

THE CONJUNCTION NHŨM IN APINAYÉ NARRATIVE

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0. INTRODUCTION

This paper is a description of the inter-clausal functions of the conjunction nhũm in Apinayé¹ narrative discourse.² Nhũm is probably the most important of the conjunctions in Apinayé, just as the corresponding conjunctions nhỹm in Kayapó and mã in Canela are the most important ones in these languages.

Because there are only a few conjunctions in Apinayé, it was anticipated that nhũm would have a variety of functions. That narrative functions were directly related to discourse-level categories of information, and that diametrically opposite functions for nhũm occur in different discourse-level environments, was not anticipated. Basically, nhũm is most often a low-level (i.e. inter-clausal) contrast³ conjunction whose functions are conditioned by its high-level (i.e. discourse level) environment. Less often, nhũm is a high-level (i.e. paragraph and narrative-initial) conjunction whose functions are to some degree conditioned by its low-level (i.e. inter-clausal) environment.⁴

As a framework for the kinds of discourse-level information discussed, the following definitions have been adapted from Grimes (1972).⁵ He distinguishes two basic kinds of information in discourse: events and non-events.

Events are happenings or actions performed by the participants. Primary events are those events, which advance the main plot of the narrative. Non-events are setting, background, and collateral.

Setting is information telling when, where, and under what circumstances events take place.

Background information, which in narratives usually has a secondary role in relation to other information, explains and clarifies. There are three kinds of background information: explanation, flashback, and preview.

An explanation is information which the narrator adds for the hearer's benefit:

- (1) 'Ămri 'ixi pĕ Kunũm.⁶
(then name call Kunũm)
'His name was Kunũm.'

A flashback is a statement of previous events, which interrupt the main plot sequence of the narrative:

- (2) 'Mĕkot ri 'prà pix o 'tykza kamã...
(they / ashes only with black because)
'Because they blackened him with ashes (when a child)...'

A preview is "an event sequence used to explain, but displaced forward in time rather than backward".⁷

- (3) Kot rōr pàr ò panhīpy tēm pa'tōx pī.
 (fut. babassu one on us fall us kill)
 "A babassu tree will fall on us and kill us."⁸

Collateral information highlights what actually did happen in a narrative by telling what did not happen. The following example, by telling what the participants did not do, emphasizes what they did do:

- (4) ...panhī 'o mjên kêt nē. (Ām mry 'o nhũm va
 (Indian with husband negative only animal with dual
 mẽ mjên.)⁹
 plur. husband)
 'They didn't marry Indians. (They married animals.)'

The paper is divided into three sections. Section 1: the three rules relating to the presence of nhũm, Section 2: modifications to those three rules, and Section 3: recognizable classes of residue.

In order to discuss the presence of nhũm between two clauses, the analysis is most coherently discussed in relation to two levels of information:

Level 1 consists of primary events and the participants in those events, setting, and collateral information with respect to the primary events and their participants; Level 2 consists of any information which is background with respect to the information of Level 1.

1. RULES RELATING TO THE PRESENCE OF NHŨM

The following formula will serve as a framework for the discussion of the presence of nhũm:

Formula I +C₁ + nhũm + C₂

When two clauses C₁ and C₂ are consecutive in the given order and are on the same level of information, nhũm occurs before C₂¹⁰ if at least one of the following conditions apply:

1. C₂ has a third person subject, which is non-coreferential with the subject of C₁;
2. C₁ is collateral and C₂ is the corresponding statement of reality;
3. either C₁ or C₂ contains setting information (specifically weather or time) and other containing another kind of information on the same level.

Each of these conditions will now be discussed separately, in the form of a rule. If more than one of the conditions is satisfied in a given situation, then all of the corresponding rules will be considered to apply there. That is to say, nhũm may be present for more than one reason.

