Conjoined Structures with /əməchun/ in Meiteiron

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0. /əməchun/ 'and' 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 /əməchun/ is given. Although /əməchun/ conjoins structures in Meiteiron, there are other conjuncts which also join structures such as the complex conjunction /..-gə...-gə/ and /..-gə/.

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

(1) cawba amachun/ tombe cak cari
       Chaoba and Tomba meal eat(continue)

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

(2a) cawba amachun/ tombe amachun/ ibetone amachun/ ay cak cari
       Chaoba and Tomba and Ibeton and I meal eat

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

(2b) cawba tombe ibetone amachun/ ay cak cari
       Chaoba Tomba Ibeton and I meal eat

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

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

(3a) tombane kappi cawbane celli mana ne nokyl amachun ayne lawri
       Tomba weeps Chaoba runs Mani laughs and I shout

(3b)² tombane kappi cawbane celli mani nokyl amachun ay(ne) lawri
       Tomba weeps Chaoba runs Mani laughs and I shout

¹ Meiteiron /əməchun/ 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) tombəə kəppi əməchun cawbəə celli əməchun maniə nokyi əməchun
tomba weeps and chaoba runs and mani laughs and
əyne 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 əməchun əy 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 /tombəə kəppi, cawbəə celli, nokyi əməchun əyne lawri/
can be represented by the following tree:

```
S
  /əməchun/
  S S S S
```

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

```
S
  /əməchun/ S /əməchun/ S /əməchun/ S /əməchun/ S
```

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

```
S
  S S S /əməchun/ S
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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

\[ S \]

/əmahuŋ/ S S

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

(5a) cəwbənə kəppi əmahuŋ cəwbənə celli
    Chaoba weeps and Chaoba runs

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

(5b) cəwbənə kəppi əmahuŋ celli
    Chaoba weeps and runs

The pronoun /mahak/ 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) cəwbənə kəppi əmahuŋ mahakə celli
    Chaoba weeps and he runs

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


(6a) təmbə əmahuŋ cəwbə cək3 care4
    Tomba and Chaoba meal eat/have/take

(6b) təmbə cək care
    Tomba meal have(completive)

(6c) cəwbə cək care
    Chaoba meal have(completive)

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

4/cəba/ means 'eat'. Here /care/ is used to mean 'taking (a meal)' or 'having (a meal)'. 
Through a transformation, we get:

(7a) ibemhəl aməchuŋ ibeton channəri
    ibemhəl and Ibeton play (continue)

(7b) ibemhəl channəri
    Ilemhəl plays

(7c) ibeton channəri
    Ibeton plays

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

(8a) ibemhəlgə ibetongə channəri
    Ibenmal with Ibeton with play

(8b) ibemhəl ibetongə channəri
    Ibenmal Ibeton with play
(8b) is a variant of (8a) and both are grammatical, meaningful, and acceptable in cultivated speech.

5. Special reduction rule:

(9a) tombane cha amachun qa cakhi
    Tomba meat and Chaoba fish eat (definite)

(9b) tombane cha cakhi
    Tomba meat eat (definite)

(9c) cawbane qa cakhi
    Chaoba fish eat (definite)

In (9b) and (9c) the action /cakhi/ 'eat' is common to both conjuncts. In (9a) the first occurrence of /cakhi/ 'eat' has been deleted and only the second one is retained. Deletion, like other transformations, alters the syntactic structure. Starting with the tree below

```
      S
     /|
    /  |
   S   S
    |   |
   Nuc Nuc
    |
   NP   NP
    |
   N   N
    |
  tombane  cakhi amachun
    |
    a transformation changes the structure to produce:

      S
     /|
    /  |
   Nuc Nuc
    |
   NP   VP
     |
    NP   NP
     |
   NP   N
    |
  tombane cha amachun cawbane qa cakhi
```

6. Correferential verb phrases:

(10a) tombäna əməc̃uŋ cawbə ə a pammī
   Tomba and Chaoba fish fond (habitual)

(10b) tombə ə a pammī
   Tomba fish fond (habitual)

(10c) cawbə ə a pammī
   Chaoba fish fond (habitual)

\[
\text{A transformation changes this tree to produce the following structure:}
\]

7. Correferential nouns:

(11a) cawbə cakhī əməc̃uŋ cawbə cakhī
   Chaoba eat and Chaoba go (definite)

(11b) cawbə cakhī əməc̃uŋ məhak cakhī\(^5\)
   Chaoba eats and he goes

(11c) cawbə cakhī əməc̃uŋ cakhī
   Chaoba eats and goes

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\(^5\)This sentence has a different semantic interpretation. Hence it is not a variant of (11a) or (11c).
The repeated NP is deleted to give the following:

8. Conclusion. This paper has been confined to describing conjoined structures formed with the conjunction /əməchun/ 'and' and the different syntactic rules affecting those structures. In cases of constructions using symmetric predicates, noun phrases are not joined with /əməchun/; instead, the complex conjunction /-gə-.gə/ is used. The first /-gə/ will follow the preceding NP and the second /-gə/ the following NP. Illustrations:

(12a) tombaŋa cawbaga cak cay
Tomba Chaoba meal have (inf./habitual)

(13a) nambul turelga imphal turelga tinnare
Nambul river Imphal river join (completive)

(12b) tomba cawbeŋa cak cay
Tomba Chaoba meal have (inf.)

(13b) nambul turel imphal turelga tinnare
Nambul river Imphal river joined

In this case (13b) the conjunction /-gə/ following the first NP has been deleted while the /-gə/ with the second NP has been retained. (12b) and (13b) can be taken as variants of (12a) and (13a), respectively.
Another form for this type of structure is:

(14) nambul əməchun imphal turel tinnārē
    Nambul and Imphal river join

(15) nambul əməchun imphal turel əni tinnārē
    Nambul and Imphal river two joined

There are other conjunctions which can join constituents but besides /-ga/, /-ga...-ga/, and /əməchun/ they are not discussed here.

References


