



The Function of Controlling Constituents for Subject Deletion in Subordinative Constructions in Acehnese

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Article history: Received 01 April 2025 Revised 07 May 2025 Accepted 28 June 2025 Available online 30 June 2025</p> <p>ISSN: 2986-3848</p> <hr/> <p>How to cite: Iqbal, M. (2025). The function of controlling constituents for subject deletion in subordinative constructions in Acehnese. <i>International Journal Linguistics of Sumatra and Malay (IJLSM)</i>, 4(1), 51-56.</p>	<p>This study aims to find the function of controlling constituents in Acehnese subordinative constructions. The function in question is “places” in the syntactic structure that will be filled with specific categories. This research employs qualitative research methods, incorporating note-taking and document review techniques. The data is presented in written text, rather than numbers or statistics. The data is obtained from various sources, such as sentences in Aceh language books, Aceh grammar books, and Aceh language dictionaries. The results show that controlling constituents in Acehnese subordinative constructions occupy only the functions of subject, object, complement, and adverb. These functions play a crucial role in connecting the main clause and the subordinate clause, thereby determining the overall meaning of the sentence. The subject-controlling constituent, as subject, object, complement, or adverb, plays a direct role in connecting the main clause and the subordinate clause. The subject in the subordinate clause refers to the subject, object, complement, and adverb in the main clause so that the subject in the subordinate clause can be omitted. It can be said that all these syntactic functions play an important role in controlling the subject in the subordinate clause.</p> <p>Keywords: Controlling Constituent, Subject Omission, Subordinative Construction, Acehnese Language</p>



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<http://doi.org/10.32734/ijlsm.v4i1.20360>

1. Introduction

Subordinative construction is a relationship between clauses that are not equivalent or do not have the same syntactic status (Alwi et al., 2017). Subordinate clauses serve as complements, qualifiers, or adverbs, and are often combined with main clauses (Cheat, 1994). In subordinative construction, there are two types of clauses, namely main clauses and subordinate clauses (Yunaidi, 2014). The main clause is commonly referred to as the independent clause, while the subordinate clause is commonly referred to as the dependent clause. The main clause can stand alone as an independent sentence and does not depend on other clauses, while the subordinate clause always depends on the main clause. That is, their meaning depends on the main sentence (Sasangka, 2019).

Subject deletion in subordinative constructions occurs in subordinate clauses. Subject deletion in subordinate clauses can occur if the subject of the main clause and the subordinate clause are the same. Similarly, if the subject in the subordinate clause is the same as the object in the main clause, the subject in the subordinate clause can also be omitted (Prabawa, 2007). This aims to avoid redundancy and make the sentence more concise and efficient.

Subject deletion does not only occur in Acehnese. The phenomenon of omission is common in languages. In the 1920s, Uzbek linguistics first mentioned the phenomenon of omission, especially contextual omission

occurring in dialog (Qizi, 2022). In ancient Chinese literature, the study of deletion is a lexical component that transforms information into a null form (Chen, 2016). On the other hand, the earliest evidence of glossing is found in medieval works on ancient Greek and Roman grammar and rhetoric. It should be noted that deletion means omitting a word, phrase, or sentence because it is considered obvious from the context (Qizi, 2022). That is, the omission of one word or several words without affecting the clarity of the sentence or the point being made. It can be said that deletion is the omission of speech or writing words that are considered redundant because they are already understood in context (Kane, 2020). The same point is also made by Alamiri and Mickan (2013), who note that deletion is a complex linguistic phenomenon characterized by the omission of linguistic elements that are already understood from the context.

Deletion can occur in single sentences and compound sentences. Unlike deletion in single sentences, which is more often contextual, deletion in compound sentences is textual. In compound sentences, both equivalent and multilevel compound sentences, if there are elements in the clauses that form them that have the same referent (often called choreographed elements), these elements do not need to be mentioned at all, but only once and the others are omitted. Consider the merging of the two single sentences in (1a) and (1b) into the compound sentence (subordinative construction) in (1c) below.

