Sinama Passive Constructions

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0. Introduction

This paper describes two kinds of passive constructions in Sinama Manuk Mangkaw (henceforth Sama MNK). Sama MNK is one of the dialects belonging to the Southern Sinama language. It is spoken in Manuk Mangkaw island, in the Southern part of the Philippines and is said to be a Philippine type language.[1]

There has been a long history of discussion about sentences with non-agentive subjects in Philippine languages. They are sometimes called as *goal-topic* sentences or simply passive sentences. To my understanding, the prevailing opinion is that Philippine type languages have no subjects but topics. The issue is important for typological linguistics because it involves two inter-related controversies, (i) the typology of Philippine languages, i.e. whether Philippine languages are ergative languages or accusative languages and (ii) the status of the subject in these languages.

In the case of Sinama MNK, there are two kinds of constructions that appear to be passive. One seems to be similar to what Philippinists call goal-topic constructions. The second construction, to my knowledge, has not yet been the subject of discussion by any article. The construction contains a verb which is actor-topic in form but surprisingly carries a passive sense. The construction,

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[1] The Southern Sinama language is widely spoken not only in the Sulu Archipelago, in the Philippines, but also in the east coast of Borneo island, including Sabah, Malaysia and East Kalimantan, Indonesia. King and King (1984) report that some Sinama languages are spoken in the east coast of Sabah and the present author has verified the existence of Southern Sinama there during a short visit. While there is little information on the East Kalimantan, data collected during my short trip is good enough to identify that the language in Derawan island is Southern Sinama. Furthermore, most of the residents in Derawan island are descendants of the settlers from Simunul island in the Philippines. Simunul is one of the main islands where Southern Sinama is spoken. The immigration seems to have started about 100 years ago.

however, also contains a prefix-like particle *leq* attached to the verb.[2]

1. Subject in Sama MNK

As I mentioned earlier, opinions vary whether Philippine languages have subjects or not. Those who claim that there is no subject in Philippine languages like to label the syntactic prominent NP in the sentence as *topic* (Schachter 1976, 1977). Thus there are actor-topic sentences but no active sentences in Philippine languages. Another school considers actor-topic sentences as active and non-actor topic sentences as passive.

This paper favors the latter school. From here on, the term *subject* is employed in lieu of Schachter's topic, because topic to me is another syntactic process of putting an NP in a prominent position, i.e. in the beginning of the sentence. However, I have stayed with the term *focus* as used by Schachter and Otanes (1972:69) to refer to the feature of a verbal predicate that determines the semantic relationship between a predicate verb and its subject. I understand that other linguists use the term *voice* and *case* to refer to this relationship.

Opinions vary in the number of passives in Philippine languages. For example, Bloomfield (1917:154) and Blake (1925) establish three kinds of passives compared to six by Constantino (1965) in Tagalog.

I have classified Sinama subjects into five categories, depending on the semantic roles they perform in the sentence, i.e. *actor, goal, locative, benefactive,* and *instrument*.[3] It is the verbal affixes which principally determines what NP is to be hailed and what semantic role this NP is to play. The sentence with an actor subject is an active sentence and one with other subject, passive. Thus Sinama has four kinds of passives.

There are two moods in Sinama: *indicative* and *imperative*. There are cases when the same focus affix forms are employed to express different semantic roles in the indicative mood. For instance, locative and benefactive seem to share

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[2] The particle is homophonous with the agentive marker in the language, which is similar to *ng* in Tagalog.

[3] The terms used are those employed generally by Philippinists, who use the terms 'actor' and 'goal' in lieu of 'agent' and 'patient'. The category actor and goal take in more than agents and patients. For the purposes of the present discussion, 'actor' and 'agent', and 'goal' and 'patient' may be regarded as synonymous.

the same form {-*in*- -*an*}. Their focus forms in the imperatives, however, are different from each other. Sama MNK has two kinds of suffixes for the imperative mood: -*un* for goal subject and -*in* for benefactive. Compare sentence 3 with 6. The followings are the examples of different kinds of subjects (subject boldfaced).

1.1 Actor subject

1. *Ngadjal si Shoko*.
   N-qadjal si Shoko[4]
   AF-cook ptl Shoko
   Shoko is cooking.

1.2. Goal subject

2. *Niqadjal daqing kohapoq leq si Shoko*.
   ni-qadjal daqing kohapoq leq si Shoko
   GF-cook fish grouper   by ptl Shoko
   Shoko cooks **the grouper fish**.

