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The grammar and meaning of atemporal complement clauses in Assamese: A cognitive linguistics approach

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ABSTRACT

The current paper describes atemporal complement clauses in Assamese, an IA language spoken in Assam (India). Cognitive Linguistics views grammar as motivated by embodied meaning. Thus, atemporal complementation reflects a conceptual shift from a temporal process to an atemporal thing because of which the verb in such a clause appears non-finite, and the situation is conceptualized through 'summary scanning.' Atemporal complementation may also involve the 'Figure and Ground' principle. The paper identifies five atemporal complementizers in Assamese, each with distinct grammatical and semantic properties, highlighting the link between grammar and the way speakers construe situations. The study further shows that atemporal complement clauses might retain some sequential scanning, defending the view that the distinction between summary and sequential scanning are not mutually exclusive as is claimed in Langacker (2008). The data for this paper has mainly come from the authors themselves who happen to be native speakers of Assamese.

KEYWORDS

Clausal complementation, cognitive linguistics, atemporal complementation, construal, scanning, atemporal complementizers

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The grammar and meaning of atemporal complement clauses in Assamese: A cognitive linguistics approach

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1 Clausal complementation

A clause is the grammatical counterpart of an event or situation. However, situations do not normally occur in isolation but in combination with other situations. Thus, complex situations are expressed either as juxtaposed (e.g. "He came here yesterday. I saw him") or as complex sentences in the form of coordination (e.g. "He came here yesterday and I saw him") or subordination (e.g. "When he came here yesterday, I saw him"; I saw him coming here yesterday"). In cognitive linguistics, each of these types of clause linking is based on a particular type of construal.

Now, one type of subordination is complementation. Taylor (2002: 428) explains complementation in the following words: "A clause which is 'embedded inside another clause, and which functions as a participant within the containing clause is commonly referred to as the 'complement clause', the process by which one clause is embedded in another is called 'complementation'." Now, a complement clause completes the meaning of a verb in the main clause (e.g. "I wanted to talk to Mary"), a predicative adjective (e.g. "He is eager to help"), or a noun (e.g. "I'd no intention of hurting you").

Such a complementation clause can be either temporal (i.e. a finite clause) or atemporal (i.e. a non-finite clause). In other words, in temporal complementation the event expressed by the complement clause is grounded in time, e.g. "that she met him yesterday" "I know that she met him yesterday." By contrast, in atemporal complementation, the situation expressed by the complement clause is not grounded in time, e.g. "to dance" in "I loved to dance." The complement clause "to dance" (also the complement clause "that she met her yesterday" in the above example) functions as a complement, as a constituent of the main clause, i.e. as Object.

2 Review of literature

Integration of clauses is a crucial aspect of the grammar of language so that there has been quite a large amount of literature, largely with reference to English. Classic works on the topic include,

among others, Rosenbaum (1967), Kiparsky (1970), Bresnan (1972), Menzel (1975), Ransom (1986), Givón (1990), Mair (1990) and Duffley (1992). Recent works on the topic include, among others, Smith & Escobendo (2001), Duffley (2006), Egan (2008), and Mair (2009). Clause integration has been a well addressed topic in cognitive linguistics. Important works include, among others, Langacker (1987), Anna Weirzbicka (1988), Croft (1991), Taylor (2002), Radden & Dirven (2007), and Kumashiro (2016). Important works on atemporal complementation from a cognitive perspective include, but not limited to, Dirven (1989), Achard (1998), Hamawand (2003), Hamawand (2005), Achard (2007), Egan (2008), Hamawand (2015).

As for notable works on clause integration in Assamese, Barbora (2012: 339-352), deals with the nominalized clause in Assamese from a Chomskyan generativist perspective. Nath (2013), another work (an unpublished PhD thesis) on the nature of non-finite complementation in Assamese within the same theoretical framework, deserves a mention. Three other accounts from a traditional point of view on the non-finite forms of verbs in Assamese are Kalita (2019: 263-276), Chowdhary (Unpublished Manuscript: 40-48), and Bez (2022: 1-50). These accounts are not purely formal, unlike the first two; however, they do not focus on non-finite complementation, which is the topic of the current paper. Thus, the current paper focuses, using insights from cognitive linguistics, exclusively on the non-finite forms of the verbs in the complement clause of Assamese, which reify the event in the clause to complement the predicate in the main clause.