(1a) You didn't come.

(1b) You must ask the lecturer for permission.

(1c) If Ø does not come, you must ask the lecturer for permission.

The subordinate construction in (1c) consists of two clauses: the subordinate clause, "if Ø does not come," and the superior clause, "you must ask the lecturer for permission." Since the subject of the subordinate clause has the same chorus as the subject of the main clause, the subject of the subordinate clause is omitted. Likewise, in subordinative constructions, if there is an element in a clause that correlates with an element in another clause, the element is omitted (Setiawan and Santoso, 2021). The subject "you" in the main clause acts as the controlling constituent for the omission of the subject "you" in the subordinate clause (1c). The controlling constituent of subject deletion plays an important role in determining whether the deletion can occur or not.

This controlling constituent is the noun phrase referred to by the subject noun phrase in the subordinate clause. Syntactically, controlling constituents can occupy various functions. The functions are "places" in the syntactic structure that are filled with specific categories (Verhaar, 1983). These places are named subject (S), predicate (P), object (O), complement (Pel.), and description (Ket.) (Susandhika et al., 2016). Based on this explanation, there are several interesting aspects related to this topic, particularly in the context of controlling constituents. Whether controlling constituents can fill "places" in the syntactic structure. The places in question are subject (S), predicate (P), object (O), complement (Pel), and adverb (Ket). For this reason, this study aims to determine the functions that can be fulfilled by controlling constituents in Acehnese subordinative constructions.

2. Method

This research uses qualitative research methods. This means that the research data is in the form of written text, not numbers or statistics. The qualitative approach as a research procedure produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and behaviors that can be observed (Bungin, 2007; Moleong, 2005; Neuman, 2014). Qualitative research provides a deeper understanding of a social condition (Flick, 2004). The data were obtained from various sources, such as sentences in Aceh language books, Aceh grammar books, and Aceh language dictionaries. The researcher also created artificial data through introspection and elicitation, as the researcher is a native speaker of the Aceh language. The data collection techniques employed in this research include note-taking and document review methods. Data analysis was conducted using the deletion technique, which was employed to assess the integrity level of the deleted elements. If the result of the deletion is not grammatical, it means that the element concerned has a high level of intangibility or is core.

3. Result

In subordinative constructions, controlling monsttuent noun phrases are only occupied by the functions of subject (the entity that performs the action or undergoes the process in a sentence), object (receives the impact of the action performed by the subject), complement (provides more detailed information about the subject or object), and adverb (provides additional information about the time, place, manner, or state of an event). The four functions of the controlling constituent will be explained below.

3.1 Subject Noun Phrase as Controller

Subject noun phrases, as controlling constituents in subordinative constructions, play a crucial role in determining the relationship between the main clause and the subordinate clause. The relationship between the two clauses can be seen from the subject noun phrase of the subordinate clause that refers to the subject noun phrase in the main clause. On the other hand, these subordinate clauses also cannot stand alone as complete sentences and are usually dependent on the main clause to provide complete meaning.

- (2) *Lôn galak lônmeu-èn bola watèe Ø mentöng ubit.*
 1TG like 1-play ball when still little
 [Subject] [Subject]
 'I liked playing soccer when Ø I was little.'

In the construction (2), the subject noun phrase *lôn* 'me' acts as the controlling constituent in the subordinative construction (2). The clause *watèe Ø mentöng ubit* 'when Ø was little' is a subordinate clause that depends on the main clause *lôn galak lônmeu-èn bola* 'I like to play ball'. The function of the subject noun phrase as the controlling constituent in this subordinative construction is to connect the main clause and the subordinate clause and provide information about who is performing the action in the subordinate clause. In this context, *lôn* 'me' as the subject noun phrase indicates that the same subject *lôn* 'me' performed the action *lônmeu-èn bola* 'to play ball' as stated in the subordinate clause. Thus, the subject noun phrase becomes important in determining the relationship between the main clause and the subordinate clause in the sentence. The same can be seen in the following example (3).

