Problems in the Syntax of Verb-Concatenation in Burmese

by

F.K. Lehman

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

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In the present paper my intention is to re-examine the general character of verb concatenation in Burmese. I do not propose to present any new facts about the matter, nor do I mean necessarily to come to many fixed conclusions. Rather, I simply wish to place the problem in the context of current syntactic theory since the existing treatments of it are somewhat outdated in this respect. What I shall show in this paper is that the correct view is that verb sequences in Burmese are neither transformationally derived nor, in the strict sense, base-generated, but rather inserted into the syntactic structure as lexically formed compounds in the sense of Mohanan's Lexical Phonology (1982).

I can find no literature on Burmese that actually proposes a transformational source for these concatenations, but the only existing paper making any serious proposal within the framework of modern syntactic theory, Smeall (1975), mentions this possibility, but only to dispose of it in favour of base-generation. This, however, was written long before it had become clear that the option of lexical compounding has to be considered. It was also done before the development of current Government & Binding syntax (G&B), or its possible notational variants (see Lehman and Pingakaravat 1986) such as Lexical-Functional syntax (in the sense of Chomsky 1981,1982 and Bresnan 1978, respectively). Rather, however, than pursuing the previous treatment at length, I shall, in the present paper, proceed to examine the three options in the light of essential concepts in G&B, namely the projection principle and the theory of empty categories (so-called zero pronouns).

Let me begin with a very brief and summary overview of the phenomena in question. Burmese is, of course, a strictly verb-final language. verb strings, therefore, are direct concatenations of verb roots, with all the desinences of the clause following the right-most element of the string: all the other verbs in the string must lack all 'particles'—modals, aspectuals, nominalisers such as the element pa (p - Lehman 1978), postpositional elements such as clause-subordinating particles (e.g. kyu. -q) etc., the only exception, which I shall deal with in its turn, being the negating element (mz, q), and in particular, all arguments (noun phrases) or material containing arguments (postpositional
phrases, essentially). It follows that all arguments relevant to the string and/or to the several individual verbs in it must appear, if anywhere, to the left of the string. This last fact will turn out to be central for our analysis of verb strings.

The facts about the automatic voicing, immediately following a syllable not ending in a glottal stop, of syllable initials that are unvoiced in citation form are also interesting regarding verb strings, but not, as I shall argue here, nearly so interesting as might at first appear. Again briefly, for the most part this automatic voicing does not apply over whatever is the juncture between elements in such strings. The few exceptions are superficial only, and turn out upon further consideration to be largely irrelevant to the analysis of these strings. It might be thought that the absence, in the general case, of such voicing indicates an open, word- or phrase-level, juncture between these elements, in which case it might also be supposed that these strings cannot be verb compounds, viz., lexically inserted as single elements under a single phrase-structure terminal node, V. This, however is wrong. I shall not be able to demonstrate the matter in this paper, but it is easy to show that this phonetic process operates only over the juncture between a particle and the following material of the word it is criticalised to, or between anything and a postpositional or desinential element following. I shall have no reason to deal with the latter, since it is not relevant to the voicing of the initials of roots (nouns, verbs), but criticisation is decidedly important here.

If we define clitics roughly as word-non-final syllables that undergo vowel reduction to schwa (with the elimination of all postvocalic elements of the syllable and accompanying neutralisation of tonal contrast — see Lehman 1973a, 1973b for fuller treatment of reduction and the dependence of tone upon post-vocahics in Burmese generally), then, with complications that I have dealt with in the earlier work to some extent and that are quite irrelevant to present considerations, an inherently unvoiced initial immediately following will be potentially subject to automatic voicing. In fact, the two common inherently clitic syllables, ʔa (ə) and the aforementioned negative element are exceptions to this generalisation: the first, which nominalises a following verb root (see Lehman 1975), is somewhat erratic in its ability to cause automatic voicing (see also Okell 1969:14ff.), whilst the second never causes it at all. The latter fact is especially important here, since it shows clearly that the absence of automatic voicing cannot be taken as evidence that there is word- or phrasal-juncture between a verb root and whatever immediately precedes it. As to the former, the matter is more difficult to state, no doubt, but not difficult in principle.

What would be, were this the place to do it, easy to demonstrate is that wherever a root-word syllable is voiced, the immediately preceding syllable that triggers the process is in a clitic position. That is, either the syllables in question constitute (parts of) a lexically unanalysable polysyllabic word (most often a loanword), or else the preceding element replaces, in fact, precisely the nominalising clitic ʔa. Not all syllables in clitic position, as is well known, necessarily voice a following initial, which do and which do not seems, for the present at least, a highly idiosyncratic property of the lexical items in question. But if, in the case of a word that is not an inherent polysyllable, there is automatic voicing, then one can be sure that the voicing trigger is so compounded with what follows that it replaces the clitic nominaliser. Furthermore, it seems at least as idiosyncratic whether a syllable in clitic position itself undergoes reduction; even if it does not (e.g., lu-gaung: , qe-mei — good person, from ʔa-gaung: , qe-mei, good one, goodness — kaung: , to be good), it can cause the following initial to voice even though the clitic it replaces cannot itself do so! Also, of course, if it does cause voicing, and if it happens to end in a glottal stop, it will undergo reduction, become itself, a clitic, because a glottal stop final blocks automatic voicing. Note, by the way, that, for at least many speakers of quite standard Burmese, in at least moderately rapid speech, voicing of a postposed grammatical element, a verb particle in particular, may
indeed take place after a stopped syllable (e.g., hou?te / hou?de, əʔnəʔ - is/was good). Whilst it is too early, in the present state of research on the topic, to be certain, it is worthwhile suggesting two things: first that automatic voicing has in every case to do with the juncture between some element and a particle, or an element replacing a particle, and, second, that the options for automatic voicing over such junctures are different depending upon whether the particle in question is or is not a clitic. There is, however, something wrong with this suggestion, and it has precisely to do with verb strings — with, in fact, the two exceptions mentioned above to the general rule that automatic voicing is not found within such strings. So, it will be necessary now to look at these exceptions.