1.1 CHANGE OF SUBJECT

Rule 1: Where the two clauses C₁ and C₂ of formula I have non-coreferential subjects, nhũm must be inserted if the second clause C₂ has a third person subject. This is by far the most common explanation of the presence of nhũm. Rule 1 applies to examples (2) - (11).

In examples (5) and (6), C₁ has first person subject, C₂ has third person subject.

- (5) C₁ C₂
Pa kamã 'krak nhũm tēm.
(I shoot fall)
'I shot it and it fell.'

- (6) C₁
('Ămri pa 'te mryjajê pumu nê) 'Ixi 'ã mẽ 'kukja.
(then I habitually animal see and) name on them-ask.
C₂
'Ămri nhũm 'tem inhmã 'ixijê jarẽ.
(then habitually me-to names tell)
(I habitually saw animals and) asked about their names.'
'They told me the (animal) names.'

In examples (7) and (8), C₁ has second person subject, C₂ has third person subject.

- (7) C₁ C₂
Kot ka ri kupê nhũm prõt kêt (nê arĩ xa)
(fut you touch run neg. and still stand)
'If you touch him he won't run and will stand.'

- (8) C₁ C₂
No kot ka va axirerek nhũm mẽ gô 'o va pa'pĩ.
(but if you dual weak pl. water with dual us-kill)
'If you're weak, they will kill us with the water.'

In examples (9) through (11), the third person subjects are non-coreferential.

- (9) C₁
Tã nhũm mẽ 'ămri vakōja pōm ir pa nhũm
(¶ pl. then cuati move away finish
C₂
kēntija pix nō.
stone only lie)
'They finished moving the cuati away and only the stones lay.'

- (10) C₁ C₂
 Kām 'kargrōr tỳx nē nhūm panhīta māt...
 to it shake hard and Indian let go
 'He (the spirit) shook (the tree) hard and the Indian let go.'

In example (11), Clauses C₁-C₃ is an expansion of participants: C₁, the deer; C₂, the list of animals; C₃, all in C₁ and C₂.

- (11) C₂
 'Āmri nē 'vỳr mō nhūm ve kōkōj nē vakō nē ām
 (then and to go I monkey and cuati and only
 C₃
 mry pijtā nhūm vem kajre 'vỳr mō.
 animal all rabbit to go)
 'Then (deer) went (to the rabbit) and the monkey and cuati and all the animals
 went to the rabbit.'

Examples (12)-(16) do not meet the condition of Rule 1, therefore nhūm is not needed between C₁ and C₂. These are listed to show why Rule 1 is framed as it is. (∅ marks the absence of nhūm.)

In example (12), both C₁ and C₂ have first person subjects.

- 12) C₁ ∅ C₂
 'Āmri pa kām: --Mo nā mẽ 'arē? 'Āmri pa kām: --...
 (then I to-him what did pl. say) then I to-him: ---...)
 'Then I said to him: --What did they say?'

In examples (13) and (14), C₁ has first person subject and C₂ has second person subject.

- (13) C₁ ∅ C₂
 Pa ixprōt ka akunha.
 (I I-run you laugh)
 'I ran and you laughed.'

- (14) C₁ ∅ C₂
 Pa akura ka muv.
 (I you-whip you cry)
 'I whipped you and you cried.'

In examples (15) and (16), C₁ has second person subject and C₂ has first person subject.

third person, and different from the subject in the preceding clause, whatever person that previous subject might have been.

Problematic examples in relation to Rule 1:

In examples (21) and (22), C₁ and C₂ have coreferential subjects and nhũm is present.

- (21) C₁
 'Ămri nĕ ve mĭtita akută no kamă 'kanhvÿ. 'Ămri nhũm
 (then and alligator both eye inside pierce then
 C₂
 ve va mĭtita pĭ.
 dual alligator kill)
 'Then they pierced both of the alligator's eyes. Then they two killed the alligator.'