- (3) *Sira Ø jideungo lagu, kakak jipeugöt PR.*
 whilw 3-listen music sister 3-make homework
 [Subject] [Subject]
 'While Ø listened to music, brother did his homework.'

The noun phrase subject '*kakak*' in construction (3) plays a crucial role in determining the relationship between the main clause and the subordinate clause. The syllable form (Ø) in the subordinate clause refers to the subject *kakak* in the main clause. This shows that the same person performs both actions. The noun phrase *kakak* also connects the two clauses and shows that both actions are performed simultaneously. It can be said that the subject noun phrase *kakak* acts as a controller and inter-clause connector in this subordinative construction (3).

3.2 Object Noun Phrases as Controllers

In a language, noun phrases can occupy various syntactic functions, one of which is as an object. Especially in subordinative constructions, object noun phrases can act as controlling constituents. This means that the noun phrase determines the subject reference in the subordinate clause. Consider the following example (4).

- (4) *Gobnyan geupeubloe rumoh nyan lheuëh Ø geupeugöt dilèe.*
 3TG 3-Pref-sell house ART after 3-make first
 [Object] [Subject]
 'He sold the house after Ø repairing it first.'

In the construction (4), the noun phrase *rumoh nyan* 'that house' functions as an object and also acts as a controlling constituent. This controlling constituent is found in the main clause, '*gobnyan geupeubloe rumoh nyan*', meaning 'he sold the house'. The subordinate clause *lheuëh Ø geupeugöt dilèe* 'after Ø repaired first' describes the time of the event. The syllable form (Ø) in the subordinate clause refers to the noun phrase *rumoh nyan* 'that house'. The noun phrase *rumoh nyan* 'that house' determines the subject reference in the subordinate clause, namely *lheuëh Ø geupeugöt dilèe* 'after (the house) was repaired first'. It can be said that the object noun phrase *rumoh nyan* 'that house' found in example (4) acts as a controlling constituent that determines the subject reference in the subordinate clause. The control in this subordinative construction is the relationship between the object noun phrase in the main clause and the subject noun phrase in the subordinate clause. The object noun phrase in the main clause is called the controlling constituent, while the subject noun phrase that is omitted in the subordinate clause is called the controlled constituent. Here, it can be seen that the controlling constituent determines the reference of the controlled constituent.

- (5) *Jih jimeubloe pèng ma-ih sampé Ø habéh.*
 3TG 3-Pref-buy money mother-3 until
 [Object] [Subject] exhausted
 'He spent his mother's money until Ø it ran out.'

In the subordinative construction (5) there are two clauses, namely the main clause *jih jimeubloe pèng ma-ih* 'he spends his mother's money' and the subordinate clause *sampé Ø habéh* 'until Ø runs out'. The object noun phrase *pèng ma-ih* 'his mother's money' plays a dual role, first as the object of the transitive verb *jimeubloe* 'to spend' and second as the subject-controlling constituent in the subordinate clause. This object-controlling constituent determines the subject reference in the subordinate clause, the controlling constituent being *pèng ma-ih* 'her mother's money'. Therefore, the subject *pèng ma-ih* 'her mother's money' in the subordinate clause is omitted because it is already known from the main clause. In other words, the object noun phrase *pèng ma-ih* 'her mother's money' plays an important role in connecting the two clauses and determining the meaning of the sentence as a whole.

3.3 Complementary Noun Phrases as Controllers

Complementary noun phrases also act as controlling constituents in subordinative constructions. In certain constructions, the noun phrase of the subject of the subordinate clause can also refer to the noun phrase that functions as a complement in the main clause. Consider the following example (6).

