KAMBERA INTRANSITIVE ARGUMENT LINKING

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Abstract. This paper contains a descriptive analysis of the various ways in which the sole arguments of intransitive predicates are linked to (morpho)syntax in Kambera, a little-known Austronesian language spoken in Eastern Indonesia. The single argument of Kambera intransitives can be marked by five different pronominal clitic combinations, each of the constructions expressing a different contextual property. One of the constructions is the absolutive construction, in which an intransitive subject is either obligatorily or optionally treated like a transitive object ('fluid-S marking', Dixon 1979, 1994). An analysis of the possible origin, structure and contextual properties of Kambera fluid-S marking will be given and it will be proposed that in general the morphosyntactic expression of intransitive arguments is not lexically determined nor based on syntactic information coded in the lexical entry but rather depends on the context in which the verb is used. The Kambera facts will be related to the question of which information the lexical entry of an intransitive is universally supposed to contain, in particular, whether or not that information should be syntactically relevant.

1. Introduction

This paper presents a descriptive analysis of the various ways in which the sole arguments of intransitive predicates are expressed in the morpho-syntax of a little-known Austronesian language, Kambera.[1] The sole argument of an intransitive verb in this language can in principle be marked by five different pronominal clitics or clitic combinations, each of the constructions expressing a different semantic (aspect, mood or modality) property of the predicate.

To allow the arguments of intransitive verbs to be realized in the five different ways to be discussed, it will proposed that the lexical specification of intransitive verbs and their arguments need not contain information on

the hierarchical position (internal/external) of the argument nor make use of discrete thematic roles such as Agent or Theme (or whatever name the relevant thematic role would have), but should be maximally simple instead. In addition, it will be proposed that the notion of activity is a cancellable semantic property that is not part of the inherent lexical meaning of the verb. This implies that the basic Kambera predicate is stative and that the language does not have underived intransitive verbs that are inherently active.

The particular focus of the paper will be on the use of the absolutive construction and the fluid-S marking properties of Kambera: when does the intransitive subject pattern with the transitive object, and what does that imply? I will propose that the identical marking of S with O depends on the relative degree of control or active involvement that the single argument is considered to have over the situation expressed by the predicate. If the argument is presented as less actively involved than what the canonical meaning of the verb would suggest, it is (optionally) marked like a transitive object.

On the basis of the Kambera facts I will argue that the linking of intransitive arguments in this language is not based on syntactic information coded in the lexical entry; moreover, that it is not lexically determined at all but dependent on the context in which the verb is used. One of the conclusions will be that for an insightful analysis of phenomena like Kambera fluid-S marking, hypotheses such as the Unaccusative Hypothesis (Perlmutter 1978), according to which subjects in absolutive constructions are syntactically derived from underlying direct objects, cannot be fruitfully used.

The paper is organised as follows. Following this introduction, I discuss in section 2 some of the basic typological facts about Kambera and review the canonical ways in which the language marks verbal arguments in morphosyntax. Next, in section 3, I illustrate the grammatical relations S ('intransitive subject'), A ('transitive subject') and O ('transitive object') (Dixon 1994) that will be used in the discussion of Kambera intransitive linking with syntactic and morphological data. The conclusion of this section will be that in Kambera syntax the A and S relation pattern together in contrast to the O relation, whereas in word-formation processes, the pattern is mixed: sometimes S patterns with A while in other cases S patterns with O. Then, in section 4 the facts that are related to the linking of Kambera intransitive arguments are presented. I discuss the five morpho-syntactic ways of marking Kambera S, three of which are briefly discussed in section 4.1. The other two constructions are discussed in more detail in a separate section each (section 4.2 and 4.3).

The latter two of these sections, section 4.3, focuses on the question whether and how we can define the contexts in which S is marked identical to O. First I discuss the contexts in which the absolutive construction is used obligatorily, moving on to constructions that do so optionally. On

the basis of these facts the generalization – already mentioned above – emerges that the Kambera absolutive construction marks an S which has less control on the activity expressed by the verb than what the canonical meaning of the verb would suggest. In other words, that Kambera is a fluid-S language of the stative-active type (Merlan 1985, Holisky 1987). The implications of these observations for a theory of lexical representation of intransitives are considered in section 5.

2. Typology, verbal argument marking

Kambera is a head-marking language (Nichols 1986) in the sense that it has rich morpho-syntactic marking on the head of the clause, the verb: pronominal, aspectual and/or mood clitics together with the verb may constitute a complete sentence. Definite verbal arguments are marked for person, number and case (nominative (N), genitive (G), dative (D), accusative (A)) by phrasal pronominal clitics attached to the verbal complex. The paradigms of the pronominal clitics are given in (1), their basic functions will be illustrated below.

(1)	NOM	GEN	ACC	DAT
1s	*ku-*	*-nggu*	*-ka*	*-ngga*
2s	*(m)u-*	*-mu*	*-kau*	*-nggau*
3s	*na-*	*-na*	*-ya*	*-nya*
1p (inc)	*ta-*	*-nda*	*-ta*	*-nda*
1p (exc)	*ma-*	*-ma*	*-kama*	*-nggama*
2p	*(m)i-*	*-mi*	*-ka(m)i*	*-ngga(m)i*
3p	*da-*	*-da*	*-ha*	*-nja*

In addition to pronominal cliticization, arguments can be expressed by NPs which are then used for disambiguation or emphasis, discourse saliency or contrastivity. If they are definite and cross-referenced on the verb they are optional adjuncts to the (core) clause.

Optional NPs can consist of nouns or pronouns (personal, deictic) and do not show case marking. Though the basic word order is SVO – i.e. the subject NP precedes the verbal complex plus the pronominal clitics attached to it, while the object NP occurs postverbally – the NPs have relatively free word order (Klamer 1996b).

The unmarked way to express the subject of a simple transitive, declarative sentence is with a nominative proclitic. This is shown in (2),[2]

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[2] **List of abbreviations:** A=Accusative, ART=Article (*na* = sg., *da* = plural), CAUS = Causative prefix, CNJ=Conjunction, CTR=Marker of control sentence, D=Dative, DEI=Deictic element (space/time), DEM=Demonstrative, EMP=Emphasis marker, G=Genitive, IMPF=Imperfective aspect marker, LOC=Locative preposition, MOD=Mood marker, N=Nominative, NEG=Negation, p=plural, PRF=Perfective aspect marker, REL=Relative marker, s=singular. **Notational conventions:** In the notation of the Kambera examples a clitic is separated from its (syntactic) host by a dash [-], while an affix is distinguished from its base by a dot [.]. Accents on vowels mark contrastive vowel length. **Note on translations:** Third person singular pronominals in

where the verb *palu* 'hit' is transitive, and the subject NP *na tau wútu* 'the fat man' is cross-referenced on the verb with the nominative proclitic *na-*. This sentence also illustrates how a canonical object is marked with an accusative enclitic (here: *-ka*). The brackets indicate the optionality of the cross-referencing NPs. The pronominal clitics are obligatory if the co-referent NP is definite.

