The NP: Structure, Case, Nominalization, Incorporation, and Relative Clauses
Omaha-Ponca

Catherine Rudin carudin1@wsc.edu
Boulder Siouan Syntax Meeting, 2001

(Author's note 2009: The following is the handout for my contribution to the session on "the NP: structure, case, nominalization, incorporation, and relative clauses" at the Siouan Syntax Fest. It consists of a brief sketch of the facts of NP structure in Omaha-Ponca, followed by a selection of data. Although it is really more "notes toward a paper" than an actual article, I am making it available in hopes that others will find the data and preliminary analysis useful.)

OVERVIEW:

1. Structure

All modifiers follow the noun. A rough template for a maximal nominal phrase is:

[N Clause Poss Quant Dem D]

This can be analyzed as a right-headed DP; in fact as nested right-headed phrases, though I wouldn't bet anything on the details of this:

$[_{DP}\ [_{DemP}\ [_{QP}\ [_{PossP}\ [_{ClP}\ [_{NP}\ N\ ]$ Clause] Poss] Quant] Dem] D]

All components, including N, are optional.

A quantifier can also occur outside DP, making a larger QP: $[_{QP}$ [DP] Quant]

A demonstrative can also occur before N: [[Dem] $[_{(DP?)}$ N ...]]

Nominal phrases can also consist of:

- pronoun
- relative clause
- nominalized clause
- appositive (or multiply articulated) construction
- conjoined nominals?
- N can be a compound or a nominalization

2. Case

I don't have anything to say here. There is no morphological/overt case marking, and I don't know anything interesting about abstract Case either.

3. Nominalization

Many nouns are morphologically verbs (clauses); "zero nominalization" or simply using a verb as a noun, is very common. The verb form is 3rd person; it may include an indefinite object (detransitivizing) prefix.

Larger clauses (i.e. a verb plus nominal argument or other stuff) can undergo the same process and be used as derived nouns.

4. Incorporation
(No doubt there IS something to say here, but I'm not going to say it.)

5. Relative Clauses
Relative clauses are internal-headed. The clause is marked with a final article, which correlates with the role of the relativized nominal in the matrix clause, not its role within the RC. The head nominal has no article.

[$_{DP}$ [$_{S}$ ... [head] ...] article]

EXAMPLES AND DISCUSSION:

1. structure
A nominal core can combine with an article to make a determiner phrase (DP). The nominal core (shown in [] *in the following examples) consists of an N and/or one or more modifiers.*

nú ak^{h}a	'the man'
man art	[N] + art
wo^{n}githe	'all (of us/them)'
all	[quantifier]
zhi^{n}gá amá	'the children'
be-small art	[clause] + art
gá ak^{h}á	'that one'
that art	[dem] + art
Mary ak^{h}a	'Mary'
M. art	[N] + art
íutha gá the	'that story'
tell that art	[clause + dem] + art
níkashi^{n}ga dú ak^{h}a	'this person'
person this art	[N + dem] + art

wa'ú no^{n}bá amá 'the two women'
woman two art [N + Q] + art

wa'ú zhi^{n}gá wi^{n} 'an old woman'
woman be-small art [N + clause] + art

i^{n}shtá thithíta	'your eye'
eye your	[N + poss]

tí o^{n}gúta t^{h}e ‘our house’
house our art [N + poss] + art

wagthábaze tú tho^{n} ‘the blue paper’
paper be-blue art [N + clause] + art

zho^{n} wáxube k^{h}e ‘the sacred pole’
wood sacred art [N (compound)] + art or [N + clause] + art ?

uthúthe gthi^{n} thi^{n}k^{h}e ‘the one who was stuck’
be-stuck sit art [clause] + art

údo^{n}=xti wi^{n} ‘a really good (one)’
good=very art [clause] + art

tí awío^{n}wo^{n} t^{h}e ‘which house’
house which art [N + mod] + art

wagthábaze tu wiwíta tho^{n} ‘my blue paper’
paper blue my art [N + clause + poss] + art

Sometimes a quantifier (including numerals) follows DP, making a quantifier phrase.

shó^{n}ge ak^{h}a wó^{n}githe ‘all the horses’
horse art all [[N] + art] + Q

shó^{n}ge shé ak^{h}á nó^{n}ba ‘those two horses’ / “two of those horses”
horse that art two [[N + dem] + art] + Q

shó^{n}ge duá=thi^{n} wi^{n} ‘this one horse’ / “one of these horses”
horse this art one [[N + dem] + art] + Q

wahábe gá t^{h}e júba ‘this little bit of corn’
corn that art some [[N + dem] + art] + Q

éthi wiwíta ama wó^{n}githe ‘all my relatives’
relatives my art all [[N + poss] + art] + Q