The two cases in question have to do with expressions meaning to 'want to V' (where V stands for any other verb whatever for which such a sequence can get a plausible interpretation) and causative expressions — expressions meaning to have/let someone V, respectively. The first case involves the verbal element hcin əʔ, 'want,' which invariably voices its initial if what immediately precedes it ends in a voicing final segment. E.g., thwa: , 'go'; thwa:j ʔ ʔ ʔ ʔ , 'to go.' The second case involves the verbal element sei , ə , 'to send, order or employ someone or something in some action.' Its initial, too, voices in phonetically appropriate contexts. E.g., thwa:sei-de , ə , 'have [someone] go.' Are these, therefore, somehow more closely bound to the verbs they follow than are many other kinds of elements in Burmese verb strings (as Smeall suggests in his interesting hierarchisation of types of verbal collocation)?

Not so, if we examine the two elements carefully. The first, 'want,' is simply itself a bound form, and in that respect very like a particle, indeed a post-verbal particle if one thinks about the fact that the element preceding that triggers voicing is not a clitic but a root verb in its own right. For instance, even in the simple verb meaning 'to want,' this element is necessarily present and its initial voiced: lou-jin-de , ə , 'to need, lack, be in want of [something].' It simply cannot occur alone, and it seems reasonably obvious that what is going on here is something similar to the previously enunciated process of replacement, in which the first element in the verb meaning 'to want,' is replaced in compounding by the verb designated V, above, e.g., the verb meaning 'to go' in the particular example. In this case, the voicing in question is automatically accounted for. One might equally well suppose, perhaps, that hcin is itself something like a particle, but this would run headlong into various kinds of evidence that this element is verbal in character, however much bound. For instance, certain aspectual particles that can follow it immediately can otherwise only follow root verbs. It must, then, be considered, as indeed Smeall in effect treats it, as a bound verb. While not by any means definitively, this further strongly suggests that the process by which verb strings are put together is one of compounding. That compounding is likely to be a lexical process will emerge later in the paper.

The case for the 'causative' element, sei is similar, though not identical. This verb can occur by itself, but Okef (1969:406) quite properly calls it 'obsolescent' as an independent verb. In the current colloquial, in fact, it occurs chiefly in the above mentioned causative collocations and in the nominalised form (meaning 'an order') ʔasei əko . Otherwise, in its root meaning, it occurs only in doublet compounds, mainly with the verb of similar meaning, hkaŋ: ʕə . Whilst Judson's Dictionary (1966) shows only sei-
The Universal tri-lingual dictionary (Hoke Sein 1978), which is far more up to date in such matters of usage, shows prominently the reverse-order doublet compound, in which the second member has its initial voiced. The 'obsolescence' of sei turns out, then, to come to this: that this element occurs, in its root meaning, mainly, if not yet only, as a bound second member of a doublet compound verb, with its initial appropriately voiced.

What all this means for us is that the automatic voicing of the initials of these two verb roots has little to do directly with the structure of verb strings, and much more to do with the fact that they have become, of themselves, bound doublet roots, hence verb-particle-like! Furthermore, it appears most straightforward to suppose that, once again, when either of these bound roots appears in a true verb string, the V preceding it is actually in replacement of the doublet first member (lou, hkaip, respectively) it is coupled with in its underlying lexical form. This allows, at very least, the correct generalisation that defines uniquely the domain of collocations of roots, whether nominal or verbal, that permit automatic voicing, namely, a juncture between a root syllable and a particle or particle-like (bound) element. There is even an interesting sort of mirror-image property as between the nominal and the verbal varieties: if a clitic particle is involved, the collocation replaces the clitic; otherwise, it replaces the non-bound form -- stated otherwise, collocation, in the sense intended, always involves the replacement of the left-hand member of a pair of elements one of which is bound. So much for the voicing problem.