(2) (*Na tau   wútu*) **na-** palu *-ka* (*nyungga*)
    ART person be.fat 3sN- hit   -1sA I
    'The big man hit me'

The single argument of an intransitive verb can also be marked with a nominative, as shown in (3):

(3) (*Na ài*)   **na-** tambuta dàngu amung
    ART wood 3sN- drop.out with   root
    'That tree is uprooted'

In (4) the double object ('applicative') verb *kei.ng* 'buy something for someone' has two object arguments: a patient ('direct object') and a beneficiary ('indirect object'). The dative clitic *-nja* marks the recipient, while the (patient) NP *rí* 'vegetable' is not cliticised on the verb because it is indefinite. However, it is also possible to cliticize both recipient and patient, if both have a definite referent, as illustrated in (5).

(4) (*I   Ama*) na-   kei *-nja* rí
    ART father 3sN- buy -3pD vegetable
    'Father buys them vegetables'

(5) (*I   Ama*) na-   kei *-ngga* *-nya*
    ART father 3sN- buy -1sD   -3sD
    'Father buys it for me'

Sentence (5) shows that there are two 'slots' for the object clitics, both following the verb. The recipient is marked with a dative clitic, followed by another dative clitic marking the patient. The fact that the second dative clitic refers to a patient, which is canonically marked with an accusative (cf. (2)), is an idiosyncratic restriction on clitic clusters in Kambera.[3]

In (6) the basic function of the genitive clitic is illustrated – marking nominal possession. A possessed NP is not necessarily definite, (6a),[4] and the possessive clitic is phrasal like the other clitics, cf. (6b,c).

Kambera are neutral with respect to gender but are translated as 'he', 'him' or 'his', unless the context demands otherwise. Kambera verbs are not marked for tense and the tense used in the English translations was determined by the original context of the utterances.

[3] The restriction is that the second postverbal object-marking clitic must always be dative. It should be noted that only a partical account of Kambera cliticization is given here. Kambera cliticization is more complex and irregular than the discussion here suggests, see Klamer (1994) on the basic properties of Kambera pronominal, aspectual and mood clitics, Klamer (1997a) for a discussion of the positional properties of the Kambera clitics and Klamer (in press) on the dative clitic in the continuative aspect construction.

[4] Definiteness is marked by the presence of the articles *na* 'sg.', *da* 'pl.' and *i* 'proper noun'.

(6) a. *Ningu   uma   -nggu*
    be.here house -1sG
    'I have a house (lit. (here) is my house (indefinite))'

   b. *Na   uma   -nggu*
    ART house -1sG
    'My house (definite)'

   c. *Na   uma   bidi   -nggu*
    ART house new   -1sG
    'My new house'

In addition to marking possessors, genitive enclitics mark the subjects of transitive and intransitive verbs. This is illustrated in (7) and (8), where the possessive enclitics mark the A of *palu* 'hit' and the S of *laku* 'go'.

(7) *Palu   -nggu   -nya*
   hit   -1sG   -3sD
   'I hit him'

(8) *Mbàda   laku   -na   -ka*
   already go   -3sG -PRF
   'He's already gone'

Genitive S-marking will be further discussed in section 4.1 below.

3. The grammatical relations S, A, and O in Kambera

The assignment of A and O relations has a semantic basis which relates to the prototypical meaning of the verb used. The semantic role mapped onto the A syntactic relation is the one which is 'most likely to be relevant to the success of the activity' (Dixon 1994:8). Most often, the role mapped onto A will be human and then this equates with 'could initiate or control the activity' (Dixon 1994:52). Morphologically underived verbs have maximally two arguments in Kambera (Klamer 1994:132). In transitive clauses where a verb has only two arguments, the argument which is not mapped onto A will be connected to the syntactic relation O. The single argument of intransitives will always be mapped onto the S-relation; whether or not the verb involves volition (e.g. *jump* vs. *grow*).

I will now present some syntactic and morphological evidence showing that (i) S, A and O are indeed distinct grammatical relations in Kambera, and (ii) that S sometimes patterns like A and sometimes like O.

Let us first look at how the relations pattern in so-called 'controlled' subordinate clauses. In controlled clauses the subject of the embedded verb is coreferential with the subject or object NP of the matrix clause, while the embedded object cannot be coreferential with an NP in the matrix clause. In Kambera, controlled clauses are marked with a special morpheme, the phrasal clitic *pa-*. This morpheme is always the initial element of the controlled clause, no matter what follows it. Kambera

control groups the A and S relation of the embedded clause together, distinct from the O relation. Illustrations are given in (9)–(11).

(9) *Ku- mangadat pa-   meti*
    1SN-   be.afraid   CTR-   die/be.dead
    'I'm afraid to die/be dead'

(10) *Na-   mài   -pa   pa-   hili   karai -ka*
     3SN- come -IMPF CTR- again ask   -1SA
     'He came once again to ask me'

(11) *Na- rudi -ka   pa-   katuda*
     3SN- force -1SA CTR- sleep
     'He forces me to sleep'

In (9) the S of the matrix verb is identical to the S of the embedded verb, in (10) the matrix S is identical to the A of the embedded verb, in (11) the O of the transitive matrix verb controls the S of the embedded verb.

Now consider (12a), where the A of the matrix verb *kamang* 'try (out) X' is marked by a clitic and the A of the second verb *paràha* 'force X' is controlled.[5] The indices indicate that the O marking clitics of the matrix verb *kamang* 'try out X' and the embedded verb *paràha* 'force X' have the same referent as the proclitic *na*-which marks the A of the third verb *kaliti* 'ride X'. The latter A-relation is obligatorily marked overtly, because it cannot be controlled by the O clitic of *paràha* 'force X', as illustrated by the illformedness of (12b). (Hence, the third clause in (12a) is coordinated rather than embedded).[6]

(12) a. *Ta- kama -nya$_i$ pa- paràha -ya$_i$ ka na-$_i$ kaliti njara*
        1PN- try   -3SD   CTR- force -3SA CNJ 3SN- ride   horse
        'We tried to force him to ride a horse (lit. ..to force him so he rides a horse')

     b. **Ta- kama -nya$_i$ pa- paràha -ya$_i$ pa- kaliti njara*
        1PN- try   -3SD   CTR- force -3SA CTR- ride   horse
        Intended reading: 'We tried to force him to ride a horse'

In summary, in control structures, A and S pattern together and are distinct from O.