- (22) C₁
 'Ămri nĕ vem pyk kăxmă 'kjĕnh o mŏ. Nhũm
 (then and sound up pull causative go
 C₂
 vem akupÿm 'o api nĕ kÿxpĕ kumĕ...
 they return causative climb and above throw)
 'Then they pulled him up. They brought him up and threw him above...'

1.2 COLLATERAL INFORMATION FOLLOWED BY REALITY.

When collateral information occurs in conjunction with a report of the event which actually happened in its place (hereafter referred to as the corresponding reality), the usual order is collateral followed by reality.

Rule 2: If in formula I, C₁ is collateral and C₂ is the corresponding statement of reality, nhũm precedes C₂.

Note that since Rule 2 is concerned with modality rather than participants, it applies irrespective of subject reference.

- (23) C₁ (collateral) C₂ (reality)
 (...nhũm) keve ŷr kĕt nĕ. Nhũm keve mă akunĭ kamă
 (sit negative away scrub brush in
 ari mra...
 walk around)
 '...he didn't sit (in the house). He walked around in the scrub brush...'

- 24) C₁ (Collateral)
 ...panhĩ 'o mjên kêt nê. Ām mry 'o nhũm
 (Indian with husband negative only animals with
 C₂ (reality)
 va mẽ mjên.
 dual pl. husband)
 'They didn't marry Indians. They married animals.'

Example (24) illustrated the statement in footnote 10 that nhũm does not have to precede the entire clause in C₂. Because in C₂ ãm mry 'o 'only animals' is in direct contrast with Indians in C₁, then that phrase precedes nhũm to emphasize the contrastive element in C₂.

Rule 2 obtains even across sentence boundaries; that is, when collateral ends a sentence and the following sentence contains the corresponding reality, the statement of reality is preceded by nhũm.

- 25) C₁
 ...no va ãm i'tỳxxàja pumunh kêt nê. Nhũm
 (but dual only strength-thing see negative
 C₂ C₃
 va te ri 'apêj nê va omunh kêt nê.
 dual vainly hunt and dual see negative)
 'They two (wife and brother) didn't see the strength-thing.
 They two (wife and brother) looked in vain but didn't see it.'

1.3 CHANGE OF SETTING.

Rule 3: Between two consecutive clauses C₁ and C₂ of formula I, one of which contains time of day or weather information, nhũm acts as a change of setting marker.

Each of the following examples adds two instances of formula I in order to show that nhũm occurs both at the beginning and the end of a section of setting.

- (26) C₁ C₂
 Vanhmẽ mẽ va arĩk. 'Āmri nhũm nata kato. 'Āmri
 (Vanhmẽ and dual stay then rain come then
 nhũm va prõt.
 dual run)
 'Vanhmẽ and the other stayed. Then the rain came. Then they two rain.'

31) A₁ Ø A₂
 'Ămri nĕ mĕinhōrkvÿ kamā 'arĕ. Mĕinā mā 'arĕ.
 (then and our-house in tell our-mother to tell
 'He told it in our house. He told our mother.'

(32) A₁ B₁ Ø
 ...'ămri nĕ ve akij. 'Ămri nhŭm apu ve'e kuma.
 (...then and call then probably hear
 ...'then he called. Then he (in hole) probably heard.

A₂ B₂
 Kre kamā akij nhŭm apu kuma...
 hole in call probably hear
 Into the hole he called and he (in hole) probably heard....

Problematic examples in relation to 2.1:

In examples (33) and (34), nhŭm is present between restatements, at the beginning of A₂.
 The nhŭm here may possibly refer to the nhŭm preceding the A₁ clause.

33) (nhŭm) ā kām anĕ 'ămri nĕ kām 'o kato. Nhŭm
 on to him say and for him take out

A₂
 kām 'o kato....
 for him take out)
 'Thus she said to him (husband) and took him (brother) out.
 She took him (brother) out...'

