Abstract

Contrary to the assumptions in the recent studies, Sasak and Sumbawa maintain the structural difference between Actor- and Patient-focus constructions despite their loss of the focus morphology. Evidence for this based on the well-known Austronesian constraint on relativization and related phenomena also suggests that the topic and the subject are two distinct grammatical relations in these languages with the former functioning as a pivot in relativization. These findings have significant implications to the syntactic status of the topic in Austronesian focus languages and to the universals of relativization posited by Keenan and Comrie (1977) in terms of subjects and objects.
Sasak dialects — “traditional” view

Classified in terms of the shibboleth for “like this-like that”
ngeno-ngené, ngeto-ngeté, meno-mené, meriaq-meriku, kuto-kuté, etc.

Actually, a great deal of variation seen within and across these traditional dialects
—see below

Nasal/oral two-way morphological/structural contrast preserved in:

Pan-cor ngeno-ngené Sasak

a. Oku kenyengka-ng=ku mbace buku in (N-AF; only A rel, Wh-question)

I PROG-LIN=1 N.read book this
‘I am reading this book.’

b. Buku ini kenyengka-ng=ku bace (Ø-PF; only P rel, Wh-question)

book this PROG-LIN=1 Ø.read
‘I am reading this book.’

Suralaga ngeto-ngeté

a. Aku mantok epe (N-AF; only A rel, Wh-question)

I N.hit you
‘I hit you.’

b. Epe pantok=ku (Ø-PF; only P rel, Wh-question)

you Ø.hit=1SG
‘I hit you.’

Ganti meno-mené

a. Aku jengke-ng=ku bace/baca buku=ni (AF; bace preferred)

I PROG-LIN=1SG Ø.read/N.read book=this
‘I am reading this book.’

b. Buku=ni jengke=bace/mbace (PF; bace preferred)

book=this PROG=1SG Ø.read/N.read
‘I am reading this book.’

Puyung meno-mené

a. Aku nyengke bace/*mbaca buku=ni (AF?)

I PROG Ø.read/N.read book=this
‘I am reading this book.’

b. Buku=ni nyengke=k bace/*mbace (PF)

book=this PROG=1SG Ø.read/N.read
‘I am reading this book.’

(Only bace in her speech)

Narmada ngeno-ngené

a. Aku jengke-ng=ku bace/mbace buku=ni (AF; bace preferred)

I PROG-LIN=1SG Ø.read/N.read book=this
‘I am reading this book.’

b. Buku=ni jengke-ng=ku bace/mbace (PF; bace preferred)

book=this PROG-LIN=1SG Ø.read/N.read
‘I am reading this book.’

Sumbawa besar

a. Aku baca buku=sa (baca preferred)

I Ø.read book=this
‘I read this book.’

b. Buku=sa k=mbaca book=1SG Ø.read
‘I read this book.’

Sumbawa Taliwang

a. Aku baca maca buku=sa (baca preferred)

I Ø.read/N.read book=this
‘I read this book.’

b. Baca/maca=ku buku=sa Ø.read/N.read=1SG book=1SG
‘I read this book.’

Intransitive: ‘I am reading now.’ (baca preferred)

Sumbawa besar

Ta ntu k=mbaca/mac a now 1SG=read

Sumbawa Taliwang

Sa’ muntu k=mbaca/mac a

Recent studies on Sasak and Sumbawa

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"[a]ll of the categories in Keenan and Comrie's accessibility hierarchy are accessible to relativization in Sasak, except for the object of comparison"

"[t]he process of relativization in Sasak is quite different from that in other Western-Austronesian languages, many of which can only relativize a syntactic subject, and require some other form of promotion of the non-subject to subject in order for it to be accessible to relativization."

Shiohara (2000, 2006) implies that S, A and P are all relativizable in Sumbawa.