In Kambera, relative structures are widely used, e.g. in questions with a

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[5] A matrix verb can control the S or A relation of two embeddings, as the grammaticality of (i) shows:

(i) *Ku- dunda -nggau pa- mài   pa- nganguyohu*
    1SN- invite -2SD   CTR- come CTR- eat   here
    'I invite you to come (and to) eat here'

[6] Below we will see that a matrix S in a control structure can also be marked with a clitic that is canonically used to mark O's (cf. (66a) below). However, also in that case, the controlled relation is not the O relation, but the A/S relation.

nominal head,[7] and as deverbal nominalizations. The latter function as nominal modifiers within NPs or as nominal predicates which are functionally related to passives in other languages (Klamer 1996b). In Kambera relativizations A and S pattern together and are distinct from the O relation, as follows. An A head noun is relativized with a relative clause that is introduced with the marker *ma-*, an O noun is relativized with a clause marked with *pa-*.[8] In the former case the embedded object is marked with an accusative clitic on the verb (*-ya* in (13a)), in the latter case, the embedded subject is marked with a genitive clitic (*-na* in (13b)).

(13) a. *Na$_i$- meti -ka [na tau   [na ma- piti -ya$_j$*
       3SN- die -PRF ART person ART REL- take -3SA
       [na kabela -nggu]$_j$]]$_i$
       ART sword -1SG
       '[The person that took my sword$_j$]$_i$ (he$_i$ has) died already'

    b. *[Na kabela [na pa- piti-na$_i$ [na tau   nuna]$_i$]]$_j$,*
       ART sword ART REL- take-3SG ART person that.one
       na$_j$-ruhak
       3SN-be.broken
       '[The sword that was taken by that man$_i$]$_j$ (it$_j$) is broken'

S head nouns are relativized with *ma-* relative clauses, i.e. pattern with A:

(14) *Na-$_j$ meti -ka [na tau   [na ma- hidu]]$_j$*
     3SN- die -PRF ART person ART REL- be.sick
     'The person who was sick (has) died already'

(15) *[Na tau   [na ma- hei   la   oka   àu]]*
     ART person ART REL- climb LOC fence bamboo
     'The person who climbed on the bamboo fence'

Turning from Kambera syntax to morphology, I will now consider the patterning of A, S and O in five major word formation processes of the language: causativization, anticausativization, the derivation of unintentional intransitive verbs, noun incorporation and verbal compounding. In causativization, S and A pattern together, distinct from O. The A relation of a morphologically underived transitive base verb becomes the O of the causative verb (16a), while the base O becomes an implicit argument, as

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[7] Thus, questions are relativizations headed by an interrogative pronoun followed by a relative clause that is distinguished for subject vs. object relativization by the markers *ma-* and *pa-*, respectively. For example *Who saw you?* is expressed as '*Who that* ma-*see you?*' and *Who did you see?* is expressed as *Who that* pa-*you see?* (cf. below).

[8] Despite the fact that the marker of control and the marker of O relativization are homonyms (both *pa*), their distinct functional and distributional properties warrant the conclusion that they are distinct grammatical elements (see the evidence in Klamer 1994). In fact, Kambera has two additional distinct morphemes with the shape *pa*: the causative prefix *pa.* (cf. below) and the aspectual enclitic *-pa* 'imperfective' (cf. (10)).

illustrated in (17). The base O cannot be the derived O as well, as the illicit reading in (16b) and (17) illustrates.

(16)   *tàru*   'X watch Y'
    a. *pa.tàru*   'A make/let X watch (Y)'
    b. *pa.tàru*   *'A show Y (to X)' (lit.:'A make/let (X) watch Y')

(17)   *Nggiki*[9] *hi*   *u-*   *pa.*   *tàru*   *-ya?*
    why   CNJ 2sN- CAU. watch -3sA
    'Why do you make him watch (it)?'
    * 'Why do you show it (to someone)?'

The S of the intransitive base verb, whether active or not, becomes the O of the causative derivation:

(18)   *hadang*   'Y get up/stand up/wake up'
    pa.hadang 'X make/let   Y get up/stand up/wake up'

(19)   *lui*   'Y melt/dissolve'
    pa.lui 'X make/let Y melt'

(20)   *Nggiki hi*   *u-*   *pa.*   *hada*   *-nya?*[10]
    why   CNJ 2sN- CAUS. wake.up -3sD
    'Why do you wake him up?'

(21)   *Nggiki hi*   *u-*   *pa.*   *lui*   *-ya?*
    why   CNJ 2sN- CAUS. melt -3sD
    'Why do you melt it?'

Causativization is a productive derivational process in Kambera that increases the verbal valency of especially intransitive bases. The language also has derivational processes that result in a valency decrease, an illustration is the derivation of anticausatives. Anticausativization derives non-controlled intransitive verbs from transitives in Kambera by assimilation of a feature [nasal] to the initial stopconsonant of the transitive base verb, resulting in a prenasalized initial stop, as illustrated in (22) (*ng* = velar nasal):[11]

(22)   *kodang*   'X move Y'
    ng.godang 'Y be.loose/be.moving (e.g. tooth)'

Though this derivation is no longer productive, there are many pairs of transitive/intransitive verbs in which the derivation is still transparent.

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[9] A question with the adverbial interrogative *nggiki* 'why/how' is structurally different from the questions headed by an interrogative pronoun (cf. note 6).

[10] The dative here is used as an allomorph of the accusative. This allomorph is used when the final consonant of the transitive verb is a nasal (see Klamer 1994:202–216).

[11] Alternatively, the process could be formulated as 'anti-causativization derives non-controlled intransitive verbs by mutation into a prenasalised stop of the root-initial plain stop of the base verb.'

Kambera anticausatives may or may not have an agent involved. In *mbuta* 'be plucked/be weeded' in (23) an agent must have been involved because for instance grass cannot be weeded without an actively involved agent, while the derivation *mbàda* in (24) is used to indicate that a fire is no longer burning – that is, it may have gone out 'by itself' or someone may have extinguished it.

(23) *buta*   'X pluck/weed Y'
     m.buta   'Y be.plucked/weeded'

(24) *pàda*   'X extinguish Y'
     m.bàda   'Y have.gone.out/be.extinguished'

The anticausative derivation is no longer productive.[12]

The language has another derivational process that derives intransitives from transitives: prefixation with *ta.* This derivation is still productive. A formal distinction between *ta.*-derivation and the anticausative is that the base verb for *ta.*-derivation may be either intransitive or transitive while the base form of anticausatives must be transitive. There are also interpretational distinctions. A derived form with *ta.* explicitly expresses that the achievement expressed by the derivation does/did not involve an agentive S: i.e. the derived verb expresses an unintentional, uncontrolled, involuntary or unexpected achievement:

(25) *bunggah* 'X open Y'   *ta.bunggah* 'Y be.open (unexpectedly etc.)'[13]
     lunggur 'X scrape Y'   *ta.lunggur* 'Y be.sore (accidentally etc.)'
     mbutuh 'Y slip.off'   *ta.mbutuh* 'Y slip.off (unexpectedly etc.)'
     lukur 'Y be.huddled' *ta.lukur* 'Y be.huddled (involuntarily etc.)'
     nggàjir 'Y shake'   *ta.nggàjir* 'Y shake (involuntarily etc.)'

