

### Complements of Perception Verbs in Malagasy

Malagasy clauses typically consist of a verb-initial *predicate*, combined with a DP expressing the subject/theme of predication, here called the *trigger* (underlined in (1)-(4)). Normally the trigger follows the predicate in root and embedded contexts (1)-(2), and may be separated from the predicate by the question particle *ve*. However, in event-denoting perception verb complements (PVCs) the trigger precedes the predicate (3). Here I consider the structure of PVCs in light of theories which derive the order in (1)-(2) through predicate fronting. I argue that PVCs are clauses, and suggest that trigger-initial order results not from raising of the trigger over the predicate (e.g., raising-to-object), but from failure of the predicate to front. I also compare the properties of PVCs in Malagasy with those of PVCs in other languages (cf. Felser 1999, et al.).

- (1) Namaky boky (ve) ny...zaza (2) Fantatro fa [ namaky boky ny...zaza ]  
 Pst.AT.read book Det child know=1s that Pst.AT.read book Det child  
 ‘The child was reading a book’ ‘I know that the child was reading a book’
- (3) Nahita [ ny...zaza namaky boky ] (ve) i...Koto  
 Pst.AT.see Det child Pst.AT.read book Det Koto  
 ‘Koto saw the child read(ing) a book’
- (4) Hitan’ i Koto (ve) [ ny...zaza namaky boky ]  
 TT.see Det Koto Det child Pst.AT.read book  
 ‘Koto saw the child read(ing) a book’

As evidence that PVCs are constituents, note that they can act as the trigger of the higher clause when the perception verb is ‘passivized’ (4). PVCs can also be coordinated, as well as clefted. Moreover, there is strong evidence against treating the PVC as a DP containing a relative clause ((3) ≠ ‘Koto saw the child who was reading a book’): [i] Demonstrative determiners are repeated at each edge of the DP, with the second copy following a relative clause (*io zaza namaky boky io* ‘that child who was reading a book’). In PVCs, however, the second copy of the demonstrative precedes the embedded predicate, showing that the latter is not contained in DP (*Hitan’i Koto io zaza io namaky boky*, ‘Koto saw that child reading a book’). [ii] PVCs are conjoined using *ary* ‘and’, which also conjoins root clauses; DPs use a separate connective *sy* (*Hitan’i Koto ny zaza sy ny saka* ‘Koto saw the child and the cat’). Conjoining PVCs with *sy* is disallowed.

Having shown that PVCs are clauses, I consider the reason for trigger-initial order within PVCs. When the trigger of the PVC is a pronoun or proper name, which show morphological case distinctions, its case is determined by the position occupied by the PVC: when the PVC is a predicate-internal complement, its trigger takes the accusative (*Nahita anao namaky boky i Koto* ‘Koto saw **you**<sub>acc</sub> reading a book’), and when the PVC is the trigger of the higher clause, its trigger takes the nominative (*Hitan’i Koto ianao namaky boky* ‘Koto saw **you**<sub>nom</sub> reading a book’). This suggests that the trigger has raised in order to be licensed in an ECM configuration. On the other hand, there is also evidence against a trigger-fronting analysis. For example, note that the first person singular pronoun has two nominative forms: the ‘weak’ form *aho* is used when the pronoun occupies the normal trigger position, and the ‘strong’ form *izaho* is used when the pronoun is clefted, topicalized, etc. Crucially, the pronoun takes the weak form when acting as the trigger in a PVC; in this respect, clause-initial triggers in PVCs pattern with canonical clause-final triggers in root clauses, rather than behaving as though they have been fronted. I also show that the PVC construction has different properties from the *raising-to-object* construction discussed by Paul and Rabaovololona (1998)—for example, PVCs may be clefted, while clefting of the string consisting of the raised object and the clause from which it has raised is disallowed.

(subfield: syntax)

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