For the rest, it is well to proceed, before examining the three general hypotheses about our phenomenon, by looking at Smeall's (1975) and Ockell's (1969) attempted classifications of its sub-varieties; for without getting the facts straight, no argument can usefully be made concerning a proper account of them. Smeall divides the collocations into five, hierarchical types, each, in his view, involving successively more closely bound connections. I shall not outline his treatment in any detail, but it simply will not do. His grouping consists, in fact, not so much of types of collocations as of the elements that are 'following' members of immediate pairings. His fifth group can be readily disposed of. It consists of aspectuals, modals and the like; of desinences, not verbs at all. His fourth group includes the elements we have just been dealing with, the causative and 'want.' It also contains two elements that he claims are as closely bound to what precedes them as the two former, namely, pyan, 'o' and ye?, qf6. The first is an independent verb meaning 'to return,' and the collocation V + pyan means 'to V again.' Why Smeall supposes this is an especially bound collocation escapes me; like the collocations involving his first three groups it has a paraphrase, relatively rare no doubt but well-formed and encountered nonetheless, in which V is followed by an overt complementiser, viz. (see below), where the second member takes a non-finite complement clause with V as its predicate. As to the second case, whilst the collocation V + ye? has, as Judson's dictionary rightly says, something like the force of the English 'to have the heart to V,' the second element is nothing but the plain verb (also, if rarely taking, in paraphrase, a complement clause with predicate V) meaning 'to be cruel or hard-hearted,' so that the more correct rendering of the collocation is simply 'to be cruel enough to V.' Smeall here seems to have been misled by Judson (1966:828), who lists a separate entry for this use with the gloss 'verb affix,' apparently not noticing its obvious relation to his earlier entry under this spelling glossed as a verb 'cruel' and the like. His group three, in which possibly the foregoing two elements really belong, consist of elements he says take complement clauses the evidence for which has to be indirect; by which he seems to mean that such complements are not readily marked as such by the usual complementisers to be treated hereinafter. However, whilst it is certainly true that, no doubt because of the extreme productivity of collocations involving such second elements as those meaning 'to try to,' 'to be able to,' 'to show how to,' and the like, the 'open' complement
form is exceedingly rare, it is nonetheless, once again, acceptable. He also lists an element
fa:, here that he glosses as 'to come to,' but this is an error, since this is, in the first
place, nothing but the ordinary verb 'to proceed,' and, in the second place, it does not
(certainly not at all commonly) occur as second member of any such collocation. It does (see
Judson 1966: 906 -- where the Burmese punctuation makes the thing quite clear) occur as a
tag after certain 'imperatives,' as in the Judson example sa:ja2ou? , fa: -- oo2e@i oo1 ,
'come on! let's eat!'

Smeall's groups one and two are really much the same. These elements are second
members of collocations, and they readily and commonly take marked clause complements
with V as predicate that are paraphrases of the direct collocations. He distinguishes his two
groups by claiming that the first takes complements marked by the complementiser lou, &--
'for', (in a non-purposive sense) whilst the second class takes the complementiser
hpou. A: -- 'for' (in a distinctly purposive sense. This is no place to go into the very
difficult subject of complementisers in Burmese, but in any case this class division of
Smeall's does not stand up well. Indeed, as his own listing shows, some at least of the
elements fall equally into both groups. The verb meaning 'to be good,' kauj; emés is very
common as a second member of a collocation with a preceding V, for instance. Smeall (1975:
277) glosses such collocations, and their complement-clause paraphrases, in group one as
'enjoy Xing,' in group two as 'wise, advisable to X' (his X = my V). This is all right as far
as it goes, no doubt, but consider such a V+ kauj: collocation as sa:kauj:de, comMÉMÉX 'good to eat.' This has two interpretations, closely related, no doubt, but certainly
distinguishable. On one interpretation, it indicates that something is found to be good 'in
the eating,' or 'as one eats it,' whilst, in the second it indicates that something serves the
purpose of being edible. As to open-form paraphrases, the first takes the complementiser
lou, after the verb meaning 'to eat,' sa: and the second takes the purposive complementiser
hpou, and indeed in this, as in innumerable other collocations involving Smeall's groups
one and two, it is often hard, even next to impossible, to decide between paraphrases with
the one or the other of these two complementisers. So much for Smeall's typology.

He goes on to try and show that his hierarchy of types or categories is supported by
certain facts concerning negation. That is, the negative clitic element ma is sometimes able to
come between successive members of a verb string, sometimes not, in which case it is forced
to remain at the left of the string as a whole. The trouble with Smeall's argument here,
however is that, as Okell shows clearly (1969: 40-42), the distinctions here are often so
subtle as to defy efforts at a straightforward account. At best we have a scale of relative
likelihood that the negative element can intervene; it is nearly impossible to find a collocation
of this kind, that is, of the kind that has a complement-clause paraphrase, in which negation
is quite eligible to intervene, unable to intervene. I intend to return to the problem of intervening
negative below, where I shall argue that this element (indeed all clitic and/or particle-like
elements) are lexically compounded with verbs, so that the fact that this element can seem to
'intervene' in a verb string of this kind bears a very doubtful connexion to the syntactic
analysis of such formations. In particular, it has rather little to do with differential degrees of
binding amongst members of such strings of verbs, and can be used neither as evidence
favouring the view that these strings are transformationally derived from clause-complement
constructions that paraphrase them (by verb-raising, or clause union) nor as evidence
favouring the view (Smeall's own) that these strings have their several elements entered
under distinct terminal V nodes, syntactically, these terminal nodes being, according to
Smeall's argument (based upon the negation phenomenon, and also upon his proposed
hierarchy and the fact that his different types of collocations therein can embed in one another with different likelihoods—something he discusses under the heading of 'scope') not co-ordinate but rather in a right branching structure with each V under its own V node, the entire right-branching structure itself being ultimately dominated by V*.

It is not clear that this proposal is even altogether coherent. On the one hand, it appears (without relevant references or comment) to be formulated in at least the notation of some early form of X-bar theory, in which case we must suppose that the successive elements are in some kind of head-modifier relationship. Smeal's introduction of the idea of scope relations amongst them also suggests this. On the other hand, the maximal node for the construction is given as V*, which surely must be taken as implying that, nevertheless, these strings are more compound-like, in something more like a co-ordinate relationship. The latter, as I shall argue below, has much to recommend it, especially when one realises that the members of true compound formations can quite well stand semantically in a non-co-ordinate relationship, a fact understood ever since the ancient Sanskrit grammarians (see, e.g., Whitney 1941:Ch. 16). It is certainly not the case that a semantic relation of a non-co-ordinate kind amongst such elements requires that they be in a structure of the kind Smeal proposes. Nor, indeed, is it necessary to suppose that the elements in such strings are inserted into the syntax under separate terminal nodes at all, even under a dominating V* (where the *-convention is generally taken to abbreviate the set of all degrees of 'co-ordinate' branching of terminals under a phrasal node, from 1 to arbitrarily many). The only reasons for proposing that there must be a branching structure involved seem to be the facts about the 'intervention' of the negative particle, about the general absence of automatic voicing and about a non-co-ordinate semantic relationship amongst successive elements, often having a complement clause paraphrase. But we have now seen that none of these reasons is at all compelling. But I do not wish to anticipate my later arguments. This, however, completes my review of Smeal's work on the subject, and I can now pass on to Okell's treatment, which, as we shall presently see, covers a number of apparently related kinds of verb-string that Smeal could ill afford not to consider before making his analytical proposal.  