3 The construal of atemporalization

As said, grammar, on the cognitive linguistics approach, is a way of linguistically encoding our conceptualization of reality. Thus, every grammatical entity, on this approach, has a conceptual or semantic base. Now, a speaker can conceive a situation and express it linguistically in alternate ways based on the speaker's own conceptualization of the situation. As is described by Radden and Dirven (2007: 21-22): "There is, as a rule, more than one way of thinking of a particular scene and describing it in language. In choosing one conceptual or linguistic alternative rather than another, the speaker "construes" her thoughts in a specific way. This is what is meant by the notion of construal. Construals are cognitive operations which are often strikingly similar to principles of visual perception. For example, I may describe the contents of a bottle of whisky as being half full or half empty. In describing it as half full, I am looking at the drink that is (still) left in the bottle, and in describing it as half empty, I am thinking of the drink that is gone. The descriptions clearly differ with respect to the perspective adopted: from the perspective of a full bottle or from the perspective of an empty bottle. Adopting a particular perspective is one of many possible construal operations."

In cognitive linguistics, several dimensions of construal have been established that are relevant in grammar (ibid: 21ff; Croft 2004:40ff). Some of these are: (i) viewing frame, (ii) generality vs specificity, (iii) viewpoint, (iv) objectivity vs subjectivity, (v) mental scanning, and (vi) fictive motion; (vii) windowing of attention, (viii) figure and ground, and (ix) profiling. While the first six of these relate to viewing operations, the rest relate to prominence.

Out of these, (mental) scanning is clearly involved in the construal of atemporalization which underlies atemporal complementation. It is worth mentioning here that atemporal complementation is the term that is used in the cognitive linguistics literature for what is traditionally called non-finite complementation (see Langacker 1987; Hamawand 2003). This is expected, because the construal that underlines non-finite complementation is the construal of atemporalization, which involves a

conceptual shift from the relational concept to be encoded typically by a verb to a thing or object that has an ontological existence to be encoded typically by a noun (see 3.1 below). In the current paper, we have thus used the term atemporal complementation for the traditional non-finite complementation.

3.1 Atemporalization and Scanning

Things and relations are two fundamental aspects of the world. While nouns are the linguistic counterparts of things, which are autonomous conceptual entities, verbs are linguistic counterparts of relations, i.e. dependent conceptual units which link two or more things in particular ways in the domains of both space and time. Thus, things are atemporal while relations, when denoted by a verb grounded in time, are temporal (see Givón: 1984: 51-52; Hopper 1982: 167). Thus, things and relations come together to form a situation as expressed by a sentence, where there are NPs denoting things and a verb that is grounded in time, i.e. a tensed verb, denoting a temporal relation. Relations can, however, be atemporal. One kind of such relation is stative atemporal relation, as in in Delhi, where the preposition in expresses a particular type of relation (see Fig 1 below). However, there can yet be another kind of atemporal relation, i.e. complex atemporal relation as expressed by a verb that is not grounded in time (see Fig 1 below).