Austin (2000)

Ngeno-ngené, in which nasal/oral morphological focus contrast is mostly preserved in transitive structures, "remembers Balinese...in picking out the Agent for a two- or three-place zero verb for special treatment. Topicalisation, question formation, relative clause formation, and purpose clause construction in Mataram and Sekong Sasak are not possible when the pivot is a zero verb Agent." (14)

"[i]n the Menó-Mené varieties [which have lost the nasal/oral morphological opposition in transitive structures of many verbs] this restriction does not apply and any argument of a verb may be directly questioned." (16)

These statements on meno-mené are not true in all meno-mené varieties I examined—four altogether, as below:

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### Puyung meno-mené

| a. | Inaq wah=en beli sebie=no (Patientive Object cannot be relativized or Wh-questioned) | Mother bought the chili. |
| a'. Kanak=no kaken sebie [saq inaq wah=en beli Ø] | The child ate the chili that the mother bought. |
| a''. Ape [inaq wah=en beli Ø] | What did mother buy? |
| b. Wah=en beli sebie=no (isyiq) inaq | Perfective transitive construction | Mother bought the chili. |
| b'. Kanak=no kaken sebie [saq wah=en beli Ø isiq inaq] | The child ate the chili that the mother bought. |
| b''. Ape [wah=en beli Ø isiq inaq] | What did mother buy? |

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### Bagu meno-mené (same pattern)

| a. | Degnan mame=ne gitaq dengan nine=no | This man sees that woman. |
| a'. Kanak=no kaken sebie [saq-siq dengan mame=ne gitaq Ø] | The woman whom the man saw is my mother. |
| a''. Sai [saq-siq=ne gitaq] | Whom did this man see? |
| b. | Dengan nine=no aku gitaq | I see the woman. |
| b'. Dengan nine [saq-siq=k gitaq]=no inaq=k | The woman whom I see is my mother. |
| b''. Sai [saq-siq=k gitaq] | Whom do I see? |

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### Ganti meno-mené (same pattern)

| a. | Inaq wah-ng beli/meli sebie=nu | Mother bought the chili. |
| a'. Kanak=no kaken sebie [saq inaq wah-ng beli Ø] | The child ate the chili that mother bought. |
| a''. Ape [inaq wah-ng beli Ø] | What does mother buy? |
| b. Wah-ng beli/meli sebie=nu (isyiq) inaq | Perfective transitive construction | Mother bought the chili. |
| b'. Kanak=no kaken sebie [saq wah-ng beli Ø isiq inaq] | The child ate the chili that mother bought. |
| b''. Ape [wah-ng beli Ø isiq inaq] | What did mother buy? |

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### Aik-Anyar menu-meni (same pattern)

| a. | Inaq wah=as beli/meli sebie=nu | Mother bought the chili. |
| a'. Kanak=nun kaken sebie [siq inaq wah=as beli Ø] | The child eats the chili that mother bought. |
| a''. Ape [siq inaq beli=as] | What does mother buy? |
| b. Sebie beli=(siq) inaq | Chili buy=3SG by mother |
| b'. Kanak=nun kaken sebie [siq Ø beli= as keq siq inaq=] | The child eats the chili NMZ buy=3SG by mother |
| b''. Ape [(siq) Ø beli=as siq inaq] | What does mother buy? |


Sumbawa besar (same pattern)

a. Nya ka=beli cabe=nan seperap
   she PAST=buy chili=the yesterday
   ‘She bought the chili yesterday.’

a’. *ma ka=kakan cabe=nan [de nya ka=beli Ø seperap]
   mother PAST=eat chili=the the NMZ she PAST=buy yesterday
   ‘Mother ate the chili that she bought yesterday.’

b. Cabe=nan ka=beli seperap lêng nya
   chili=the PAST=buy yesterday by she
   ‘She bought the chili yesterday.’

b’. ma ka=kakan cabe=nan [de Ø ka=beli lêng nya seperap]
   mother PAST=eat chili=the the NMZ PAST=buy by she yesterday
   ‘Mother ate the chili that she bought yesterday.’

Sumbawa Talliwang (same pattern)

a. Nya ka=beli cabe=so’ nerap
   she PAST=buy chili=the yesterday
   ‘She bought the chili yesterday.’

a’. *ma ka=kakan cabe=so’ [anu nya ka=beli Ø nerap]
   mother PAST=eat chili=the the NMZ she PAST=buy yesterday
   ‘Mother ate the chili that she bought yesterday.’

b. Ka=beli cabe=so’ nerap ning nya
   PAST=buy chili=the the yesterday by she
   ‘She bought the chili yesterday.’

b’. ma ka=kakan cabe=so’ [anu ka=beli Ø ning nya nerap]
   mother PAST=eat chili=the the NMZ PAST=buy by she yesterday
   ‘Mother ate the chili that she bought yesterday.’