Sometimes a possessive follows DP but here it is predicative, not part of nominal phrase:

[shí^{n}nuda tó^{n}ga thi^{n}k^{h}e] o^{n}guta ‘the big dog is ours’ [DP] poss
[mazho^{n}=khe] wiwíta ‘the land is mine’ (Dorsey 1890:435.12)

Sometimes a demonstrative precedes N, with or without other modifiers (Dorsey examples from recent Siouan list posting by John Koontz). This pattern is “the more common alternative with a single demonstrative and a noun” in Dorsey, but very rare in my data. (shé mizhi^{n}ga/shé nuzhi^{n}ga excepted)

Dem N (and similarly Dem [N V] and Dem [N Quant])
90:28.12 thé níkashi^{n}ga 'this person'

90:704.8 shé níkashi^{n}ga 'that fellow'
90:713.2 gá waxí^{n}ha 'that paper [letter]'
90:25.5 e mó^{n}ghe 'that sky'
90:87.12-13 thé ó^{n}xtiego^{n} úzhu 'these principle head-men'
90:85.14 thé núzhi^{n}ga no^{n}ba 'these two boys'

Dem Art N "pretty unusual"
90:96.2 thé=k^{h}e shó^{n}ge 'this horse'
90:57.9 shé=k^{h}e tashní^{n}gthishkaha 'that fawnskin bag'

Dem N Art (Quant) "More normal"
90:86.7 thé ushté ama 'these remaining ones'
90:149.4 thé téwa'u thi^{n}k^{h}e 'this buffalo woman'
90:147.5-6 thé tí amá bthúga 'all these lodges (of people)'

Patterns with dem following noun (examples below still from John Koontz's post) are far more common in my data than any pattern with dem preceding the noun.

N Dem "also occurs"
90:85.2 ó$^{(n)}$ma the 'this one'
90:330.1 ní^{n} thé 'this water'
90:109.9 mó^{n}zewethi^{n} the 'this sword'
90:194.6 watháha thé 'this clothing'
90:109.6 shínudo^{n} the=tha^{n}k^{h}e=i=ki, mó^{n}zewethi^{n} the 'these dogs and this sword'
90:721.3-5 níkashi^{n}ga shé 'those people'
90:295.15 xthabé shé, zo^{n}dé shé 'those trees, that thicket'
90:83.1 tó^{n}wo^{n}gtho^{n} e 'that tribe'

N Dem plus other stuff: "More common" (quite common in my data)
90:124.14 wáxesabe thé=ama 'this blackman' N Dem Art(P)
90:80.2 mó^{n}the=t^{h}e 'this arrow'
90:140.3 ú'e thé=k^{h}e 'this field'
90:213.11 zhó^{n} thé=t^{h}e 'this wood'
90:109.6 shínudo^{n} the=tho^{n}khe=i=ki, mó^{n}zewethi^{n} the 'these dogs and this sword'
90:54.1 théghegaku shé=t^{h}e 'that drum'
90:134.19 pahé shé=hi=the=k^{h}e 'that hill yonder'
90:... páhe shé=hi=the=thaN=di 'at that distant hill'
90:109.17 zhó^{n} shé=t^{h}e 'that tree'
90:117.19 shiu shé=t^{h}o^{n} 'that prairie chicken'
90:167/2 shínudo^{n} shé=thiNk^{h}e 'that dog'
90:154.20 wa'úzhiNga gá=thi^{n} 'that old woman'
90:190.11 nó^{n}b=uthixtho^{n} gá=tho^{n} 'that ring'
90:278.12 níashi^{n}ga wahí thé 'these human bones' [N N] Dem(Art)
90:52.5 mo^{n}shchi^{n}'ge izhí^{n}ge é=ak^{h}a 'that Son of the Rabbit'
90:231.19 mó^{n}ze ná=zhide thé=k^{h}e 'this redhot iron' [N V] Dem Art
90:278.5 wat^{h}ó^{n}zi júba thé=thi^{n} 'a bit of corn like this' [N Quant] Dem (Quant)
90:107.13 wé'uhi e=shno^{n} the hébe 'this piece of a mere hide scraper'

It's not at all clear how to analyze demonstrative constructions. It's been suggested that N Dem constructions are "possibly copular constructions" -- perhaps so, but many (actually I think all or at least most) do not seem copular in sentences. eg:

[Shínuda é] nó^{n}pa 'He is scared of that dog.'

Frequency of demonstrative constructions of various types may have changed since Dorsey's time? Or perhaps just more limited range of styles in my data? In any case, more investigation is needed here, especially into difference in meaning between N-dem and dem-N.

