apply at any lower point. Under their theory of Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy, the meaning of relative clauses is more or less difficult to access depending on the construction, with subject relative clauses being the easiest and the object relative clauses being the most difficult.

The main purpose of this paper is to supplement the literature on Shupamem (a poorly documented language) by applying the existing views on relative clauses on this language. Further, this contrastive analysis is meant to ease the understating of relativization and provide the basic knowledge of the structure of Shupamem. For this reason, it only describes (i) the structure of relative clauses, (ii) the types of relative clauses and (iii) the relativization strategies in English and Shupamem.

1. Overview of Shupamem

Shupamem is an SVO, tone and noun class Bantu language spoken by the Bamun people of the Noun Division in the western part of Cameroon. Previous studies on this language (Nchare 2005, 2012; Ngoungouo 2016, and Njutapmvoui 2017) revealed that it possesses fifteen noun classes and three tenses (Past, present and future), each of which is structured into sub-tenses. The present tense of non-stative verbs is always associated with the progressive, the habitual and the evidential aspects. The past tense is structured into four tenses: the immediate past (P1) which is not morphologically realized, the recent past (P2) marked by the morpheme pé, the intermediate past (P3) marked by pí, and the remote past (P4) marked by kàpí. In the same view, there exist an immediate future tense (F1) marked by the morpheme nántuá, an intermediate future tense (F2) marked by náls? and a remote future tense (F3) marked by nántuáls?. Tense markers are left-adjoined to the verb as illustrated in (1) below:

- (1)
- | | | | | |
|----|----------------------|-------|-----|------|
| a. | món | pé | jè | pén |
| | child | P2 | eat | fufu |
| | "The child ate fufu" | | | |
| b. | món | náls? | jè | pén |
| | child | F2 | eat | fufu |
| | "The child ate fufu" | | | |

2. The structure of English and Shupamem relative morphemes

This section examines the English and Shupamem relativizers.

2.1. English relative morphemes

The form of the English relativizers varies according to the nature and the function or case of the head noun in the sentence. In subject relative clauses or the nominative case, the morphemes who (person), that and which (animals and things) introduce the relative clauses as illustrated in (2) below:

- (2)
- The man who lives in China (person)
 - The dog that barks every morning (animal)
 - The car which is black (thing)

Similarly, the morpheme whom is used for persons while that and which are used for animals and things in the accusative case or direct object relative clauses. They are preceded by prepositions in the dative case or indirect object relative clauses. The data in (3) illustrate the direct object relative clauses in English:

- (3)
- The man whom I greeted (person)
 - The dog that my uncle bought (animal)
 - The car which I parked in the school yard (thing)

The morpheme whose introduces the relative clauses in the genitive case or possessive relative clauses irrespective of the nature of the head noun, as illustrated in the following data:

(4)

- a. The baby whose mother died (person)
- b. The dog whose owner is absent (animal)
- c. The pen whose ink is read (thing)

Finally, where, when and how introduce the locative, the temporal and the manner relative clauses, respectively. They are illustrated in the data below:

(5)

- a. The house where I live (place)
- b. The time when you came (time)
- c. I did not see how you danced (manner)

It is observed that English relativizers are made up of one morpheme each. They introduce the relative clause and vary with respect to the nature and function of the antecedent.

2.2. Shupamem relative morphemes

There exist two relative morphemes in Shupamem, namely the discontinuous morphemes $j\text{ə}\acute{\text{a}}\dots n\acute{\text{a}}$ and $m\grave{\text{o}}\text{?}\dots n\acute{\text{a}}$. The latter is rare in discourse and shall not be given attention in this paper. The first item of the discontinuous relative morphemes introduces the relative domain, while the last closes it. In other words, $j\text{ə}\acute{\text{a}}$ and $m\grave{\text{o}}\text{?}$ introduce the relative clause, while $n\acute{\text{a}}$ occupies the clause' final position. Semantically, the item $j\text{ə}\acute{\text{a}}$ means "that" and is number inflected. Its plural counterpart is $f\text{ə}\acute{\text{a}}$. Due to the loss of some concord properties by the language, $j\text{ə}\acute{\text{a}}$ rather undergoes some phonological assimilation with respect to the nature of the preceding sound than agrees with its antecedent. In this line, it becomes $n\text{ə}\acute{\text{a}}$, $m\text{ə}\acute{\text{a}}$, $\beta\text{ə}\acute{\text{a}}$, and $r\text{ə}\acute{\text{a}}$ when preceded by /n/, /m/, /p/, /b/, and /t/, respectively. On the contrary, the item $n\acute{\text{a}}$ is invariable in all circumstances. $j\text{ə}\acute{\text{a}}$ is the relativizer and $n\acute{\text{a}}$ is the definitivizer. The data in (6) illustrate subject, direct object, indirect object, locative, temporal and manner relative clauses in Shupamem.