34) A₁
 (ÿ nhŭm) ve'e kajtija ra mō nĕ nhĭaxyti pĕ
 (¶ rabbit already go and goat from

B₁
 ō pĭ xōja par-pĕ nhÿ. Nhŭm nhĭaxytita ō pĭ xōja
 his tree fruit under sit goat his tree fruit

A₂
kur o ku'ĕ. Tā nhŭm nhÿ'ÿnh ra kajreja mō nĕ ra
 eat standing from already rabbit go and already

B₂
 kĕp ō pĭ xōja par-pĕ nhÿ. 'Ămri nhŭm ve nhĭaxytija
 from his tree fruit under sit goat

ve õ pĩ xôja vÿr mõ.
 his tree fruit to go

'The rabbit had already gone and sat under the the goat's fruit tree. The goat was standing eating from his fruit tree. The rabbit had already come from somewhere and sat under his (goat's) fruit tree. Then the goat went towards his fruit tree.'

2.2 INTRODUCING BACKGROUND INFORMATION

When optional background information (i.e. Level 2) is introduced between clauses C_1 and C_2 of formula I, its presence does not affect the presence of nhũm before C_2 , as described by Rules 1-3. This is represented in formula III which is an expanded form of formula I.

Formula III: $C_1 \pm^{12} \text{nhũm} \pm \text{Background} + \text{nhũm} + C_2$

In this section only $C_1 \pm \text{nhũm} \pm \text{Background}$ of formula III are discussed.

2.2.1 With coreferential subjects

Transition into background is generally signalled by the reversal of Rule 1. Thus nhũm is present when the subjects in C_1 and Background are coreferential and third person as represented in formula IIIa.

Formula IIIa: $C_1 + \text{nhũm} + \text{Background}$

The reversal of Rule 1 to introduce background information is not entirely automatic. For example, in formula IIIa for coreferential subjects, if the background information is marked by another device,¹³ then the nhũm is not necessarily present. In (38) a restatement assembly brackets the background section and nhũm is not present preceding the flashback section.

In examples (35) through (38), where the background information is flashback, nhũm is present because C_1 and Background have coreferential third person subjects.

35) C_1 +nhũm +Background
 I'pinhõ mry punutija pôj. Nhũm xê ve panhija pi ne
 (bro-in-law animal bad arrive Indian kill and
 kutu nê o kvÿ nê o pôj.
 carry and with go and with come
 'The bad animal brother-in-law arrived. He had killed an Indian and carried it and arrived with it.'

(36) C_1 +nhũm +Background
 ...nê o pôj. Nhũm kot panhĩ par nê o mraja kamã
 and with come he Indian kill and with walk because
 ...'and arrived with it. Because he killed the Indian and walked with it...'

- (37) C₁
 'Ămri nê kê va ra mã mō nê api nê arī xa. 'Ămri
 (then and dual already go and climb and still stand (then
 +nhũm +Background
 'Ămri nhũm kê ra mẽmoj amnhĩnhpêx mex nê.
 then already something do well)
 'They went and climbed and stood. They had already done everything well.'

2.2.2 With non-coreferential subject

Nhũm is not present when the background has a non-coreferential third person subject in relation to C₁, as represented in formula IIIb.

Formula IIIb: C₁ + Ø + Background

The following examples of background information contain flashback, preview and explanation.

- (38) C₁ +Ø +flashback
 Rõr pàr kot unênh kãm pa omunh kêt nê. No Vanhmẽ
 (babassu tree him catch I see negative but Vanhmẽ

mẽ nã pre va ra rõry 'y o mō.
 and did past dual already babassu seed going)
 'I didn't see the babassu tree catching him. 'But Vanhme (and them) had already gone babassuing.'

- (39) C₁
 ...pà rax mã mẽ'o axà. No ve ãm antepêmã ve'e pa'pãm...
 (tree lots in they enter but only long ago our-father)
 '..they entered a large forest. But long ago our fathers...'

