International Workshop on Cross-linguistic Studies on Clause Combining
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Complement Constructions with Perception Verbs in Kolyma Yukaghir

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Kolyma Yukaghir is a language spoken by about 30 to 50 people in northeast Siberia. The language boasts of a rich verb morphology that indicates various types of dependent clauses, but does not exhibit any clear instances of "insubordination." However, in some cases, an event that is usually expressed by an independent clause is conveyed through a dependent clause. This paper reports one such case: complement constructions using perception verbs in Kolyma Yukaghir. Perception verbs are viewed as a class of complement-taking predicates in many literatures (Noonan 1985, Cristofaro 2003, Dixon 2010). Kolyma Yukaghir contains several syntactic patterns that express the relation between the act of perception and the perceived event. Examples (1)–(3) below represent three main patterns of complement constructions with the verb *juө-* 'see, look (at)'. In (1), the perceived event is expressed by an embedded clause, i.e., its predicate takes the accusative case suffix, and the clause functions as the O argument of the main verb. Patterns (2) and (3) do not exhibit embedding of the perceived event. Instead, the event is expressed by an independent clause whose predicate usually takes the indicative suffixes. The former pattern (i.e., pattern (2)) is parataxis, where the act of perception is also expressed by an independent clause. In the latter pattern ((i.e., pattern (3)), the act of perception, which is usually expressed by the main verb, is expressed by a dependent clause, i.e., by an adverbial clause where the verb *juө-* 'see, look (at)' takes locative case suffix.

(1) *terikie-die*   *tiine*   *l'ie-l'el-u-m,*
     old.woman-DIM:NOM   a.little.while.ago do.something-IDEV-E-IND.TR.3

     juө-l'el-u-m   *[t'olʁoraa-die*   *ʃewrej-l'el-gele].*
     see-IDEV-E-IND.TR.3   hare-DIM:NOM   escape-IDEV-ACC

     'The old woman did that a little while ago, saw the hare escape.'

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(2) *nume-ŋin*   *keb-ej-dele*   *juɵ-m,*

    house-DAT   go.away-PFV-CVB.SEQ   see-IND.TR.3

    mo-d'e   *lem-dik,*   *[debegej*   *modo-j].*

    say-IND.INTR.1SG   what-PRED   debegej:NOM   sit-IND.INTR.3

    '(He) went home and saw, I say, that Debegej were sitting.'

(3) *ɵnʒej-delle*   *juɵ-de-ge*   *[t'aat'aa-pe-gi*

    go.down-CVB.SEQ   see-POSS.3-LOC   elder.brother-PL-POSS.3:NOM

    ataqloo-t   *amd-oo-t*   *qodoo-ŋi]*.

    be.two-CVB   die-STAT-CVB   lie-PL.IND.INTR.3

    '(He) went down and saw that his elder brothers together lay dead.'