Possibly related to demonstratives: A common construction consists of two (occasionally 3 or even 4) coreferential nominals with identical articles. Usually one has a demonstrative as its nominal core; in fact, this is perhaps the most common use of demonstratives in my data, especially in narratives. But some instances don't involve a demonstrative. Probable structure: $[_{DP}\ [_{DP}\ NP\ art_i]\ [_{DP}\ NP\ art_i]\ ]$*; i.e. appositive. But it could be a type of definiteness agreement?*

zhi^{n}gá ama shé ama 'those children' (the children, those ones)
small art those art

duá=thi^{n}k^{h}e wáú thi^{n}k^{h}e 'this woman' (this one, the woman)
this art woman art

she ak^{h}a níkashi^{n}ga ak^{h}a winégi ak^{h}a Charlie ak^{h}a 'that guy, my uncle Charlie'
that art person art my-uncle art Charlie art

gá ama nikashi^{n}ga no^{n}ba ama 'those two people' (those ones, the two people)
that art person two art

[wat^{h}é tho^{n} awío^{n}wo^{n} tho^{n}] newi^{n} a? 'which dress did you buy?'
dress art which art ^{2}buy Q (the dress, which one)

VFW Post [shé ge haská ge] uwáwa'i. 'The VFW post loaned them those flags.'
this art flag art loaned

Shi [gá k^{h}e tápuska k^{h}e] di shti wabthít^{h}o^{n}. 'And I worked here at this school too.'
and this art school art at too ^{1}work

Conjoined nominals also occur, but I'm not sure how to analyze them. In my elicited data they are usually linked with ego^{n}...sheno^{n}:

I like to eat beef and chicken and potatoes: Téska tanúka égo^{n} wazhí^{n}ga égo^{n} nú shéno^{n} that^{h}é xtáathe.
I like running and swimming. T^{h}ó^{n}=i=t^{h}e égo^{n} xithó^{n} shéno^{n} xtáathe.
I bought a red dress and white shoes. Wat^{h}é zhíde égo^{n} hi^{n}bé ská shéno^{n} bthíwi^{n}.
... a red dress, white shoes, and a green hat. Wat^{h}é zhíde, hi^{n}bé ská, watháde pézhitu shéno^{n} ...

In texts conjoined NPs are generally juxtaposed, often with a word meaning "also/too"

Dorsey 1890:18.5 núga wi^{n} mí^{n}ga wi^{n} edábe 'a male (and) a female also'

Dorsey 1890:72.11-12 á^{n}p^{h}a^{n} núga zhí^{n}ga wi^{n} á^{n}p^{h}a^{n} mí^{n}ga zhí^{n}ga=shti wi^{n} 'a small male elk (and) a small female elk, too'
Shi níkashi^{n}ga húton^{n}ga wa'u shti shaó^{n} shti shi wáxe dúba edí at^{h}i=ama.
and person winnebago woman too sioux too and white some there ^{3}arrive=aux
'And a Winnebago woman, some Sioux, and some whites were also there.'

Compounding is very common, with various combinations of stems:

N+N (modifier+head)

pó^{n}ka=wáu	'Ponka woman' (Ponca + woman)
xáde=mo^{n}k^{h}o^{n}	'tea' (grass + medicine)
mo^{n}shtí^{n}ge=wathat^{h}e	'salad' (rabbit+food)

N+N (classifier+head)

te=hé	'buffalo horn' (buffalo + horn)
ti=zhébe	'door' (house + ???)

N+N (head +modifier)

i^{n}shtá=mó^{n}ze	'Iron Eye (flashing eyes?)' (eye + metal)

N(Subj arg)+V

mo^{n}k^{h}ó^{n}=sabe	'coffee' (medicine + be black)
nitá=to^{n}ga	'mule' (ear + be big)
mó^{n}ze=i-utha	'telephone' (metal + talk)

N(non-Subj arg)+V

mo^{n}í^{n}ka=gaghe	'earth lodge builder clan' (earth + to make)
wathó^{n}=bashpi	'sliced squash' (squash+one slices it)

N+particle

tá=xti	'deer' (ungulate + very)
wazhí^{n}=shte	'be in a bad mood' (be in a mood + so-ever)

more complex compounds:

té=ska=mo^{n}ze=ni	'milk' ((buffalo + be white = cow) + udder + water)
mó^{n}ze=ska=úzhi	'purse' ((metal + be white = money) + bag)
tá=xti=zhi^{n}ga	'fawn' ((ungulate + very = deer) + small)
zhábe=ta=zhó^{n}	'box elder' (beaver + its + wood)

truncated:

sho^{n}to^{n}ga	'wolf' (sho^{n}ge 'dog'/historically 'horse' + to^{n}ga 'be big')
wazhi^{n}tu	'bluebird' ((wa 'indef' + zhi^{n}ga 'be small' = bird) + tu 'be blue')
i^{n}gtho^{n}si^{n}snede	'mountain lion' (i^{n}gtho^{n}ge 'cat' + si^{n}de 'tail' + snede 'be long')
mo^{n}shtí^{n}ska	'jack rabbit' (mo^{n}shti^{n}ga 'rabbit' + ska 'be white'