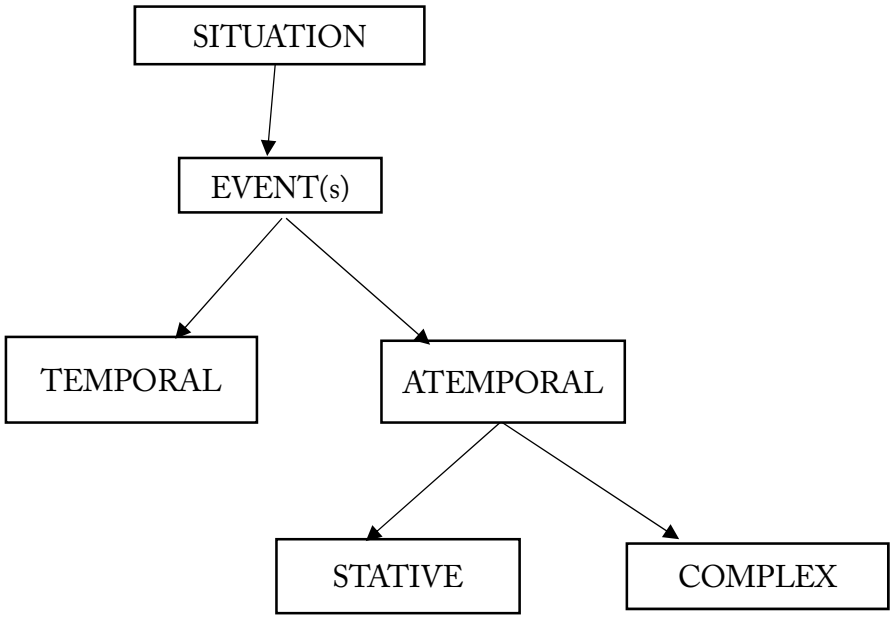

Figure. 1 (adapted from Langacker 1987: 249)

It is to be noted that temporal relations (see Fig 2 below) are processual. Thus, the tensed verb in a temporal event, e.g. ate in I ate rice, denotes a process: the verb ate evokes in the mind the various phases sequentially involved in the act of eating rice, right from serving rice on one's plate to finally washing hands at the end of the meal. In other words, the whole action is scanned state by state successively right from its evolution to its current state through time. Thus, it is called sequential

scanning, which is schematized in Fig. 2 below. The span of time during which the action is scanned is called the temporal profile of the action.

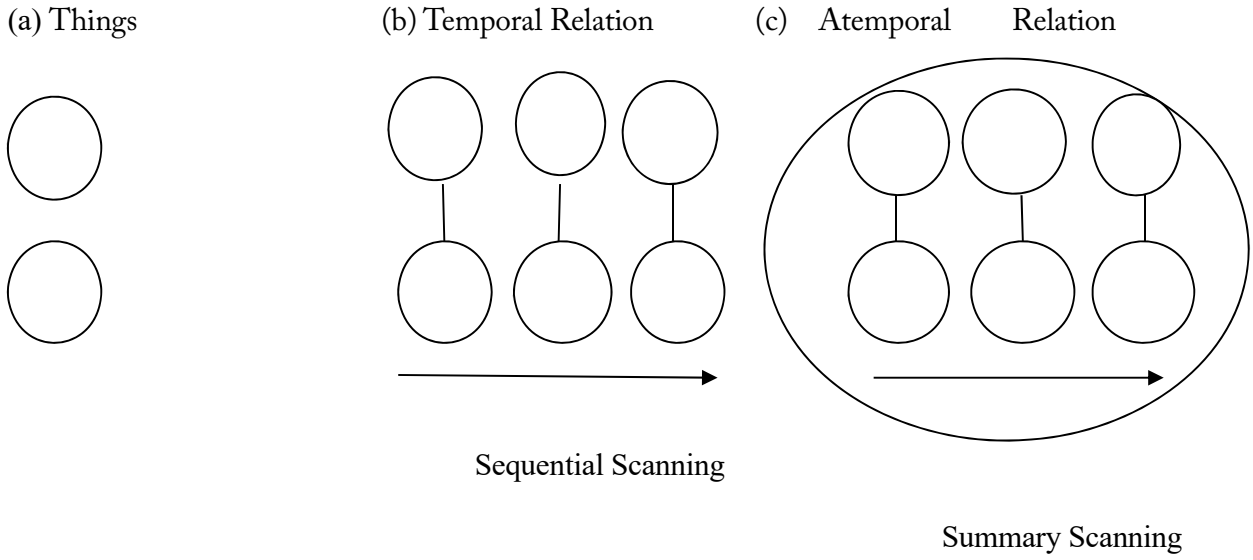

Figure 2. Sequential and summary scanning (adapted from Radden and Dirven 2007: 80)