Okell (1969:23 ff.) defines three categories of what he refers to as verb compounds: ordinary, auxiliary and pre-verb compounds (with various further complications I need not go into in this paper). Ordinary compounds are pairs (occasionally longer strings) of verbs of very similar meaning that reinforce one another (where either could have done the job alone - Okell's sub-class of 'Doubled Verbs'), or that taken together specify a meaning by

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1 Smeal makes an error that bears at least tangentially on my argument here. He claims that the complementiser law. can be directly succeeded by law, the postpositional marker of oblique, in particular, objective, case (see Lehman 1985 ). He seems to be forced to do this in order to relate non-finite complement clauses to direct object nominalisations of such clauses, thus over-defining the very notion of complement itself. This sequence is, however, no allowed. law. is already postpositional case-marking in character, and, in Burmese, particles, such as the emphatic law. (see Lehman 1978c ), but not other postpositions, can follow postpositions. In any case, there appears to be no good reason for thus overgeneralising the category of complements.
generalisation or narrowing down that neither by itself could specify adequately. Some examples (from Okell) are: pyu.zu. งว, 'to do' + 'to collect' = 'to compile,' yaun:we งωαδοδ, 'sell' + 'buy' = 'trade.' These strings have no paraphrases as constructions in separate clauses, but the other two have. His Auxiliary compounds are the ones that Smeall dealt with, and I need say no more of them at this time. His third class comprises pairs (or sometimes more) of verb roots for which a paraphrase exists in which the first member is the predicate of a participial conjunctive clause. That is, the first member, in its own proper clause, is in an auxiliary compound with a following ρι: งว, meaning 'to finish,' in its root, that is, participial form; this makes its predicate translatable as a past-perfect participle, and the clause itself is an adverbial left-adjunct of the sentence as a whole. This is the only equivalent Burmese has of sentence conjunction; there is no true co-ordinate conjunction of clauses in the language. An example is thwa:bi: งว 'having gone.' Thus, we also get thwa:we-de 'goes and buys,' with the paraphrase thwa:bi: we-de, 'having gone, buys.

Okell does not present any particular argument for treating his three classes under the rubric of compounding, though I shall argue that he is correct in so treating them. I have to presume that he is led to this move by at least two facts: that nothing (save, again, the negative clitic) can intervene between the verb root elements of such strings, and that there are a number of kinds of complex strings that are mixtures of the three types. This, however, is at best a marginal consideration. If there existed, as there do not, ordinary compounds properly containing one of the other two types, e.g., of the schematic form XYZ, where, say, Y is an auxiliary or a pre-verb compound, or, even better, of the form XY, with either X or Y itself one of the other two types, the consideration would bear tellingly in favour of the treatment under the head of compounding. As it is, the fact that an ordinary compound can be a first member of a preverb collocation (pyan-le-hopin. งωαδοδ - 'return, turn round and open,' that is, 'reopen'), the first member of an auxiliary collocation (hsa?: hsan-jin, งωαδοδ - 'connect, join, want to,' that is, 'want to associate'), or the second member of either (thwa: kyan-si, งωαδοδ - 'go, think, intend,' that is, 'intend to go;' htaq-sin:sa; งωαδοδ - 'sit, think, assimilate,' that is, 'sit and consider') is only a trivial problem in bracketing within these strings. Moreover, so is the fact that verb strings can be ambiguous. Thus, for example, pyan-htauq-yei, งωαδοδ - 'return, sit, write,' viz., 'return, and sit-and-write,' or 'return-and-sit, and write;' or, say, la-neide, งωαδοδ - 'come, stays,' viz., 'comes and stays,' or 'remains as coming,' i.e., 'is coming' (nei is an auxiliary member that serves altogether productively to make the progressive aspect, and the construction, of course, has a paraphrase with the complementiser lou. are all resolved by allowing bracketing within verb strings. This option is, compatible with a compounding analysis (cf. Mohannan 1982), with an analysis that views at least the two types other than the ordinary compounds of Okell as containing, respectively, conjunctive and complement
This completes the summary of Okell's treatment, but what was said at the end of the preceding paragraph raises an interesting point having regard to the range of possible alternative analyses of these verb strings. To begin with, it might just be supposed that these verb strings, at least Okell's auxiliary and preverb types, which I shall hereafter call subordinative and conjunctive, respectively, are actually sequences of subordinate and main clauses in these two kinds of relations. But there are at least three kinds of considerations militating definitively against such a possible view. In the first place, let us take up the idea that in these strings we simply have two sorts of subordinate clauses 'without their customary markers or complementisers.' The usual markers for non-finite subordinate clauses, low, hpo, are, indeed, some sort of complementisers as nearly as can be determined, although I cannot take up the argument in this paper, even though it has from time to time recently been suggested that COMP is always leftward of its clause, regardless of the word order of the language, owing to the postulated universal asymmetry between rightward and leftward movement. But pi: is nothing of the kind, but rather itself simply the verb meaning 'to finish.' A clause ending with this element ends simply with a verbal participle and, in the colloquial at least, has no overt marker or complementiser (see Judson's Grammar, 1951, for ywei, and similar overt markers of verbs as participial and the fact that they are in the same distribution class as low, and also Judson 1966:864, under ywei, g1c9). If, then, a verb string of the conjunctive kind lacks the formative pi; the first member is still a verb root, a participial form. In fact, in both subordinative and conjunctive strings the first member is a simple verb root or participle, so that, on the view that these constructions are subordinate clause structures, they simply fall together structurally. This result seems to me to make the view being examined at the moment exceedingly doubtful, but not incoherent, since one sort would be a sentence adjunct and the other would be an adverbial adjunct internal to the main clause. At any rate, that the distinction in question collapses, and especially that no arguments can intervene within any such string appears definite against the proposal under review now, because there must be room in any clause for at least some of its arguments.

