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PRIMARY AND SECONDARY OBJECTS IN UPPER NECAXA TONONAC

DAVID BECK
UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA



GRAMMATICAL RELATIONS IN UNT

- Upper Necaxa Totonac (UNT) allows clauses with up to five syntactic objects
 - at the same time, it lacks case or fixed word order
- agreement and other syntactic tests consistently fail to distinguish between grammatical object-relations
- Beck (2006) notes that object-suppression does distinguish objects (and then proceeds to ignore it)
- in this talk, I'll show that
 - the object targeted for suppression is a primary object
 - other objects, including applied objects, are secondary objects

UPPER NECAXA TOTONAC

- member of Totonacan language family
- spoken in 4 villages by ~3,000 people
- polysynthetic with flexible word order
- no nominal case or adpositions
- complex system of valency-increments



MULTI-VALENT CLAUSES

- this typological configuration poses a problem for mapping of semantic roles to syntactic arguments
- mapping supposedly assigns unique grammatical relations to **arguments** in sentences like (1):

(1) tsámá iŝʔawáčḡ na-kin-laʔ-makapín-ni-yḡ puská:t
tsámá iŝ-ʔawáčḡ na-kin-laʔ-makapín-ni-yḡ puská:t
that 3PO-boy FUT-1OBJ-ALTV-send:2SUB-BEN-IMPF:2SG.SUB woman
'On behalf of her **son** you will send **me** to the **woman**.'

- we can easily identify a subject via differential agreement
- the first-person Patient in (1) controls object-agreement
- **so is the Patient the direct/primary object?**

NUMBER AGREEMENT

- unfortunately, any object in a multi-valent clause can control number agreement

(2) tsamá čǐškú ka:stą:maški:ɬ lakstín laʔatín čičǐ
tsamá čǐškú ka:-stą:maški:-ɬ lakstín laʔa-tin čičǐ
that boy PL.OBJ-sell-PFV children CLF-one dog
‘The man sold the children one puppy.’

(3) tsamá čǐškú ka:stą:maški:ɬ tsuṃaxá:t tantú šas'áta čičǐ
tsamá čǐškú ka:-stą:maški:-ɬ tsuṃaxá:t tan-tu šas'áta čičǐ
that boy PL.OBJ-sell-PFV girl CLF-two DTV-dog dog
‘The man sold the girl two puppies.’

- in (2) the plural Recipient controls number agreement
- in (3) the plural Theme controls agreement

PERSON AGREEMENT

- verbs can also show agreement with up to two objects

(4) wan tsuṃaxá:t, kinta:tá kista:maškí:n

wan	tsuṃaxá:t	kin-ta:tá	kin-sta:maškí:-n
say	girl	1PO-father	1OBJ-sell-2OBJ

‘The girls says, “My father sold **me** to **you**.” ’ (in exchange for a dowry)

(5) wan ?awáčə, minta:tá kista:maškí:n

wan	?awáčə	min-ta:tá	kin-sta:maškí:-n
say	boy	2PO-father	1OBJ-sell-2OBJ

‘The boy says, “Your father sold **you** to **me**.” ’ (in exchange for a dowry)

- object-agreement doesn’t reflect changes in semantic role
- SAP arguments control agreement, irrespective of SemRole
- agreement does not distinguish between objects

RECIPROCALIZATION

- any object can be target of reciprocalization

(6) nala:šapaniyá:uM kilakstinkán

na-la:-šapá-ni-ya:-M

FUT-RCP-massage-BEN-IMPV-1PL.SUB

kin-lakstín-kaṅ

1PO-children-PL.PO

‘We will massage our children for **each other**.’

‘We will massage **each other** for our children.’

- either interpretation of the sentence is possible in context
- all “classic” tests fail to distinguish between objects
- MacKay & Trechsel (2008) report similar facts in Misantla
- Misantla appears to be a “symmetrical object language” à la Bresnan & Moshi (1990)
- UNT might also be a symmetrical object language ...

OBJECT-SUPPRESSIVE

- BUT the object-suppressive *does* differentiate objects
- *-nVn* suffix reduces the valency of bi- and multi-valent bases

(7) ɬú:wə̌ ɪkpúšlɪ̌ kɪnkapéx

ɬú:wə̌ ɪk-puš-lɪ̌ kɪn-kapéx
much 1PO-pick-PFV 1PO-coffee

‘I picked a lot of my coffee.’

(8) ɪki:pušnuɬtsá̌, ɪkləʔspuɬlɪ̌tsá̌ kɪntaskuxút

ɪk-ki:-puš-nun-ɬ=tsá̌ ɪk-ləʔspút-lɪ̌=tsá̌ kɪn-taskuxút
1SG.SUB-RT-pick-**OBJ.SUPP**=now 1SG.SUB-finish-PFV=now 1PO-work

‘I went picking, I’m finished my work now.’

