

Yucatec Maya: A Fragment

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Background on YM

- ▶ VOS language (but often appears SVO due to focus constructions or topicalization)
- ▶ Considered to be a tenseless language
 - ▶ Shows temporality through aspect-mood (AM) markers
- ▶ Exhibits split ergativity

Set-A and Set-B

- ▶ Terms borrowed from the traditional Mayanist literature
- ▶ Used to show agreement marking
- ▶ Set-A shows agreement for subjects of transitive and intransitive verbs and possession
 - ▶ Has an element that comes before stem

| | SINGULAR | PLURAL |
|------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| 1ST PERSON | in (w)... | in (w)...-o'on |
| 2ND PERSON | a (w)... | a (w)...-e'ex |
| 3RD PERSON | u (y)... | u (y)...-o'ob |

Set-A and Set-B

- ▶ Terms borrowed from the traditional Mayanist literature
- ▶ Used to show agreement marking
- ▶ Set-B shows agreement for subjects of various predicates as well as agreement for the object of verbs
 - ▶ Suffixes stem

| | SINGULAR | PLURAL |
|------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 1ST PERSON | ...- en | ...- o'on |
| 2ND PERSON | ...- ech | ...- e'ex |
| 3RD PERSON | ...- Ø | ...- o'ob |

Set-A and Set-B

- (1) [In wéetmeyaj]-o'ob (ti'o'ob)
[A.1.SG coworker]-B.3.PL (they)
'They are my co-workers'
- (2) Koolnáal-en (tèen).
farmer-B.1.SG (I)
'I am a farmer.'

AM Markers

- ▶ Heads of VPs
- ▶ Used in non-copular sentences
- ▶ Can show temporal distance

(3) Ta'itak in xok-ik-Ø le periyòodiko-o'.
PROX A.1.SG read-INC-B.3.SG DEF newspaper-D2
'I /have/had/will have/ almost read the newspaper,'
'I /am/was/will be/ about to read the newspaper.'

AM Markers

- ▶ Heads of VPs
- ▶ Used in non-copular sentences
- ▶ Can show temporal distance
- ▶ Can also show modality

(4) Yaan in xok-ik-Ø le periyòodiko-o'.
OBL A.1.SG read-INC-B.3.SG DEF newspaper-D2
'I /have/had/will have/ to read the newspaper.'

| AM marker | Status category triggered |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| perfective (PRV): <i>t-</i> | completive (CMP): e.g. <i>-aj-</i> |
| proximate (PROX): <i>ta'itak</i> | incompletive (INC): e.g. <i>-ik-</i> |
| predictive (PRED): <i>bíin</i> | subjunctive (SUBJ): e.g. <i>-Ø-</i> |

- (5) T-in *xok-aj-Ø* le *periyòodiko-o'*.
PRV-A.1.SG read-**CMP**-B.3.SG DEF newspaper-D2
'I read the paper.'
- (6) Ta'itak in *xok-ik-Ø* le *periyòodiko-o'*.
PROX A.1.SG read-**INC**-B.3.SG DEF newspaper-D2
'I /have/had/will have/ almost read the paper.'
- (7) Bíin in *xok-Ø-Ø* le
PRED A.1.SG read-**SUBJ**-B.3.SG DEF
periyòodiko-o'.
newspaper-D2
'I will/would read the paper.'

- (8) T=u jàant-aj-Ø òon Pèedrój.
PFV=A.3 eat-CMP-B.3.SG avocado Pedro
'Pedro ate avocado.'
- (9) òon t=u jàant-aj-Ø Pèedrój.
avocado PFV=A.3 eat-CMP-B.3.SG Pedro
'Pedro ate an AVOCADO.'

Focus

Attempt 1

$$\textit{filler-gap-cxt} \Rightarrow \left[\begin{array}{c} \text{MTR} \quad \left[\text{GAP} \quad \boxed{A} \right] \\ \text{DTRS} \quad \left\langle \boxed{1}, \left[\text{GAP} \quad \left\langle \boxed{1} \right\rangle \oplus \boxed{A} \right] \right\rangle \end{array} \right]$$

$$\textit{focus-cl, attempt 1} \Rightarrow \left[\begin{array}{c} \text{MTR} \quad \left[\text{PRED} \quad + \right] \\ \text{DTRS} \quad \left\langle \boxed{1} \left[\text{PRED} \quad - \right], \dots \right\rangle \\ \text{HEAD-DTR} \quad \boxed{1} \end{array} \right]$$

Relative Clause

Looks Like Focus

- (10) le máax jats'-ik-Ø Juan-o'
DEF who beat-INC-B.3 Juan-D2
'that person who hits Juan'¹

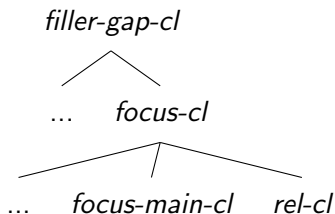
- (11) T-in wil-aj le máak j-sùut=o'.
PRV-A1 see-CMP DEF man PRV-returned=D2
'I saw the man who returned.'²

¹Example from Bricker 1978 (121).