The data show that in the derivation of *ta.*-verbs S and O are treated similarly, contrastive to A. In section 4.1 below I will come back to this

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[12] Present-day speakers of Kambera use the prefix *ta.* (discussed next) to derive intransitives with an explicitly non-active S. In addition to simple base verbs, anticausative derivations are taken as input for this derivation, as shown in (i) ('ng' represents a velar nasal):

(i) kunggul   *X roll Y*
    ng.gunggul   *Y roll (by itself)*
    ta.ng.gunggul *Y roll (accidently/unintentionally etc.)*

Unlike anticausatives, derived forms with other prefixes (*ka.*, *la.*, *pa.*, *ma.*, *ha.*) cannot be the input for a *ta.* derivation. This suggests that the anticausative forms are treated like simple base forms of stative verbs on a par with simple stative verbs like *rara* 'be.red'.

[13] A relative structure is involved when a passive-like notion ('be opened (by someone)') is expressed. In (ia) the relativization has an explicit agent (*-na*); in (ib) the relativization functions as a nominal predicate with the subject *-ya*, analogous to structures like (50)–(55) below.

(i) a. *Pindu pa- bunggah -na*
       door   RM- open   -3SG
       'A door (that is) opened by him'
    b. [*Pa-bunggah*]$_{Nominal\ predicate}$ *-ya*$_j$ [*na pindu*]$_j$
       RM- open   -3SA ART door
       'The door it$_j$ (is the one that) was opened'

class of derived forms and we will see that, within the group of intransitive verbs, *ta.*- derivations form an exceptional class in their S-marking properties. At the end of the paper, in section 5, a possible explanation for the exceptional behaviour of this verbal class will be proposed.

A further productive word formation process in Kambera is the nominal incorporation of the body part noun *eti* 'liver' to derive intransitive phrasal experiencer verbs.[14] Sentence (26) shows that *eti* can be part of an independent NP; i.e. it is not obligatorily incorporated. In this sentence the NP *na eti-na i Ama* 'father's liver' is marked as the S of the verb *bàkul* 'be big'. The possessor of *eti*, namely, 'father', is the experiencer of the metaphorical expression 'to have a big liver', i.e. 'to be happy':

(26) *Bàkul -nanya$_j$ -ka [na eti -na$_k$ i Ama$_k$]$_j$*
      be.big -3s.CONT[15] -PRF ART liver -3SG ART father
      'Father's liver is big; i.e. father is glad/pleased/happy'

In (27) the noun *eti* is incorporated into the predicate by being located directly adjacent to the verb, followed by the pronominal clitics. Nominals do not normally occur inside the verbal complex; in fact, *eti* is one of the very few nominals that may be incorporated in this way (cf. Klamer 1997b). The S-marking clitic of the phrasal verb refers to the logical possessor of *eti*, 'father':

(27) *[Bàkul eti]$_V$ -nanya$_j$ -ka [i Ama]$_j$*
      be.big liver -3s.CONT -PRF ART father
      'Father is feeling glad/happy/pleased (lit.: father is being big-livered')

Additional illustrations of phrasal experiencer verbs with an incorportated noun *eti* are given in (28).

(28) *jangga eti*   *mila   eti*
      be.tall liver   be.poor liver
      'be arrogant'   'feel/have compassion'

      karàu eti   *bàrang   eti*
      be.dark liver   pound (intr.) liver
      'be angry'   'be worried'

The derivation of phrasal experiencer verbs is a productive process in Kambera and new expressions are constantly being formed. The majority of the base verbs involved in this derivation are intransitive (most (all?) of them stative), with *eti* expressing the S relation, as in (26)-(28). Interestingly, however, transitive base verbs incorporating *eti* also occur. In those

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[14] The methaphorical value of *eti* 'liver' as the location of e.g. feelings and emotions is similar to *heart* in English.

[15] An S marked with a postverbal clitic cluster of a genitive and dative (*-nanya*) indicates that the clause is in continuative aspect (=CONT). In section 4.1 below I will come back to the structure and use of this construction, which does not influence the nominal incorporation process at hand.

derivations *eti* expresses the O relation of the base verb: *manganga* 'steal X' in (29) and *pangàndi* 'take X' in (30):[16]

(29) *Manganga eti   -nggunya*
     steal   liver -1s.CONT
     'I am greedy (lit. I steal (other people's) liver)'

(30) *Pangàndi eti   -munya*
     take   liver -2s.CONT
     'You are touching/sweet (lit. you take (other people's) livers)'

In other words, nominal incorporation treats *eti* in S and in O relation similarly while the A relation is irrelevant in this derivation.

The final word-formation process that will be discussed here is the derivation of compound verbs. Like nominal compounds, Kambera productively derives verbal compounds, consisting of a sequence of two verbs V_1 and V_2. Both of the verbs can either be transitive or intransitive. They can be shown to form a syntactic unit together like a derived verb and unlike a biclausal structure.[17] In (31) both the verbs are transitive (the second one being the causative *pa.marau* 'cause to be far') and together they form a transitive predicate with an A and an O relation, as illustrated in (31a). That the A and O cannot be coreferent is shown in (31b):

(31) a. *Ku- ngàndi pa.marau   -ya$_j$ [na kalàu meti]$_j$*
        1sN- take   CAUS. be.far -3sA ART mouse dead
        'I took the dead mouse far away'
        (lit.: I take and cause to be far away the dead mouse)
     b. **Ku$_k$- ngàndi pa.marau   -ka$_k$*
        1sN- take   CAUS. be.far -1sA
        Intended reading: 'I took my(self) far away, i.e. I removed my(self)'[18]

In (32) below the verbal compound consists of a transitive and an intransitive verb. The O of the compound is both the O of V_1 and the S of V_2, as shown in (32a). The O of the compound cannot be coreferent to the A of V_1, as the illformedness of (32b) illustrates.

(32) a. *Ku- ngàndi marau -ya$_j$ [na anakeda]$_j$*
        1sN- take   be.far -3sA ART child
        'I took the child far away (lit.: I took it and went far away)' (I.e. the child ended up far away as a side effect of my going far away.)

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[16] Note that in the examples (29) and (30) not the logical possessor of *eti* but rather the person performing the action expressed by the verb is the experiencer of the derived phrasal verb. The derivation of phrasal experiencer verbs therefore cannot as a whole be analysed as an instance of a so-called 'possessor raised to subject' derivation (Klamer, in prep.).

[17] E.g. because of their shared pronominal and aspectual markers (Klamer 1994:267–275).

[18] Section 4.2 below contains a brief discussion of Kambera reflexives.

b. *Ku_k- ngàndi marau -ka_k
    1sN- take   be.far -1sA
    Intended reading: 'I took my(self) and went far away/I removed
    (myself)'

A compound consisting of two intransitive verbs is, of course, intransitive,
and the S is the same for the two verbs, as in (33a). Being intransitive, the
compound verb does not allow the S of V_2 to be marked as an O (unlike in
(32a) above), whether or not it is coreferent with the S of V_2, which is
shown in (33b).

