SAME BUT DIFFERENT: BALINESE VS. MALAGASY PIVOTS

• **Synopsis:** We present a (non-canonical) passive analysis of promotion to pivot in Balinese (BAL) and Malagasy (MAL) and discuss syntactic micro-variation between the two languages wrt. Condition C connectivity based on different case licensing options and the resulting availability of late merge.

• **Austronesian pivots:** Austronesian languages promote one (any) argument to a syntactically and pragmatically prominent *pivot* status. The BAL and MAL pivot obtains a dedicated surface position (clause-initial in BAL, clause-final in MAL), and is cross-referenced by a verbal *voice*-marker that (roughly) tracks the θ-role of the pivot; here we are contrasting **A**(gent)**V**(oice) to **O**(bject)**V**(voice)/ **P**(atient)**V**(oice). A debate concerns whether pivots are obligatory V2-like topics or derived surface subjects. We focus on pivots in BAL (Indonesian-type) and MAL (Philippine-type), claiming that they align at the middle of the two poles: while they move to a high position with strong discourse effects, such as a definiteness requirement, they also acquire subject properties, such as the ability to be controlled.

• **From topic to subject:** We propose that Austronesian languages of the Malayo-Polynesian branch are undergoing a topic-to-subject grammaticalization (cf. Patrianto & Chen 2023), with intermediate stages in-between, represented by BAL and MAL: their pivots are neither pure topics (anymore), as in Philippine-type languages (Tagalog), nor pure surface subjects (yet), as in Indonesian-type languages (Acehnese). This is mostly evident in PV/OV clauses, where an internal argument (IA) becomes the subject-like pivot (1); despite resembling a passive, the clause remains syntactically active and transitive.

(1) a. ***Bawi-ne*** *punika tumbas tiang*
pig-DEF that OV.buy 1SG
'The pig was bought by me.' *BAL* (Arka 2003: 5)

b. *Notapahin'i Sahondra tamin'ny antsy* ***ity hazo ity***
PST.PV.cut.GEN.Sahondra PST.P.GEN.DET knife **this tree this**
'This tree was cut with a knife by Sahondra.' *MAL* (Paul 2000: 9)

• **OV/PV as non-canonical passive:** We suggest that OV/PV in BAL and MAL instantiates a non-canonical passive (Legate 2021): it renders the theme the surface subject, but does not demote the agent to an oblique and is not morphologically more marked than AV; in fact, OV in BAL is morphologically null and co-exists with a canonical marked passive (Arka 2003). Although non-canonical, the passive-like nature of OV/PV stems from three facts: i) only the pivot can be controlled; ii) the non-pivot agent can be omitted, otherwise it must be strictly adjacent to the verb; iii) the pivot undergoes A-movement.

1) Control: Only pivots can be the target of obligatory control, a major subject diagnostic (Dixon 1994).

(2) a. *Ia majanji* [**PRO** *periksa dokter*]
3SG AV.promised [**PRO**$_{piv}$ **OV**.examine doctor$_{agent}$]
'She promised to be examined by a doctor.' *BAL* (own elicitation)

b. *nanery ny zaza* [**PRO** *h-ozahan' ny dokotera*] *aho*
force.AV the child [**PRO**$_{piv}$ IRR-examine.**PV** the doctor$_{agent}$] 1SG.DFLT
'I forced the child to be examined by the doctor.' *MAL* (Potsdam 2009: 761)

2) Agent status: The non-pivot agent can be dropped in OV/PV, yielding an implicit passive reading.

(3) *Jemak* ***nasi-ne***
take.OV **rice-DEF**
'The rice was taken.'
BAL (elicited)

(4) *Notapahina tamin'ny antsy* ***ity hazo ity***
PST.PV.cut PST.P.GEN.DET knife **this tree this**
'This tree was cut with the knife.'
MAL (Paul & Travis 2006: 323)

If overtly expressed, the non-pivot agent must be strictly adjacent to the verb, a form of last-resort licensing in the absence of structural case for the external argument (Levin 2015; Erlewine et al 2019).

(5) a. *siap-e* [***uber*** *cicing*] *ke jalan-e*
chicken-DEF [**OV.chase** dog] into street-DEF
'The chicken was chased into the street by a dog.'

b. **siap-e* [***uber*** *ke jalan-e cicing*] *BAL* (Wechsler & Arka 1998: 405)

(6) a. [***Nohanin'*** *ny gidro*] *haingana ny voankazo omaly*
[**PST.PV.eat** DET lemur] quickly DET fruit yesterday
'The fruit was eaten quickly by the lemur yesterday.'

b. *[***Nohanin(a)*** *haingana ny gidro*] *ny voankazo omaly* *MAL* (Pearson 2005: 392)

3) WCO: Promotion to pivot is A-movement: it feeds variable binding, thereby obviates WCO effects.