²Example from Norcliffe (2009).

Focus and Relative Clauses

Attempt 2



$$\text{focus-cl, attempt 2} \Rightarrow \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{DTRS} \quad \left\langle \boxed{1}, \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{PRED} \quad + \\ \text{VAL} \quad \langle \rangle \end{array} \right] \right\rangle \\ \text{HD-DTR} \quad \boxed{1} \end{array} \right]$$

$$\text{focus-main-cl, attempt 2} \Rightarrow \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{MTR} \quad \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{PRED} \quad + \end{array} \right] \\ \text{DTRS} \quad \left\langle \boxed{1} \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{PRED} \quad - \end{array} \right], \dots \right\rangle \end{array} \right]$$

$$\text{rel-cl, attempt 2} \Rightarrow \left[\quad \right]$$

Agent focus

The AF alternation

When the agent is focused, an alternative verb form called the AF (agent focus) form may be used:

(12) Táan in xok-ik le perioyòodiko-o'
PROG A.1.SG read-INC(B.3.SG) DEF newspaper-D2
'I am/was/will be reading the paper.'

(13) Leti' jats'-ik-en
it beat-INC-B.1.SG
'HE beats me.'

Agent focus

The AF form

- (14) a. K-in jant-ik-Ø bu'ul.
IMPF-A.1.SG eat-INC-B.3.SG beans
'I eat beans.'
- b. *jant-ik-Ø bu'ul
eat-INC-B.3.SG beans
intended: 'I eat beans.'

Agent focus

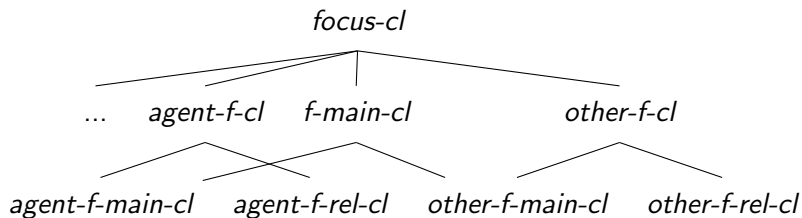
Agent-focus-rel-cl

The AF verb form also occurs in relative clauses:

- (15) Le chàan xibpàal k-u ts'uts'-ik-Ø
DEF little male.child IMPF-A.3.SG kiss-INC-B.3.SG
le x-ko'olel-o'.
DEF FEM-woman-D2
'the little boy who is kissing the woman'
- (16) Le chàan xibpàal ts'uts'-ik-Ø le
DEF little male.child kiss-INC-B.3.SG DEF
x-ko'olel-o'.
FEM-woman-D2
'the little boy who is kissing the woman'

Agent focus

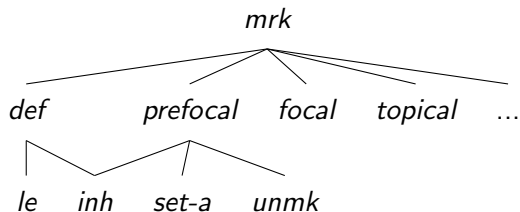
Hierarchy of focus constructions



Agent focus

MRKG hierarchy

We use the MRKG feature to posit constraints on focus (e.g., preventing multiple focused elements):



Agent focus

Final version

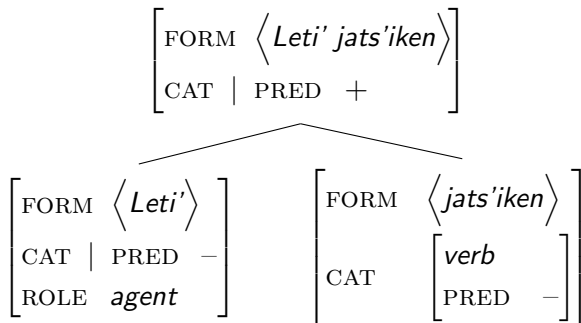
$$focus-cl \Rightarrow \left[\begin{array}{l} MTR \quad \left[MRKG \quad focal \right] \\ DTRS \quad \left\langle \boxed{1}, \left[VAL \quad \langle \rangle \right] \right\rangle \\ HD-DTR \quad \boxed{1} \left[MRKG \quad prefocal \right] \end{array} \right]$$

$$agent-focus-cl \Rightarrow \left[\begin{array}{l} DTRS \quad \left\langle X, \left[\begin{array}{l} CAT \quad \left[\begin{array}{l} verb \\ STATUS \quad sbj \mid inc \end{array} \right] \\ MRKG \quad unmk \\ GAP \quad \left\langle X \left[\begin{array}{l} ROLE \quad agent \end{array} \right] \right\rangle \oplus L \end{array} \right] \right\rangle \end{array} \right]$$

Note: agent focus does not allow completive status marking.