But verbs may often encode an event reified as a thing. In such a case, the event expresses a non-processual atemporal relation, often called a complex atemporal relation (as mentioned above) as it is an intermediate type of relation, lying somewhere between a thing and a process. Typically, in this type of relation, all the states are scanned at one go; they are profiled collectively as a single coherent gestalt. Thus, for example, between the two examples illustrated in Fig. 2 above, "John demolished the building" involves a sequential scanning, while the other example, "The demolition of the building by John", a summary scanning, i.e. all the component phases of demolition (note that demolition is a tenseless, nominalized form of the verb demolish) is scanned summarily in a cumulative fashion and profiled as a single thing). Thus, Langacker (1987: 248) draws an analogy between sequential scanning and a moving picture and summary scanning and a still picture. As expected, complement clauses are also called nominal clauses, because they usually occupy a noun phrase slot in a clause.

We haste, however, to add that Langacker (2008)[1], where he had revisited his original formulation of scanning, points out that "the actual manifestation of sequentiality [is] a matter of degree. Indeed, apprehending a sequenced occurrence holistically may simply consist in its sequential aspect falling below the threshold of awareness."

[1] In response to Broccias & Hollmann's (2007) critique of sequential and summary scanning, Langacker (2008) has updated his theory of sequential and summary scanning to acknowledge that the two modes of scanning are not mutually exclusive, rather they may co-occur, with one mode being salient than the other.

Thus, sequentiality, as is shown in the above work, may lose its salience because of three major factors:

(i) the sequential scanning inherent in the meaning of a verb, e.g. swim, is a mental simulation, which is also true of an actual instance of swimming that occurred in the past. In the case of such a simulation, the sequential scanning will naturally be less intense, less detailed and will happen in a shorter processing time than the sequential scanning made in an action being experienced at the present moment of time (e.g. someone swimming);

(ii) another factor is automatization, which allows an event to be executed in streamlined fashion, without attention to its details;

(iii) the sequentiality may lose its salience when the event involved is subordinated to another event because of the fact that the primary focus in subordination is rather on the main clause event, not the subordinated one (i.e. "When John came, Mary was dancing"). Langacker (1991: 440) called this 'conceptual subordination': "By the very nature of a complement clause, the process it describes undergoes a kind of conceptual subordination: rather than being viewed in its own terms as an independent object of thought, it is primarily considered for the role it plays within the subordinate relationship expressed by the main clause."

In atemporal complementation type of subordination, the verb in the complement clause is atemporalized as in, e.g. "the children playing" in "Peter is watching the children playing." This in turn means that the complement clause event is rather a mental simulation in the same way as the action meant by a verb, when not grounded in time (see (i) above). But the manifestation of sequentiality in such a complement clause is further lessened by the fact that it is subordinated to a main clause (see (iii) above). Thus, in the case of an atemporal complement clause, because of both simulation and subordination, the manifestation of sequentiality may fall "below the threshold of awareness." Thus, in the example cited above, i.e. "Peter is watching the children playing", sequential scanning primarily applies to the main clause event "Peter is watching", not the subordinated clause event "the children playing." Thus, "Peter is watching the children playing" can be an answer to "What is it that Peter is doing?".

The manifestation of sequentiality of the atemporal complement clause event can, however, be increased. Thus, in Assamese, when the verb *tʰak* 'stay' is used with the non-finite form of the verb in such a complement clause, it gives a durative reading to the reified action involved. In both (1) and (2) below, the main clause event is in the past progressive, but the complement clause in (2), i.e. *nasi tʰak* (where the complementizer *-i* makes *nas* 'dance' non-finite) has a greater degree of sequentiality than *nasi* has in (1).