The view that they can be base-generated, which is essentially the view taken by Smeal, simply leads to too many problems. It provides either too complicated a branching structure, as we have seen above, or the wrong structure. If the bracketing problem were to be said to require that structure, then even the ordinary type collocations would require it. Even if V* with a flat branching structure were to be proposed for one or more of the types of verb strings, moreover, we should be no better off, since we would still be left with no principled account of why it is that no material can intervene in these strings. That is, there would be nothing to prevent at least some sorts of non-verb material to the left of any given verb within any given level of V. The example showing this can be had from English, where
at least adverbial material can intervene amongst a string of one or more auxiliaries followed by a main verb ('He ought certainly to have by now died.'). This is so irrespective of the fact that Burmese is a strict verb-final (SOV) language, since any kind of non-verb material can appear left of any verb, including intact subordinate clauses. Indeed, we should then be left with the problem of how, in such a structure, to prevent in fact every sort of intervening material including the set of nominal arguments of each verb separately, which is effectually to say that any version of the base-generated proposal is bound to be structurally indistinguishable from the proposal that these verb strings preserve the clause structure of their open-form paraphrases, just in case, of course (but see Lehman 1973c), in this quasi-free word order, or non-configurational, language (Chomsky 1981, 1986), there is independent evidence for V* with at least some kinds of subordinate clauses under it. It seems obvious then that we can discount the base-generated hypothesis.

This seems to leave us with two serious proposals to consider: the transformational derivation by clause union/verb-raising, and the lexical compounding hypothesis. Either can be made to account plausibly for the non-intervention of arguments in verb strings. The former proposal has not, to the best of my knowledge, been explicitly put forward for Burmese, though it is implicitly considered by Smeall only to be discounted by him. It has, however, considerable currency as an account of not dissimilar instances, in other languages, of the stringing together of verbs where the semantic interpretation of the whole construction is reflected by an available paraphrase in which each verb is in a distinct clause together with its respective arguments and adjuncts (see, for instance, Woodbury & Sadock 1986 for a very up-dated version of this view). On this view, verbs are raised to the main clause from dependent clauses. It is thought to be Chomsky-adjoined to the upstairs verb, creating in fact what amounts to the structure proposed in Smeall's paper (or its left-branching counterpart, perhaps). A supposed example is the rule that produces (see, e.g., Legendre 1986, for an account of this, inter alia, in the terms of Relational Grammar) the French causative construction (faire + V), with the possibility of at least the object clitic, se, coming between the two when faire is not infinitive (faire se désespérer les étudiants, faire se désespérer les étudiants, fait désespérer les étudiants, fait se désespérer les étudiants).

The potential presence of the clitic in such examples as the French causative construction is equivocal for evaluating the applicability of such an hypothesis to the Burmese case. Clitics, after all, are not independent arguments (see discussion in Legendre 1986 and references therein). But, as Woodbury & Sadock point out with regard to clause union, where it may plausibly be supposed to be operating one must seek what they call 'clause union effects,' viz., arguments semantically proper to one (usually the raised one) of the conjoined verbs found in cases or positions (an especially instructive paper on clause union transformations and its effects is Haegeman & van Riemsdijk 1986. No such clause union effects can be found when there are verb strings present.

Consider a crucial example involving subordinative collocations.
I want to go. No problems arise here, as this is an Equi construction. The word for 'I' is in the case of the subject as it would be for either verb separately. In a case where the verb for 'to want' is combined with another verb in a non-Equi construction, e.g.,

(2) kyun-do thu.kou thwa azi-jin-de (なこ り に す き ら に す き ら)

I want him to go. Still no problems of the sort arise, because the word 'him' is in the object case as it would be for the free verb meaning 'to let.'

Similarly, consider the very common subordinating construction of the Tough Movement sort, that is, with a Tough Movement paraphrase,

(3) thu ci. kauq.de (に な ら に な ら)

she look-at is-good/ She is good-looking.

Once again, the word for 'she' is in just the subject case it would be in for the verb 'good' alone. Moreover, since complement clauses can come after subjects, the subject of the collocation is not out of place for being the subject of just the word for 'good.' Thus, its open-form paraphrase,

(4) thu ci. lou. kauq.de (... で で で ) = thu [pro ci.lou.]pro [thu ci.lou.]

... 'for'COMP...

She is good to look at/for looking at/for one to look at.