(33) a. Na-   dedi   meti
          3sN- be.born die
          'He died at birth'
      b. *Na_j- dedi   meti -$ya_{j/k}$
          3sN-   be.born die   -3sA
          Intended reading: 'He$_j$ was born (and) died/He$_j$ was born (and)
          he$_k$ died'

Finally, when V_1 is intransitive and V_2 transitive, the compound verb is
transitive and its object is the O of V_2, which cannot be coreferent to the S
of V_1:

(34) a. Ku- hi   rohu -ya
          1sN- cry hug   -3sA
          'I hugged him crying'
      b. Na_j- hi   rohu -$ya*_{j/k}$
          3sN-   cry hug   -3sA
          'He hugged him(*self) crying'

The illustrations given show (among other things) that in Kambera verbal
compounds S and A and O are distinct relations: O can neither be
coreferent with A, nor with S.

Summarizing this section, we have seen that in Kambera syntax
(control, relativization), the A and S relation pattern together in contrast
to the O relation. In derivational word-formation processes, however, the
pattern is mixed – sometimes S patterns with A (following the so-called
'nominative-accusative' pattern) and sometimes with O (following the
'absolutive-ergative' pattern):

(35) Relativization: A and S versus O
      Control: A and S versus O
      Causativization: A and S versus O
      Anticausativization: A   versus S and O
      Ta.-derivation: A   versus S and O
      Noun incorporation: A   versus S and O
      Verbal compounding: A   versus S   versus O

The fact that Kambera allows a mix of nom-acc and abs-erg patterns will be relevant for the analysis of the S-marking constructions discussed in the next section.

4. Kambera intransitive argument linking

4.0. *Introduction*

This section is the descriptive core of the paper in providing an overview of the five ways in which S, the argument of an intransitive verb, can be 'linked' to or expressed in morphosyntactic structure.

The possible morphosyntactic markings of S in Kambera are impressionistically represented in (36). In this illustration, the verb *meti* 'die' is used as an illustration of Kambera intransitive verbs in general, shorthand for its semantics properties is **meti'** and (x) is its argument which can be morphosyntactically expressed by any of the five pronominal clitic markings given in the righthand column:

(36) 'semantic' 'morphosyntactic'
meti' (x) *expressed as* 1. nominative
    2. genitive
    3. genitive + dative
    4. nominative + accusative
    5. accusative

Thus, S may occur in more than one syntactic frame viz. have different morpho-syntactic expressions. The five ways to mark an intransitive subject are illustrated for the verb *meti* 'die/be dead' in (37):

(37) a. *Jàka nda nyumu, da- meti -ka làti*
   CNJ NEG you 3sN- die -PRF in.fact
   'Without you, they would die/they would have died'

 b. *Mbàda meti -na -ka?*
   already die -3sG -PRF
   'Is he dead already/has he died already?'

 c. *Ba na- habola tuna -ka nú,*
   CNJ 3sN- give.birth thus -PRF DEI
   meti -ma -a -na-nya nyuna yena
   die -EMP -MOD -3sG-3sD she this.one
   'When she thus gave birth, she died'

 d. *Jàka nda nyumu, da- meti -ha -ka làti*
   if NEG you 3pN- die -3pA -PRF in fact
   'Without you, they would die/have died for sure'

 e. *Jàka nda nyumu, meti-ya$_k$ -ka làti*
   CNJ NEG you die -3sA -PRF in.fact
   'Without you, we would die/have died (lit. ..one$_k$ would have died)'

Each of the S-marking constructions in (36) expresses one or more of the following properties: sentential aspect (perfective, continuative), irrealis mood, non-agent oriented modality, and 'register' and 'discourse' properties of the clause.

In section 4.1 I first discuss the properties of the S markings illustrated in (37a–c): nominative, genitive and a cluster of genitive+dative (in previous examples such as (29) and (30) above glossed as '3s.CONT'). The double subject marking (nominative and accusative) illustrated in (37d) is the topic of section 4.2, where I argue that the accusative markings in both (37d) and (37e) are traces of an older absolutive-ergative system. A construction where S is marked with an accusative clitic will be called an absolutive construction. Why this notion is used for this particular construction and what its properties are is discussed in section 4.3.

4.1. S is marked with a nominative, a genitive or a cluster of genitive+dative

Sentence (37a) shows an argument marked by a third person plural nominative proclitic (da-). A and S in unmarked declarative sentences are canonically marked by a nominative (see section 1); the nominative does not force a specific interpretation of the clause, unlike the other S-markings.

(37b) shows an S marked by a genitive enclitic (-na). Such 'nominal clauses' are used very frequently and have the external syntax of possessed NPs: they can be specified for definiteness with an article; if definite, they can be cross-referenced as an argument of the main verb; they can be cleft and compared. The functional properties of nominal clauses are diverse, but all of them express a circumstance of the main clause and thus function like dependent clauses in Kambera discourse. Nominal clauses have certain specific mood, modality and aspectual properties: their mood is 'irrealis', their modality is 'non-agent oriented' and their aspectual properties are variable – the result of the interaction of the non-agent oriented modality of the predicate and the semantics of the verb. Ignoring further details of this construction,[19] for present purposes it is sufficient to note that the genitive marking of S is as grammatical and as frequently used as the nominative marking and signals distinct mood, modality, aspectual and discourse properties of the nominal clause as a whole.

The intransitive argument in sentence (37c) is marked by a cluster of two pronominal clitics: in addition to a genitive (-na), a dative (-nya) is used as well. A clitic cluster like this marks the aspectual property that the situation expressed by the intransitive verb continues or endures – 'continuative aspect'. The referential function of the genitive enclitic in

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[19] See Klamer (1994:90–100) for more details.

this cluster is to mark the S, while the function of the dative – which is always third person singular in this construction, regardless of the person and number of the subject itself – is less transparent. The construction was more complex originally but has been reanalysed.[20] Synchronically it marks the 'continuative aspect'. At present, the clitic cluster has a single referent and will therefore be glossed for the person and number of that referent, with the addition of 'CONT' to indicate that this construction is used to express 'continuative aspect' (Klamer, in press).