- (40) C₁ +Ø +explanation
 'Ămri pa kãm: -- Mo nã mẽ 'arê? 'Ămri 'ixi
 (then I to-him what did pl. say then name
 pê Kunũm.
 call Kunũm.)
 'Then I said to him: "What did they say?" His name was Kunũm.'

- (41) C₁ +Ø +flashback
 ...Krokrokkjêre ve apu krokrok pix kãm. Mêkot ri 'prà
 (...Krokrokkjêre probably cuati only like they ashes
 pix o 'tykja kamã...
 only with black because)
 'Krokrokkjêre probably went around black like the cuati. Because they
 blackened him with ashes...'
- (42) C₁ +Ø +preview
 "Ăn pa ato amũxu kê apinhõ... pøj pa kãm
 (ok I you hide so that bro-in-law arrive I to him
 ixkapër..."
 I-talk)
 "'I'll hide you, so that when your brother-in-law comes I'll talk to him...'"
- (43) C₁ +Ø +preview
 "E kãm mēmoj japêj kê kukrê.
 (hey for him something hunt so that eat)
 "'Hey, look for something for him so that he eat.'"
- (44) C₁ +Ø +preview
 "Tã no ãm mã ja py kê mēmoj anhÿrmã
 (however but only away this take so that something soon
 akamã tanhmã amnhĩto..."
 you-in something self)
 "'However, take this away, so that if something does something to you soon...'"
- (45) C₁ +Ø +preview
 "Mã akupÿm tē nē kãm ixkapër jarē kê tokyx anē."
 (away return go and to him I-talk tell so that quickly do
 "'Return and tell him my talk, so that he hurry.'"

3. RECOGNIZABLE CLASSES OF RESIDUE.

3.1 NHŪM SEPARATING TWO CONSECUTIVE CLAUSES

- (46) C₁ C₂
 Põm tē nē kato. 'Ămri nhũm kãm: --...
 (away go and go out to him)
 'He (the turtle) moved away and went out. He (the turtle) said to him
 (armadillo): —...'

- (47) C₁ C₂
 'Ămri nĕ ve arĭ 'prĭ 'ă kuma nhũm ve mĕ mă
 (then and still clearly hear pl. away
 akupÿm vem kută tĕ.
 return facing go)
 'Then they clearly heard them and returned to the others.'

In examples (46) and (47), the nhũm may be a high-level marker ending one phase of the story and beginning another.

In example (46), after the turtle's speech the armadillo was, in turn, sealed in a cave, and died.

In example (47), the enemy's return to the others immediately precedes the slaughter of the hero's soldiers.

(48) with nhũm between C₁ and C₂ with coreferential subjects.

- (48) C₁
 ('Ămri nhũm) kaprănreta 'prĭ 'ă a'krôja o
 (then turtle thoroughly vine with
 C₂
 amnhĭkagrĭnh pa. 'Ămri nĕ 'pănh mry pârôa'ĭkja
 self-tie finish then and next animal horned
nhũm amnhĭtă mănnĕn vakăm ê 'pa.
 on him also dual-them tie finish)
 'Then the turtle thoroughly tied himself up with vine. Then next he also tied the
 horned animals onto himself.'

3.2 NHŨM SEPARATING A LIST FROM THE VERB

The data studied contains only one example of this type. It is considered insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove it as a rule explaining the presence of nhũm.

- (49) C₁
 'Imry kă nĕ 'ĭkuxĕ nĕ ă rôry 'ă kavà.
 (bag and gun and his babassu basket
 'His hunting bag and gun and babassu basket.
 C₂
 'ĭkrămĕnh nhũm 'amÿ nĕ unhvÿ.
 his-ax hold and stand)
 His ax he held and stood.'

FOOTNOTES

1. The Apinayé language is a member of the Jê language family of Brazil. About 350 Apinayé Indians live in two villages located in north central Brazil, in the extreme north of the State of Goiás. Most of the men speak a fair amount of Portuguese when in contact with outsiders. They, like the women, use only Apinayé in normal village and home situations. There are a few women who speak Portuguese. The author has worked intermittently in the Apinayé tribe since June, 1969.

