THE SYNTACTIC POSITION OF NUMERATIVE COMPLEX IN INDONESIAN[*]

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In Indonesian, numerative complex may either precede or follow the noun. In my work, I will show that two factors determine the position of the numerative complex: specificity and information structure. Information structure is also found to be significant for related constructions, i.e. those involving "floating" of numerals. I conclude that the position of numerals may be determined by compositional obligatoriness.

Keywords: Indonesian, numerals, quantifier float, specificity, information structure.

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1. Introduction

Indonesian is a Malayo-Polynesian language (< Austronesian) spoken in Indonesia. This language is subject to a very high dialectal variation (see, e.g., [Paauw 2008] on the different dialects of Malay/Indonesian); in the present paper, I study literary, or standard Indonesian.

The major part of the data comes from texts found on the Internet: mostly from newspapers and blogs. Some examples were elicited: I used elicitation mainly to get negative grammaticality judgments. All of my consultants are native Indonesian speakers from Jakarta; they do not speak any other language of the area, yet they are fluent in English (and possibly Russian).

As it is noted in some grammars of Indonesian [Mintz 1994: 298; Ogloblin 2008: 157], in constructions with cardinal numerals, a numerative complex (NC, a combination of a numeral and a classifier[1]) may either precede or follow the noun:

(1) **NC-N order**

[*dua   ekor*]   *kucing*
two   CLF   cat
'two cats'

(2) **N-NC order**

kucing   [*dua   ekor*]
cat   two   CLF
'two cats'

The difference in meaning between the two constructions remains unclear. In fact, this issue has not yet been studied in a concise way, although some works provide very useful insights. The present study aims to establish the semantic/pragmatic difference between the two possible word orders. I will also consider the closely related constructions, namely those which involve quantifier float.

In Austronesian languages of Central/Eastern Indonesia, numerals may have morphosyntactic properties of verbs [Klamer 2002; Donohue 2005]. In Indonesian, numerals can (i) be used predicatively and (ii) head relative clauses:

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[1] The classifier is non-obligatory when the numerative complex precedes the noun, it is omitted in some examples.

(3) **Predicative use of numerals**

kue	*di*	*meja*	**lima**	**potong**
cake	in	table	five	CLF

‘There are five slices of cake on the table.’, lit. ‘The cake on the table is five pieces.’ [Sneddon 1996: 234-235]

(4) **Numerals heading a relative clause**

anjing	*yang*	**dua**	**ekor**	*itu*
dog	REL	two	CLF	this

‘These two dogs … ‘, lit. ‘the dogs that are two’ (https://www.kaskus.co.id/)

These constructions are beyond the scope of my study, and I will only consider those examples where the numeral is NP-modifier/quantifier.

I will show that when the numerative complex (NC) is postposed, (i) the nominal is (at least preferably) non-specific and (ii) the NC is in focus (the focus can scope over the whole nominal, or over the whole VP). Further, I will argue that (iii) the “floating” of numerals out of the nominal is motivated by information structure, too: it occurs when the noun is topicalized, and the NC is in focus.

Section 2 is dedicated to the semantic/pragmatic difference between NC-N and N-NC constructions; in section 3, I discuss the floating of numerals in Indonesian. Section 4 provides a possible account for some of the facts observed, drawing upon the notion of compositional obligatoriness. Section 5 is a conclusion.

2. Semantics and pragmatics of the two orders of numerals and nouns

Let us quickly review the previous analyses of the constructions in question.

Hopper [1986: 317] suggests that in 19th century Malay the N-NC construction was used when the nominal is definite. He provides the following example:

(5)

maka	*ada*	*pun*	*mengerjakan*	**lobang**	**sa-buah**	**itu**
and	be	PTCL.FOC	making	hole	one-CLF	this

sampai	*lima*	*enam*	*hari*
take	five	six	day

‘Indeed it took five or six days just to dig that one hole.’

[Hopper 1986: 317]

Yet this suggestion is problematic: this example comes from the text written in 1846, hence, it is not relevant for the study of contemporary Indonesian[2]; further, it seems that the data provided by Hopper are not sufficient to make any generalization.