(9) *ɪki:pušnuɬtsá̌ kɪnkapéx

‘I went to pick my coffee.’

- *-nVn* suppresses the expression of the monotransitive object

OBJECT-SUPPRESSIVE

- in underived ditransitive verbs, *-nVn* targets the non-Theme

(10) *naḵka:maški:nín kinkawa:yúxnu* (**kistánku*)

na-ḵk-ka:-maški:-nin *kin-kawa:yúx-nu* (**kin-stánku*)
FUT-1PL.SUB-PL.OBJ-sell-OBJ.SUPP 1PO-horse-PL (*1PO-younger.sibling)

‘I’m going to give **my horses** away (*to my younger sibling).’”

- in (10) the object-suppressive blocks expression of the Recipient, not Theme
- (11) shows that this is not a pragmatic effect

(11) *naḵkmaški:nín kistánku*

na-ḵk-∅-maški:-nin *kin-stánku*
FUT-1PL.SUB-SG.OBJ-sell-OBJ.SUPP 1PO-younger.sibling

‘I’m going to give away my younger **sister** (in marriage).’

*‘I’m going to make gifts/a gift to my younger sibling.’

- *-nVn* treats Recipients of ‘give’ verbs like monotransitive objects
- **non-Theme of the ditransitive is a primary object (Dryer 1986)**

PRIMARY OBJECTS

- further testing reveals that *-nVn* consistently distinguishes primary from secondary objects
- primary objects are
 - single objects of monotransitives
 - non-Themes of underived ditransitives
 - Causees in causative constructions
 - basic objects in applicative constructions
- secondary objects are
 - Themes of underived ditransitives
 - basic objects in Causative constructions
 - applied objects

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- IN TEPEHUA, WATTERS (1989) FINDS WITH -NVN:
 - 3 APPLICATIVES LOSE **BASIC OBJECTS**
 - DATIVE -NI LOSES ITS **APPLIED OBJECT**
 - THERE ARE NO UNDERIVED DITRANSITIVES

APPLIED SECONDARY OBJECTS

- applied objects in UNT are always secondary objects

(12) kit ɟkʔa:ɬa:nin̩ mintapíšnú

kit ɟk-ʔa:ɬá:n-ni-n min-tapíšnú
I 1PL.SUB-steal-BEN-2OBJ 2PO-necklace

‘I stole your necklace from you.’

(13) kit ɟkʔa:ɬa:nanin̩ wɨš

kit ɟk-ʔa:ɬá:n-nan-ni-n wɨš
I 1PL.SUB-steal-OBJ.SUPP-BEN-2OBJ you

‘I stole from you.’

*‘I stole you.’ (e.g., a boy telling a girl he’s eloped with her)

- the basic object (the Theme) is suppressed
- the applied object (the Affected) controls agreement

APPLIED SECONDARY OBJECTS

- applicatives can be added to monovalent bases

(14) xa: pinkūtún̄a kinta:l̄a?taa?č̄o?ó:ȳa kinta:tá?

xa: pin-kūtún-a kin-ta:-la?-taa?č̄o?ó:-ya kin-ta:tá
NEG go:2SUB-DSD-IMPF:2SG.SUB 1OBJ-CMT-ALTV-walk-IMPF:2SG.SUB 1OBJ-father

‘Don’t you want to visit my father with me?’

- second verb is *taa?č̄o?ó:* ‘walk’ plus two **applicatives**
- Co-Actor (as above) or Goal can control agreement
- both objects are secondary objects
 - neither is suppressed by *-nVn*
 - adding *-nVn* gives an atelic ‘go around visiting’ sense

NON-DIRECT APPLICATIVES (BECK 2009)

- *direct applicatives* add a direct object to a base

Hakka Lai (Peterson 2006:24)

- (15) tsewmaŋ door=?a? ?a-ka-ka-piak
Tsewmaŋ market=LOC 3SG.SUB-1SG.OBJ-go-BEN
'Tsewmaŋ went to the market for me.'

- direct objects in Hakka Lai control agreement

- *non-direct applicatives* add an indirect or oblique object to a base

Temne (Kanu 2012:148)

- (16) ɔ̀-làngbà ɔ̀ gbép-ánè áŋ-kòmp k-è-pàr
NC1:DEF-man NC1.SUB:DEF climb-INST NC3:DEF-palm.tree NC3-INDEF-rope
'The man climbed the palm tree using a climbing rope.'

- direct objects in Temne follow the verb

- (terminology needs to be tweaked for primary object languages)

CONCLUSIONS

- UNT, unlike Misantla, distinguishes two types of object
- primary objects
 - identified only by their potential for suppression by $-nVn$
- secondary objects
 - continue to be potential targets of agreement/reciprocal
 - include all applied objects
- multiple applicatives add multiple secondary objects
- this means the mapping problem isn't solved
- secondary objects are assigned a grammatical relation that does not uniquely identify their semantic role in the event
- this needs to be accommodated in theories of syntax

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