3. nominalization

It is extremely common for a verb (or clause) to be used as a noun, with no overt nominalizing morphology. Noun/verb status is distinguished only by context (eg. by occurring with article or auxiliary). Examples with a nominal argument (like 'elephant') might be analysed as compounds.

ti	'house' ~ 'one dwells'
hitháí	'Saturday' ~ 'one bathes'
úhe	'path' ~ 'one travels, proceeds'
wathát^{h}e	'food' ~ 'one eats something'
wathízha	'laundry' ~ 'one washes something'
ágthi^{n}	'chair' ~ 'one sits'

wébase ‘saw’ ~’one cuts something by pressing’
ti baxiatha ‘elephant’ ~ ‘it pushes over a house’

*Complement clauses are sometimes nominalized by a clause-final article (usually the “default” article t^{h}e). **presumably these are articles, not evidentials...?*

[DP [S] article]

[No^{n}zhí^{n}=ta k^{h}e] ebthégo^{n} ‘I think it’s going to rain.’
^{3}rains=fut art ^{1}think
[Ebé mó^{n}ze ska ‘í t^{h}e] íshpaho^{n}? ‘Do you know who gave money?’
who money ^{3}gave art ^{2}know
[Águdi gthi^{n} t^{h}e] ithápaho^{n}=m=azhí. ‘I don’t know where she lives.’
where ^{3}live art ^{1}know=1=neg

Often, there is no clause-final article. I think these are subordinate clauses with no overt subordinator, but perhaps it’s a complex predicate/serial verb kind of construction?

[S [S] verb] (??or [S ...verb verb])

[wahí thagthí] xtátha ‘he likes to chew bones’
bone ^{3}chew ^{3}like
[awák^{h}eta né] shko^{n}na... ‘wherever you want to go’
where ^{2}go ^{2}want
[ho^{n} k^{h}a snéde] athá ‘it’s getting late/the night is getting long’
night art ^{3}be-long ^{3}go
[sidadi bthe] ebthégo^{n} ‘I intended to go yesterday.’
yesterday ^{1}go ^{1}think
ho^{n}sko^{n}ska t^{h}e di [azhó^{n}] agthé ‘I went to bed at midnight.’
midnight at ^{1}sleep ^{1}go

5. relative clauses

Rather than a “gap” coreferential to a clause-external head noun or NP, RCs in Omaha-Ponca contain the head NP itself (internally headed). They are not adjectival, but nominal. The final article nominalizes the clause and indicates the animacy, proximateness, or other features of the resulting nominal phrase (DP) and its head noun: The head NP (underlined in examples) is always indefinite (no article). It is usually first in the clause, but not always.

[DP[S .... [NP$_{head}$] .....] article]

[[John ak^{h}a <u>mízhi^{n}ga</u> xtátha=i] ak^{h}a] zho^{n}. ‘The girl John likes is asleep.
J. art girl ^{3}likes art ^{3}sleeps

[[<u>Wathízha</u> gahítha] t^{h}e] nó^{n}pe=nó^{n}=i=t^{h}e ‘They were afraid of the flapping laundry.’
washing ^{3}flaps art ^{3}afraid=usually=P=evid

The [[<u>í^{n}ch^{h}o^{n} ubthá</u>] t^{h}e] égo^{n}=i=t^{h}e ‘It was just like I’m telling it now.’
this now I-tell-it art thus=P=evid (Or is <u>t^{h}e</u> part of the clause?)

[[<u>Shó^{n}ge</u> ágthi^{n}=i] t^{h}e] gá t^{h}e a? ‘Is this the horse I was riding?’
horse ^{1}ride=P art this art Q

... [[wathát^{h}e that^{h}a=i]tho^{n}] é hébe that^{h}é=ak^{h}a '... the food that they ate...'
food ^{3}eat art that piece ^{3}eat=aux JOD 1890:356.

Shi [[níkagahi ahí=bi ehé] ak^{h}a]... 'Again the chief who I said had arrived ...'
again chief ^{3}arrive=P ^{1}said art JOD 1890:421.1

Égithe ... tí=i=t^{h}e ha, [[thé wahó^{n} athé]ak^{h}a.] 'Finally this camp-mover camped.'
Finally ^{3}camp=P=evid dec this set-off ^{3}go art JOD 1890:362.5

[[shi^{n}nuda no^{n}ba uxpáwathe] ak^{h}a] 'the two dogs that I lost'
dog two ^{1}lose art

Relative clauses can be subject and object of the higher clause. Offhand I don't know of examples of RC as postpositional object or in other roles....