3. *Pattaqun*.
   GF-pattaq-un [imp.]
   take picture

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[4] The symbol *N*- represents a prefixed nasal that assimilates in various ways with the initial phoneme of the stem. Preceding /p, b, t, s, k, (g)/, N- assimilates to the point of articulation of the stem initial consonant and that consonant is deleted. In other environments it has the following realizations:

ng-: occurs preceding /q/, but /q/ drops

nga-: occurs preceding /h, l, m, n/

ngan-: occurs preceding /d, j/ and

ngang-: occurs preceding /g/.

Examples:

qaq	>	ngaq	'to get/take' AF
hinang	>	ngahinang	'to work/make' AF
deen	>	pangandeenan	'to hand in' GF
gamot	>	nganggamot	'to grow' AF

Take pictures.

1.3. Locative subject

4. *Anakqanak iya bay binillihan leq na durian.*

anak-anak iya bay billi-in- -an leq na durian.

child   the perf LF-buy   by him durian

The child is the one from whom he bought durian.

1.4. Benefactive subject

5. *Si Shoko iya binallahan buwas leq si Aliq.*

si Shoko iya balla-in -an buwas leq si Aliq

ptl Shoko the BF-cook   rice   by Ali

Shoko is the one for whom Ali cooks rice.

6. *Pattaqin aku.*

pattaq-in aku

BF-take picture I [imp]

Take a picture of **mine**.

1.5. Instrumental subject

7. *Bay pangaqan sigala ili boheq.*

bay paN-qaq-an sigala ili boheq

perf IF-get   they that water

They get water by **that**.

2. {leq+N-} Construction

In Sama MNK, there are cases when the particle *leq* occurs with an actor focus verb. This particle is preposed to the verb and appears similar to a prefix and gives the sentence a perfective as well as 'passive-like' sense.

8. *Leq ngadjal leq ku manuk.*

leq N-qadjal leq ku manuk

ptl AF-cook by I chicken

The chicken has been cooked by me.

Compare this with 9, which is an ordinary actor subject sentence whose prefix is symbolized by {N-}.

9. *Ngadjal aku manuk.*
   I cooked chicken.

Although the verb, *ngadjal* (< *N-qadjal*), is in actor focus in 8, the subject in the sentence is not the actor. The most appropriate interpretation to 8 in English would be "the chicken has been cooked by me", but not "I cooked the chicken". This passive interpretation may have been brought about by the prefix-like particle *leq*. This may lead one a hypothesis the verbal affix is made up of {*leq+N-*}.

This hypothesis seems to be supported by the following example 10 and 11, showing a modification relation between a noun and a verb. Thus, when a verb modifies a noun, {leq+N-} functions like the past participles in English. For comparison, I will put Tagalog examples here.

10a. *daing leqmila*
    fish leq-N-bila
    fish leq-AF-split
  b. isdang dinaing or dinaing na isadaq (TAG)
    split fish

11a. *Bilahi aku ma mampallam leqngalunok.*
    like I   ptl mango   leq-N-lunok
    like I   ptl mango   ripe
  b. Gusto ko ng pinalambot na mangga. (TAG)
    I like ripe mango.

3. Aspect and Mood
3.1. Aspect in Philippine languages

Before introducing the aspect system in Sinama, let us first look into the aspect systems in some Philippine languages. Philippine linguists agree on that Philippine languages have *aspect* rather than *tense* and this is indicated by verbal affixes.

Through verbal affixes, one can distinguish whether an event has begun or not, and if it has begun, whether the event is continuing or has been completed. Thus Tagalog has four kinds of distinction.

Infinitive:	maglutoq *cook*
Perfective	naglutoq *cooked, had cooked*
Imperfective:	naglulutoq *is/was cooking*
Contemplated:	maglulutoq *will cook/is about to cook/was about to cook*

Some languages do not have separate forms for the contemplated and the infinitive forms like Tausug.

Perfective:	nagqadjal *cooked/has cooked*
Imperfective:	nagqaqadjal *is/was cooking*
Contemplated:	magqadjal *cook/will cook/was about to cook*

3.2. Aspect in Sinama

Unlike most Philippine languages, aspect in Sinama is not indicated by verbal affixes. Aspect is differentiated by different particles such as *bay* for the perfective, *lay/way* (dialectal difference) for the inchoative, and *song* for the contemplated. These particle are optional because context often decides the aspectual meaning. Without such particles, sentence 12 may be ambiguous as to whether the event has started or not if there is little context.

12. *Pinong siya leq si Abdul.*
   pong-in- siya ptl ptl Abdul
   GF-break chair by Abdul
   Abdul breaks/broke the chair.

13a. *Bay pinong siya leq si Abdul.*
   perf GF-break chair by Abdul
   Abdul broke the chair.
   b. *Song pinong siya leq si Abdul.*
   fut GF-break chair by Abdul
   Abdul will break the chair.