(1)
nas-i bʰal lag-isil
dance-CMPZ good be attached-PST
'I enjoyed dancing.'

(2) nasi tʰaki bʰal lagisil
nas-i tʰak-i bʰal lag-isil
dance-INF stay-CMPZ good be attached-PST
'I enjoyed keeping dancing.'

4 Atemporal complementizers

In cognitive linguistics, complementation is considered as the tightest grammatical linking of clauses (see Radden & Dirven 2007: 55ff; Taylor 2002: 428ff) as in this link one clause is embedded in the other.

The link in atemporal complementation is established with the help of certain morphemes. At the conceptual level, these morphemes are referred to as atemporalizers as they convert a temporal event into an atemporal one. Grammatically, they are referred to as atemporal complementizers. Thus, to and –ing are atemporal complementizers in, respectively, "I stopped to smoke" and "I stopped smoking." Assamese has at least five such atemporal complementizers, which are discussed below.

4.1 Types of atemporal complement clauses in Assamese

We have identified five types of atemporal complement clauses in Assamese with five different atemporal complementizers. We focus on their grammar and meaning in the sub-sections that follow.

4.1.1 The atemporal complementizer -a:

One of the atemporal complementizers in Assamese is *-a*, the use of which can be seen in (3) below. In the example, the main clause is *beja* (*hoi*) 'is harmful' (it is to be noted that *hoi* 'be-Pres-3' is silent in all such examples cited in the paper), while the atemporal complement clause is *mod k^{h}ua* 'drinking alcohol' and it complements the predicative adjective *beja* 'harmful'.

(3) mod k^{h}ua beja (hoi)
mod k^{h}a-a beja
alcohol eat-CMPZ bad
'Drinking alcohol is harmful.'

In (3), we have a generalized statement about a particular type of action, i.e. "Drinking alcohol is harmful." Let's consider (4) below where another atemporal complementizer, i.e. *–iboloi* (see 4.2 below) is used in place of *–a*, which has resulted in a change of meaning: the sentence in (4) thus expresses rather a personal opinion about the taste of mod 'alcohol'.

(4) mod k^{h}aboloi beja (hoi)
mod k^{h}a-iboloi beja
alcohol eat-CMPZ bad
'Drinking alcohol is not tasty.'

The complementizer –a can be used with a non-generalized statement as well. In such a case, *-a* is suffixed by the classifier *tu*, which classifies 3-dimensional objects and is simultaneously a residual classifier in Assamese[2]. Assamese, unlike English, does not have an article like 'the'. Thus,

2 See Borah (2012).

when a classifier is suffixed to a noun, it results in a definite NP, e.g. *lora-tu* 'the boy'. Thus, *zua-tu* in (5a) means a specific instance of going, complementing the verb *gom pa* 'to learn'. The example (5b), where the classifier *tu* is missing is, thus, not well-formed.

(5a) tumi taloi zuatu gom pau

tumi	tar-loi	za-a-tu	gom	pa-u
you	there-ALL	go-CMPZ-CLF	clue	get-3

'I learned about you going there.'

(5b) *tumi taloi ebar zua gom pau

tumi	tar-loi	za-a	gom	pa-u
you	there-ALL	go-CMPZ	clue	get-3

'I learned about you going there.'

This also explains, why (6) below would not usually be used to mean (3) above; it will be uttered rather as an opinion about a specific instance of drinking alcohol (e.g. upon seeing someone drinking alcohol), although it can metonymically mean a generalized statement on the possible harmful effects of drinking alcohol.

(6) mod kʰua-tu beja (hoi)

mod	kʰa-a-tu	beja
alcohol	eat-CMPZ-CLF	bad

'In my opinion, drinking alcohol is harmful.'

In (7) below, we have a further example where the atemporalized verb in the complement clause complementing the predicative adjective *beja* 'bad', is suffixed by the same residual classifier *tu*.