(7) a. ***Sabilang**$_i$ **anak** **cenik** alih* *bapa-ne*$_{i/j}$
Every **person small** search.OV father-POSS
'Every$_i$ child is searched by his$_i$ father' *BAL* (own elicitation)

b. *Norahan'ny* *vadiny*$_{i/j}$ ***ny*** ***vehivavy rehetra***$_i$
PST.PV.kiss'DET spouse.her **DET woman all**
'Every woman$_i$ is kissed by her$_i$ spouse.' *MAL* (Travis 1998: 442)

• **Condition C:** Despite an otherwise striking similarity, BAL and MAL differ wrt. Condition C: promotion to pivot obligatorily reconstructs in BAL OV, but can fix an underlying violation in MAL PV.

(8) a. ****Bapan i Wayan-e***$_i$ *alih* *ia*$_i$
father **Wayan-POSS** OV.search 3SG
Int.: 'Wayan$_i$'s father is searched for by him$_i$.' *BAL* (own elicitation)

b. *Notambazany*$_i$ *ariary folo* ***ny*** ***zana-dRakoto***$_i$
PST.PV.hire.GEN.3SG ariary ten **DET child-GEN.Rakoto**
'Rakoto$_i$'s child was hired by him$_i$ for 10 ariary.' *MAL* (Paul 2002: 112)

We propose that this micro-variation reflects the clause's case-assignment system: the pivot position invariably assigns unmarked NOM(inative); but while Voice° in BAL OV still retains structural ACC(usative) for the theme, MAL PV Voice° has lost it. Thus, while the MAL PV pivot is only licensed at its (high) landing site, the BAL OV pivot is already licensed downstairs and then trivially absorbs the high NOM.

• **Late Merge:** We assume that, while WCO tracks the A/A'-distinction, Condition C tracks the locus and timing of case (Bhatt & Keine 2019). As per Takahashi & Hulsey (2009), a determiner can be base-generated and move without its NP restrictor, which can be late-merged with D at the landing site, as long as case can still be assigned there. BAL OV assigns ACC to the theme pivot within VoiceP already, and so an entire copy containing the offending R-expression is present at the base position, feeding Condition C even after pivot movement. MAL pivots only receive (NOM) case at the final pivot site, thereby allowing the NP restrictor to undergo late merge high, bleeding Condition C. We suggest that the availability of ACC in BAL but not MAL represents slightly different stages of the grammaticalization process.

• **Balinese OV ACC:** That BAL OV can still assign ACC to the theme in-situ is supported by **i) multiple extraction:** we follow Erlewine et al 2017 in that the pivot site hosts a composite A/A'-probe: the A-part triggers movement and assigns case, while the A'-part yields the discourse (topic) effects and restricts A'-extraction to the pivot. The composite probe may split to attract two different DPs (Scott 2021); if the A-part operates before the A'-part (Abels 2007), case is reserved only for the first moving DP, the second undergoing pure A'-movement. When BAL wh-extracts the pivot under OV (9), it allows simultaneous fronting of the non-wh/non-pivot agent, which must otherwise occur verb-adjacently. Thus, the agent can alternatively employ high NOM to be licensed, with the wh-extracted theme already case-assigned downstairs. We will show that all licit orders of multiple fronting are explained if only the lower landing site is reserved for case, and the theme, but not the agent, is always licensed at the base position.

(9) ***Apa*** *ci* *aih* *ditu* *ibi?*
what you OV.seek there yesterday?
'What did you look for there yesterday?' *BAL* (Erlewine et al 2017: 390)

Further support comes from **ii) focus fronting** of the pivot, where BAL allows stranding a resumptive at the launching site (10). If resumptive pronouns must be independently licensed themselves, BAL OV must be able to assign ACC. No such resumption of a focus-fronted pivot is allowed in MAL (Paul 2000).

(10) ***Anak*** ***luh*** ***ento*** *alih-ang* *yang i* *Nyoman* *ia*
person female that OV.search-APPL I PN Nyoman 3SG
'That girl, I sought her for Nyoman.' *BAL* (Arka 2003: 52)

Finally, we address why BAL OV cannot late-merge the NP restrictor directly at the case-assigning pivot site to bleed Condition C. We link the impossibility of late merge in BAL to an independently motivated DP-internal movement (of NP to SpecDP) to derive the suffixal nature of D: such movement must happen at the first-merge position of the DP, and so the NP restrictor must be present there; at any later stage, it would be countercyclic, violating any formulable version of the Extension Condition (cf. Safir 2019).