

The expression of objects in an apparently VAO language.

Hoava (Austronesian, Solomon Islands) appears to manifest several typologically and syntactically problematic phenomena. It appears to employ object agreement without subject agreement; to incorporate nouns along with their modifiers; and to display a VAO clause order – i.e. to lack an internal object on the surface. However, each of these issues relates to the expression of objects, a convergence that invites the hypothesis that the three issues are connected. This paper examines these together. Using a combination of syntactic and phonological evidence, it demonstrates that the language is in fact VOA, with apparent object agreement representing pronominal objects expressing definite objects, and apparent phrasal incorporation representing indefinite object NPs. It concludes that far from the object never surfacing in VP-internal position in Hoava, it always does so. Consequently, the language poses no problems for current typological and syntactic theories in this respect.

Following standard approaches to analyzing languages of Austronesian's Oceanic branch (see e.g. Lynch et al 2002), Davis (2003) treats Hoava as displaying object agreement, as in (1), at odds with claims of a universal prohibition on object agreement in languages lacking subject agreement (Woolford 2000:47). Davis claims Hoava verbs have transitive forms displaying agreement, and intransitive forms lacking it. This paper shows that apparent agreement forms are not affixes. In some instances they are clitics. When other forms intervene between the transitive head and the clitic, the head is in its so-called 'intransitive' form, as in (2), where the vowel-final 'intransitive' form contrasts with the 'transitive' form in (1). Moreover, in categories other than 2SG and 3SG, purported agreement forms are in fact free pronouns differing from subject pronouns only by the presence of a preceding particle projecting definiteness and accusative case features (compare (3) and (4)). The paper concludes that definite objects are expressed VP-internally by a weak accusative pronoun if 2SG or 3SG, or an accusative-marked free pronoun in other categories. It argues that optional lexical NPs associated with these objects, as in (1), are adjuncts, and therefore an instance of object doubling like that in Chicheŵa (Bresnan & Mchombo 1987), rather than Romance clitic doubling as in e.g. Spanish (see Jaeggli 1986), where the lexical NP remains the argument.

Also following traditional Oceanic approaches, Davis argues that Hoava displays object noun incorporation, identified by the use of the 'intransitive' form of the verb and the location of the logical object before the subject, as in (5). However, such objects may carry modifiers, be marked for possession, or even be conjoined, as in (5)-(7), at odds with claims that in incorporation, even of the noun-stripping or composition by juxtaposition variety (Miner, 1986; Mithun 1984:849-852), the incorporant is limited to bare N (Gerds 1998:94). The paper demonstrates that such apparent incorporants are distributionally equivalent to accusative pronominal objects, and lack a sufficiently close bond with the V by occurring after certain adverbs (see Mithun 1984:851), as a comparison of (8) and (2) shows. It concludes that the apparent incorporants are indefinite objects in a transitive construction. While Hoava definite objects are expressed by internal pronouns with optional lexical NP adjuncts, indefinite objects are expressed by a VP-internal NP. Hoava "incorporation" therefore resembles Niuean 'Pseudo-Noun-Incorporation' (Massam 2000, 2001), but is more straightforward: pronominal definite objects in Hoava mean no mechanism is needed to get the object out of the VP as in Niuean, where no pronominal equivalents occur. Instead, the Hoava object is base-generated *in situ*, always surfacing in VP-internal position.

The paper concludes therefore that Hoava poses no problems for typological claims about agreement or incorporation, or syntactic claims about the universality of internal objects.

- (1) So **tavet=ia** eri kamade **sa keke royaroya yele**.
 then work=3SGO they four ART one ladder long
 ‘Then the four of them made a long ladder.’
- (2) sa h<in>abu [**tavete velo=a** yamu kerane]
 ART <NMLZ>gather.food work usually=3SGO youPL old.days
 ‘the food gathering you usually did in the old days’
- (3) Toyas=**ii yami** ga sa banara.
 order=ACC weEXCL REST s/he chief
 ‘The chief ordered us.’
- (4) **yami** heri la pa rabolo.
 weEXCL DEM go LOC Rabaul
 ‘We here go to Rabaul.’ (D48)
- (5) Tavete **parika na tupi** eri kahike.
 work bow and arrow they three
 ‘They three made bows and arrows.’
- (6) Hiva napo **kolo magini** ba rao na.
 want drink water be.hot EMPH I DEM
 ‘I want to drink hot water.’
- (7) Tavete **nana tupi, nana parika**.
 work GPOSS.3SGP arrow GPOSS.3SGP bow
 ‘[He] made his arrows, his bows.’
- (8) Pa vera koni vayi **velo pepeha**
 LOC where FUT take usually soil
 ‘Where do [you] usually take soil from?’

References

- Bresnan, J.W. & S.A. Mchombo, 1987, ‘Topic, pronoun and agreement in Chicheŵa.’ *Language* 63:741-782.
- Davis, K., 2003, *A grammar of the Hoava language, western Solomons*. Canberra: PL.
- Gerdts, D.B., 1998, ‘Incorporation.’ In A. Spencer & A.M. Zwicky, eds, *The handbook of morphology*. Oxford: Blackwells.
- Jaeggli, O.A., 1986, ‘Three issues in the theory of clitics: case, doubled NPs, and extraction.’ In Borer, H., ed., *The syntax of pronominal clitics*. Orlando: Academic Press.
- Lynch, J, M.D. Ross & T. Crowley (eds) *The Oceanic languages*. London: Curzon.
- Massam, D., 2000, ‘VSO and VOS: aspects Niuean word order.’ In A. Carnie & E Guilfoyle (eds) *The syntax of verb initial languages*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Massam, D., 2001, ‘Psuedo noun incorporation in Niuean.’ *NLLT* 19:153-197.
- Miner, K.L., 1986, ‘Noun stripping and loose incorporation in Zuni.’ *IJAL* 52/3:242-254.
- Mithun, M., 1984, ‘The evolution of noun incorporation.’ *Language* 60/4:847-894.
- Woolford, E., 2000, ‘Ergative agreement systems.’ *University of Maryland Working Papers in Linguistics*. 10:157-191.