

(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	ne
Perfect	kua
Present	Ø
Future	to



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

- Nouns must normally be preceded by a case marker:

	Ergative	Absolutive
Name / Pronoun	e	a
Else	he	e

- The ergative is used for a subject if it is followed by an object; the absolute 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 absolute.

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*.