- (6) *Ngön geutanyoe seubeutojih kana moto bah that*
 friend 1JM actually already car although
 [Pelengkap]
Ø golom jipeudeuh bak geutanyoe.
 Asp 3-Pref-show Prep 1JM
 [Subject]
 'Our friend actually already has a wife, although Ø it hasn't been shown to us yet.'

Not only subjects and objects, but also complementary noun phrases can also act as controlling constituents in subordinative constructions. This means that the noun phrase can control the subject in the subordinate clause. In construction (6), the complementary noun phrase *moto* 'car' controls the subject of the subordinate clause, so the subject of the subordinate clause is omitted because it has the same coreference. In addition, the semantic relationship between the two clauses shows that the subordinate clause provides additional information about the *moto* 'car' owned by our friend. This can be seen from the statement that the motto 'car' has not been shown to be relevant to 'us'. Therefore, the complementary noun phrase *moto* 'car' plays an important role in the process of omitting the subject in the subordinate clause.

3.4 Adverbial Noun Phrases as Controllers

Adverbial noun phrases also play an important role in Acehnese subordinative constructions. This noun phrase functions as a controlling constituent of the subject in the subordinate clause. This controlling adverbial noun phrase is located in the main clause. Consider the following example (7).

- (7) *Surat nyoe kalheuh geutèkèn lé Pak Geuchik*
 letter ART Asp 3-signature by Sir village head
 [Keterangan]
sigohlom Ø geujak u blang.
 before 3-go Prep Rice field
 [Subject]
 'This letter was signed by the village head before Ø went to the rice field.'

The adverbial noun phrase *lé pak geuchik* 'by the village head' plays a crucial role in the construction of (7). Apart from providing additional information, this noun phrase also acts as a controlling constituent of the subject in the subordinate clause. The adverbial noun phrase *lé pak geuchik* 'by the village head' functions as the controlling constituent of the subject in the subordinate clause *sigohlom Ø geujak u blang* 'before Ø goes to the rice field'. The syllable form (Ø) in this subordinate clause refers to the information contained in the main clause, namely *lé pak geuchik* 'by the village head'. On the other hand, the appearance of this adverbial

noun phrase also provides complete sentence information. The same can be seen in the construction of (8) below.

- (8) *Bahan-bahan seminar kalheuh teubagi keu peserta sigohlom*
 materials seminar Asp Pref-share Prep participant before
 [Keterangan]
 Ø *jitamöng lam ruang.*
 3-enter Prep room
 [Subject]
 'The seminar materials were distributed to the participants before Ø entered the room.'

As previously explained, adverbial noun phrases can also function as controlling constituents, especially controlling constituents for subjects in subordinate clauses. This can be seen in construction (8), the noun phrase *keu peserta* 'to the participants' located in the main clause controls the subject in the subordinate clause *sigohlom Ø jitamöng lam ruang* 'before Ø entered the room'. In the clause, it can be seen that the subject of the subordinate clause, which is realized in the form of a syllable (Ø), is omitted because it has been mentioned previously in the main clause. The subject that is omitted is the noun phrase *keu* participants 'to the participants'.

4. Conclusion

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that the controlling constituent of the subject in Acehnese subordinative constructions has an important role in connecting the main clause and the subordinate clause and determining the meaning of the sentence as a whole. This controlling constituent only occupies the function of subject, object, complement, and adverb. These controlling constituents have their respective functions in connecting clauses and determining subject references in subordinate clauses. It can be said that the controlling constituents of subject deletion in Acehnese subordinative constructions have various functions in conveying information effectively and efficiently. An understanding of the controlling constituents in Acehnese subordinative constructions is crucial for comprehending the sentence structure and its overall meaning. Further research on subject-controlling constituents in Acehnese subordinative constructions is necessary to enhance the understanding of this language. This research can be conducted by analyzing the role of subject deletion controlling constituents in Acehnese subordinative constructions, as function and role are two aspects that cannot be separated.

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