Here the word for 'she' can be construed as subject of either clause; whichever it be, the other clause has an Empty Pronominal (pro) subject (see especially Lehman & Pingkaranawat 1986 for the treatment of Empty Categories in this language and the bearing of these facts upon Empty Category theory in general). Moreover (see Chomsky 1981: 308 ff.), it is by no means obvious now that so-called Tough Movement involves anything other than the idea that TM verbs like 'easy,' 'good' (in the sense of 'good for Y-ing') and so on are lexically subcategorised to allow underlying non-sentential, even animate, subjects just as long as they have the requisite sentential complement with a direct object coreferential with the upstairs subject. (4) uncontroversially meets this condition admirably. Nor does the verb string in (3) meaning, roughly, 'good-looking' present the problems the glossing expression
in English might be thought to present. That is, 'look' in English, like 'seem' may be a so-called raising verb, whose underlying subject is expletive (non-thematic) 'it,' so that the surface subject of 'she looks good' may be a derived subject, in which case it might just be argued that in 'she is good-looking,' 'she' is not actually in the case of the underlying subject of either verb taken alone, thus perhaps making for a conceptual difficulty in the way of an apparent clause union effect. 'it' means 'to look at,' and 'she,' here, is the direct object, so that the connexion with the TM paraphrase is complete, a connexion that English compounds like 'good-looking' seem never to have.

So, the absence of clause union effects as to the case or position of arguments appears to argue strongly against treating Burmese verb strings as transformationally derived (for a different view of verb raising in the context of a consideration of the structure preserving constraint upon movement rules, in which the very fact of what we have here called clause union effects is held to argue against the existence of any such rule, see Wasow 1977).

NOW THE TWO MATTERS OF THE PROJECTION PRINCIPLE AND MOHANNAN'S COMPOUNDING IDEAS. I REFER TO HIS PERSUASIVE DEMONSTRATION THAT COMPOUNDS (HE DEALS MAINLY WITH JUST NOUN COMPOUNDS, BUT THAT MAKES NO DEMONSTRABLE DIFFERENCE) ARE FORMED IN THE LEXICON. HE PROPOSES DETAILED MECHANISMS FOR HANDLING BOTH THE BRACKETING PROBLEM AND THE DISTINCTION, WHICH AFTER ALL EXISTS FOR NOUN COMPOUNDS, TOO, BETWEEN WHAT HE CALLS SUBCOMPOUNDS (CF. BY 'SUBORDINATIVE') AND CO-COMPOUNDS (CF. MY 'CONJUNCTIVE'). HIS MORE GENERAL ARGUMENT IS TO THE EFFECT THAT MORPHOLOGY IS, AS A WHOLE, LEXICAL RATHER THAN TRANSFORMATIONAL, AND I WISH TO EXTEND THAT REASONING (SEE BELOW).

HAVING REGARD, STILL, TO MOHANNAN'S POSITION (WHICH, AS HE HAS NOTED IS INDIFFERENT TO ANY DISTINCTION BETWEEN G&G AND LFG GRAMMATICAL THEORY), I HAVE TO ARGUE THAT THE PROJECTION PRINCIPLE IS NOT VIOLATED IN ANY OBVIOUS WAY GIVEN THE ABSENCE OF AT LEAST SOME SUBCATEGORISED ARGUMENTS FOR SOME OF THE MEMBERS OF SUCH A COMPOUND. THAT IS, THERE IS IN FACT (WEAK) EVIDENCE AGAINST A WHOLE BUNCH OF PRO OR TRACES REPRESENTING THE 'MISSING' ARGUMENTS. (CONSIDER THE THETA PRINCIPLE — EACH ARGUMENT, THAT IS EACH INSTANCE OF A NOMINAL IN A SYNTACTIC ARGUMENT POSITION IN THE SENSE OF G&B THEORY, HAS TO HAVE A UNIQUE THETA ROLE ONLY). YOU CANNOT HAVE ARGUMENTS, EMPTY OR NOT, IN THE SAME CLAUSE THAT ARE COREFERENTIAL (SEE FKL 1986 ON REFLEXIVES AND OTHER BOUND ANAPHORS AS NOT TRUE COREFERENTIALS), AND BOUND ANAPHORS IN THESE CASES AND WITH THESE READINGS ARE IMPOSSIBLE. (WANT SELF TO GO).
ALSO, ONE MUST DEAL WITH THE QUESTION OF PROPER GOVERNMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF (4), WHERE IT POSSIBLY CANNOT BE THE CASE THAT CAUSATIVES (LET HIM V) PUT *HIM* IN OBJECT CASE BY COMPLEMENTISER GOVERNMENT OR VERB GOVERNMENT. BUT THIS MAY NOT BE IMPOSSIBLE, AFTER ALL, I.E., NOT IMPOSSIBLE TO HAVE EXCEPTIONAL- GOVERNMENT CONSTRUCTIONS OR COMPLEMENTISER GOVERNMENT OF A DOWNSTAIRS SUBJECT IN THIS WORD ORDER (I MEAN WITH THE COMPLEMENTISER WAY OFF ON THE RIGHT OF ITS CLAUSE AND NO VP, HENCE THE VERB GOVERNING THE OBJECT NOT HAVING TO BE ANYTHING LIKE EVEN ADJACENT TO, LET ALONE AN IMMEDIATE SISTER OF, THAT OBJECT), SINCE AS IT ALREADY STANDS GOVERNMENT HERE DOES NOT DEPEND UPON ADJACENCY — PERHAPS NOT IN ANY NON-CONFIGURATIONAL LANGUAGE. BUT THE THING IS THAT IN THE OPEN FORM BOTH ARGUMENTS APPEAR (HOWEVER UNCOMMONLY) AND WHEN THE LOU. COMPLEMENTISER IS THERE IN THAT STRUCTURE, THE DOWNSTAIRS SUBJECT IS NOT OBLIQUE. KYUNDO THU THWA: LOU. THU.GOU SEI HKAING.DE. HENCE, IT SIMPLY ISN'T THE CASE THAT WE CAN APPEAL HERE TO GOVT. IN FACT WHENEVER WE DO IN BURMESE THE EQUIVALENT OF ENGLISH CONSTRUCTIONS IN WHICH A MATRIX VERB HAS A COMPLEMENT SUBJECT IN THE OBJECT CASE EITHER GOVERNED BY COMP-FOR OR IN EXCEPTIONAL GOVERNMENT, WE USE THE CAUSATIVE, SUBCATEGORISED TO TAKE SIMULTANEOUSLY AN OBJECT AND A COMPLEMENT CLAUSE, IN BETWEEN. SO THIS MECHANISM GETS ROUND THE ABSENCE OF CASE GOVERNMENT OF A DOWNSTAIRS NON-FINITE SUBJECT. HENCE, WE HAVE TO SUPPOSE THAT IN THE OPEN FORM THE MISSING ARGUMENTS ARE ALL PRO. [TAKE NOTE OF THE ACCEPTABILITY OF: KYUNDO KA, KYUNDO/KOU-DAING (PSEUDO-REFLEXIVE) THWA.LOU.LAOUJINDE. THAT IS, THERE SEEM TO BE NO (RELEVANT?) CASES OF LEXICALLY GOVERNED SUBJECTS OF DOWNSTAIRS NON-FINITE CLAUSES.] BY THE WAY, WERE THERE EVIDENCE FOR EVEN PRO MISSING ARGUMENTS IN THE SINGLE CLAUSE, IT WOULD INDEED COUNT AS CLAUSE UNION EFFECT! THIS COUNTS ADDITIONALLY AGAINST TRANSFORMATIONAL VERB RAISING, I MEAN ABSENCE OF ARGUMENTS THAT WOULD NOT BE IN ANY SIMPLEX CLAUSE OTHERWISE.