Some very important insights are provided by Conklin [1981: 215-8]. She argues that the N-NC construction is used when the numerative complex is focalized (even though she does not use the term "focus"). The following two examples are given (the corresponding WH-questions are provided by Conklin):

(6) {What did you buy?}

saya   membeli [$_{FOC}$ *tiga buah   keranjang*]
I   buy   three CLF   basket
'I bought three baskets.' / 'I bought three of the baskets.'

(7) {How many (baskets) did you buy?}

saya   membeli   keranjang [$_{FOC}$ *tiga   buah*]
I   buy   basket   three   CLF
'I bought three baskets.'

As I am going to show below, this hypothesis is only partly true.

2.1. Specificity issue

In this section, I am going to show that the order of numerals and nouns is to quite an extent determined by the **specificity** of the nominal.

Following Lambrecht [1994: 80-81], I will draw upon the notion of identifiability to define specificity. Specific referents are identifiable to the speaker (and possibly to the hearer), while non-specific referents are not[3].

NC-N is basic word order, and it is used most frequently. Apparently, it can occur in all the contexts, regardless of semantic/pragmatic factors (the relevant examples will be given below). N-NC word order occurs much more rarely.

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[2] Early grammars of Malay suggest that N-NC is the neutral (and, hence, the most common) word order, while NC-N order is used when the numeral is "emphasized" ([Winstedt 1913: 131], cf. [Maxwell 1907: 70-71]; the short overview of the issue is given in [Blust 2013: 294]). As it will be shown below, it does not hold for the contemporary Indonesian.

[3] Of course, there are other (more formal) definitions of specificity; see [von Heusinger 2011] for an overview.

N-NC word order is used primarily with non-specific nominals. Consider the examples (8-9): the nominal falls under the scope of a distributive operator, and, consequently, it is clearly non-specific[4].

(8) **Distributive context: N is non-specific**

Penerima	*zakat*	*produktif*	*men-dapat*	*ternak*
receiver	zakat	productive	ACT-get	cattle

kambing	***tiga***	***ekor***	***per***	***kepala***	***keluarga***.
goat	three	CLF	per	head	family

'The receivers of productive zakat get three goats per family head.'
(https://www.republika.co.id/)

(9) **Distributive context: N is non-specific**

Bagaimana	*Kelingking*	*bisa*	*menangkap*	***kancil***
how	Kelingking	can	catch	mouse.deer

dua	***ekor***	***se-kali-an,***	*padahal*	*yang*
two	CLF	one-time-ABSTR	while	REL

di-kejar-nya	*tadi*	*hanya*	*satu?*
PASS.3-chase-POSS.3	now	only	one

'How can Kelingking catch two mouse deer at once, while he's now chasing only one?' (http://ceritarakyatnusantara.com/)

In (10) the nominal *telur dua buah* 'egg two CLF' is non-specific, too: no "particular eggs" are meant.

(10) | *Biasa-nya* | *di-beri-kan* | ***telur*** | ***dua*** | ***buah***. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| usual-POSS.3 | PASS.3-give-TR | egg | two | CLF |

'Usually, two eggs are given {to the crocodile}.' (http://www.kuebugis.com/)

The same holds for (11):

(11) | *Laki-laki* | *tersebut* | *akan* | *di-denda* | ***babi*** | ***tiga*** | ***ekor*** ⟨…⟩ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| man~PL | mentioned | will | PASS.3-fine | pig | three | CLF |

'That man will be fined three pigs ⟨…⟩'
(http://www.pusat4.litbang.depkes.go.id/buku/2014/topo%20tawui.pdf)

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[4] Apparently, (8) involves a participant-distributive operator, and (9) involves event-distributive operator in terms of Cable [2014: 574]. On the interaction of specificity and distributivity see [Tatevosov 2002: 92].

