

Long-Distance Dependencies in Tagalog: The Case for Raising

We propose a new analysis of apparent A-bar dependencies in Tagalog, and discuss its relevance for the typology of extraction strategies allowed by Universal Grammar.

One striking and well-known feature of Tagalog and many other Western Austronesian languages is that in questions and relative clauses only the subject (also known as focus, topic or nominative) may relativize. Also, verbs in a long-distance chain must appear in a particular voice. Most current analyses treat these "subject-only" chains as extraction with extra constraints (e.g. Nakamura 2000, Rackowski & Richards 2005).

However, an extraction analysis of subject-only chains has undesirable consequences for the typology of extraction. Like Malagasy (e.g. Paul & Potsdam, in press) and Indonesian (e.g. Cole et al. 2005), Tagalog is actually a *wh*-in-situ language: non-subject *wh*-phrases, i.e. non-nominative arguments (1) and adjuncts, remain in place (Dery 2005), whereas subject *wh*-phrases "cleft", occupying the predicate position of a pseudocleft (2) (Paul 2001, Aldridge 2002, Rackowski & Richards 2005). Yet the body of this cleft -- a headless relative clause -- is considered to require null operator movement to SpecCP, with additional constraints to guarantee the subject-only property (e.g. Aldridge 2002, Rackowski & Richards 2005). This raises the question of whether we should really expect to find a language that allows syntactic *wh*-movement, and yet overt *wh*-expressions in that language *never* move -- Should Universal Grammar allow this kind of grammar? We believe not: if a language has A-bar extraction as an option, it should also be available as a strategy for *wh*-question formation.

Treating subject-only chains as extraction raises other issues when the typological picture is considered: (i) voice should be irrelevant for A-bar dependencies, yet the two crucially interact in Western Austronesian; (ii) subjects are often dispreferred as extractees across languages; and (iii) in Tagalog subject-only chains are structurally identical to the local dependency of raising (Nakamura 1999, Sells 2000, Davies 2000).

To deal with these puzzles, we propose an alternative account of Tagalog subject-only chains, specifically, that they have the form of raising: Subject-only chains (3) and raising chains (4) have all their crucial properties in common. First, only subjects may relativize and raise, hence the subject gap in their lowest clause. Second, in higher clauses, the predicates must appear in one particular voice form, typically patient or dative voice; in both constructions this form is the same for each verb. And third, both constructions use the same linking particle/complementizer, *na/-ng* glossed LNK.

What has been crucially overlooked, however, is that subject-only chains also have the *distribution* of classical raising chains - raising constructions and relative clauses. In English, for example, a reduced relative is only formed with local raising dependencies, as illustrated in (5).

Given that subject-only chains have both the form and distribution of raising, we propose that Tagalog subject-only chains are an instance of raising, and not extraction. Our account explains the otherwise odd uniformity between apparent extraction and raising, and solves the problems of extraction analyses: the restrictions on voice and the subject constraint are both inherent properties of raising. And the reason that *wh*-elements remain in-situ is not because Tagalog has an unusual mixture of *wh*-ex-situ and in-situ strategies, with some mysterious restriction precluding overt *wh*-elements from moving, but simply because *wh*-movement (A-bar-movement) is not available as an option in this language, and possibly in other Western Austronesian languages as well.

Tagalog in-situ wh-question

1. Kumain ng ano si Mark?
PF.eat.AV GEN what NOM Mark
'What did Mark eat?' (adapted from Dery 2006, ex. 12)

Tagalog subject wh-question: pseudocleft

2. Ano ang binili mo?
what NOM PF.buy.PV 2.SG.GEN
'What did you buy?'

Tagalog relative clause

3. babae [na sinabi ko kay Pedro
woman LNK PF.say.PV 1.SG.GEN DAT Pedro
[na ikakasal kay Jose]]
LNK marry.PV DAT Jose

Lit.: 'woman [said to me by Pedro [to be marrying Jose]]'
'woman [that I said to Pedro [that will marry Jose]]'

Tagalog subject-to-subject raising

4. Pinaniwalaan ni Maria ang babae
believe.RV GEN Maria NOM woman
[na sinabi ni Juan [na binigyan ng pera]].
LNK say.PV GEN Juan LNK PF.give.RV GEN money
'Maria believed the woman to have been said by Juan to have been given (the) money by him.'

English reduced relative clause

5. a. a man known to be liked by Maria
b. *a man known that Maria likes

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