This concludes our discussion of S marking by a nominative proclitic, a genitive enclitic and a cluster of genitive plus dative. Rather than giving a full account of these structures, the intention was to show that (i) these different S markings are in fact possible and (ii) that they are used in distinct contexts. A variety of contextual factors is involved when the

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[20] Although historical written sources of the language are scarce and do not date back more than a century, there is synchronic language-internal evidence that this construction may reflect an older stage of the language where the dative clitic was used as an expletive pronoun marking a matrix S which was predicating of a nominal predicate. The verb plus genitive S constituted the embedded nominal predicate. The analogy between this construction and canonical nominal predicates is shown in (i) and (ii), in (i) the nominal predicate has a noun as lexical head, in (ii) a verb:

(i) [*Uma* -*nggu*_{possessor}]_{NP}   -*nya*_{matrix subject}
   house -1SG   -3SD
   'It (is) my house'

(ii) [*Mài* -*nggu*_{embedded subject}] -*nya*_{matrix subject} *la Humba*
   come -1SG   -3SD   LOC Sumba
   'It (is) my coming to Sumba → I'm coming to Sumba'

The literal translation of (ii) is an adequate interpretation of the continuative aspect construction. According to this diachronic analysis the dative clitic in a continuative aspect construction is not meaningless but an expletive matrix subject instead. It provides an explanation for the fact that the dative in this construction is always third person sg. because it is an expletive subject here. Synchronically, the construction is no longer considered an embedded structure and the clitic cluster has been reinterpreted as marking a single argument. Evidence for this is given in (iii) and (iv). Where the predicate has a truly nominal head, both clitics *can* be separated from each other by additional material, as shown in (iii), while this is not possible when the lexical head is a verb, cf. (iv):

(iii) [[*Uma*   -*nggu nyungga*]   -*ma*   -*ya*]_S
    house   -1SG I   -EMP   -3SA
    'It (is) MY house'

(iv) a.* [*Mài* -*nggu nyungga* -*ma* -*nyal*-*ya la Humba*]_S
     come -1SG   I   -EMP -3SD/3SA LOC Sumba
     Intended reading: 'I am (SURELY) coming to Sumba'
    b.* [*Mài* -*nggu nyungga* -*nyal*-*ya la Humba*]_S
     come -1SG   I   -3SD/3SA LOC Sumba
     Intended reading: 'I am coming to Sumba'
    c.* [*Mài* -*nggu* -*ma* -*nyal*-*ya la Humba*]_S
     come -1SG   -EMP -3SD/3SA LOC Sumba
     Intended reading: 'I AM coming to Sumba'

An explanation for the impossibility to separate the two clitics in the cluster in sentences like (ii) is that the cluster is interpreted as one entity. The clitic -*nya* in continuative aspect constructions like this has lost its referential function and/or merged it with that of the genitive clitic, thus simplifying the structure of the clause and the function of the clitic cluster (Klamer 1994:152–162, in press).

morphosyntactic coding of S is determined. That is, the morphological shape of an S-marking clitic in Kambera reflects more than just lexically specified information; the choice for a particular S-marking morpheme is not simply dependent on information encoded in the lexical entry of the verb alone. In the next two subsections we will discuss two additional ways to mark Kambera S which support this conclusion.

4.2. S is doubly marked with a nominative proclitic and an accusative enclitic

In sentence (37d) the single argument is doubly marked. That is, it is syntactically expressed by two distinct pronominal clitics which are simultaneously used in one sentence: the nominative (*da-*) and the accusative (*-ha*). This construction will be referred to as 'double-S marking' and is considered in detail here because the fact that S is marked with the accusative – a clitic canonically used to mark O – as well as the nominative clitic is an important similarity between this construction and the absolutive construction discussed in section 4.3 below.

In both (37d) above and (38) below double-S marking is used to state explicitly that the speaker is certain about the situation/event expressed by the clause:

(38) [I   Miri Yehu]ⱼ **na-**ⱼ mài **-ya**ⱼ²¹ la   pinu tana
     ART Lord Jesus 3sN- come -3sA   LOC top earth
     'The Lord Jesus did come down to earth'

Apart from evidentiality, the double-S construction is also used to express other subjective evalutions of the speaker about the expressed proposition, such as obligation, supposition or expectation. Sentence (39a) contains a notion of 'obligation' and contrasts with (39b). The latter sentence, with only a nominative clitic to mark S, is a simple declarative statement and, as indicated by the translation, does not imply obligation.

(39) a. **Da-** laku **-ha** pa- rama haromu
        3pN- go -3pA CTR- work tomorrow
        'They must/have to go to work tomorrow'
     b. **Da-** laku pa- rama haromu
        3pN- go CTR- work tomorrow
        'They will go to work tomorrow'

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²¹ Locative Prepositional phrases (PPs) or NPs within these PPs are not verbal arguments and as such not marked on the verb. That is, *-ya* here neither refers to *la pinu tana* 'to earth', nor to *tana* 'earth', but to *I Miri Yehu* 'the Lord Jesus'. This becomes evident in a sentence when we alter the number of the subject in a sentence like (38) to plural. In that case both the nominative and the accusative clitic become plural.

In (40) and (41) the double-S marking expresses the expectation that something will happen/be done:

(40) *E!   na-   mbata   -ya -ka nú!*
EXCL 3sN- be.broken -3sA -PRF DEI
'Hey! It is almost breaking/it will surely break'

(41) *Ta- hei   -du -ta la pinu palindi jàka na-mben*
1pN- ascend -EMP -1pA LOC top hill CNJ 3sN-fierce
na karimbua
ART *buffalo*
'We will (surely) run up the hill if the buffalo gets mad'

However, (40) and (41) show that the generalization cannot be that this construction is used to express subjective moods:

(42) a. ***Da-*** *ₚ puru   -ha [da papalewa]ⱼ*
3pN- descend -3pA ART angel
'Angels came down'

b. ***Da-*** *ₚ puru   [da papalewa]ⱼ*
3pN- descend ART angel
'Angels came down'

c. * *Puru   -ha da papalewa*
descend -3pA ART angel
Intended reading: 'Angels came down'

(43) a. ***Da-*** *tama -ha la kurung ba ku- yaulu -ha*
3pN enter -3pA LOC room CNJ 1sN- chase -3pA
'They entered the room when I chased them'

b. ***Da-*** *tama la kurung ba ku- yaulu -ha*
3pN enter LOC room CNJ 1sN- chase -3pA
'They entered the room when I chased them'

c. * *Tama -ha la kurung ba ku- yaulu -ha*
enter -3pA LOC room CNJ 1sN- chase -3pA
Intended reading: 'They entered the room when I chased them'

According to the informants that were consulted, (42a) and (43a) are not used to express a particular mood and were reported to be an alternative form of the (b) sentences. Note that of the two clitics used in the (a) sentences, the accusative rather than the nominative can be freely omitted, as shown by the illformedness of the (c) sentences.