Yet sometimes one can find the examples of clearly specific nominals encoded by N-NC construction, for example:

(12) *Pada   saat   penangkapan,   polisi   juga   meng-aman-kan*
      in   moment   arrest   police   too   ACT-arrest-TR

      *sejumlah   barang   bukti   yakni   **sapi   tiga   ekor,***
      overall   thing   evidence   namely   cow   three   CLF

      satu   unit   sepeda   motor   Yamaha   Vixion,
      one   unit   bike   motor   Yamaha   Vixion

      dan   uang   tunai   Rp   40   juta.
      and   money   cash   rupiah   forty   million
      'In the moment of arrest, the police also arrested the following evidence: three cows, one motorbike Yamaha Vixion and 40 million rupiah in cash.' (https://beritasampit.co.id/)

In (12), the referent *sapi tiga ekor* 'cow three CLF' is mentioned for the first time in the discourse; after this, it is only mentioned once, hence, one can conclude that this nominal is not prominent in the discourse. This is not unexpected: Givón [1983: 26] suggests that it is typical for languages to encode non-specific nouns and nouns of "lesser importance" in the same way.

The standard NC-N construction can be used to denote both specific and non-specific referents, see (13-14):

(13) **Distributive context: N is non-specific**
      ... dengan   per-kira-an   rata-rata
      with   NMLZ-estimate-ABSTR   average~PL

      *panen   **dua   kucing   per   tahun***
      population   two   cat   per   year
      '{There are about 1,000 Pallas cat hunters in Mongolia,} with an estimated annual harvest of two cats.' (https://id.wikipedia.org/)

(14) **Definite nominal**
      *Namun   **tiga   ekor   sapi***   *tersebut   di-serahkan*
      however   three   CLF   cow   mentioned   PASS.3-hand.over

      ke   Polres   Pulang   Pisau
      to   police.station   Pulang   Pisau
      'However, the three cows were handed over to the police station of Pulang Pisau.' (https://beritasampit.co.id/)

2.2. Focus

Now let us return to the Conklin's suggestion: she argues that when the numerative complex is postnominal, it is focalized. Does focus really affect the order of numerals and nouns?

For the purposes of the present work, I will use the following definition of focus: focus of a statement is "that part of the utterance that answers the Question under Discussion" ([Clopper, Tonhauser 2011] after [Kroeger 2017]; cf. [Roberts 1996]).

In the following examples, Questions under Discussion will be recovered from the context.

Most often, when the N-NC construction is used, not only the numeral is focalized, but the whole nominal, or even the whole VP (so-called predicate focus, see [Lambrecht 1994]). This can be seen in examples (16-18). Examples (15-16) are in fact a question-answer pair, retrieved from a parallel Bible corpus [Christodouloupoulos, Steedman 2014].

(15) "*Ada*   ***berapa***   ***roti***   ***pada***   ***kalian?***"
     there.is   how.many   bread   on   you.all

     tanya   *Yesus*   *kepada*   *mereka.*
     ask   Jesus   to   they
     'And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye?' (Mt. 15:34)

(16) **The whole nominal focalized**
     "*Tujuh*,"   *jawab*   *mereka,*   "*dan* [$_{FOC}$ *ikan*   *kecil*   *beberapa*   *ekor*]".
     seven   answer   they   and   fish   little   some   CLF
     'And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes.'[5] (Mt. 15:34)

(17) **The whole nominal focalized**
     {What is usually given to the crocodile?}
     Biasa-nya   *di-beri-kan*   [$_{FOC}$ *telur*   *dua buah*].
     usual-POSS.3   PASS.3-give-TR   egg   two   CLF
     'Usually, two eggs are given {to the crocodile}.'
     (http://www.kuebugis.com/)

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[5] I assume that *ikan beberapa ekor* 'fish some CLF' is a numerative complex, although *beberapa* 'some' is, strictly speaking, not a numeral.

(18) **Predicate focus**

{What do they do?/What happens to them?}

Mereka	*bisa*	*punya*	*mobil,*	*malah*	*ada*	*yang*
they	can	have	car	even	there.is	REL

[_{FOC}	*mendirikan*	*rumah*	*tiga*	*buah*	*dalam*	*se-tahun*],
	build	house	three	CLF	in	one-year

dan	*sekaligus*	*pula.*
and	at.once	also

'They can have a car, there are even those that build three houses a year, and all this at the same time.' (https://arifuddinali.blogspot.com/)

Still, it is possible to find the examples where the numerical complex is focalized, while the noun is in topic. Look at the following example, which apparently involves some kind contrastive focus:

(19) **NC focalized**

Sedan	*dan*	*Station*	*Wagon*	*memiliki*	*lampu*
Sedan	and	Station	Wagon	ACT:have	headlight

depan	[_{FOC} *bulat*]	[_{FOC} *4 buah*],	*sedangkan*	*Hardtop*
front	round	4 CLF	while	Hardtop

dengan	*lampu*	*depan*	[_{FOC} *kotak*]	[_{FOC} *2 buah*].
with	headlight	front	box	2 CLF

'Sedan and Station Wagon have **four round** front headlights, while Hardtop has **two box** front headlights.' (https://id.wikipedia.org/)

So, it is true that the N-NC construction is often focalized. But the focus can scope not only over (i) numerative complex, but also over (ii) the whole noun phrase and (iii) the whole VP, so Conklin's [1986] suggestion cannot be fully accepted.

2.3. Topicalising N-NC construction

According to Alsagoff [1993: ch.4], in Indonesian[6] the initial argument is always topicalized. Further, Alsagoff argues that the initial argument must be

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[6] In fact, Alsagoff considers not Indonesian, but Malay language. The two languages are mutually intelligible and can be regarded as the dialects of one and the same language; some authors even "merge" the two languages for their purposes, cf. [Kroeger 2014]. I assume that Alsagoff's suggestions hold for Indonesian language, too.

either specific or definite[7]. As we have already seen, the N-NC construction is used with (i) non-specific nominals and (ii) it usually falls under the scope of focus. Consequently, one would expect that it is impossible for N-NC construction to appear clause-initially, and this is in fact the case:

(20) ??***teroris   dua   orang*** *telah   di-tahan   hari ini*
      terrorist two   CLF   PST   PASS.3-arrest   day   this
      Intended meaning: 'Two terrorists have been arrested today.'

(21) ??***saudara laki-laki dua orang*** *akan   pergi   ke   bioskop*
      sibling   male~PL   two CLF   FUT   go   to   cinema
      Intended meaning: 'Two brothers will go to the cinema.'

Clearly, if N-NC word order was not associated with specificity and focus, it would be possible for such constructions to occur clause-initially, but it is not.

It is not yet clear which of the two factors – specificity or focus – is the most important one. For example, one could hypothesize that the NC in N-NC construction is focalized because non-specifics tend to be focalized; still, in this work, I will not pursue that issue.

2.4. NP-internal or NP-external?

As it will be discussed below, in Indonesian numerative complex may occur outside of the nominal (i.e. "to float"). Consequently, the N-NC construction as presented above can be analyzed in two ways:

(22) *Biasa-nya   di-beri-kan*   [$_N$ *telur* [$_{NC}$ *dua buah*]].
      usual-POSS.3   PASS.3-give-TR   egg   two   CLF
      'Usually, two eggs are given {to the crocodile}.'

(23) *Biasa-nya   di-beri-kan*   [$_N$ *telur*]   [$_{NC}$ *dua buah*].
      usual-POSS.3   PASS.3-give-TR   egg   two   CLF
      'Usually, two eggs are given {to the crocodile}.'

How to decide, then, whether the numerative complex is NP-internal or NP-external in the examples that we have discussed?

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[7] It is well known that topicality normally implies definiteness, although this is not always so. See [Lyons 1999: 232-6] for discussion.

Some authors suggest that in Indonesian the demonstrative *itu* is the rightmost element of the NP (see [Razak 1995]; cf. [McCune, Simin 1983: 82][8]). Hence, one could suggest that it is possible to establish whether the NC is NP-internal or NP-external by using demonstrative:

(24)   [$_N$ *buaya*   [$_{NC}$ *dua   ekor*]   *itu*]
        crocodile   two   CLFt   hat
        'the two crocodiles'

(25)   {*muncul   lagi*} [$_N$ *buaya   itu*]   [$_{NC}$ *dua   ekor*]
        appear   again   crocodile   that   two   CLF
        'the two crocodiles {appeared again}'

But the problem is that this would not really help us. B. Partee [Partee 1995a] *inter alia* assumes that non-restrictive modifiers are attached to fully fledged NPs:

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                    NP
                   /  \
                 NP    PP/REL
                /  \
              DET   N
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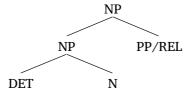
Figure 1. The structure of (English) noun phrase
modified by a non-restrictive relative clause/PP [Partee 1995a: 320]

So the structure of (25) can also be as follows:

(25') [$_N$ [$_N$ *kucing   itu*]   [$_{NC}$ *dua   ekor*]]
            cat   that   two   CLF
            'the two cats'

Consequently, *itu* cannot be used to verify whether the numerative complex is NP-internal of NP-external, and I could not find any other means to do it.

So, for now, it is unknown whether N-NC construction discussed above is a single phrase or a nominal followed by a floating quantifier.

3. Floated NCs

In Malayo-Polynesian languages numerals often "float" away from their nominal head. The floating of numerals is attested, e.g., in Tukang Besi [Donohue 1999: 110], Nias [Brown 2001], Lamaholot [Nishiyama, Kelen 2007: 39-42]. In Indo-

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[8] McCune and Simin [1983: 82] assume that the demonstrative *itu* is used to "clarify the closure of a heavy NP".

nesian this construction is possible, too; but, rather impressionistically, I would suggest that in Indonesian, constructions with floating numerals are more peripheral (i.e. less frequent) than in (some) other Malayo-Polynesian languages. In Nias, for example, "disjoint quantifier phrases … are, in fact, more frequent than phrases in which the numeral, classifier and noun occur together" [Brown 2001: 433].

[Conklin 1981] was the first work to provide the evidence of floating of numerals in Indonesian; she also attempted to describe the meaning of such constructions, but did it in a very brief and impressionistic way. The floating of numerals in Indonesian is also mentioned in [Jenks 2013a]. Still, the phenomenon has not yet been studied thoroughly.

Virtually, floating numerals may (i) be adjacent to the nominal over which they quantify and (ii) they may be floated to the right periphery of the clause, as in (26). In this work, I will only discuss the second case, since I did not manage to find enough data to study the first one.

(26) **Udang   Purba   itu** *Tinggal* **Dua   Ekor**
      shrimp   ancient   that   live   two   CLF
      'Only 2 (of those) shrimps are living.' (https://tulisan.reynoldsumayku.com/)

Note that in (26), as well as in other examples given in this section, the floated numerals may be in fact outside of the clause.

It seems that the floating of numerals is motivated by information structure, since it only occurs in contexts where the numeral and the noun do not form a single information unit. As examples from texts suggest, floated numerals occur when the noun is topicalized, while the numerical expression is an answer to a QUD, i.e. while it is in focus[9].

(27) {How many Sumatran Rhinos are left now?}

      Kini, **badak** **sumatera** *di* *Malaysia* *tinggal* **dua** **ekor.**
      now   rhino   Sumatran   in   Malaysia   live   two   CLF
      'Now, only two Sumatran rhinos are left.' lit. 'Only two Sumatran rhinos are living now.' (https://www.republika.co.id/)

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[9] Apparently, when the numeral is floated to the right periphery of the clause, some kind of "exhaustive" interpretation arises: the quantity of rhinos in (27) can only be equal to two, not more. It may be an instance of so-called identificational focus [Kiss 1998]; yet that issue requires a special investigation.

Further, when floated rightwards, numerals often occur with focus particles *hanya* and *saja*:

(28) *... dan   pada   tahun   1998   di-lapor-kan*
     and   in   year   1998   PASS.3-report-TR

     *burung   ini   **hanya**   tinggal   enam   ekor   **saja***
     bird   this   only   live   four   CLF   only
     '... and in 1998 it was reported that only four (of) these birds are living.'
     (http://ndobos.blogdrives.com/)

(29) *teman   datang   ke   pesta   se-puluh   orang   **saja***
     friend   come   to   party   one-ten   CLF   only
     'Only ten friends (of mine) came to the party.'

A somewhat similar picture can be seen in Thai and Burmese [Jenks 2013b; Simpson 2011]; the numeral is floated when it is focalized, the noun being familiar to speaker and hearer.

