Word Order, Headedness, and Directionality: Omaha-Ponca

Catherine Rudin
carudin1@wsc.edu
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(Author's note 2009: The following is the handout for my contribution to the session on "word order, headedness, and directionality" at the Siouan Syntax Fest. It consists of a brief sketch of the facts of word order in different types of constituents 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. Word Order in the clause:

Verbal complex is normally rightmost and is the only obligatory element.
Verbal complex = V + aux + evidentials etc... quotatives, exclamatives, other
“illocutionary” markers ...
Other things (nominals, adverbs, etc.) precede verbal complex in no set order:
(XP) (XP) (XP) V+(aux)+(clitics)
HOWEVER in perhaps 10% of sentences an “XP” follows the verbal complex:
(XP)(XP) V+(aux)+(clitics) XP

2. Word Order in nominals:

Article follows all other elements of nominal phrase.
Modifiers including “adjectival” clauses (stative verbs), possessors, quantifiers,
and demonstratives follow the noun -- in roughly that order.
So the maximal nominal phrase is approximately:
$[_{DP} [_{NP}$ N Clause Poss Quant Dem] D]
(All components, including N, are optional.)

3. Word Order in other phrases

PP is always P-final: $[_{PP} [DP$] P]
AdvP Adverbial clauses end with an adverbial element $[_{AdvP} [S$] Adv]
Other? (If there's a VP, it is V-final ... but is there any evidence for VP??)

4. Headedness/Directionality

 Overall, Omaha-Ponca is quite strongly right-headed. Whether there are phrases whose “normal” shape is not right-headed depends on:
(a) how we analyze nominals. Does NP contain more than just N? If so, it appears to be
left headed):
$[_{DP} [_{NP}$ N Clause Poss Quant Dem] D]
but perhaps each modifier heads its own right-headed projection:
$[_{DP} [_{DemP} [_{QP} [_{PossP} [_{ClP} [_{NP}$ N] Clause] Poss] Quant] Dem] D]

(b) whether all the “little stuff” after the verb (auxiliaries, evidentials, etc.) are considered to be heads of various projections (Mood Phrase, Aspect Phrase, ...)

▸In two of the major categories (DP and PP), right-headedness is 100% exceptionless. Nothing ever follows D or P within the phrase.

▸In the other major category, S, right-headedness is the norm but is quite frequently violated (unless we take postverbal constituents to be outside the clause... perhaps a "Topic Phrase" ??)   [$_{TP}$ [$_S$ ... V] XP$_{Topic}$]   vs.   [$_S$ ... V XP]

<u>EXAMPLES AND DISCUSSION</u>:

1. clause

Constituent order within the clause is quite free. Many categories, including all arguments, are expressed morphologically in the verb, and are optional (often omitted) as independent syntactic units.

The Verb is the only obligatory element (in non-eliptical sentences) and is most often clause-final in both main and embedded clauses.

Nominal, Postpositional, and Adverbial phrases normally precede the verbal complex. When more than one such phrase occurs, their order is relatively free, though probably constrained by discourse factors. SOV is the most usual order when both S and O are present, but is not inviolable.

Clause structure: [$_S$[(XP)* [$_{V'}$ V (clitics)(aux)]]

Examples with various choices of (XP):

[Pahó^{n}ga dit^{h}o^n] [íutha gá the] [no^{n}zhí^n=t^{h}e].   PP + NP$_S$ + V
old-days from   story this art ^{3}stand=evid
'This story is from the old days.'

[Ó^{n}ba wí^n] [wahó^{n}thishige ak^{h}a] [shó^{n}ge wi^n] [gó^{n}tha=i=t^{h}e].   AdvP + NP$_S$ + NP$_O$ + V
 day one   Orphan-Boy   art   horse one ^{3}wants=P=evid
'One day, Orphan Boy wanted a horse.'

[Údo^n] [shkághe].   clause + V
(be)good ^{2}do
'You did (something)good.'

[Shé thi^{n}k^{h}e] [wí^n] 'í=ga!   NP$_{IO}$ + NP$_O$ + V
 that art   one give=imp
'Give that guy one!'

[Gasó^{n}thi^n] [ábae] athé=ta=ama.   AdvP + clause? + V
tomorrow hunting ^{3}go=fut=aux
'They're going hunting tomorrow.'

[Ti   ata] ni^n a?   AdvP + V
house in ^{2}be Q
'Are you in the house?'

[Tiuzhí shti] wákigthathi^n.   NP$_O$ + V
family too ^{3}has-his-own^{3p}

'He has a family too.'