Significance of two types of transitive structure in Sasak and Sumbawa

Puyung meno-mené (Kroon 1998:111)

a. Herman wa=n ebéng inaq klambi
   Herman PERF=3 give mother shirt
   ‘Herman has given mother a shirt.’

b. Wa=n ebéng inaq klambi isiq Herman
   PERF=3 give mother shirt by Herman
   ‘Herman has given a shirt to mother.’

Sumbawa besar (Shiohara 2006: 142, 143)

a. Aku ya=kakan’ tepóng=ta
   1SG.LOW CONS=eat cake=this
   ‘I will eat this cake.’

b. tepóng=ta ya=kakan’ lêng aku
   cake=this CONS=1SG.LOW=eat by 1SG.LOW
   ‘I will eat this cake.’

Kroon (1998) “the isiq construction”
Musgrave (2000) “postposed agent constructions”

Kroon (1998:105) “a peculiar pattern that distinguishes the Sasak language from all other Western Malayo-Polynesian languages.”

Interim conclusion 1

1. Transitive structures in Puyung meno-mené and other Sasak dialects and Sumbawa that have lost morphological focus contrast still maintain the structural AF/PF contrast—a case of focus constructions without focus morphology

   “in a PAN Relative clause the (deleted) noun phrase coreferential with its head noun had to be its pivot...” (Ross 1995:730)

2. This Austronesian syntactic constraint is still active even in those Sasak and Sumbawa structures without focus morphology

Next question: What is “pivot”?

“[In Pan] the pivot was always definite” (Ross 1995:729)

“Pivot” → “Topic”

(McKaugn 1962, Schachter and Otanes 1972, McFarland 1976)

Subject or Topic?

Keenan and Comrie Topic → Subject; PF construction → Passive

Accessibility Hierarchy (Keenan and Comrie 1977:66)
SU > DO > IO > OBL > GEN > OCOMP

Austronesian
Welsh, Finnish
Basaqa, Tamil
N. Frisian, Catalan
French, German
English, Uinhao

“in absolute terms Subjects are the most relativizable of NPs”
(Comrie and Keenan 1979: 653)

“subjects are universally the most relativizable of NPs”
(Keenan 1985:158)
There are several good reasons for not making the move:

1. There are subject and object relations apart from the Topic relation in Sasak and Sumbawa:
   a. Cliticization of subjects (and objects)
   b. Passive exists apart from PF — Patient of a passive clause behaves like a subject. Patient of PF does not.
   c. Control phenomena — Some are controlled by Topic, some by subject=Topic
   d. Relativizer selection in Bagu meno-mené

2. Relativization pattern violates the following universal (not discussed here):
   "All RC strategies must operate on a continuous segment of the AH."
   (Comrie and Keenan 1979:661)

3. Relativization pattern is better accounted for in terms of the Topic relation (not discussed here)

**Puyung meno-mené**

**Passive subjects**

- a. (Aku) wah=k te-empuk isiq Ali
  
  | PERF=1 PASS-hit by Ali |
  | 'I have been hit by Ali.' |
- b. Te-empuk=m isiq Ali
  
  | PASS-hit=2 by Ali |
  | 'You were hit by Ali.' |
- c. Te-empuk=n isiq Ali
  
  | PASS-hit=3 by Ali |
  | 'She was hit by Ali.' |

**Control phenomena**

1. "Want"-type: takes a non-controllable SOA complement
   - I want [Ø to leave]
   - I want [John to leave]
   - I want [it to rain]
   - I want [Ø to be tall]