(7) tar kʰuatu bor beja (hoi)

xi-r	kʰa-a-tu	bor	beja
he-gen	eat-CMPZ-CLF	very	bad

'His style of eating is disgusting.'

4.1.2 The atemporal complementizer -iboloi

The atemporal complementizer *-iboloi* is used typically to express a personally generalized statement, as was observed with (4) above, which is reproduced as (8) below.

(8) mod kʰaboloi beja (hoi)

mod	kʰa-iboloi	beja
alcohol	eat-CMPZ	bad

'Drinking alcohol is not tasty.'

(9) mod k^{h}aboloi moza (hoi)
mod k^{h}a-iboloi moza
alcohol eat-CMPZ good
'Drinking alcohol is a great fun.'

The complementizer *–iboloi* is thus also associated with a specific instance of the process in question, often with a future orientation (it is to be noted that *–loi* 'to' is an allative case marker in Assamese). Consider the following examples, where the atemporal complement clauses have complemented the compound verb *mon za* 'feel like', and the verb *ko* 'say', respectively.

(10) tak saboloi mon goise
xi-k sa-iboloi mon za-is-e
he- DOM see-CMPZ mind go-ING.PROG[3]-3
'I want to see him.'

(11) xi tumak zaboloi koise
xi tumi-k za-iboloi ko-is-e
he you-DOM go-CMPZ say-ING.PROG-3
'He has asked you to go.'

4.1.3 The atemporal complementizer -ibo

The atemporal complementizer *–ibo* is associated with modality, i.e. a reality that has a potential to be factual or realized, as in the examples below. The complement clauses in the examples complement, respectively, the verbs *zan* 'can/know' and *par* 'can'.

(12) moi xaturibo zanu
moi xatur-ibo zan-u
I swim-CMPZ know-1
'I can swim.'

(13) xi gari solabo pare
xi gari sola-ibo par-e
he car drive-CMPZ can-3
'He can drive a car.'

Both (12) and (13) above express disposition modality, expressing the ability to perform some particular act or task. In (14a), we have another such example with the complementizer *–ibo*, expressing a potential reality. Contrast (14a) with (15a), where the complementizer used is *–iboloi* (see 4.2. above). The complement clauses in the examples complement, respectively, the verbs *bisar* 'want' and the compound verb *xidd^{h}anto lo* 'decide'.

3 See Borah (2016a), where an ingressive progressive aspect is proposed in Assamese.

(14a) moi zabo bisarisu
moi za-ibo bisar-is-u
I go-CMPZ want-ING.PROG-1
'I want to go.'

(15b) moi zaboloi xidd^{h}anto loisu
moi za-iboloi xidd^{h}anto lo-is-u
I go-CMPZ decision take-ING.PROG-1
'I have taken the decision to go.'

While (14) expresses a potential reality with the verb *bisar* 'want', (15), by contrast expresses a factual reality, i.e. the speaker has taken a decision to go, which is a factual. Thus, (14b) and (15b) are ill-formed.

(14b) *moi zaboloi bisarisu
moi za-iboloi bisar-is-u
I go-CMPZ want-ING.PROG-1

(15b) *moi zabo xidd^{h}anto loisu
moi za-ibo xidd^{h}anto lo-is-u
I go-CMPZ decision take-ING.PROG.1

The ungrammaticality of (14b) and (15b) provide clear evidence that *-ibo* and *-iboloi* have different semantics. One is associated with potential reality, the other factual reality.

The examples below provide further evidence that *–ibo* is associated with potential reality. The complement clauses in the examples complement the modal verbs *lag* 'be attached' in (16a) and (18a), and *pari* 'be possible' in (17a).

(16a) xomoiot ahibo lage (deontic modality)
xomoi-ot ah-ibo lag-e
time-LOC come-CMPZ be attached-3
'Arriving on schedule is desirable.'

(17a) azi mod k^{h}abo pari (intrinsic modality)
azi mod k^{h}a-ibo par-i
today alcohol eat-CMPZ be able-IMM
'It may be a day for drinking alcohol.'