[Gaso^{n}thi^n] shi [gahí níkashin^{n}ga ama] [gá ge] o^{n}wo^{n}shi $\qquad$ AdvP + NP$_S$ + NP$_O$ + V
tomorrow and chief person $\quad$ art $\quad$ that the ^{3}ask^1
'The council asked me (to do) that tomorrow

[Ó^{n}ba húbe ki] [é t^{h}e] [eó^{n}baha] no^{n}zhi^n=ta=mi^{n}k^{h}e $\qquad$ AdvP + NP? + NP$_S$ + V
day holy when that art m.c. $\quad$ ^{1}stand=fut=aux
'On Sunday I'mm going to be the master of ceremonies.'

Certain particles precede or follow the sentence:
$\qquad$ (particle) [$_S$[(XP)* [$_{V'}$ V (clitics)(aux)]] (particle)

Égithe té dúba wadó^{n}ba.
finally buffalo some he-see-them
'Finally he saw some buffalo."

I^{n}sh'áge ama o^{n}ska two and a half wégithawa=bi=**ama**.
elder art as-if $\qquad$ ^{3}charge^{3P}=P=quote
'Senior citizens apparently are charged 2 1/2 (dollars), they say.'

Although the most usual word order is verb-final, a postverbal constituent occus in perhaps 10% of sentences in connected discourse. This typically represents a discourse topic, or sometimes an afterthought or clarification. (In the following examples the postverbal phrase is underlined.) Postverbal constituents are probably in a Topic slot outside the whole sentence:
$\qquad$ (particle) [$_S$[(XP)* [$_{V'}$ V (clitics)(aux)]] (particle) **(XP)**

Go^n shnábe o^{n}gthí^n=ta=mi^{n}k^{h}e <u>wéugo^{n}ba</u>. $\qquad$ 'So I'll live with dirty windows'
so be-dirty I-live=fut=I-aux window
$\qquad$ (conversation about washing windows; *wéugo^{n}ba* is a well established topic)

Watháko^n ná=i t^{h}e di shí=the íthithishi a, <u>Haskall</u>?
gambling ^{2}go=P when ^{2}arrive=evid? ^{3}feed^2 Q Haskall
'When you went to gamble, did they feed you when you arrived, (at) Haskall?
$\qquad$ (first utterance of a conversation; no topic established; *Haskall* added for clarification.)

No^{n}gthéze ama é wathít^{h}o^n sho^n gághe the di, ó^{n}ba thizé=no^n=i=t^{h}e égo^n=i $\quad$ t^{h}e di awak^{h}etá shte
N. $\qquad$ art that ^{3}work finish ^{3}do when day ^{3}take=usu=P=evid thus=P when where $\quad$ ever
go^n bthe=no^n=mo^n, <u>wabthít^{h}o^n=m=azhi t^{h}e di</u>.
so ^{1}go=usu=aux $\quad$ ^{1}work=1=neg $\qquad$ when
'When No^{n}gtheze is done working, on her day off, when it's like that, I go anywhere (with her), if I'm not working.'
$\qquad$ (afterthought?)

Égithe duá=t^{h}e nídethe=t^{h}e, <u>ké tó^{n}ga</u>.
finally this=art ready=evid turtle big
'Eventually it was ready (cooked), the snapping turtle.'
$\qquad$ (reintroducing topic/reminding -- the turtle hasn't been mentioned in a while)

Question words (and other focused elements?) most often immediately precede the verb:

Zhiⁿgá thiⁿkʰe iⁿdádoⁿ dóⁿbe a?   'What does the baby see?'
small   art   what ³see Q

Moⁿkʰóⁿ sabe ebé athíⁿ tʰí a?   'Who brought the coffee?'
medicine black who ³has ³come Q

Móⁿshoⁿkʰe águdi níze a?   'Where did you get those feathers?'
feather art where ²get Q

However, other positions are possible for question words too:

Iⁿdádoⁿ wáthatʰe gaha gthíⁿ?   'What's on the table?'
what   table   on-top ³sit

Nominal subordinate clauses usually precede the main clause, but may also follow it:

Óⁿwoⁿshigthe amá wéamoⁿxa=b=azhi=noⁿ, iⁿdádoⁿ oⁿgóⁿtha=i tʰe
server art ³ask⁴=P=neg=habitual what ⁴want=P art
'The servers never ask us what (i.e. which piece of food) we want.'

