Conjoined Structures with /amachuŋ/ in Meiteiron

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0. /amachuŋ/ 'and'1 in Meiteiron conjoins constituents. It can join phrases, clauses, and sentences as well as single words. In this paper a short account of the various structures which can be joined by /amachuŋ/ is given. Although /amachuŋ/ conjoins structures in Meiteiron, there are other conjuncts which also join structures such as the complex conjunction /...-ga...-ga/ and /...-ga/.

1. Phonologically each occurrence of /amachuŋ/ is attached to the immediately preceding noun phrase and after each occurrence of /amachuŋ/ it is possible to pause.

(1) cawba amachuŋ/ tomba cak cari
    Chaoba and Tomba meal eat(continue)

1.1 All the constituents may have /amachuŋ/ attached to them except the last member of a series.

(2a) cawba amachuŋ/ tomba amachuŋ/ ibeton amachuŋ/ ay cak cari
    Chaoba and Tomba and Ibeton and I meal eat

1.2 All the occurrences of /amachuŋ/ can be optionally deleted except the last in the series. Thus, (2a) above can be transformed into:

(2b) cawba tomba ibeton amachuŋ/ ay cak cari
    Chaoba Tomba Ibeton and I meal eat

Here, (2a) and (2b) are grammatical variants of each other.

2. /amachuŋ/ joins different NPs and different VPs:

(3a) tombaŋa kappi cawbaŋa celli mānaŋa nokyl amachuŋ aynə lawri
    Tomba weeps Chaoba runs Mani laughs and I shout

(3b)2 tomba kappi cawba celli mani nokyl amachuŋ ay(ŋa) lawri
    Tomba weeps Chaoba runs Mani laughs and I shout

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1 Meiteiron /amachuŋ/ is only approximately the same in meaning as the English and.

2 Since (3b) differs from (3a) morphologically, they do not constitute an ideal minimal pair, but (3b) shows some of the possible variation.
(3c) tombənə kəppi aməchun cawbənə celli aməchun manina nokyi aməchun
Tomba weeps and Chaoba runs and Mani laughs and
əynə lawri
I shout

Here (3a) and (3b) are grammatical and are acceptable as meaningful sentences in this language, and they can be treated as variants. Sentence (3b) is meaningful but it is unacceptable to speakers of the language. Here we may point out that in cases where the constituents are sentences only the next to the last constituent in the series is followed by /əməchun/.

(4) cawbə celli aməchun əynə tummi
Chaoba runs and I sleep

In (4) above only two sentences are joined by /əməchun/. (4) is grammatical as well as meaningful and is acceptable to speakers of the language.

The structure /tombənə kəppi, cawbənə celli, nokyi aməchun əynə lawri/ can be represented by the following tree:

A transformation copies /əməchun/ before each S, and we get:

A set of transformations then deletes all occurrences of /əməchun/ except the last leaving the following tree:

The structure is (3a) which, as has already been pointed out, is grammatical as well as meaningful and is acceptable to speakers of the language.
3. Co-referentiality. In case there are only two sentences with coreferential NPs, we have

\[
S \\
/əməchun/ \quad S \quad S
\]

The conjunction transformation will place /əməchun/ between the two sentences. [Note: This tree requires no additional transformations. The transformations mentioned above are sufficient to generate this structure.]

(5a) cawbənə kəppi əməchun cawbənə celli
   Chaoba weeps and Chaoba runs

Sentence (5b) shows the deletion of the repeated NP (Equi-NP deletion):

(5b) cawbənə kəppi əməchun celli
   Chaoba weeps and runs

The pronoun /məhak/ could be used in place of the second NP but it is ambiguous in this case, because it could mean someone other than Chaoba.

(5c) cawbənə kəppi əməchun məhakə celli
   Chaoba weeps and he runs

In (5c) above /məhakə/ does not necessarily refer to /cawba/, although it may. It could also refer to someone other than /cawba/. Hence, deletion is the best alternative to avoid this sort of confusion.


(6a) tombə əməchun cawba cak⁴ care⁴
    Tomba and Chooba meal eat/have/take

(6b) tombə cak care
    Tomba meal have(completive)

(6c) cawba cak care
    Chaoba meal have(completive)

³/cak/ also means 'cooked rice'. Here the appropriate sense is 'a meal'.

⁴/cawba/ means 'eat'. Here /care/ is used to mean 'taking (a meal)' or 'having (a meal)'.
Tomba meal taken and Chaoba meal taken

Through a transformation, we get:

Tomba and Chaoba meal taken

(7a) ibemhāl āmēchun̂g ibetan channari
Ibemhāl and Ibeton play (continue)

(7b) ibemhāl channari
Ibemhāl plays

(7c) ibetan channari
Ibeton plays

In mutual action the preferable form is /-gə/. In (7a) above the meaning may be Ibemhāl and Ibeton are playing separately or it can mean they are playing different games. Thus the preferred construction is:

(8a) ibemhālga ibetonga channari
Ibemhāl with Ibeton with play

(8b) ibemhāl ibetonga channari
Ibemhāl Ibeton with play