(6)

a. $m\grave{\text{a}}t\text{w}\acute{\text{a}}$ car	$j\text{ə}\acute{\text{a}}$ Rel	$\acute{\text{a}}$ Res.	$k\grave{\text{u}}m$ P1 knock	$m\grave{\text{a}}m\text{v}\acute{\text{i}}$ goat	$n\acute{\text{a}}$ Def				
"The car that knocked the goat" (subject)									
b. $m\grave{\text{a}}m\text{v}\acute{\text{i}}$ goat	$j\text{ə}\acute{\text{a}}$ Rel	$m\grave{\text{a}}t\text{w}\acute{\text{a}}$ car	$k\grave{\text{u}}m$ P1 knock	$\acute{\text{i}}$ Res.	$n\acute{\text{a}}$ Def				
"The goat that the car knocked" (direct object)									
c. $p\acute{\text{o}}n$ child	$n\acute{\text{u}}\text{ə}$ Rel	$m\text{-f}\grave{\text{a}}$ 1sg-gave	$l\acute{\text{a}}p\acute{\text{a}}\text{?}$ shoes	$n\acute{\text{a}}$ to	$p\text{u}\acute{\text{a}}$ Res.	$n\acute{\text{a}}$ Def			
"The children to whom I gave the shoes" (indirect object)									
d. $n\acute{\text{d}}\acute{\text{a}}p$ house	$\eta\acute{\text{a}}$ there	$j\text{ə}\acute{\text{a}}$ Rel	$\acute{\text{i}}$ 3sg.	$t\acute{\text{e}}$ Prog.Prs	$\eta f\acute{\text{u}}$ live	$n\acute{\text{a}}$ Def			
"The house where he lives" (locative)									
e. $M\grave{\text{e}}$ 1sg	$p\acute{\text{i}}$ P3	$m\grave{\text{a}}$ Neg	$n\text{z}\acute{\text{i}}\text{-}\eta\grave{\text{a}}$ know-SM	$f\grave{\text{u}}\text{?}$ time	$j\text{ə}\acute{\text{a}}$ Rel	$\acute{\text{i}}$ 3sg	$k\grave{\text{a}}$ P4	$w\text{u}\acute{\text{e}}n$ go	$n\acute{\text{a}}$ Def
"I did not know the time when she left" (temporal)									
f. $m\grave{\text{e}}$ 1sg.	$j\acute{\text{i}}$ P1.know	$\eta k\grave{\text{y}}k\acute{\text{a}}$ way	$j\text{ə}\acute{\text{a}}$ Rel	$w\grave{\text{u}}$ 2sg.	$t\acute{\text{e}}$ Prog.Prs	$\eta f\acute{\text{i}}k\acute{\text{e}}t$ talk	$n\acute{\text{a}}$ Def		
"I know how you talk" (manner)									

In all the examples above, there are two morphemes that encircle the relative clause: $j\text{ə}\acute{\text{a}}$ introduces the relative clause which is closed by $n\acute{\text{a}}$.

Following this description of the English and Shupamem relative morphemes, the main differences to be outlined here are: (i) English displays single relative morphemes whereas Shupamem uses a discontinuous relativizer; (ii) English relativizers are case-marked

whereas Shupamem's are not; (iii) Shupamem relativizer may undergo a phonological assimilation to the preceding sound whereas English relative pronouns do not.

3. Types of relative clauses

A typological overview of relative clauses in world languages reveals a range of them comprising free or headless, bound or embedded, restrictive, non-restrictive, finite, and non-finite relative clauses. A look is given to each of these relative clause types in English and Shupamem hereafter.

3.1. Free relative clauses

This is a type of relative clause that lacks an overt, explicit or external antecedent. Accordingly, the relative clause itself takes the place of an argument in the matrix clause. Consider the English sentence below:

(7) "I like what I see"

In the sentence above, [what I see] is a free relative clause because it has no antecedent. It serves as object of the verb "like" in the main clause.

