Typological Study of Word Order (19) :
Yuchi

Tasaku TSUNODA

0. Introduction,
I am most grateful to William L. Ballard for kindly and generously providing information and data on Yuchi and also for commenting on earlier drafts of the present work.

1. Name of language
Yuchi.

2. Sources of information
Questionnaire data provided by William L. Ballard, supplemented with Ballard (1978) (often abbreviated as ‘Ballard’ or ‘B’) and with additional examples and information provided by Ballard. Examples or information cited from the questionnaire data or provided through personal communication are indicated with ‘Ballard, p. c.’ or ‘B, p. c.’. The information regarding 3 and 4 has been supplemented with Crawford (1979) and Haas (1979).

3. Genetic affiliation
Independent (Ballard, p. c.). Yuchi is a language isolate, and has not been proved to be related to any other language or language family (Crawford p. 327, Haas pp. 309-10).
4. **Geographical distribution**

Yuchi was once spoken in Georgia and presently is spoken by fewer than thirty people near Sapulpa in Oklahoma (Crawford p. 327, Haas p. 310, Ballard, p. c.).

5. **Morphological and other relevant facts**

Yuchi has pronominal prefixes as well as independent pronouns. Nouns, independent pronouns, etc. seem to have no case inflection, i.e. they have the neutral case system \((St=Si=O)\). Pronominal prefixes seem to have the nominative-accusative system \((St=Si\neq O; \, NOM=NOM\neq ACC)\).

(Ballard (p. c.) notes, however, that a case could be made for a vestigial ergative system \((St\neq Si=O; \, ERG\neq ABS=ABS)\).) The nominative case has five paradigms, while the accusative case has two paradigms, and the use of various series is rather complicated; see Ballard (1978). In addition to marking the subject, the nominative prefixes also ‘occur as possessive prefixes on nouns’, apparently with two exceptions (Ballard p. 106).

For typographical convenience, the notation system employed by Ballard will be slightly modified in what follows. That is, a lateral fricative will be written with \(lh\); and voiceless and voiced palato-alveolar affricates with \(ch\) and \(j\), respectively.

Abbreviations employed are the following: - ACC, accusative; ADV, adverb or adverb phrase; DEM, demonstrative; EXC, exclusive; FEM, feminine; IMPERA, imperative; NEG, negation; NOM, nominative; Obj, object; PL, plural; Q, question; SG, singular; Subj, subject; 1, first person; 2, second person; 3, third person.

6. **Subject, object and verb**

‘Yuchi is generally an SOV language’ (Ballard, pp. 104-05). The only order of transitive sentences is SOV. (Ballard (p. c.) notes, however, that sentences with both subject and object expressed by nouns are infrequent in his data.) An example of the SOV order:

\[1\) dze-\(\tilde{u}\)\(\tilde{e}\) \quad \text{wedin} \quad \text{\(ko\)-thwa.} \]

\[
1 \text{SG, NOM-father} \quad \text{cow} \quad 3 \text{SG, NOM-kill} \quad \text{(SOV)}
\]
'My father killed a cow.' (B, p. c.)

(Recall that nominative prefixes can indicate possessors.)

For intransitive sentences, the usual (or the only?) order is SV:

(2) dzene ge-szæthe... 
dog 3 SG, NOM-run (SV)

'The dog ran...' (B, p. c.)

Ballard (p. 104, p. c.) states that the relative order of subject and object prefixes is as follows:

(i) 2ndObj preceding 1stSubj, e. g. (3) below; (2) of 16.
(ii) 3rdObj preceding 1stSubj, e. g. (1) of 13; (3) of 16.
(iii) 1stObj preceding 2ndSubj, e. g. (4) below.
(iv) 3rdObj preceding 2ndSubj, e. g. (2) of 10.
(v) 3rdSubj preceding 1stObj, e. g. (5) below, and (1) of 15.
(vi) 3rdSubj preceding 2ndObj. No example.