2. nominal
[QP[DP[NP NP] art] quantifier]
A nominal core (NP?) can combine with an article to make a determiner phrase (DP), which in turn can combine with a quantifier (including numerals) to make a quantifier phrase (QP). DP and QP are head-final, and headed by a functional element drawn from a closed morphological class. A rough template of possible constituents and their relative order within "NP" is:
    [NP (noun) + (clause) + (other modifiers) + (demonstrative)]
demonstratives and quantifiers also appear in other positions; it's messy.

*(See my other Boulder Siouan Syntax-fest paper for details and examples: **The NP: structure, case, nominalization, incorporation, and relative clauses: Omaha-Ponca**; C. Rudin, 2001 ms.)*

3. other phrases
a. PP
PPs are P-final (postpositional); a postposition follows a noun or other nominal phrase (including clauses, etc.).

(a)di   'in/at/on/to'   [ti] ádi   'in the house'
                               [tiútanoⁿ] di   'in the yard/street'
                               [uxpúzhe kʰe] di   'in the cupboard'
                          [wa'u zhiⁿgá thiⁿkʰe] di   'at the old woman('s place)'

(a)ta   'to/toward'   [Macy] ata   'to Macy' ([mési ata])
                               [uthiwiⁿ ti kʰe] ta   'to the store'

dit^{h}o^n 'from'   [umó^{n}thi^{n}ka házhi t^{h}e] dit^{h}o^n 'since last year'
                                        [tiúzhi wiwíta t^{h}e] dit^{h}o^n '(it is) from my family'
                                        [wabthít^{h}o^n t^{h}e] dit^{h}o^n 'since I've been working'

(a)t^{h}o^n 'as far as'   [[to^{n}wo^{n}gtho^n] t^{h}o^n] bthe   'I'm going to town.'

(a)do^n 'during'   [hó^n] do^n 'at night'
                                        [ó^{n}ba] do^n 'in the daytime'

other postpositions include:

(a)tathisho^n	'up to'	thu	'in/at/on'
tat^{h}o^n	'from'	(a)ha	'to/from/in … places'
(a)do^n	'because of'	go^n	'in … wise, like …'

b. AdvP

The only multi-word adverbials I know of (i.e. ones where it makes sense to talk about "word order") are adverbial clauses. These end with an adverbial subordinator:

ego^n I	'having'
ego^n II	'so'
ado^n	'therefore'
ki=(zh)	'if/when'
t^{h}e/k^{h}e/tho^n	'when' --	also t^{h}edi ?? or is this t^{h}e 'when + di 'at'?

examples:
Ké thi^{n}k^{h}e t'étha <u>egó^n</u>, gá thi^{n}k^{h}e bthát^{h}e=ta=mi^{n}k^{h}e.   'Having killed the turtle, [he said']I will
turtle art he-killed-it having this art I-eat-it=fut=aux   eat this.'

O^{n}wó^{n}k^{h}ega <u>(e)go^n</u> at^{h}í=m=azhi.   'I was sick so I didn't come.'
I-sick   so I-arrive-here=I=neg

Ato^{n}be <u>go^n</u> ubthá=ta=mi^{n}k^{h}e.   'Having seen it, I'm going to tell about it.'
[1]see having [1]tell=fut=aux

O^{n}zhi^{n}ga <u>t^{h}e di</u>...   'When I was small...'
[1]small   when

Pahó^{n}ga hí   <u>t^{h}e di</u> pi'o^n.   'When they came the first time, they fixed it.'
first [3]arrive-here when [3]repair

Mítho^{n}mo^{n}shi o^{n}wó^{n}that^{h}a=i, mó^{n}ze íutha <u>ki</u>.   'We were eating dinner when the phone rang.'
noon   [4]eat=P   telephone   when

Agthí   <u>ki</u> ebé shti at^{h}í=i=t^{h}e.   'When I came home somebody had been there.'
[1]arrive-home when who soever [3]arrive-here=P=evid

"Before" is expressed with a negative "when" clause:

O^{n}wó^{n}that^{h}a=b=azhi <u>t^{h}e di</u> gá t^{he} thishtó^n théthewo^n
we-eat=P=neg art when this art finish is-necesary?   'Before we eat, this has to get finished.'

The adverbial clause normally precedes the main clause, but can also follow it:

Go^n wa'ú thi^n ítho^{n}ba uthúha=b=azhi=t^{h}e, uthúbini thé <u>t^{h}edi</u>.
well woman art never he-follow-her=P=neg=evid she-go-around? she-go when
'He didn't follow the woman after she went around it [the church].'