This type of relative clause is not attested in Shupamem as exemplified in (8) below:

(8)

a. m̀ə ná	ŋgúʔ	júa	jə́	n-té	nʒə́n	ná
1sg. Evid.Prs	love	thing	Rel	1sg-Prog.Prs	see	Def
"I like what I see"						
b. *m̀ə ná	ŋgúʔ	jə́	n-té	nʒə́n	ná	
1sg. Evid.Prs	love	Rel	SM-Prog.Prs	see	Def	
Intended: "I like what I see"						

The data in (8.a) show that the noun júa "thing" precedes the relative clause jə́ n-té nʒə́n ná "what I see". Its absence triggers the sentence ungrammaticality (8.b). This structure would be acceptable iff the antecedent was initially mentioned in the discourse. Consider the examples below:

(9)

a. Wú	ntuá	j̀ə	ŋkú:n	ké	mà:lò:ríʔ	
2sg	F1	eat	beans	or	rice	
"Would you eat beans or rice?"						
b. m̀ə	ná ntuá	j̀ə	jə́	n-té ntuá	jə́n	ná
1sg.	F1	eat	Rel	3sg-F1	see	Def
"I shall eat what I shall see"						

There is no explicit head noun to the relative clause jə́ n-té ntuá jə́n ná "what I shall see" (9.b). The sentence however is interpretable because the antecedents are the nouns ŋkú:n "beans" and mà:lò:rí "rice" mentioned in (9.a).

3.2. Bound relative clauses

As opposed to a free relative clause, a bound or an embedded relative clause qualifies an explicit element in the main clause. This can be a noun or a pronoun, referred to as head noun, NPREL or antecedent. In the sentence "the house that I visited yesterday", [that I visited yesterday] is a bound relative clause, referring to the noun "house" that appears in the main clause. Shupamem relative clauses are always bound to their external NP, as illustrated in the data below:

(10)

a. m̀əlórì	jə́	món	pé	nʒú	ná
rice	Rel	child	P2	eat	Def
"The rice that the child ate"					
b. m̀ətwá	jə́	í	pá	fý	ná

car Rel Res. be white Def
“The car that is white”

It is observed that the relative clause *jʉ́ é mɔ́n pé nʒè ná* “that the child ate” is bound to the antecedent *màlòrì* “rice” (10.a). Similarly, *jʉ́ é í pâ fý ná* “which is white” is bound to the head noun *màtwá* “car” (10.b). This further supports the claim that free relative clauses are not attested in Shupamem.

3.3. Restrictive relative clauses

A restrictive or defining relative clause is a type of relative clause that modifies the meaning of its head noun. If omitted, it would no longer be known what the head noun refers to. The data below illustrates a restrictive relative clause in English.

(11) The book that I bought yesterday is interesting

Here, [that I bought yesterday] is a restrictive relative clause. It says exactly which book is being described. Shupamem attests restrictive relative clauses as shown in the following:

(12)

a. pé:ǰí jʉ́ é mɛ́ pí jú:n ŋkùrè ná pâ: jimbókét
pen Rel 1sg P3 buy yesterday Def Prs.be good
“The pen that I bought yesterday is good”

b. Ali jʉ́ é í pé nté ndʉ́ órá ná pâ: jú?ní:
Ali Rel Res. P2 run race Def Prs.be obedient
“Ali who ran is obedient”

In (12.a), the head noun *pé:ǰí* “pen” is relativized with the use of the clause *jʉ́ é mɛ́ pí jú:n ŋkùrè ná* “that I bought yesterday”. This relative clause modifies the meaning of the head noun *pé:ǰí* “pen”. As such, its omission will alter the sentence meaning, resulting in the “pen is good”. The same process is observed in (12.b).

3.4. Non-restrictive relative clauses

A non-restrictive relative clause provides supplementary information to the head noun. It is identified phonologically by the presence of a pause at its beginning and end in English. Let’s consider the sentence below:

(13) Mr Smith, who lives here, travelled yesterday

In this sentence, the relative clause [who lives here] adds information to the head noun Mr Smith. It can be omitted without altering the meaning of the sentence. In Shupamem, non-restrictive relative clauses are not morphologically realized. This is shown in the data below:

(14)

a. Njoya jʉ́ é í té nǰú ñàǰí ná wuén ŋkùrè
Njoya Rel Res. Prog.Prs live here Def P1.go yesterday
“Njoya, who lives here, went yesterday”

b. *Njoya, jʉ́ é í té nǰú ñàǰí ná, wuén ŋkùrè
Njoya Rel Res. Prog.Prs live here Def P1.go yesterday
Intended: “Njoya, who lives here, went yesterday”

The example in (14.a) indicates that no morpheme or phonological feature is used to mark a non-restrictive relative clause in Shupamem. Unlike English, the use of pauses as non-restrictive relative clause marker is not attested in Shupamem. This justifies the ungrammaticality of (14.b). The non-restrictive nature of a clause however has a pragmatic implication in this language. If the information conveyed by the relative clause was not known by the listener, the said relative clause is considered restrictive, because its omission would not let the listener know the exact referent. This goes in line with Watters (2000) who argues that “the distinction between restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses is not always marked in African languages”.