In sum, a doubly marked S is mostly used to express certain moods, though this is not necessarily so. The double-S construction has, however, a restricted use, as it is mainly used in specific registers, poetic and/or religious texts and is considered somewhat archaic.[22]

[22] The suggestion has been made (Gertjan Postma, p.c.) that the accusative clitic in this construction could be analysed as a 'fake' reflexive pronominal. It is unclear, however, how such a 'fake' reflexive would be related to Kambera reflexives in general. The reflexive

Wielenga (1909)[23] provides some evidence that the double marking of the subject was used more widely at the beginning of this century. Most of the examples he gives of this construction as it was used at that time (unfortunately, just nine) are considered ungrammatical by present-day

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nominal normally used in reflexive constructions is *wiki* 'self', a noun which can also be translated as 'own':

(i)   *Uma*   **wiki**   *-nggu*
      house   self/own   -1SG
      'My own house'

Wiki has the structural properties of a noun rather than a pronoun. Like other nouns, it can be used as a nominal modifier (compare (i) and (ii)), whereas pronouns must be cross-referenced on the noun with a genitive clitic, as in (iii).

(ii)   *Uma witu   -nggu*
       house grass -1SG
       'My hut'

(iii) *Uma   -nggu nyungga*
       house -1SG I
       'My house'

While full pronouns such as *nyungga* 'I' are inherently definite, the reflexive noun *wiki* can be part of both a definite (e.g. (vi)) and an indefinite NP (e.g. (iv), (v)).

(iv)   *Ba   da-ᵢ   ha.memu   [wiki-daᵢ]*
       CNJ   3PN-   boast   self-3PG
       'While they are boasting (lit. if they boast (about) themselves)'

(v)   *Ba   na-   wàbahung wiki-na*
       CNJ   3SN- dump   self-3SG
       'And he collapsed (lit. and he dumped himself)'

(vi)   *Ka   ta-   kinju   -haⱼ   [da wiki -nda]ⱼ*
       CNJ   1PN- examine -3SA   ART self -1PG
       'So we examine ourselves (lit. so that we examine themⱼ ourselvesⱼ)'

(vii) * *Ta-ᵢ   hei   -taⱼ/-haⱼ   [da wiki -nda]ⱼ   la   pinu pa.lindi*
       1PN-   ascend -1PA/-3PA ART self -1PG   LOC top mountain
       Intended reading: 'We will climb on the hill/get ourselves on the hill'

(viii) *Ka   na-   ndingir   wiki*
       CNJ   3SN- be.standing self
       'So he'll be independent/have his own responsibility (lit. stand self)'

(ix)   *Mbàda   ndingir   wiki -na*
       already be.standing self-3SG
       'He's independent already'

(x) * *Mbàda   ndingir   -na-ka   wiki-na*
      already be.standing -3SG-PRF self-3SG

(xi)   *Mbàda   katuda-na-ka   ana   -na*
       already sleep-3SG-PRF   child -3SG
       'His child is already asleep/sleeping'

In (iv) and (v) *wiki* is part of the indefinite NP marking the O of transitive verbs like *hamemu* 'boast (about) something' and *wàbahung* 'dump something'. With an article, it constitutes a definite object NP cross-referenced on the verb, as in (vi). With intransitive verbs like *ndingir* 'be standing', indefinite *wiki* must be incorporated in the verb, as in (viii). The difference between an incorporated noun and a syntactically independent indefinite NP is that the latter can be separated from the predicate (verb) by pronominal, mood, and aspectual clitics (see (xi)), while an incorporated noun forms an inseparable unit with the verb. This is shown by the grammaticality contrast between the pairs (ix)–(x) and (x)–(xi).

Intransitive verbs cannot occur in constructions like the one in (vii). This rules out the possibility that the accusative clitic in a sentence with double-S marking marks a definite reflexive NP, i.e. an accusative in a double-S construction does not have the same referent as an accusative in a transitive clause like (vi).

[23] Wielenga 1909 is the first grammar of Kambera; it contains 63 pages of grammatical notes, 73 pages of text material and a word list of 187 pages.

speakers. Nowadays, using an accusative clitic in (44)–(46) results in ungrammaticality. Wielenga, however, reported these sentences to be correct (Wielenga 1909:47, 51–53).

(44) * *Na-   manandang   -ya   na   uma   -nggu*
    3SN- be.beautiful -3SA ART house -1SG
    'My house is beautiful'

(45) * *Da-   bokul   -ha   da   kalú*
    3PN- be.big -3PA ART banana
    'The bananas are big'

(46) * *Na-   rengga   -ya   ba   na-   laku*
    3SN hurry -3SA CNJ 3SN- go
    'He walks quickly (lit.: he hurries when he goes)'

On the other hand, (48) and (48) below, which are also presented in Wielenga (ibid) are nowadays still acceptable, although a construction without the accusative clitic is preferred.

(47) *Hi   da-   beli   -ha   la   uma*
    CNJ 3PN- return -3PA LOC house
    'And they went back home'

(48) *Hi   na-   laku   -ya   na   maramba*
    CNJ 3SN- go   -3SA ART king
    'And the king went'

The restricted use of these constructions nowadays, as compared to their wider use at the beginning of this century suggests that the phenomenon of double-S marking is a relict of an earlier construction that was more widely used at an earlier stage.

There are several indications that this construction, in which the markings of S are identical to both the A and the O of transitive verbs, reflects a stage in the language's evolution from an absolutive-ergative system towards a nominative-accusative system, a stage that allowed the S markers of both systems to be used simultaneously.

Firstly, if indeed the nominative-accusative system has 'taken over' an older absolutive-ergative pattern, we can explain why the accusative clitic (formerly the 'absolutive'), in contrast to the nominative, can be left out in double-S marking (cf. (42b,c)). The fact that double-S marking is mainly part of specific registers used for poetry and/or religion and is considered archaic can also be explained when we take into consideration that Kambera literature is oral and mostly consists of traditional texts passed down the generations. The texts are often rather structured, contain much ritual speech,[24] and often address religious topics. (Note

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[24] Kambera ritual speech is very unlike Kambera everyday language. Because it contains many opaque metaphors and parallelisms, 'ordinary' Kambera speakers often say that they cannot understand it. See Fox 1988.

however, that the construction is not always considered archaic, cf. (42)–(43) above).

Secondly, the hypothesis that Kambera is evolving from an abs-erg to a nom-acc system ties in with the syntactic and morphological properties of the language discussed in section 3. Given that the derivational morphology of a language often shows traces of its former (morpho)-syntactic patterns it is not surprising that Kambera morphology shows mixed nominative-accusative and absolutive-ergative properties (cf. (35)) while the embedded structures in Kambera syntax (control, relativization) exhibit a nominative-accusative system.

In the next section we will encounter additional indications that the language displays a mix of both systems. One indication is that arguments of *non-verbal* predicates are marked like transitive O always (cf. (50)–(53) below), whereas the arguments of intransitive *verbs* are variably marked. The exceptional marking of the S of non-verbal predicates can be seen as a remnant of the earlier 'absolutive' marking of the S of all intransitive predicates, surviving today for the clearly delineated class of non-verbal predicates only.

Another indication is the fact that in imperatives S and O are treated alike: both are marked with an accusative clitic (cf.(57)–(58)) whereas A is always omitted (as in (57)). And finally, we will see that the variable (or 'fluid') marking of the S of verbal predicates itself shows a mix of abs-erg and nom-acc properties.