When both the subject and the object are third persons, the subject is indicated by a pronominal prefix, and the object occurs as an independent pronoun or is omitted, e. g. (1) of 6; (2) of 18; and (1) of 22.

Ballard's data indicate that the relative order of subject and object prefixes is governed by the following person hierarchy:

3rd person preceding 2nd person preceding 1st person with the sole exception of '1stObj + 2ndSubj', e. g. (4).

This person ranking seems unusual in that the higher ranked person follows, rather than precedes, the lower ranked person. However, Ballard (p. c.) argues that this ranking is manifested not in the left-to-right order, but in the order of proximity to the verb, in which case the person ranking posited above conforms with the usual person hierarchy, again, with the sole exception of '1stObj + 2ndSubj', e. g. (4).

Examples of the person hierarchy, from Ballard (p. 105):

(3) naedze-do-shi.
2SG, ACC-1SG, NOM-pity 'I pity you'. (2ndObj-1stSubj-V)

(4) dze-yo-shi.
1SG, ACC-2SG, NOM-pity 'You pity me'. (1stObj-2ndSubj-V)
(5) se-dze-lhëzëchhi.

3SG, NOM-1SG, ACC-chase 'She chases me'. (3rdSubj-1stObj-V)

7. Adposition

Yuchi possesses postpositions, e.g. (1), but appears to lack prepositions.

(1) yasəa lhahe kĩölüha!

wood out of take, IMPERA

'Take it out of the wood!' (B, p. c.)

8. Genitive and noun

Probably no genitive form of nouns exists (Ballard, p. c.). However, possessors can be expressed by pronominal prefixes. Namely, generally 'All five subject prefix paradigms occur as possessive prefixes on nouns. . . .' (Ballard, p. 106). Examples include 'my sister' in (1) of 6; and, 'your sister' in (1) of 13.

Different nouns take their prefix from different subject paradigms. In certain instances, a given noun can take prefixes from two paradigms, showing a contrast between alienable and inalienable possession (Ballard, p. 109). Examples from Ballard (p. 109):

(1) dze-hi

1SG, NOM-sinews

'my sinews (in my body)'

(2) dzo-hi

1SG, NOM-sinews

'my sinews (in my bag, that I bought at a store)'

9. Demonstrative and noun

A demonstrative follows the noun it qualifies (Ballard, p. c.):

(1) yuh fa

house DEM 'this/that house' (B, p. c.)

(Ballard (p. c.) suggests that the expression in (1) is probably a compound.)
10. **Numeral and noun**

A numeral follows the noun it qualifies (Ballard, p. c.) :

(1) yuhe nêkê
   house three ‘three houses’ (B, p. c.)

(2) weyê chêwahe we-yo-xe-jê.
   deer five 3 PL, ACC-2 SG, NOM-kill-PAST (OV)
   ‘You killed five deer’. (B, p. c.)

11. **Adjective and noun**

An adjective follows the noun it qualifies (Ballard, p. c.) :

(1) sê chhalha
   girl red ‘a red girl’ (B, p. c.)

(Ballard (p. c.) notes that the expression in (1) probably refers to an American Indian girl.)

In the next example, a translation equivalent of an English adjective is a suffix :

(2) yuhe-ê
   house-big ‘a big house’ (B, p. c.)

12. **Relative clause and noun**

No information is available.

13. **Proper noun and common noun**

No information is available. The nearest example available is the following, in which the common noun ‘sister’ and the proper noun ‘Segie’ are separated and probably do not constitute a noun phrase :

(1) soê-wêznê senê
   2SG, NOM-sister 3SG, FEM, be
   se-do-wê-jê Segie.
   3SG, ACC-1SG, NOM-dream-PAST Segie (OVO)
   ‘I dreamt about your sister Segie’. (B, p. c.)
14. **Comparison**

No information is available.

15. **Main verb and auxiliary verb**

There are no auxiliary verbs. What might be expressed by auxiliary verbs in some other languages are expressed in Yuchi by verb suffixes. (Ballard, p. c.) An example is -tæ ‘can’ in:

(1) di-pæ-tæ  2o-dzo-gwa-jæ.