3.5. Finite relative clauses

Finite relative clauses are those whose verbs are in conjugated forms. The examples of the English relative clauses provided above are finite. Similarly, verbs contained in every Shupamem relative clause are always conjugated, as illustrated in the data below:

(15)

a. màtwá	jɛ́	á	pâ	fý	n-é	pí	kùm	màmví
car	Rel	Res.	Prs.be	white	Def	P3	knock	goat
“The car that is white knocked the goat”								
b. *màtwá	jɛ́	á	jìim-bé	fý	n-é	pí	kùm	màmví
car	Rel	Res.	Prs.be	white	Def	P3	knock	goat
Intended: “The car that is white knocked the goat”								

The verb pâ “be” in (15.a) is conjugated in the present tense in Shupamem. (15.b) is ungrammatical because the verb is non-finite.

3.6. Non-finite relative clauses

As opposed to finite relative clauses, non-finite relative clauses are those whose main verbs are not conjugated. Relative clauses that have the same subject with the main clause are also referred to as non-finite relative clauses. Consider the following:

(16)

- a. She is the person on whom to rely.
- b. The man sitting on the sofa there is my brother.

In (16.a), [on whom to rely] is a non-finite relative clause, which has “person” as head noun. In (16.b), [sitting on the sofa there] is also a non-finite relative clause. There is no relative pronoun and the head noun “man” is the subject of the verb “sitting”.

In Shupamem, non-finite relative clauses are prohibited. The verb of the relative clause must always be conjugated, and the relativizer always present. This is illustrated in (17) below:

(17)

a. léra?	pá	mèn	nɛ́	pé	nsuántúm	ndú-ní	né
teacher	Prs.be	person	Rel	3sg	Prs.rely	on-OM	Def
“The teacher is the person on whom to rely”							
b.*léra?	pá	mèn	nɛ́	ji-nsuántúm		ndú-ní	né
teacher	Prs.be	person	Rel	Inf. rely		on-OM	Def
Intended: “The teacher is the person on whom to rely”							

It is observed that the verb suántúm “rely” is conjugated in the present tense of the subjunctive mood. If the latter is used in the infinitive form, the sentence will be ungrammatical (17.b).

The contrast between English and Shupamem on the relative clause types is summarized in the table below:

Nº	Types of relative clauses	Properties	English	Shupamem
1.	Free/headless relative clauses	Absence of the head noun/antecedent/NP _{REL}	Licensed	Not licensed
2.	Bound relative clauses	Presence of the head noun/antecedent/NP _{REL}	Licensed	Licensed
3.	Restrictive/defining relative clauses	Modifies the meaning of the head noun/antecedent/NP _{REL}	Licensed	Licensed
4.	Non-restrictive relative clauses	Provides supplementary information about the head noun/antecedent/NP _{REL}	Licensed (use of comas)	Licensed (unmarked, defined by the context)
5.	Finite relative clauses	The verb of the relative clause is conjugated	Licensed	Licensed
6.	Non-finite/participial relative clauses	The verb of the relative clause is not conjugated	Licensed	Not licensed

English vs Shupamem relative clause types

3. The relativization strategies

Kuteva and Comrie (2005) postulate four major types of relative clause formation which can be found cross-linguistically:

- Relative pronoun strategy: here, there is a case marked relative pronoun that indicates both the syntactic and semantic role of the head noun within the relative clause; an element or pronoun which simply indicates that a clause is a relative clause is not sufficient to postulate that a language is applying this strategy.
- Non-reduction strategy: this strategy is divided into three types:
 - a. Correlatives: it displays a full NP within the relative clause + (at least one) pronominal form in the matrix clause;
 - b. Head-internal: here, there is a full NP within the relative clause, no representation thereof in the matrix clause;
 - c. Paratactic: here, the relative clause does not differ from an ordinary declarative clause; it is loosely connected to a main clause.
- Pronoun retention strategy: this strategy implies the presence of a resumptive pronoun within the relative clause, whereas the term 'resumptive pronoun' applies only if this pronoun were ungrammatical or optional in an independent clause;
- Gap strategy: in this strategy, there is no overt reference to the case of the head noun.