ALSO GENERALLY NO EVIDENCE FOR NP MOVEMENT OR TRACES, THOUGH (1986) POSSIBLY AT LF (LOGICAL FORM). SO WHY SHOULD ONE EXPECT V-MOVEMENT?

MOHANNAN'S IDEA (NOW FOR VERBS) AND CONTROL! THAT IS, A SINGLE, TRULY COMPOUNDED VERB WILL HAVE NO MISSING ARGUMENTS, OF COURSE, IF THE NOTION OF COMPOUNDING IS TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY. SO, WHAT OF PROJECTION PRINCIPLE? I SUGGEST THAT IT IS SERVED JUST IN CASE THE CONTROLLER (CONTROLLER- ASSIGNED ANTECEDENT, ACTUALLY)
IS THERE, THAT IS, IN CASE THE ARGUMENT IS THERE THAT AT LF WILL SERVE AS DEFINITIVE CONTROLLER FOR EMPTY ARGUMENTS. 'I WANT-TO-LET him GO,' WHERE him IS THE ANTECEDENT OF THE DOWNSTAIRS SUBJECT OF go ASSIGNED BY THE CONTROL VERB 'LET.' TO THIS I SHALL ADD THE POINTS OF SIMILARITY WITH SADOCK'S AUTOLEXICAL SYNTAX, VIZ., THE NOTION THAT COMPOUNDS MEET WHAT AMOUNTS TO THE CONDITION OF THE PROJECTION PRINCIPLE 'ELSEWHERE' THAN IN THE LEVEL AT WHICH THEY ARE SO REPRESENTED. SADOCK PROPOSES A SORT OF DOUBLE-REPRESENTATION IN THE SYNTAX, SHOWING, AT ONCE, A LEXICALLY INSERTED COMPOUND AND A CLAUSE-STRUCTURE WITH THE SUBCATEGORISATED ARGUMENTS ALL IN THEIR PLACES; MOHANNAN DOESN'T QUITE FACE THE ISSUE. MY PROPOSED SOLUTION HANDLES IT WITHOUT GIMMICKRY, BY A PROPER EXTENSION OF G&B NOTIONS OR, SINCE I DO NOT APPEAL TO MOVEMENT RULES, LEXICAL FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR.

HERE, TOO, I CAN SHOW THAT THERE ARE BOTH MORPHOLOGICAL AND LOGICO-SEMANTIC REASONS TO SUPPOSE THAT THE NEGATIVE MARKER (FOR THAT MATTER THE SAME ARGUMENT PROBABLY APPLIES, THOUGH I NEED NOT ARGUE IT IN THIS PAPER, TO THE DESINENCES OF THE VERB GENERALLY; EVEN TO AGREEMENT SYSTEMS QUITE WIDELY, THOUGH THERE ARE NONE IN BURMESE EXCEPT FOR THE MARGINAL CASE OF THE DISTRIBUTED PLURAL MARKERS SUCH AS KYA.) IS PUT ONTO THE VERB IN THE LEXICAL MORPHOLOGY. THIS WILL TURN OUT TO HANDLE BOTH NEATLY AND MOTIVATEDLY THE PROBLEM RAISED BY THE FACT THAT THE NEGATIVE MARKER CAN GO MORE OR LESS UPON THE ARBITRARY MEMBER OF THE VERB STRING PROPER. HERE TAKE PARTICULAR NOTE OF OKELL'S EVIDENCE THAT THIS IS MORE FLEXIBLE THAN THE MERE COMMONEST USAGE INDICATES, AND THIS RELATES, NO DOUBT, TO MY EARLIER DEMONSTRATION OF THE SAME KIND WITH REGARD TO THE SUPPOSEDLY FIXED ORDER OF THE DESINENCES OF THE FINITE VERB (IN LEHMAN 1978).