**Pancor ngeno-ngené**

- a. Loq Ali wah=ne, ngirim=ang oku surat (AF)
  
  | ART Ali PERF=3 N.send-APPL I letter |
  | I sent a letter. |
- a'. Oku wah=ne kirim=ang surat isiq Ali (PF)
  
  | PERF=1 PASS-hit by ART Ali |
  | 'Ali sent me a letter.' |
- b. Oku wah=kku, ngirim=ang loq Ali surat (AF)
  
  | PERF=1 PASS-hit=3 by ART Ali |
  | 'I sent Ali a letter.' |
- b'. Loq Ali wah=kku kirim=ang surat (PF)
  
  | PASS-hit=1 Ø.send-APPL letter |
  | 'I was sent a letter.' |

- a. Meleng=kku [Ø ngiduk le Siti] (AF complement)
  
  | Ø=A=SUBJECT=TOPIC want=1 N.kiss ART Siti |
  | I want to kiss Siti. |
- a'. [Ø ngiduk le Siti] (AF)
  
  | Ø=A=SUBJECT=TOPIC want=1 N.kiss ART Siti |
  | 'I want to kiss Siti.' |
- b. Meleng=kku [ne=iduk Ø isiq le Siti] (AF complement)
  
  | Ø=P=OBJECT=TOPIC want=1 3=Ø.kiss by ART Siti |
  | I want Siti to kiss (me). |
- b'. [ne=iduk Ø isiq le Siti] (AF)
  
  | Ø=P=OBJECT=TOPIC want=1 3=Ø.kiss by ART Siti |
  | 'Siti kisses me.' |
- c. Meleng=kku [Ø te=iduk isiq le Siti] (AF complement)
  
  | Ø=P=SUBJECT=TOPIC want=1 PASS-hit by ART Siti |
  | I want to be kissed by Siti. |
- c'. [Ø te=iduk isiq le Siti] (AF)
  
  | Ø=P=SUBJECT=TOPIC want=1 PASS-hit by ART Siti |
  | 'I was kissed by Siti.' |
2. "Try"/"Order"-type: requires a controllable SOA complement with a "like-subject" coreferential with either the matrix subject or the matrix object

*I tried [to be tall]  (cf. I tried to be kind.)
*I ordered Mary [to be tall]  (cf. I ordered Mary to be kind.)
*I tried [for John to kiss Mary]
*I ordered Mary [for John to kiss her]
I tried to [Øi to kiss Mary]
I ordered Mary, [Øi to kiss John]
I tried to [Øi to be kissed by Mary]
I ordered Mary, [Øi to be kissed by John]
Bagu meno-mené relativizer selection

Ø=ÆSUBJET=TOPIC
a. Dengan mame [saq Ø gitaq dengan nine]=no amaq=k (AF)
   person male REL see person female=that father=1
   'That man who sees the woman is my father.'

b. Dengan nine [saq Ø te-gitaq siq]=ne inaq=k (Passive)
   person female REL see by person male=his mother=1
   'This woman who is seen by the man is my mother.'

c. Dengan nine [saq-id=Ø]=gitaq Ø siq=see by person male=his mother=1
   person female REL=3 see by person male=this mother=1
   'This woman whom the man sees is my mother.'

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References:


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“Topic” → Subject → Large subject → Spec, IP → Spec, xP

“Subject” → “$¥%&’” → Small subject → Spec, VP → Spec, IP

S, A

= S, A

P of passive

Actor

(Schachter)

Passive

Active voice construction

Middle/Antipassive voice construction

(see Nagaya 2007)

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Interim conclusion 2

1. There exist both Topic and Subject/Object grammatical relations in Sasak and Sumbawa.

2. Subject and Object control (a) citization

(b) Bagu meno-mené REL selection

3. Objects involved in (a) P focusing

(b) Passivization

4. “Try”/”order”-type predicates control a Subject=Topic gap in complements

5. Topic is involved in (a) the “want”-type control phenomenon

(b) Relativization (and related phenomena attributable to nominalization)

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Conclusion

Austronesian typological feature: two distinct grammatical relations Topic and Subject exist

In English and other European languages these relations converge on Subject

Austronesian system of grammatical relations is similar to Japanese and Korean, in which a fully grammaticalized Topic relation exists along with the Subject relation

The Austronesian system differs from the Japanese/Korean systems in that the Topic relation is fully integrated in the basic sentence pattern; in the former major sentence types all include a Topic relation; in the latter Topicless sentences are not limited to specific constructions such as,

Existential, Recent perfect, Exclamatory sentences—these do not have a Topic in Philippine languages

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