4.1. English relativization strategy

English applies the relative pronoun strategy in which the pronoun indicates the case of the head noun and introduces the relative clause. Precisely, "who" indicates that the antecedent is in the nominative case, while "whom" marks the accusative and dative (when preceded by a preposition) cases. Finally, "whose" indicates the genitive case in English. The data below illustrate these points:

(18)

- a. The man who jumped into the well (nominative)
- b. The child whom I greeted yesterday (accusative)
- c. The lady to whom I sent a letter last month (dative)
- d. The house whose owner passed away (genitive).

Besides the relative pronoun strategy, English also makes use of the gap strategy in direct object relative clauses. As argued above,

there is no overt reference to the case of the head noun. In English, the relative pronoun that introduces the object relative clauses can be left out as illustrated hereafter:

- (19)
- a. The man I met yesterday is a pilot
 - b. The book I read every morning is very interesting
 - c. The child I gave money to is lovely

It observed that the relative pronouns “whom” and “that/which” are omitted in the data above. This does not affect the sentence grammaticality.

4.2. Shupamem relativization strategy

A first look at the position of the relativizers in Shupamem may lead to the conclusion that this language licenses the relative pronoun strategy. However, none of the relativizers is case inflected in the language. Besides, Comrie 1998:62 posits that an element or pronoun which simply indicates that a clause is a relative clause is not sufficient to postulate that a language is applying this strategy”, they indicate. The mere presence of a pronoun that is restricted to relative clauses, and is thus in some intuitive sense a relative pronoun, is not sufficient to define an instance of the relative pronoun strategy. Such relative pronouns can be case-marked not to indicate its role in the relative clause, but rather to agree with the head noun in the matrix clause.

This point of view is strengthened by the presence of resumptive pronouns inside the relative clauses in Shupamem, suggesting that pronoun retention is the strategy licensed in the language. Within this strategy, the position being relativized is explicitly indicated by means of a resumptive pronoun. The term resumptive pronoun applies only if this pronoun were ungrammatical or optional in an independent clause. Shupamem independent structures do not display resumptive pronouns, as illustrated below:

- (20)
- a. Món kàpí jún ηkεəʔrè
Child P4 buy motorbike
“The child bought a motorbike”
 - b. * Món í kàpí jún ηkεəʔrè
Child Res. P4 buy motorbike
Intended: “The child had bought a motorbike”

The presdence of the resumptive pronoun í in (20.b) renders the sentence ungrammatical. This would not be the case in relative clauses. Consider the following:

- (21)
- a. màtwá jεə á pâ fý ná
car Rel Res. Prs.be white Def
“The car that is white”
 - b. Pámví jεə pə té ntuə ná
goats Rel Res. Prog.Prs come Def
“The goats that come”
 - c. Lé:ràʔ jεə món té njàʔjé-ηí ná
teacher Rel child Prog.Prs greet-Res. Def
“The teacher whom the child is greeting”
 - d. pàléràʔ jεə món té njàʔjé-wáp mé
teachers Rel child Prog.Prs greet-Res. Def
“The teachers whom the child is greeting”

On the one hand, the relativized subject màtwá “car” is indicated inside the relative clause by the resumptive pronoun á “it” (21.a). Similarly, the subject pámví “goats” is indicated inside the relative clause by the resumptive pronoun pá “they” (21.b). These sentences are literary translated as “The car that it is white” (21.a) and “The goats that they are coming” (21.b).

On the other hand, the object lé:rà? “teacher” is indicated inside the relative clause by the resumptive pronoun - ní (21.c), whereas pàlèrà? “teachers” is indicated by –wáp (21.d). All these examples justify that Shupamem licenses pronoun retention.

It should also be mentioned that the gap strategy is not attested in Shupamem, because the relative morphemes must always appear inside the sentence.

Summing up the relativization strategies, one notes that English applies the relative pronoun and the gap strategies whereas Shupamem applies the pronoun retention strategy.

Conclusion

This paper aimed at bringing out the differences between the English and Shupamem relative clauses. The analysis provided revealed some significant differences between English and Shupamem at the levels of the structure of their relative morphemes, the types of relative clauses attested, and the relativization strategy adopted. On the structure of the relative morphemes, this work showed that English displays single relative morphemes whereas Shupamem uses a discontinuous relativizer. Also, English relativizers are case-marked whereas Shupamem’s are not. Likewise, Shupamem relativizer may undergo a phonological assimilation to the preceding sound whereas English relative pronouns never do. On the relative clause typology, the work revealed that headless and non-finite relative clauses do not exist in Shupamem whereas they do in English. In the same line, non-restrictive relative clauses which are encoded in English by a pause is morphologically or phonologically unrealized in Shupamem. It is rather conveyed by the context. Finally, English applies the relative pronoun and the gap strategies, whereas Shupamem applies the pronoun retention strategy.

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