The following examples from Sinama Sitangkay illustrate the difference between *bay* and *way*. In both cases, both actor and goal are deleted, because they are understood from the context. *Free translations are given to the following examples.*

14. *Bay na amilli.*
    perf ptl AF-buy
    He has already bought.

15. *Way na amilli.*
    inch ptl AF-buy
    He is on the way of buying but has not yet bought anything.

These particles cannot be considered as verbal prefixes, because pronouns can be inserted between the said particles and the verbs. If they are not verbal affixes, they must be auxiliary verbs considering that they can only be found in verbal sentences. Compare 16a and 16b.

16a. *Bay aku milli tinapey.*
    perf I AF-buy bread
    I bought bread.
  b. **Bay milli aku tinapey.*

The same thing cannot be said of *leq*, which appears to be, all intents and purposes, a real prefix. *Leq* attaches itself to the verbal stem and cannot occur discontinuously with the verbal stem. Consider the following examples. The aspect marking auxiliary verb *bay* occurs with the {leq+N-} construction as in 17a. The data 17b indicates that {leq+N-} is a combined verbal form. Thus, the particle *leq* is to be interpreted as a prefix, which attaches to the {N-} stem in the last place.

17a. *Bay leqmong siya leq si Abdul.*
    bay leq-N-pong siya leq si Abdul
  b. **Siya leq bay mong leq si Abdul.*

The chair was broken by Abdul.

There are sentences, however, which appear to contradict the foregoing observation. In 18, *leq* seems to be separated from the verb by clitic pronoun *ku*. However the *leq* here is not the verbal prefix but the agentive marker in passive sentences.

18. *Leq ku ngadjal manuk.*
  ptl ku N-qadjal manuk
  ptl I   AF-cook chicken
  The chicken has been cooked by me.

Sentence 18 is actually derived from sentence 19 by preposing the agentive complement *leq ku* before the verb. In such cases, the verbal prefix *leq* is obligatory dropped to yield sentence 18 as indicated 19b.

19a. *Leqngadjal leq ku manuk.*
  b.*Leq ku leqngadjal manuk.*
  The chicken has been cooked by me.

The same thing happens in all preposed agentive complement such as 20a. An agent complement with a proper noun can occur in the same position.[5]

20a. *Leq si Shoko ngadjal manuk.*
  by ptl Shoko AF-cook chicken
  The chicken has been cooked by Shoko.
  b. *Leq si Shoko leqngadjal manuk.*

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[5] Remember that in the ordinary goal subject sentence, it is not accepted .

a. *Leq si Abdul sinipaq kambing.*

b. Bay *sinipaq leq si Abdul kambing.*

  bay sipaq-in- leq si Abdul kambing
  perf GF-kick by Abdul kambing
  The goat was kicked by Abdul.

The general rule goes something like this. An actor complement marked by the actor complement marker *leq*, once preposed to the verb, will trigger the deletion of the passive prefix *leq*. It is evident therefore that *leq* can only be a verbal prefix.

3.3. Mood in Sinama

The {leq+N-}construction may bear some relation to mood. It is only used to express an epistemic mood and cannot describe any unreal event. This would explain why 21b cannot be negated by the particle *maha*. Sentence 21a is an ordinary goal subject construction and 21b is the {leq+N-} construction.

21a. *Maha bay pinong siya leq si Abdul.*

    maha bay pong -in- siya leq si Abdul

    not   perf GF-break chair by Abdul

    The chair was not broken by Abdul.

  b. **Maha leqmong siya leq si Abdul.*

In the same way, only adverbs with a past sense can occur in {leq+N-} construction (22a and b).

22a. *Leqmong siya leq si Abdul diilaw.*

    leq-N-pong siya leq si Abdul diilaw

    leq-AF-break chair by Abdul yesterday

    The chair was broken by Abdul yesterday.

  b.**Leqmong siya leq si Abdul pahalu.*

    leq-AF-break chair by Abdul tomorrow

In view of the foregoing discussion, I have decided to give this construction the label "passive-perfective".[6]

4. Concluding Remarks

In Philippine languages, focus affixes decide whether or not a sentence is

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[6] It is worth quoting Shibatani's note that in an number of languages, the perfective aspect calls for the passive form (1988:112).

active or passive. There are at least two unique features which differentiate Sinama from the rest of the Philippine languages. One is the passive perfective {leq+N-} construction which occurs with an active focus affix but possesses a passive-like meaning. The other feature is the dependence on auxiliary verbs to indicate aspect instead of verbal affixes. As far as aspect is concerned, the passive-perfective construction naturally conveys a perfective meaning. This is why I have labeled this construction as passive-perfective construction.

Acknowledgment

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