(30) Burmese
     {How many bungalows are free?}
     bangalo *kɔ̀   wàang   yừu   **sóong-sáam-láng***
     bungalow   PRT   vacant   ASP   2/3-CLF
     'Two or three of the bungalows are free.'
     [Simpson 2011: 135] (the QUD is reconstructed by me)

Note that, apparently, in all the contexts where the noun is topicalized and the numeral is in focus the standard NC-N construction can be employed (yet some additional investigation is required):

(31)   {How many bears did you kill this time?}
     kali   ini   saya   membunuh [FOC *tiga*] *beruang*
     time   this   I   kill   three   bear
     'This time I killed three bears.'

4. Headedness in constructions with numerals

Since Indonesian is a right-branching language, it is tempting to suppose that the numerals are heads in standard NC-N construction and dependents in non-standard N-NC construction. But how one could account for this?

According to [Lander, Tyshkevich 2015: 195], "there are two sources of the syntactic headedness effects, namely the relevance and the **compositional obligatoriness**". Compositional obligatoriness "may be thought … to be a matter of connecting an expression to its immediate context" ([Lander 2009]; cf. [Partee 1995b]). For example, in this line of reasoning, determiners (*a, the, most* etc.) are compositionally obligatory, since they define the reference of the noun.

I suggest that the head properties of the numerative complex in NC-N construction are due to the fact that in such constructions numerals are determiner-like: they (can) restrict the reference of the noun, and hence NC-N constructions may be used with definite referents. In N-NC construction, numerals are not determiner-like: they do not affect the reference of the noun, and, consequently, the noun is (most commonly) non-specific.

(Of course, all this reasoning makes sense only if we assume that numerals in N-NC construction are NP-internal).

The example (32) seem to support the hypothesis I have put forward:

(32) *Setelah   itu*   [_FOC *Kartini   meng-angkat   Mala*
      after   that   Kartini   ACT-take.away   Mala

*dan tidak lama   muncul   lagi   **buaya**   **itu** **dua** **ekor***],
and   NEG   longtime appear   again crocodile   that   two   CLF

satu-nya ukuran kecil   dan satu-nya ukuran besar   hitam   panjang.
one-POSS.3 size   little and one-POSS.3 size   big   black   long
'After that Kartini took away Mala, and the two crocodiles appeared: one was small and the other was big, long and black.'
(https://nasional.republika.co.id/)

Possibly, in this example we have not a noun followed by the floated numeral, but a noun phrase modified by a non-restrictive NC. *dua ekor* 'two CLF' is clearly non-restrictive since the reference has already been established in the previous discourse. If so, the NC here is not compositionally obligatory, and this could explain the fact that it occurs on the right side of the noun.

5. Conclusion

It has been shown that (i) the standard NC-N construction can be used to denote all kinds of referents (specific/non-specific); apparently, it is not sensible to the information structure of the sentence and can be used in any context.

(ii) N-NC construction is (primarily) used to denote non-specifics; this construction also implies that the numeral/the nominal/the VP is focalized. (iii) the numeral may be floated out of the nominal; the floating of numerals is motivated by information structure: it occurs when the NC is in focus, and the noun is topicalized. (iv) in standard NC-N construction numerals (possibly) head the nominal; the headedness effect may be due to the fact that in NC-N constructions the numerals are determiner-like, and hence compositionally obligatory.

My study showed that the existing treatments of the subject [Hopper 1986: 317, Conklin 1981: 215-8] are not (fully) consistent with the actual data. Still, there are many questions yet to be answered. The most important ones are: how to establish NP constituency in Indonesian? how to establish whether – in some contexts – the NC is a floating quantifier adjacent to the noun or a non-restrictive modifier? which factor is more important for the ordering of nouns and numerals – specificity or information structure? Hopefully, they will be answered in subsequent work.

Abbreviations

2/3 — second/third person; 3 — third person; ABSTR — abstract; ACT — active voice; ASP — aspect; CLF — classifier; FOC — focus; FUT — future tense; NEG — negation; NMLZ — nominalization; PASS — passive voice; PL — plural; POSS — possessive; PST — past tense; PTCL — particle; REL — relative pronoun; TR — transitive.

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