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2. The twenty-two texts used for the analysis include transcriptions of legends and texts written by indigenous writers including such subjects as legends and personal experiences.

3. Contrast here refers to some diversity between adjacent clauses, which is brought to the hearer's attention by surface markers. The conjunction nhũm is only one of the contrast markers in Apinayé.

4. Nhũm operates with tã and 'ãmri as a higher level conjunction marking paragraphs. Tã nhũm and 'ãmri nhũm both occur, but tã nhũm seems to be a more definite paragraph marker, and 'ãmri nhũm end of thought contrast marker within a paragraph. ('ãmri nhũm also occurs between clauses, in accordance with rules 1-3 relating to nhũm.)

In paragraph initial the functions of nhũm overlap marking a new paragraph as well as changing either focus/setting (as in time of day and weather clauses) or participants from the last clause of the previous paragraph:

Tã nhũm mẽmo arĩgro 'ã nhũm kamàt...
(some day on night)
'One day at night...'

As a narrative opener nhũm acts alone or combined with other morphemes. In the texts examined most of the legends begin with nhũm or ỳ nhũm; most of the Old Testament Bible stories (re-told by Indians) begin with tã nhũm or nhũm; about half of the Indian written stories begin with nhũm, tã nhũm, ỳ nhũm.

5. Grimes, J. E. 1972. The Thread of Discourse (Technical Report No. 1 National Science Foundation Grant GS-3180). Cornell Univ. Ithaca, N.Y.

6. Examples in this paper are written in the practical orthography. Symbols used are: stops p, t, x, k, '; nasals m, n, nh [ñ], ɠ; continuants v, r, j; high close vowels i, ĩ, y [i], ỹ [ĩ], u, ũ; mid close vowels ê, ÿ [ë], ô, õ, ã [ẽ]; mid open vowels e [ɛ], ẽ [ɛ̃], a, ã, à [ɛ̃], o.

For a full description of Apinayé phonemes see: Ham, Patricia and Robert Header, "Apinayé Phonemic: and Hyperphonemic Structure" 1963, filed at the National Museum, Rio de Janeiro; and National Indian Foundation (FUNAI), Brasília; Ham, Patricia "Morfofonêmica Apinayé", Atas do Simpósio Sobre a Biota Amazonica, Vol. 2, pp.123-126, 1967; Burgess, Eunice and Patricia Ham, "Multilevel Conditioning of Phoneme Variants in Apinayé", Linguistics: An International Review, Vol. 41, pp.5-18, July 1968.

7. Grimes op. cit.. p.74

8. A preview in the form of a direct quotation by a participant is not certain.

9. Throughout this paper vernacular material in parenthesis does not form a relevant part of the example in question, but may be considered relevant as context for the example.

10. Nhũm does not have to precede the entire clause in C₂. If the first element of C₂ is in direct contrast with C₁, then it will precede nhũm to emphasize its contrast with an element in C₁. This will be noted with examples (24) and (48).

11. For further explanation see: Cromack, Robert Earl. 1968. Language Systems and Discourse Structure in Cashinawa, Vol. 1. pp.147-153. Hartford, Conn. thesis.

12. ± signifies optional occurrence.

13. There are other ways of alerting the hearer to a flashback. The morpheme ra 'already' is sometimes present near the beginning. Also, amtepêmã 'long ago' introduces some flashback sections.

('Ămri nhũm) kê ra mēmoj amnhĩnhpêx mex nē.
 (then already something self-do good
 'They had already done everything well.'

C₁
 ...pà rax mã mẽ'o axà.
 (forest big in they enter
 '...they entered a big forest.

C₂
 No ve ãm amtepêmã ve'e pa'pãm...
 but only long ago our-father)
 But long ago our fathers...'