These facts together are taken as indications that the present structure of the language shows a mix of nominative-accusative and absolutive-ergative properties.

4.3. *S is marked with an accusative enclitic: the absolutive construction*

The fifth possibility to mark S is with an accusative enclitic and was illustrated in (37e) above, repeated here as (49):

(49) *Jàka nda nyumu, meti-ya$_k$ -ka làti*
    CNJ   NEG you   die -3SA -PRF in fact
    'Without you, we would die/have died (lit. ..one$_k$ would have died)'

In this particular sentence, the accusative clitic is used as an impersonal pronoun, but in this section I will discuss other examples of accusative S marking that show that accusatively marked S's are not only impersonal pronouns, and impersonal pronouns are not always accusative.

I will argue that the accusative marking of S depends on the interpretation of how the argument is involved in the situation expressed by the verb: if S is less actively involved than what the canonical meaning of the verb would suggest, it is marked accusatively. Because synchronic Kambera morpho-syntax in general follows the nom-acc pattern, the morpheme that marks O and sometimes S is called 'accusative' rather than 'absolutive'.

The construction in which the S is marked with an accusative enclitic is referred to as the 'absolutive' construction, because in this construction S is marked identical to O. On the basis of the arguments presented in the previous subsection I suggest that this construction is a synchronic reflex of the absolutive marking that must have been part of the abs-erg pattern of a previous stage of the language.[25]

4.3.1. *Accusative S with non-verbal predicates.* Predicates that express inherent states (identity, class membership) are nominal, the language has no copular verb and the argument is obligatorily expressed with an accusative clitic. The predicates in (50)–(52) are nominal:

(50) [*Tau   mini*]_{NP} *-ya*
     person male   -3SA
     'It/he (is) a man'

(51) [*Potu-na   [na apu-nggu   la   Humba*]]_{NP} *-ya*
     photo-3SG ART granny -1SG LOC Sumba   -3SA
     'It (is) a picture of my Sumbanese granny'

(52) *Nda [uma   witu*]_{NP} *-a   -ya, [uma   watu*]_{NP} *-ya*
     NEG house grass   -MOD -3SA house stone   -3SA
     'It (is) not a hut, it (is) a brick house'

As the argument of identity predicates is identical to the situation described by the predicate it is not actively involved or controlling that situation. The same applies for the other non-verbal predicates that are used in Kambera to express locations in time and space: a prepositional phrase in (53), a deictic element in (54) and a question word in (55). Arguments of non-verbal predicates are also expressed with an obligatory accusative clitic.

(53) *Lai nú   -ya*
     LOC DEI -3SA
     'He/she/it (is) there'

(54) *Nú   -du   -ya*
     DEI -EMP -3SA
     'Yes, indeed (lit. so/thus (is) it)'[26]

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[25] In contrast to Keyser & Roeper (1984) and Burzio (1986), who refer to verbs with a single argument that behaves like an object as 'ergative', and contrast them with 'unergatives'. Levin and Rappaport (1992) have replaced the term 'ergative' by 'unaccusative' (vs. 'unergative'). In the latter system, the Kambera structure where S is marked like O would be referred to as an 'unaccusative' construction. But because in Kambera there is an accusative clitic involved in this construction, the term would be needlessly confusing.

[26] The deictic element *nú* refers to the space/time that is remote from the speaker. Here it has a discourse function, referring to something that has been said previously. Its argument is marked accusatively.

(55)   *Ka   nggi   -kau*?
     CNJ   where   -2SA
     'Where (are) you?'

A special group of non-verbal predicates are the numeral predicates. If a numeral predicate denotes an amount of people seen as a group or entity, S is marked with an accusative clitic. In such a case, the predicate expresses a state (rather than an event, process or activity) and S is identical to that state rather than actively involved in it. Illustrations of this are given in (56a,b). However, (56c,d) illustrate that numeral predicates may also mark S with a nominative (56c) or occur in the continuative aspect (56d). In this respect numeral predicates behave similarly to intransitive verbs.[27]

(56)   a.   *Dua   kambulu pitu   -a   -ha*
          two   ten   seven -MOD -3pA
          'They are (a group of) only twenty seven (people[28])'
     b.   *Dua   kambulu pitu   -a   -ya*
          two   ten   seven -MOD -3pA-3sA
          'It$_k$ is (a group of) only twenty seven (people)'
     c.   *Da$_j$- dua   kambulu pitu   -a*
          3pN   two ten   seven -MOD
          'They$_j$ (are) only twenty seven (people)'
     d.   *Tau   ngahu   riu   -nanya   -ka una   lai nú*
          person   hundred   thousand -3s.CONT -PRF EMP.3s   LOC DEI
          'A hundred thousand people (were present) there'

In (56a) S is marked as third person plural accusative, but it may alternatively be expressed as third person singular without causing a change in meaning. This is not possible for the plural argument in (56b). This suggests that the accusatively marked S in the construction in (56a) is conceptually more an entity (i.e. a group rather than twenty-seven individuals) than the S in (56b), as indicated by the translation of the differences between both sentences.

4.3.2. *Accusative S with verbal predicates.*   Another context in which S is marked like O is when the situation expressed by the verb is in focus while

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[27] This could be an argument to categorize numerals as verbs (*ka.mbulu* 'be.ten'). On the other hand, distributional differences between verbs and numerals (e.g. the fact that numerals can precede classifiers to form a numeral phrase in order to quantify a noun, while verbs cannot do this) and the fact that numerals form a closed class while the verbs are an open class, are arguments to categorize them differently. Thanks to Mark Donohue (p.c.) for bringing this up.

[28] We know it concerns 'people' because only human arguments of numeral predicates may be marked accusatively. In constructions such as these, non-human arguments are expressed with a genitive clitic:

(i)   *Dua   kambulu pitu   -a   -da   / *-ha*
     two   ten   seven -only   -3pg   / *-3pA
     '(There are) only twenty seven of them (e.g. books)'

the argument involved in the situation is either implied or less in focus than the verb. In one instance this is always the case, namely in the construction used for imperatives. Imperative addressees are always second person and in imperatives there is more focus on the activity that should be carried out than on the (known) addressees – which explains why overt (pro)nominal marking of addressees is often absent. Other constructions where S is marked like O are (1) clauses with an emphatically left-dislocated verb (2) clauses with an impersonal subject and (3) clauses with a verb that is modified by degree adverbs. In this section I discuss these in turn.

Let us first look at imperatives. In Kambera imperatives, the addressee of transitives (i.e. a clitic or NP marking the A) is always omitted, as illustrated by (57). On the other hand, the addressee of intransitives (i.e. a clitic marking the S), though it may be omitted, is commonly present and is marked with an accusative clitic, i.e. identical to O, as in (58)–(59):[29]

(57) *Kinju -ha!*
      examine   -3pA
      'