Syntactic Roles in Balinese

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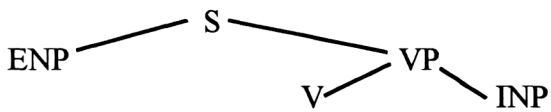
This paper is part of my master's thesis which looks at Balinese clauses in terms of their syntactic roles and flexible constituent orders. The central theme of my discussion is the syntactic roles of the NPs in transitive clause constructions in Balinese.

Syntactic roles in Balinese are better accounted for by the role relations of external noun phrase (ENP) and internal noun phrase (INP), than by traditional role relations of 'subject' and 'object'. The effectiveness of using the terms ENP and INP is that they can embrace simultanuously whether the ENP is an agent or a patient. The basic syntactic clause structure in Balinese can be formulated as in (1), in which the sentence node S dominates ENP and VP, and VP dominates V and INP.

(1)



This type of constituent hierarchy was first formulated by Schachter (1984) in his study of Toba Batak. The ENP and INP now become the center point for developing our discussion of constituency and variations of constituent order in various construction types.

The semantic roles of agent and patient can be expressed as either the ENP or the INP, depending on the nasalized vs. non-nasalized initial phoneme of the verb. In particular, a nasalized verb initial phoneme (+AT), as in (2), correlates with an agent as the ENP, whereas a non-nasalized verb initial pheneme (-AT), as in (3), correlates with a patient as the ENP.

(2) *Jaran-e* *[ngaper cicing]* *ituni.*
horse-DEF +AT-kick dog a.little.while.ago
'The horse kicked a dog a little while ago.'

(3) *Cicing-e* *[kaper jaran]* *ituni.*
dog-DEF -AT-kick horse a.little.while.ago
'The dog was kicked by a horse a little while ago.'

The INP forms a cohesive constituent with the preceding verb. This rules out the suspicion that the construction with a non-nasalized verb initial phoneme is structurally like a passive construction. For a similar situation in Toba Batak, Schachter states that it would be an unexpected phenomenon if the NP in question is indeed a passive agent. The agent *Si Torus* which immediately comes after the verb *diida* 'be seen' in his Toba Batak sentence construction of *(2b) Diida Si Torus Si Ria* 'Si Torus saw Si Ria' is undeletable, otherwise the reverse would occur if the INP is really a passive agent, given the cross-linguistic dispensibility of the agent in passive constructions. (p. 124) Similarly the agent INP *jaran* 'horse' in Balinese, as shown in (3), is undeletable, whereas the patient ENP *cicinge* 'the dog' is. Wouk (1984) in his study of Toba Batak, also rejects the active vs. passive voice distinction for the +AT vs. -AT distinction, respectively. He rejected it on account of the relative frequency of the two types of constructions that occur in the texts. He suggested that "whatever the function of passive is, I consider it unlikely that speakers of Toba Batak would need that function so much more often than speakers of English." (p. 197) In a Balinese text study of main event line (MEL) (Sidhakarya 1995), I found that 81% of MEL clauses are expressed with verbs in -AT constructions. Certainly, the Balinese -AT clauses cannot be passives just because the agents come after the verbs. Again, I would like to show that the Balinese syntactic roles and constituency are analyzable in terms of INP vs. ENP. To test this claim about constituency, I evaluate the asymmetry in constituency and properties between the ENP vs. INP via several kinds of tests such as *interruptibility*, *ellipsis and coordination*, *flexible ordering of the ENP,* and *deletion under discourse control.*

A. Interruptibility Test

The interruptibility test shows that nothing ever comes between the verb and the INP. For example: a quantifier *liu* 'a lot' may appear anywhere in the clause except between the verb and the INP, and still maintain the meaning of the clause *you picked up a lot of coconuts,* as shown in (4) and (5).

(4a) *Liu cai* *[ng-alap nyuh].*
a.lot 2SG +AT-pick.up coconut

(4b) *Cai liu [ngalap nyuh].*
(4c) **Cai [ngalap liu nyuh].*
(4d) *Cai [ngalap nyuh liu].*

(5a) *Liu nyuh-e [0-alap cai].*
(5b) *Nyuhe liu [alap cai].*
(5c) **Nyuhe [alap liu cai].*
(5d) *Nyuhe [alap cai] liu.*

B. Ellipsis and Coordination Test

Further evidence for the cohesiveness of the INP with the preceding verb is coordination with the conjunction *tur* 'and', as in (6a-d). In the four cases the V+INP may be coordinated with another V+INP regardless of the verb form.

(6a) *Padi-n-e* *[0-kehkeh siap]* *tur* *[0-jekjek jaran].*
rice-LK-DEF -AT-scratch chicken and -AT-stamp.on horse
'The rice was scratched by a chicken and stamped on by a horse.'

(6b) *I* *Ketut* *[naar jaja]* *tur* *[ng-inem yeh].*
PM/M Ketut +AT-eat cake and +AT-drink water
'I Ketut ate a cake and drank some water.'

(6c) *Sampi-n-e* *[0-dandan cang]* *tur* *[ng-enjekin*
cow-LK-DEF -AT-lead 1SG and +AT-stamp.on
batis *cang-e].*
foot 1SG-DEF
'I led the cow and [it] stamped on my foot.'

(6d) *I Suparta [maca buku] tur [0-dingehang cang] melah-melah.*
PM/M Suparta +AT-read book and -AT-listen.to 1SG good-DUP
'I Suparta read a book and I listened to [him] attentively.'

Padine in (6a), *I Ketut* in (6b), *sampine* in (6c), and *I Suparta* in (6d) are ENPs whose respective coordinated VPs may be any combination of the two verb types.

The grammaticality of (6a-d) is good evidence for the VP constituent postulated in (1) and for the claim that both the +AT verb and the -AT verb, together with the INP which follows each, form a VP constituent of the same type. Changing the coordinated verb phrases (6a-d) into coordinated clauses results in ungrammaticalities/oddities of the expressions, as shown in (7a-d).

(7a) **Padi-n-e [kehkeh siap] tur jaran [nyekjek (padi-n-e)].*
(7b) *? I Ketut [naar jaja] tur yeh [inem(-a)].*
(7c) *? Sampi-n-e [dandan cang] tur batis cang-e [jekjek(-a)].*
(7d) *I Suparta [maca buku] tur cang [ningehang (ia)] melah-melah.*

The expression in (7a) is ungrammatical because the transitive verb in the second clause requires an overt patient. The patient *padine* 'the rice' in the second clause, which is an INP, is the same as the ENP patient of the first clause.

The expresssions in (7b) and (7c) might be acceptable if the pronominal ***-a*** INP were overtly mentioned. However, this rules out the possibility that an elliptical INP in the second coordinated clause may corefer to the ENP of the first clause. The only possible clause coordination which has some resemblance with verb phrase coordination is the expression in (7d). The third person pronominal ***-a*** INP in the second coordinated clause corefers to the ENP in the first clause, and it could be dropped. The difference between the expressions in (6d) and (7d) is that the semantic roles of the ENP agents in the first and second clauses of (7d) are being contrasted, whereas in (6d) no such contrast is implied since the ENP in the second clause is elliptical and the