1SG, NOM-drink-can  3PL, NOM-1 SG, ACC-say-PAST

'They told me I can drink.' (B, p. c.)

(Ballard (p. c.) notes that in Yuchi the 'main verb comes last' as in Japanese.)

16. **Adverb and verb**

Adverbs precede the verb (Ballard, p. c.). Examples include 'hard' in (1), 'every day' in (2), and 'there' in (3):

(1) talega  xti-næ!

hard  dance-IMPERA  (ADV V)

'Dance hard!' (B, p. c.)

(2) ne-he-xi  kextra  ñaga-sala

here-hither-you come  since  day-every

2SG, ACC-1 SG, NOM-see  (V, ADV V)

'I see you everyday since you came here.' (B, p. c.)

(3) ?ahe  ke-so-nø-pə-a-de...

there  that way-3SG, ACC-1 PL, NOM-see-and then  (ADV V)

'We'll go and see her there... ’ (B, p. c.)

As noted in 5 above, 'adjectives' are really verbs. They can qualify another verb:

(4) kžala  do-kžá  dze-safine.

work  1SG, NOM-do  1SG, NOM-be fast

'I am fast at my work'. (B, p. c.)

(Lit. , perhaps 'I do work and I am fast'.)
Examples of adverb phrases include ‘out of the wood’ in (1) of 7.

17. **Adverb and adjective**

An adverb precedes the ‘adjective’ (which ia really a verb) it qualifies (Ballard, p. c.):

(1) John pežã£ hogan.  
    John very 3SG, NOM-be tall ‘John is very tall’. (B, p. c.)

18. **General questions**

Yuchi has the question marker -žle. It is attached to the focus of question. In unmarked cases, it is attached to the verb. (Ballard, p. c.)

(1) tse-bale-žle?  
    rain-stopped-Q ‘Did the rain stop?’ (B, p. c.)

(2) John golhæne ho-1hæ-žle?  
    John meal 3SG, NOM-eat-Q (SOV)  
    ‘Did John eat the food?’ (B, p. c.)

Ballard (p. c.) notes that -žle may be considered as an enclitic rather than a suffix (i) in the sense that, when it is attached to a verb, it is always at the end, following all suffixes and (ii) in that it can be attached to any element in the sentence.

Apart from the addition of the question marker, general questions do not seem to differ in word order from declarative sentences.

19. **Inversion of subject and verb in general questions**

This inversion does not occur (Ballard, p. c.).

20. **Special questions**

No information is available except that an interrogative pronoun will occur sentence-initially if it is the subject (Ballard, p. c.). Examples of special questions include:

(1) wafa 20-fe-yi?  
    where 1PL, EXC, NOM-go-?  
    ‘Where are we going?’ (B, p. c.)
The gloss for -yi is not known.

21. **Inversion of subject and verb in special questions**
No information is available.

22. **Negative sentences**
It seems that verbs are negated by the negative prefix na- and that negative sentences do not differ in word order from affirmative sentences.

(1) John Bill nae-we-thwa-jë.
   John Bill NEG-3SG, NOM-kill-PAST (SOV)
   'John did not kill Bill'. (B, p. c.)

(2) nae-dze-nqë.
   NEG-1SG, NOM-be 'I'm not here'. (B, p. 109)
Yuchi has a negative verb gwæรฉ? 'not be' (Ballard, p. 109). It is affixed—rather redundantly—with the negative prefix:

(3) nae-dze-gwæรฉ?
   NEG-1SG, NOM-not be 'I'm not here'. (B, p. 109)

23. **Conditional clause and main clause**
No information is available.

24. **Purpose clause and main clause**
No information is available.

**References**
Abbreviations employed are the following: - JFLNU, Journal of the Faculty of Letters, Nagoya University; SLLL, Studies in Language and Literature. Language (published by the Institute of Literature and Linguistics, the University of Tsukuba); and, UNP, University of Nagoya Press.