(18a) azi boroxun ahibo lage (epistemic modality)
azi boroxun ah-ibo lag-e
today rain come-CMPZ be attached-3
'It is likely to rain today.'

The (b) versions of (16), (17) and (18) are ill formed as they have *–iboloi* in place of *–ibo*.

(16b) *xomoiot ahiboloi lage
xomoi-ot ah-ibo lag-e
time-LOC come-CMPZ be attached-3
'Arriving on schedule is desirable.'

(17b) *azi mod k^haboloi pari
azi mod k^ha-ibo par-i
today alcohol eat-CMPZ be able-IMM
'It may be a day for drinking alcohol.'

(18b) *azi boroxun ahiboloi lage
azi boroxun ah-ibo lag-e
today rain come-CMPZ be attached-3
'It is likely to rain today.'

4.1.4 The atemporal complementizer -i

The atemporal complementizer *-i* is associated with complementation that is resultative in meaning. In the following examples *–i* is used and they express a result had from an accomplished instance of a particular type of action as in (19); or an expected result from such an action as in (20) below. The complement clauses in the examples complement the compound verb *b^hal lag* 'enjoy'.

(19) anzak^{h}on k^{h}ai bor b^{h}al lagil
anza-k^{h}on k^{h}a-i bor b^{h}al lag-il
curry-CLF eat-CMPZ very good be attached-PRF
'I thoroughly enjoyed eating the curry.'

(20) taloi goi nissoi bor b^{h}al lagibo
tar-loi za-i nissoi bor b^{h}al lag-ibo
there-ALL go-CMPZ sure very good be attached-FUT
'I am sure we will thoroughly enjoy going there.'

In (21) and (22) below, we have two examples, each expressing a resultative summary of a particular type of action. In both examples the compound verb *beja pa* 'hate/dislike' controls the complement clauses.

(21) dorob k^{h}ai beja pau
dorob k^{h}a-i beja pa-u
medicine eat-CMPZ bad get-1
'I hate having medicines.'

(22) mas kʰai bohute beja pai

mas	kʰa-i	bohute	beja	pa-i
fish	eat-CMPZ	many	bad	get-3

'Many dislikes eating fish.'

It can be noted here that the marker *-i* is also used in the SVC (i.e. serial verb construction) in Assamese as in the following example.

(23) xi ga dʰui, bʰat kʰai, olop xui, bazaroloi gol

xi	ga	dʰu-i	bʰat	kha-i	olop	xu-i	bozar-oloi za-l
he	body	wash-CPM	rice	eat-CPM	little	sleep-CPM	market-ALL go-PRF

'He took a bath, then had his meal, took a nap, and then went to the market.'

Thus, in the SVC in Assamese, *-i* means the completion of each action before the closing action in the chain of actions[4]. As noted above, in resultative complementation, *-i* means the same, i.e. completion of an action that results in some result.

4.1.5 The atemporal complementizer -ile

The atemporal complementizer *-ile* is associated with complementation that expresses a condition. This can be seen from (24a) - (26a) below, where we have three conditional statements with *-ile*. The complement clauses in them express a present (24a), future (25a), and a past condition (26a), complementing the noun *dukʰ* 'pain', i.e. his sadness is related to the fulfilment of the condition involved.

(24a) tumi kandile dukʰ pau

tumi	kand-ile	dukʰ	pa-u
you	cry-CMPZ	hurt	get-1

'When you cry, I get hurt.'

(25a) tumi kandile dukʰ pam

tumi	kand-ile	dukʰ	pa-m
you	cry-CMPZ	hurt	get-FUT

'If you cry, I will get hurt.'

(26a) tumi nahile dukʰ palu heten

tumi	na-ah-ile	dukʰ	pa-il-u	heten
you	NEG-come-CMPZ	hurt	get-PRF-1	COND

'If you did not come, I would have been hurt.'

