

# (Q) Relatively Speaking (1/2) [Solution]

Q1.

- (a) **Fai moa noa.**

*There are only birds.*

- (b) **Kua holoholo foki he faiaoga ne takafaga e au a ia.**

*The teacher that I caught has also washed him.*

- (c) **To muhu vaka e tama ka holoholo he moa.**

*The child that the bird will wash will have plenty of canoes.*

*The child will have plenty of canoes that the bird will wash.*

Q2.

- (a) *He will also read.*

**To totou foki a ia.**

- (b) *Sione has only had fish that the teacher will eat.*

**Kua fai ika noa a Sione ka kai he faiaoga.**

- (c) *The teacher that Mele saw built the canoe.*

**Ne tā he faiaoga ne kitia e Mele e vaka.**

- (d) *There have always been plenty of carpenters.*

**Kua muhu kāmuta tūmau.**

## Explanation

- The default word order is *Tense + Verb + (Adverb) + Subject + Object*

- Tense markers are as follows:

Past	<b>ne</b>
Perfect	<b>kua</b>
Present	<b>∅</b>
Future	<b>to</b>



## (Q) Relatively Speaking (2/2) [Solution]

- Nouns must normally be preceded by a case marker:

	Ergative	Absolutive
Name / Pronoun	<b>e</b>	<b>a</b>
Else	<b>he</b>	<b>e</b>

- The ergative is used for a subject if it is followed by an object; the absolutive is used elsewhere.
- Nouns can be followed by a relative clause:
  - Relative clauses are introduced by **ne** if the clause is in the past tense, and **ka** in the future, then follow typical syntax.
- Verbs come in two types: existential verbs, **fai** *be/have* and **muhu** *be/have plenty*; and general verbs.
  - Existential verbs are translated as *there + be* without a subject, and as *have* with a subject.
  - The object is compulsory. The head noun is moved to come directly after the verb, and does not appear with case markers. Relative clauses stay in the object position.
  - Note that existential verbs are always treated as intransitive, i.e., subjects of existential verbs are absolutive.

Massam (2001), *Pseudo Noun Incorporation in Niuean*: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/404791>.

Massam (2000), *VSO and VOS: Aspects of Niuean Word Order*. In Andrew Carnie and Eithne Guilfoyle (eds), *The Syntax of Verb Initial Languages*.