THE CONJUNCTIVE AND ORDINARY CASES REMAIN PROBLEMATICAL. I LEAVE THE DETAILS ON THE LATTER TO ANOTHER PAPER, AND I INTEND HERE SIMPLY TO RELATE THIS PHENOMENON TO THE EVIDENCE IN THE D. BERNOT AND B. PEMAUNGTIN PAPER (1966) ABOUT THE FACT THAT SIMPLEX LEXICAL ENTRIES (FOR ABSTRACT TERMS MOSTLY) ARE COMPOUNDS OF A PLURALITY OF ROOTS THAT ARE, NEVERTHELESS NOT SIMPLY CONJUNCTIONS, VIZ. SET THEORETICAL UNIONS OF THE TWO, BUT RATHER INTERSECTIONS (OF THE RESPECTIVE FEATURES OF THE TWO PARTS). THIS APPEARS ALSO IN MY DEMONSTRATION (1985) TO THE SAME EFFECT ABOUT SEEMINGLY COMPOSITE KINSHIP WORDS LIKE MI-BA, MEANING NOT 'MOTHER AND FATHER' BUT RATHER 'PARENT/MOTHER AND/OR FATHER.'
THE PLURAL MARKERS ON SUCH COMPOUNDS TYPICALLY FAIL TO
DISTRIBUTE OVER THE SEPARATE PARTS AS THEY WOULD BY DEMORGAN'S
LAW IF THESE WERE TRULY CONJUNCTIONS OF THE PARTS. THIS APPROACH
TO ORDINARY COMPOUNDS, IN THE SENSE OF OKELL, OBIviATES ANY FORM
OF THE PROJECTION PRINCIPLE PROBLEM FOR THIS CLASS OF COMPOUNDS.
IS THE THEORY OF CONTROL ALSO CLEARLY THE WAY TO HANDLE THE
PROJECTION PRINCIPLE PROBLEM FOR CONJUNCTIVE COMPOUNDS? NOT
NECESSARILY OR OBVIOUSLY, ESPECIALLY IN VIEW OF THE (LEHMAN &
PINGKARAWAT, 1986) FACT THAT PARTICIPIAL CONJUNCTIVE CLAUSES ARE
NOT CONTROL CONTEXTS, AS THEY ARE IN THAI, ANOTHER LANGUAGE
WITH ONLY PARTICIPIAL AND NO CO-ORDINATE CONJUNCTION: ['SO-AND-SO
HIT THE BOY AND (PRO) DIED' -- WHERE THE NON-SPECIFIC EMPTY SUBJECT
PRO NEED NOT NECESSARILY REFER TO THE SUBJECT, OR EVEN THE OBJECT
OF THE PRECEDING CLAUSE!]. WHY IS IT THAT, NEVERTHELESS, AS IT WERE,
THE CONJUNCTIVE COMPOUNDS ACT AS IF THEIR PARAPHRASES IN OPEN
PARTICIPIAL CONJUNCTIVE CLAUSE FORM WERE CONTROL CONTEXTS, IN
THE SENSE OF COMING UNDER A LIKE-SUBJECT CONDITION? I REALLY DO
NOT YET KNOW HOW TO DEAL ADEQUATELY WITH THIS, AND CLEARLY MORE
WORK NEEDS TO BE DONE ON THE MATTER. NEVERTHELESS, AT LEAST THIS
MUCH CAN BE SAID: WHATEVER SUBJECT THERE IS FOR THE CONJUNCTIVE
COMPOUND, EVEN IF IT BE, ITSELF, AN EMPTY PRONOMINAL, IS, AS IN REAL
CONTROL CONTEXTS, SUFFICIENT. IN BOTH KINDS OF CASE, THE SO-
CALLED MISSING ARGUMENTS FOR THE VARIOUS PARTS OF A COMPOUND
VERB (EXCLUDING, NOW, THE OKELL 'ORDINARY' CLASS) ARE, SO TO SAY AT
LEAST, REPRESENTED BY, OR IN, THE SPECIFIED ANTECEDENT, WHERE ITS
BEING, IN THE TECHNICAL SENSE, 'SPECIFIED' IS A MATTER OF CONTROL AT
LEAST FOR THE CASE OF THE SUBORDINATIVE COMPOUNDS. PERHAPS, AS I
WISH TO SUPPOSE NOW, THE CONJUNCTIVE COMPOUNDS' BEING NON-
CONTROL CONTEXTS ARE A LANGUAGE-SPECIFIC EXCEPTION TO WHAT
DOES, AFTER ALL, APPEAR TO BE A RATHER GENERAL PRINCIPLE (OF
UNIVERSAL GRAMMAR/UG?), SO THAT THE CASE OF THE BURMESE
CONJUNCTIVE COMPOUNDS WORKS ACCORDING TO MORE UNIVERSAL
PRINCIPLES, EVEN IN BURMESE. I REALLY SUSPECT, BUT CANNOT ARGUE AT
ALL PERSUASIVELY, THAT SOMETHING LIKE THIS IS AT LEAST PART OF THE
ANSWER.
References