Agent focus

Predicativity and *agent-focus-main-cl*



Deictic clitics

- ▶ Deictic clitics (D) orient the speaker deictically toward the content of the sentence.
- ▶ Attach to the end of a clause.
- ▶ The Highlander Principle: There can be only one!
- ▶ Their occurrence is licensed by the presence of a clitic-triggering constituent.
- ▶ The morphemes are: **a', o', e', i'**

Semantics of deictic clitics

- ▶ **a'** (D1): accessible to the speaker, this
- ▶ **o'** (D2): inaccessible to the speaker, that, the
- ▶ **e'** (D3): specific lexical items (e.g. *way* "here") and topics
- ▶ **i'** (D4): mainly negation, but also e.g. *ti'* "there"

Basic examples

- (17) K-in xok-ik le periyòodiko-o'.
 IMPV-A1 read-INC DEF newspaper-D2
 'I read the newspaper.'³
- (18) Wi'ij-en way-e'.
 hungry-B.1.SG here-D3
 'I'm starving here.'⁴
- (19) Ma' táan u lúub-s-ik k'áax-i'.
 NEG PROG A3 fall-CAUS-INC jungle-D4.
 He is not clearing the jungle.⁵

³Example from Bohnemeyer (2002).

⁴Example from Vivas Camara (1988).

⁵Example from Bohnemeyer (2002).

Clause-finality

- (20) **Je'el** hun-p'ít ts'àak-**a'**!
PRSV one-bit cure.ATP-D1!
'Here's some medicine!'
- (21) Tíin k'al-ik **le** naj y-etel u
PROG:A1SG lock-INC DEF house ONGL-with A3
yabej-il-**a'**.
key-REL-D1
'I am locking this house with the key.'

Clitic preponderance I

a' > o' > e' > i'

D1 > D4

- (22) Tak **be'òora ma'** wèen-ek-en-a'.
even now NEG sleep-SUBJ-B.1.SG-D1
'Until now I have not slept.'

D3 > D4

- (23) Le **ma'** k'uch-uk-en-e' káa j
DEF NEG arrive-SBJ-B.1.SG-D3 CON PRV
jóok' leti'.
exit.B.1.SG (s)he
'When I had not yet arrived, she left.'

Clitic preponderance II

D1 > D2

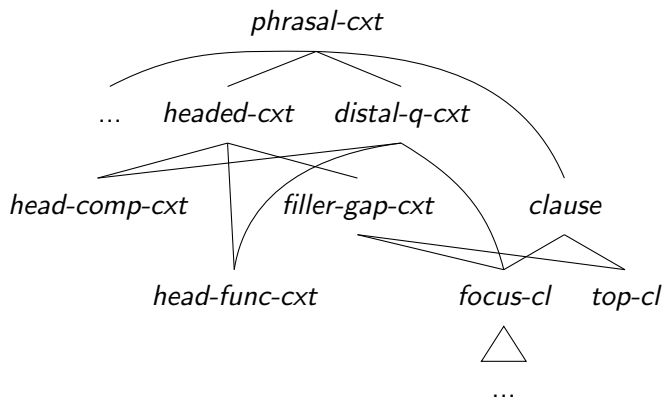
- (24) tuméen don Ignacio Bravo j tàal u jets'-kun-t
because don Ignacio Bravo PRV come A.3 quiet-CAUS-APP(B.3.SG)
le màaya-s-o'ob **way** túun ba'atejil-o'ob-a'.
DEF Maya-PL-PL here PROG:A3 fight-PL-D1
'...because don Ignacio Bravo came to pacify the Mayas who were fighting here.'

Distal queue construction

distal-q-cxt \Rightarrow

$$\left[\begin{array}{l} \text{MTR} \\ \text{DTRS} \end{array} \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{ENQ-D} \quad F_{\text{MAX}}(\boxed{1}, \boxed{2}, \dots, \boxed{n-1}, \boxed{n}) \\ \text{DEQ-D} \quad \boxed{m} \end{array} \right] \right. \\ \left. \left\langle \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{ENQ-D} \quad \boxed{1} \\ \text{DEQ-D} \quad \text{none} \end{array} \right], \dots, \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{ENQ-D} \quad \boxed{n-1} \\ \text{DEQ-D} \quad \text{none} \end{array} \right], \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{ENQ-D} \quad \boxed{n} \\ \text{DEQ-D} \quad \boxed{m} \end{array} \right] \right\rangle \right]$$