[4] As *-i* links the actions in the chain, it is often termed as conjunctive particular marker (see Subbarao 2012). As said, the marker is also the progressive aspect marker in Assamese. Thus, in Borah (2016a), it is claimed to have a polysemous meaning of continuity in the SVC in Assamese.

We can safely apply the Figure-Ground configuration, another dimension of construal as recognized in cognitive linguistics, to (24a) - (26a) above. Thus, the events expressed by the complement clauses, i.e. the conditions, act as Grounds (G) to the events expressed by the main clauses, i.e. the pain that comes come from the fulfilment of the conditions. They, thus, constitute Figures (F).

We can further note here that in a language like English (24a)-(26a) will be expressed through the construal of subordination, where the subordinated clause is an if-clause grounded in time. This is clear from the relevant English glosses in the examples. As is observed in Radden and Dirven (2007: 55), "the two combined situations [in subordination] are clearly divided in figure and ground: the main clause always constitutes the figure and the subordinate clause is always the ground." In (24a)-(26a), as observed, it is the complement clauses that constitute the ground.

However, it is possible to express these examples through subordination as in the (b) versions of (24)-(26) below, where the temporal subordinated clauses examples are marked by the presence of *zetia* 'when' in (24b) and and *zodi* 'if' in (25b) and (26b).

(24b) tumi zetia kanda, duk^{h} pau
tumi zetia kand-a duk^{h} pa-u
you when cry-1 hurt get-1
'When you cry, I get hurt.'

(25b) tumi zodi kanda duk^{h} pam
tumi zodi kand-a duk^{h} pa-m
you if cry-1 hurt get-FUT
'If you cry, I will be hurt.'

(26b) tumi zodi nahila heten, tente duk^{h} palu heten
tumi zodi na-ah-il-a heten tente duk^{h} pa-il-u heten
you if NEG-come-PRF-2 COND then hurt get-PRF-1 COND
'If you would have not come, I would have been hurt.'

It is clear from the discussion above that the marker *–ile* atemporalizes a subordinate clause (e.g. (25b) above) that expresses a condition. As a matter of fact, *–il*, in being the present perfect marker in Assamese, means that the action involved has just finished, but its impact or relevance is still there in the present. Thus, an extended (i.e. polysemous) meaning of *-ile* is fulfilment of a condition, resulting in a particular result as its impact (i.e. pain in the case of the concerned examples; *-e* is a locative marker in Assamese functioning as the ground of the condition created by *-il*).

5 In lieu of a Conclusion

What we hope to have established in the current paper is that Assamese has five subordinators (i.e. *–a*, *iboloi*, *-ibo*, *-i*, and *-ile*) that are used in non-finite complementation. Using insights from cognitive linguistics we have shown that these subordinators are essentially atemporal complementizers which reify the event in the complement clause in order that it can be embedded into the main clause as a complement to its predicate. We have shown that this is 'conceptual

subordination', where the event of the complement clause is viewed not as an independent event, but as part of the event of the main clause. Thus, ideally, such a complement clause involves summary scanning, while the main clause involves sequential scanning. However, these two types of scanning are not mutually exclusive, as we have shown using data from Assamese in support of Langacker's revised view on scanning.

We have shown in the current paper that these five atemporal complementizers have different semantics. Thus, in their typical use, *-a* reifies an event for a generalized opinion about it; *-iboloi*, on the other hand, reifies an event for a generalized statement with a personal bias; *-ibo* reifies an event to talk about its potentiality (i.e, modality); *-i* reifies an event for its result to be experienced, while *-ile* reifies an event as a condition to be fulfilled.

However, we need to examine further data in order to refine these findings.

Abbreviations

1	first person	FUT	future
2	second person	GEN	genitive
3	third person	ING.PROG	ingressive progressive
ALL	allative	IMM	intrinsic modality marker
CLF	classifier	LOC	locative
COND	conditional	MOOD	mood
CPM	conjunctive participle marker	NEG	negative
CMPZ	complementizer	PRF	perfective
DOM	differential object marker	PST	past

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