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Austronesian voice as thematic nominalization

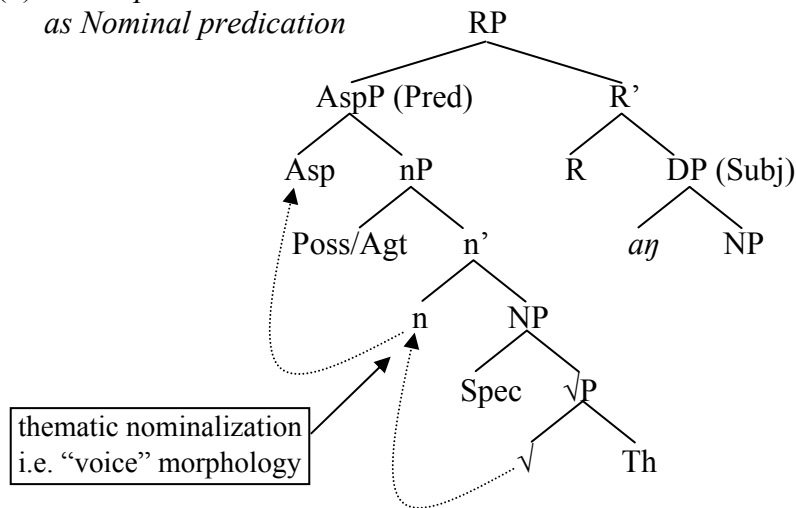
Understanding what appear to be verbal predications in Philippine languages as possessing nominal syntax explains an extremely broad constellation of facts which are otherwise impossible to bring together under more typical ergative or accusative analyses. Austronesian “voice” morphology is understood here in accordance with its diachronic development from thematic nominalizers (Starosta, Pawley & Reid 1982). As shown in (1), this nominalizing morphology is found in little *n* and the (non-trigger) agent is formally a possessor generated in [Spec,*n*P] (Radford 2000), on par with the verbal Agent position in [Spec,*v*P]. The result of this is that once the root merges with *n* it embodies the thematic role which is then assigned to the trigger (e.g. the *an* phrase in Tagalog). The semantics of the nominalization is then transferred to the subject via an equational clause. The typical predicate initial order of conservative Austronesian languages is not obtained by movement but rather through base generation in the specifier of the Relator phrase (den Dikken 2006). The subject is generated as the complement of the Relator head, which can be considered a null copula for our purposes. Several typological predictions fall out of this approach naturally:

- (i) Null headed relatives are commonplace throughout Austronesian languages which preserve this morphology because the apparent verb *is* the relative head (2).
- (ii) There is no so-called 3>2 applicativization as there exists in other ergative languages (e.g. Mayan) as apparent applicatives (PAn **Si-* instrumental, *-an* locative) are actually nominalizers and do not create new objects.
- (iii) Because genitive agents in [Spec,*n*P] lack the CAUSE semantics associated with [Spec,*v*P] only inherent Agents are permissible as external arguments (3) (barring poetic license).
- (iv) Extraction of arguments from the predicate phrase is not permitted because this is tantamount to extraction from NP, a highly constrained process crosslinguistically. This now puts facts such as those in (4) from Tagalog on par with English (5).
- (v) Implicit objects cannot be licensed by actor voice predicates, the English analog of which can be seen in (6).
- (vi) Unlike true subjects, genitive agents are never obligatory, another feature which groups them with possessor agents of nominalizations cross-linguistically.

Several questions must be addressed here as the bare structure assigned to a basic predication is now reminiscent of those critiqued by Aldridge (2004) for not being able to account for the binding and control facts, among others. But reflexive binding can be analyzed as that found in English equational clauses, a context which has long been understood to defy standard structural accounts (Jacobson 1994). A full review of the control data, on the other hand, shows that relative agentivity of arguments plays a larger role than syntactic position, as first noted by Dell (1983) (cf. Kroeger 1993). Regarding the position of complement clauses (Aldridge 2004), it is necessary to either rely on obligatory extraposition across the subject or non-standard adjunction.

Strong support for the current analysis comes from the fact that when the two primary cues for nominality, the genitive-ergative syncretism and the linking of all DP internal material, erode – as they do in the majority of Indonesian languages – the other characteristics listed in (i)-(vi) above also disappear. For example, we find restrictions on (apparent) null headed relatives, true applicativization (e.g. Malay *-i*, *-kan*), and extraction of patient voice agents (7), now being comparable to the English by-phrase rather than of-phrase (8).

(1) *Verbal predication
as Nominal predication*



- (2)a. aŋ=bi~bil-hin b. aŋ=d<um>atiŋ c. aŋ=p<in>u~punta-han
 NOM=INCM~buy-PV NOM=<AV.RL>arrive NOM=<RL>INCM~go-LV
 ‘The (thing) to be bought’ ‘The (one who) arrived’ ‘The (place) gone to.’

- (3)a. *?P<in>atay-Ø **naŋ**=saksak b. P<in>atay-Ø **sa**=saksak
 <RL>kill-PV GEN=stab <RL>kill-PV OBL=stab
 ‘Killed by a stab’

- (4)a. $_{AspP}$ [ka~kain-in $_{nP}$ [naŋ=pagoŋ]] $_i$ $_{RP}$ [[aŋ=damo] t_i]
 INCM~eat-PV GEN=turtle NOM=grass
 ‘The turtle will eat the grass.’

- b. * $_{NP}$ [naŋ=pagoŋ] $_j$ ay $_{NP}$ [ka~kain-in t_j] $_i$ $_{RP}$ [[aŋ=damo] t_i]
 GEN=turtle TOP INCM~eat-PV NOM=grass

- (5) a. Noli Me Tangere is the writing of Jose Rizal *Nominalization model*
 b. ***Of whom** is Noli Me Tangere the writing? *wh- movement out of NP*

- (6) a. #Nag-luto=ako Ø at k<in>áin-Ø=niya (cf. #I was the cook and he ate it)
 AV.RL-cook=1S.NOM and <RL>eat-PV=3S.GEN

- b. Ni-luto-Ø=ko Ø at k<in>áin-Ø=niya
 RL-cook-PV=1S.GEN and <RL>eat-PV=3S.GEN
 ‘I cooked (it) and he/she ate (it).’

- (7) maka **oléh perempuan itu** di-keluar-kan-nya suatu tali daripada pinggang-nya...
 thus by woman that PV-exit-APPL-3S.GEN one rope from waist-3S.GEN
 ‘Thus the woman removed one rope from her waist.’ (Bayan 25:7)
 From MCP: <http://www.anu.edu.au/asianstudies/ahcen/proudfoot/MCP/>

- (8)a. Noli Me Tangere was written by Jose Rizal. *Passive model*
 b. **By whom** was Noli Me Tangere written? *wh- movement of by phrase*