Phrasal construct



An example syntactic tree

- (25) Ma' in w-ojel le naj-a'.
NEG A.1 ONGL-knowledge DET house-D1
'I don't know this house.'

| | |
|-------|---|
| FORM | $\langle ma' \text{ in } \textit{wojel le naja'} \rangle$ |
| ENQ-D | a' |
| DEQ-D | a' |

| | | | |
|-------|-----------------------|-------|---|
| FORM | $\langle ma' \rangle$ | FORM | $\langle in \text{ } \textit{wojel le naja'} \rangle$ |
| ENQ-D | i' | ENQ-D | a' |
| DEQ-D | \emptyset | DEQ-D | a' |

| | |
|-------|--|
| FORM | $\langle in \text{ } \textit{wojel} \rangle$ |
| ENQ-D | \emptyset |
| DEQ-D | \emptyset |

| | |
|-------|--|
| FORM | $\langle le \text{ } \textit{naja'} \rangle$ |
| ENQ-D | a' |
| DEQ-D | a' |

| | |
|-------|----------------------|
| FORM | $\langle in \rangle$ |
| ENQ-D | \emptyset |
| DEQ-D | \emptyset |

| | |
|-------|----------------------------------|
| FORM | $\langle \textit{wojel} \rangle$ |
| ENQ-D | \emptyset |
| DEQ-D | \emptyset |

| | |
|-------|----------------------|
| FORM | $\langle le \rangle$ |
| ENQ-D | a' |
| DEQ-D | \emptyset |

| | |
|-------|----------------------------------|
| FORM | $\langle \textit{naja'} \rangle$ |
| ENQ-D | \emptyset |
| DEQ-D | a' |

Restrictions on the Sentential node

$$S = \left[\begin{array}{c} \text{SYN} \end{array} \left[\begin{array}{cc} \text{CAT} & \left[\begin{array}{cc} \text{PRED} & + \\ \text{SET-A} & + \end{array} \right] \\ \text{VAL} & \langle \rangle \\ \text{GAP} & \langle \rangle \\ \text{ENQ-D} & \boxed{1} \\ \text{DEQ-D} & \boxed{1} \end{array} \right] \right]$$

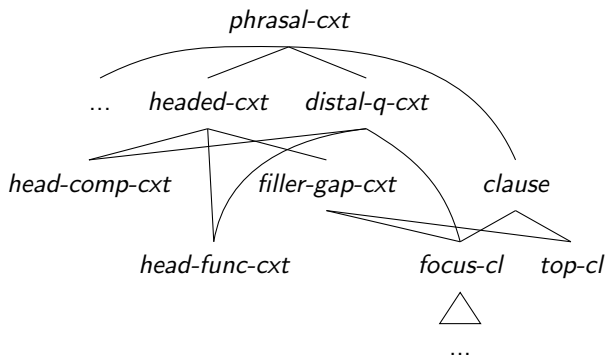
Topicalization

- Topicalization: a distal clitic in the middle of a sentence.

- (23) Le **ma'** k'uch-uk-en-**e'** káa j jóok' leti'.
DEF NEG arrive-SBJ-B.1.SG-D3 CON PRV exit.B.1.SG (s)he
'When I had not yet arrived, she left.'⁶
- (26) Le ts'akyaj-**o'** u k'aba'-**e'** Pedro-Ø.
DET doctor-D2 A.3.SG name-D3 Pedro-B.3.SG
'As for that doctor, as for his name, it is Pedro.'
(or: 'The doctor's name is Pedro.')

⁶Example from Bohnemeyer (2016).

Phrasal construct



Towards an account of topical clauses

topical-cl \Rightarrow

$$\left[\begin{array}{l} \text{MTR} \left[\begin{array}{ll} \text{MRKG} & \textit{topical} \\ \text{ENQ-D} & \boxed{1} \\ \text{DEQ-D} & \boxed{1} \end{array} \right] \\ \\ \text{DTRS} \left\langle \boxed{2} \left[\begin{array}{ll} \text{ENQ-D} & \boxed{3} \\ \text{DEQ-D} & F_{\max}(e', \boxed{3}) \end{array} \right], \boxed{4} \left[\begin{array}{ll} \text{CAT} & \left[\text{PRED} \quad + \right] \\ \text{VAL} & \langle \rangle \\ \text{GAP} & \langle \boxed{2} \rangle \oplus L \\ \text{MRKG} & \textit{mrk} \\ \text{ENQ-D} & \boxed{1} \\ \text{DEQ-D} & \boxed{1} \end{array} \right] \right\rangle \\ \\ \text{HD-DTR} \quad \boxed{4} \end{array} \right]$$

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