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Avestan

Morphosyntactic structures – Part 3: Clause



MUYA —
The Multimedia Yasna Project

Roadmap

- Word order
- Clitics
- Nominal sentences
- Clausal coordination
- Subordination
- Relative clauses

Canonical order of constituents (in all-new contexts)

- “Neutral” word-order in all-new contexts: S - O - V (common opinion)
- More precisely, Skjærvø 2009 posits: S - ADV – DO – IO – V
- But see the agnosticism voiced by Hale 2017

Clitics

- “Wackernagel’s Law”: Enclitics surface at the 2nd position of the clause, often violating the canonical order of constituents
- Sentential (1), pronominal (2) and emphatic (3) clitics (for this classification see Hale 2008)

(1) *ašəm at̄ vahištəm yazamaide* “**Further**, we worship best *aša-*” (OAv., Y 37.4)

(2) *təm mōi dąstuuqm daēnaiiāi frāuuaōcā* “This capability proclaim to **my** Daēnā/vision” (OAv., Y 46.7)

(3) *nū zī cašmainī viiādarəsəm* “I have **just now** seen with (my) eye” (OAv., Y 45.8)

Nominal sentences

- Gapping of the copula (*ah-* ‘to be’) in 3rd person is the norm:

huuō dāmōiš drūjō hunuš

“he **(is)** a son of the creator of Deceit” (OAv., Y 51.10)

- Not only in the third person:

mīždām ... yehiā tū daθrām

“the reward, of which you **(are)** the source?” (OAv., Y 34.13)

Nominal sentences

- *ah-* as verbum existentiae

yōi *āṇharə=cā* *həṇti=cā*
REL.NOM.SG.M be.PF.3PL=and be.PRS.3PL=and
“those who have existed and who exist” (OAv., Y 51.22)

Clausal coordination

- Sentence connector: =cǎ̃ “and”
- Additive/adversative conjunction: aṭ̃ “and, then, furthermore, but”
- Disjunction: =vā “or”
- Correlative con- and disjunction: X=cǎ̃ Y=cǎ̃ “both X and Y”, X=vā Y=vā “either X or Y”, nōiṭ̃ ... naēδa “neither ... nor”
- Conjunctive adverbs: aθǎ̃ ‘so, thus’, āaṭ̃ ‘then’, ...

Subordination: multifunctional OAv. *hiiat̥* / YAv. *yaṭ*

- Formally = REL.NOM/ACC. SG.N
- Temporal clause:

yaṭ *hē* *tanuš* *hiškuui* *bauuāt̥* *pascaēta ...*
when DEM.GEN body.NOM.F dry.NOM.F become.PRS.SUBJ.3SG then

“**When** his body has become dry, then ... (V 9.31)

- Consecutive clause:

yaṭ *yauuō* *pouruš* *bauuāt̥*
so.that barley.NOM.M much.NOM.M become.PRS.SUBJ.3SG

“**so that** the barley become copious” (V 3.32)

Multifunctional OAv. *hiiat̥* / YAv. *yaṭ* (cont.)

- Complementizer:

taṭ ahmāi jasaṭ āiiaptəm yaṭ hē puθrō us.zaiata
COMP DEM.DAT son.NOM be.born.PRS.INJ.3SG.MID

“that boon came to him **that** a son was born to him” (Y 9.4)

Further subjunctions

- *hiiat̥* / *yat* is complemented by and partly alternates with more specific subjunctions, e.g.:

yadā / *yaδa* ‘when’

yaθā / *yaθa* ‘so that, as’

yauuat̥ ‘as long as’

YAv. *yezi* ‘if’

etc.

Correlative structures

- Adverbial clause and matrix clause

yaθā ... aθā “as ... thus”

aṭ ... hiiṭ “then ... when”

- Relative clause and matrix clause

yā ... ahmāi “who ... to him”

tāṅg ... yōi “those ... who”

Gapping of correlative pronoun

mazdā *dadāt* *ahurō ...* *vanhəuš* *vazduuarē*
 Mazdā.NOM give.PRS.3SG Ahura.NOM good.GEN.SG.N fat.ACC.SG

manəhō [***ahmāi**] *yā* *hōi*
 thinking.GEN.SG.N [*dem.DAT.SG.M] REL.NOM.SG.M DEM.GEN.SG

mainiiū *šīiaōθanāiš=cā* *uruuaθō*
 intention.INS.SG action.INS.PL=and ally.NOM

“Ahura Mazdā gives the fat of good thinking [to him] who is his ally through (his) intention and his acts” (OAv., Y 31.21)

Relative clauses: incorporation of antecedent

yā *mōi* *vīduuā* *vaocaṭ*
REL.NOM.SG.M I.DAT knowing.NOM.SG.M tell.AOR.SUBJ.3SG

haiθīm *mqθrām*
true.ACC.SG.M formula.ACC.SG.M

“The knowing one, who will tell me the true formula” (OAv., Y 31.6)

Relative clauses: case attraction

- In relative clauses with gapped copula, relative pronouns may agree with their referent noun/pronoun in case:

<i>yā</i>	<i>mōi</i>	<i>vīduuā</i>	<i>vaocaṭ</i>
REL.NOM.SG.M	I.DAT	knowing.NOM.SG.M	tell.AOR.SUBJ.3SG
<i>haiθīm</i>	<i>mqθrəm</i>	<i>yim</i>	<i>hauruatātō</i>
true.ACC.SG.M	formula.ACC.SG.M	REL.ACC.SG.M	wholeness.GEN

“the knowing one who tells me the true formulation, which is the one of wholeness [...]” (Y 31.6) → not: ***yō*** (REL.NOM.SG.M)

Relative clauses with gapped copula

- Introducing adpositions:

azəm yō *ahurō* *mazdā*
I.NOM REL.NOM.SG.M Ahura.NOM.SG.M Mazdā.NOM.SG.M

“I, Ahura Mazdā” (YAv., Y 19.6 etc.)

- “Explanative” function?

tāiš *šiiāōθanāiš* *yāiš* *vahištāiš*
DEM.INS.PL.N action.INS.PL.N REL.INS.PL.N best.INS.PL.N

“by means of these actions, (namely) the best ones” (OAv., Y 35.4)

Relative clauses with gapped copula (cont.)

- Marking specificity:
karšuuarə yaṭ arəzahi “the continent Arəzahi” (*The continent which is A.)
- With incorporation of antecedent:
yō yimō xšaētō “splendid Yima”
- YAv. *yaṭ* (NOM/ACC.SG.N) as relative particle, unmarked for case:
puθrəm yaṭ pourušaspahe
son.ACC.SG.M REL Pourušaspa.GEN
“the son of Pourušaspa” (Yt 5.18)