Subject and topic in Lamaholot, Eastern Flores*

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Purposes of the talk:
✓ Description of the Lewotobi dialect of the Lamaholot language
✓ Two types of alignment for bivalent verbs:
   - AF constructions: <A=SUB=TOP; P=OBJ>
   - PF constructions: <A=SUB; P=OBJ=TOP>
✓ PF constructions are best analyzed as topicalization rather than passivization.
✓ Subject and topic are involved in different grammatical phenomena.

Structure of the talk:
1. Lamaholot language and its dialects
2. Language characteristics
3. Actor Focus and Patient Focus constructions
4. PF construction as topicalization
5. Subject and topic
6. Conclusions

1. Lamaholot language and its dialects
   • Lamaholot:
     ➢ Central Malayo-Polynesian (Blust 1993, but see Donohue and Grimes 2008)
     ➢ Approximately 200,000 speakers (Nishiyama and Kelen 2007)
     ➢ Spoken in eastern part of Flores and its neighboring islands (Maps 1 and 2)
   • Lewotobi dialect
     ➢ Based on the fieldwork in Desa Nurri (Dusun Nurabelen)
     ➢ Kecamatan Ile Bura and Kecamatan Wulungitang
     ➢ Lewotobi (lewo tobi ‘village of pohon asam’) is the name of the volcano in the region. It is also the name of the capital village of Kecamantan Ile Bura.
     ➢ “Lewotobi” language (Ethnologue) vs. “Lewotobi” dialect (Keraf 1978)
     ➢ A language spoken in keliling Lewotobi ‘around Mt. Lewotobi’ (Nurri villagers)
   • Prior research

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Map 1: Language map of Flores

Map 2: Eastern Flores, Solor and Adonara

Lewolema
(Pampus 1999, 2001)

Lewoingu
(Nishiyama and Kelen 2007)

Lewotobi dialect

Philippe Grangé
(Université de La Rochelle)

Desa Nurri

Solor (Arndt 1937)
2. Language characteristics

- **Preposed possessor language** in terms of Himmelmann (2005)’s typology
  - Non-pronominal possessors precede the possessum.\(^1\)
    
    \[(1)\] Hugo laŋo?=kə
    
    Hugo house=3SG.POSS
    ‘Hugo’s house’

  - Inalienable possession is distinguished from alienable possession.
    
    \[(2)\] Hugo kotəʔ (cf. kotaʔ ‘head’)  
    
    Hugo head.3SG.POSS
    ‘Hugo’s head’

  - The distinction between narrative and equational clauses is clear.
    
    \[(3)\] Hugo n-ai=aʔ lali Maumere n-ai. (narrative)  
    
    Hugo 3SG-go=3SG DIR Maumere 3SG-go
    ‘Hugo went (down) to Maumere.’

    \[(4)\] Hugo ata Nurabelen. (equational)  
    
    Hugo person Nurabelen
    ‘Hugo is a person from Nurabelen.’

  - There is person making for S/A arguments (see Section 5)
  - Nouns precede numerals.
    
    \[(5)\] ata rua  
    
    person two
    ‘two persons’

  - The negator and other TAM markers occur clause-finally.
    
    \[(6)\] go isə kbako həlaʔ.  
    
    1SG suck tabaco NEG
    ‘I don’t smoke.’

  - The basic word order is SVO.
  - No voice system? (See Sections 4 and 5)

- Few grammatical elements:
  - Agreement enclitics (see Section 5)
  - Agreement prefixes (see Section 5)
  - Personal pronouns

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\(^1\) Abbreviations used in the paper are: CONJ-conjunction, DIR-directional, EXC-exclusive, INC-inclusive, PASS-passive, PL-plural, POSS-possessive, REL-relativizer, SG-singular, 1-first person, 2-second person, 3-third person.
Enclitic pronoun \( \text{ro} \): 

The third person singular pronoun \( \text{ro} \) refers to Patient of bivalent verbs and Recipient (not Theme) of trivalent verbs. It can occur with the free pronoun \( \text{na} \).

(7) a. Hugo \( \text{bəŋo}=\text{ro} \) (na).
Hugo hit=3SG 3SG
‘Hugo hit him/her.’

b. Hugo \( \text{hope}=\text{ro} \) (na) gula.
Hugo buy=3SG 3SG candy
‘Hugo bought him/her a candy.’

cf. \( \text{ro} \) is not an agreement marker:

*Hugo \( \text{bəŋo}=\text{ro} \) Besa.

- Zero anaphora is widely allowed.
- Serial verb constructions
- Directionals: Absolute frame of reference
- Satellite-framed language (Talmy 1991) or equipollently-framed language (Slobin 2004)

3. **Actor Focus and Patient Focus constructions**

- Two types of alignment for bivalent verbs (Shibatani’s paper presented in this workshop):
  - AF construction:
    - Agent = Subject = Topic
    - Patient = Object = Non-topic
  - PF construction:
    - Agent = Subject = Non-topic
    - Patient = Object = Topic

(8) a. AF construction
Tanti \( \text{bəŋo} \) Ika. \(<A=\text{SUB}=\text{TOP}; P=\text{OBJ}>\)
Tanti hit Ika AVP
‘Tanti hit Ika.’

‘Tanti pukul Ika.’ (Bahasa Indonesia, consultants’ translation)

b. PF construction
Ika, Tanti \( \text{bəŋo} \). \(<A=\text{SUB}; P=\text{OBJ}=\text{TOP}>\)
Ika Tanti hit PAV
‘Ika, Tanti hit (her).’

‘Ika, Tanti pukul.’ (Bahasa Indonesia, consultants’ translation)

- No morphological change on verbs
- No morphological modification on nouns
- In general, the AF-PF contrast doesn’t change the propositional meaning of a sentence, but in some cases it may change the aspectual meaning of a sentence.

(9) a. AF construction:
Nius n-enu tua? teʔé. (realis/past)
Nius 3SG-drink tuak this.POSS
‘Nius drank this tuak.’
b. PF construction:
\[ \text{tuak} \text{ this.POSS} \text{ Nius 3SG-drink} \]
\‘This tuak, Nius will drink (it).’

- There is no doubt that AF constructions are more basic than PF constructions.
  - Native speakers’ intuition
  - Default construction they use for answering in elicitation sessions.
  - Text frequency

- Then, what is the best analysis of PF constructions? (cf. Donohue 2005)
  - The PF construction is a pragmatically marked construction (Section 4).
  - The AF-PF distinction doesn’t change the grammatical status of the arguments of a clause (subject and object) (Section 5).
  - The Lamaholot PF construction is not passivization but topicalization.

4. PF construction as topicalization
- PF constructions show properties often associated with topicalization.
  - Intonationally distinct contour on the P of PF constructions
  - Intonational break (pause) is usually found after the P of PF constructions.
  - These characteristics are also found in topicalization of obliques.

(10) go pana k-\(\tilde{o}\)\(\tilde{a}\) Hugo.
1SG walk 1SG-do Hugo
‘I walked with Hugo.’
\[ \rightarrow k\tilde{o}\tilde{a} Hugo, go pana. \]

(11) go b\(\tilde{a}\)\(\tilde{u}\) Tanti k-\(\tilde{o}\)\(\tilde{a}\) lima.
1SG hit Tanti 1SG-do hand
‘I hit Tanti with hands.’
\[ \rightarrow k\tilde{o}\tilde{a} lima, go b\tilde{a} u Tanti. \]

- Mainly used in main clauses (and in certain complement clauses, ex. \textit{k-oi} ‘know’)

(12) AF construction:
\[ \text{go k-oi Tanti b\(\tilde{a}\)o Ika.} \]
1SG 1SG-know Tanti hit Ika
‘I know Tanti hit Ika.’
\[ \rightarrow \text{PF construction:} \]
\[ \text{go k-oi Ika, Tanti b\(\tilde{a}\)o.} \]

- The P of PF constructions can leave a resumptive pronoun.

(13) ana? te\(\tilde{e}\), go b\(\tilde{a}\)\(\tilde{u}\)(=ro?) na.
child this.POSS 1SG hit=3SG 3SG
‘This child, I hit him or her.’
There are pragmatic constraints on the P of PF constructions.

- The P of PF constructions cannot be the focus of answer in question and answer pairs. cf. Halliday (1967)
  (14) Agent is the focus of answer:
  Q: hege gə̃ ikə̃ peʔə?
      who eat.3SG fish that.POSS
  ‘Who ate that fish?’
  A1: AF construction:
      Hugo gə̃ ikə̃ peʔə.
      Hugo eat.3SG fish that.POSS
  ‘Hugo ate that fish.’
  A2: PF construction:
      ikə̃ peʔə, Hugo gə̃.
      ‘That fish, Hugo ate.’
  (15) Patient is the focus of answer:
  Q: Hugo gə̃ a?
    Hugo eat.3SG what
  ‘What did Hugo eat?’
  A1: AF construction:
    Hugo gə̃ ikə̃.
    Hugo eat.3SG fish
  ‘Hugo ate fish.’
  A2: PF construction:
    ?? ikə̃, Hugo gə̃.
    fish Hugo eat.3SG
    Intended for ‘Fish, Hugo ate.’
- The P of PF constructions cannot be the focus of negation.
  (16) a. AF construction:
    go kə̃ ikə̃ hua həla?, kū ikə̃ kowi?.
    1SG eat.1SG fish NEG but fish
    ‘I don’t eat hua, but kowi.’
  b. PF construction:
    *ikə̃ hua, go kə̃ həla?, kū ikə̃ kowi?.
    fish 1SG eat.1SG NEG but fish
    Intended for ‘I don’t eat hua, but kowi.’
- The data above show that the P of PF constructions cannot be narrowly focused (but note also that it is possible that wh-words, which are supposed to be narrowly focused in wh-questions, can appear as the P of PF constructions, cf. Section 5.3).
- The P of PF constructions conveys topical/presupposed information rather than focal information.

To summarize, PF constructions are best characterized as topicalization.
5. **Subject and topic**
- Agent serves as subject in both AF and PF constructions.
  - Agent is not demoted in PF constructions.
  - PF constructions are not passive.

- Subject and topic are involved in different grammatical phenomena.
  (cf. Schachter 1976 on Tagalog)
  - Subject-related phenomena
  - Topic-related phenomena
  - None of the above

5.1. **Subject-related constructions**
- In the following constructions, subjects control the grammatical phenomena, whether they are topic or not.

- Agreement prefixes. A certain number of verbs can take an agreement prefix to indicate the person and number of **either intransitive or transitive subject**.

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(17) S (intransitive subject):
na n-a?i=a? kae?.
3SG 3SG-leave=3SG PERFECTIVE
‘He or she has already left.’

(18) A (transitive subject):
go k-enu tua?.
1SG 1SG-drink tuak
‘I drink tuak.’

- The AF-PF contrast doesn’t change the agreement pattern.

(19) a. AF construction:
go k-enu tua? te?ē k-waro.
1SG 1SG-drink tuak this.POSS 1SG-can
‘I can drink this tuak.’

b. PF construction:
tua? te?ē, go k-enu k-waro.
tuak this.POSS 1SG 1SG-drink 1SG-can

→ Subjects control agreement both in AF and PF constructions.
• Agreement enclitics. Agreement enclitics are employed to indicate the person and number of intransitive subjects.
  ➢ Enclitics rather than suffixes
  ▶ High analyzability
  ▶ Optional (but obligatory with specific meanings)
  ▶ Can go with other than verbs

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(20) go plaʔe=əʔ.
1SG run=1SG ‘I ran away.’
(21) go tuba(*=əʔ) na.
1SG stab(=1SG) 3SG ‘I stabbed him/her.’
  ➔ Agreement enclitics are only for intransitive verbs.

• The verb for ‘eat’ is the only verb that uses suppletive forms for agreement.
  ➔ See (14) and (15). In both AF and PF constructions, subjects agree with verbs.

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• Reflexives. Only subjects can control a reflexive expression.
  (22) a. Hugo plewə wəki naʔəʔ. (AF, SUB=antecedent, OBJ=reflexive)
  Hugo praise self 3SG.POSS ‘Hugo praised himself.’
  b. *wəki naʔəʔ plewə Hugo. (AF, SUB=reflexive, OBJ=antecedent)
  c. wəki naʔəʔ, Hugo plewə. (PF, SUB=antecedent, OBJ=reflexive)
  d. *Hugo, wəki naʔəʔ plewə. (PF, SUB=reflexive, OBJ=antecedent)

• Kadïʔ ‘kemudian’ coordination. Only subjects can control the subject gap in the second clause. The AF-PF alternation doesn’t change the interpretation of the sentences.
(23) A=S
   a. AF construction:
      na bọ́ŋo go, kádì? __ gwali.
      3SG hit 1SG then return
      ‘S/he hit me, and (s/he) returned.’
   b. PF construction:
      go, na bọ́ŋo, kádì? __ gwali.
      1SG 3SG hit then return
      ‘Me, s/he hit, and (s/he) returned.’

(24) A=A
   a. AF construction:
      3SG 3SG-see uncle 1SG.POSS then get.mad=3SG 3SG
      ‘S/he saw my uncle, and then (s/he) got mad at him.’
   b. PF construction:
      mame goʔè, na n-oi,
      uncle 1SG.POSS 3SG 3SG-see
      then get.mad=3SG 3SG
      ‘My uncle, s/he saw, and then (s/he) got mad at him.’

5.2 Topic-related phenomena
   • In the following constructions, topics control the grammatical phenomena, whether they are subject or not.

   • Kia go coordination. Only topics can control the subject gap in the second clause. The AF-PF contrast results in different interpretations.

(25) TOP=S
   a. AF construction:
      Besa n-oi Hugo kia gə __ plaʔe.
      Besa 3SG-see Hugo CONJ CONJ run
      ‘Besa saw Hugo and then (Besa) ran away.’
   b. PF construction:
      Hugo, Besa n-oi kia gə __ plaʔe.
      Hugo Besa 3SG-see CONJ CONJ run
      ‘Hugo, Besa saw (him) and then (Hugo) ran away.

(26) TOP=S
   a. AF construction:
      Ika bọ́ŋo Nia kia gə __ plaʔe.
      Ika hit Nia CONJ CONJ run
      ‘Ika hit Nia and then (Ika) ran away.’
b. PF construction:

Nia, Ika bəŋo kia ɡə __ plaʔe.
Nia Ika hit CONJ CONJ run
‘Nia, Ika hit (her) and then (Nia) ran away.’

- Relativization/Nominalization.

(27) SUBJ (S)

anaʔ yang [__ n-aʔi=aʔ] Larantuka n-ai] səna.
person REL 3SG-go=3SG Larantuka 3SG-go cool
‘The person who went to Larantuka is cool.’

(28) SUBJ (A)

anaʔ yang [__ kriŋ laŋoʔ teʔeʔ] səna.
person REL work house this cool
‘The person who built this house is cool.’

(29) OBJ (O)

anaʔ yang [__ go bəŋo] səna.
person REL 1SG hit cool
‘The person who I hit is cool.’

• Relativization is sensitive to Topic relations: what can be topicalized (i.e. the P of PF constructions) can be relativized, whatever its grammatical relation is.

2 Kuno (1973)’s theory of relativization: “what is relativized is not an ordinary noun phrase, but the theme (NP-wa) [i.e. topic ---NN] of the relative clause.” (ibid. 2)

2 Kuno (1973)’s theory of relativization: “what is relativized is not an ordinary noun phrase, but the theme (NP-wa) [i.e. topic ---NN] of the relative clause.” (ibid. 2)
go brea=ə? k-ẽʔẽ Nia.
1SG like=1SG 1SG-do Nia
‘I like Nia.’

→ PF construction:
Nia, go brea=ə?.
‘Nia, I like.’

→ Relativization:
Nia anaʔ yang [__ go brea=ə?].
‘Nia is the child I like.’

(33) Possessor:
ra mña ata dikə oto=kə.
3PL steal person car=POSS
‘They stole the person’s car.’

→ PF construction:
ata dikə oto=kə, ra mña.
‘The person’s car, they stole.’

→ Relativization:
ata dikə yang [__ oto=kə ra mña] səna.
‘The person whose car they stole is cool.’

➢ However, what cannot be topicalized (i.e. the P of PF constructions) cannot be relativized, whatever its grammatical relation is.

(34) Theme of BUY verbs:
go hope Ika gula.
1SG buy Ika candy
‘I bought Ika a candy.’

→ PF construction:
*gula, go hope Ika.

→ Relativization:
* teʔɛ gula yang [go hope Ika __].
Intended for ‘This is the candy I bought Ika.’

(35) Object of V2 in serial verb constructions:
go poroʔ ikə pake hepe teʔɛ.
1SG cut fish use knife this
‘I cut the fish with this knife.’

→ PF construction:
*hepe teʔɛ, go poroʔ ikə pake.

→ Relativization:
*teʔɛ hepe [go poroʔ ikə pake __].
Intended for ‘This is the knife with which I cut the fish.’

5.3. Other constructions
• PF constructions are not available in complement clauses of control predicates. In wh-questions and quantifier float constructions, both subject and topic can control the
phenomena. So they do not work as tests for examining subject and topic in this language.

- **Control:**
  PF constructions are not allowed in complements of control constructions.
  - **Subject control predicates**
    (36) a. go coba [(A) plɔwə] Hugo.
    1SG try praise Hugo
    ‘I tried to praise Hugo.’
    b. *go coba [Hugo (A) plɔwə].
    1SG try Hugo plɔwə
    Intended for ‘I tried to praise Hugo.’
  - **Object control predicates**
    (37) a. go ruda Ida [(A) plɔwə] Hugo.
    1SG tell Ida praise Hugo
    ‘I told Ida to praise Hugo.’
    b. *go ruda Ida [Hugo (A) plɔwə].
    1SG tell Ida Hugo plɔwə
    Intended for ‘I told Ida to praise Hugo.’
  
  cf. *to: ‘want, hope’
  (38) a. go toː=a?
    1SG want=1SG praise Hugo
    ‘I want to praise Hugo.’
    b. *go toː=a?
    1SG want=1SG Hugo praise
    Intended for ‘I want to praise Hugo.’

- **Wh-questions. Wh-words occur in-situ in Lamaholot wh-questions.**
  (39) a. hege bɔŋo Ika?
    who hit Ika
    ‘Who hit Ika?’
    b. Nia bɔŋo hege?
    Nia hit who
    ‘Who did Nia hit?’
    c. hege, Nia bɔŋo?
    who Nia hit
    ‘Who did Nia hit?’

- **Quantifier float:** Numerals and quantifiers appear right after nouns they quantify, and cannot float (cf. quantifiers in Palu’e, Donohue 2005).
  (40) a. go foto ra rua=ka.
    1SG take.picture 3PL two=3PL
    ‘I took a picture of two of them.’
    b. *ra, go foto rua=ka.
    (PF construction)
    c. ra rua=ka, go foto.
    (PF construction)
• To conclude, subject and topic are involved in different grammatical phenomena (see Table 7). Importantly, subject in AF constructions is still subject in PF constructions, which means that PF constructions do not change the alignment of grammatical relations (subject and object). Therefore, they are not passive.

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<td><em>Kɔdii</em>-coordination</td>
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5. Conclusion
• Lamaholot has two different kinds of constructions for bivalent verbs:
  - AF constructions: <A=SUB=TOP; P=OBJ>
  - PF constructions: <A=SUB; P=OBJ=TOP>
• AF constructions are more basic and unmarked constructions.
• PF constructions are best analyzed as topicalization rather than passivization.
• Subject and topic are involved in different grammatical phenomena.

Note: Lamaholot doesn’t have either morphological or analytic passive (cf. Donohue 2005):
  ➢ How do they translate Indonesian *di*-passives?
    (41) Saya di-pukul. (Bahasa Indonesia)
        1SG PASS-hit
        ‘I was hit.’
    (42) Saya di-tipu. (Bahasa Indonesia)
        1SG PASS-cheat
        ‘I was cheated.’
  ➢ Plural agent constructions
    (43) ra bəŋo go.
        3PL hit 1SG
        ‘They hit me.’ or ‘I was hit.’
    (44) ra broka go.
        3PL cheat 1SG
        ‘They cheat me.’ or ‘I was cheated.’

References


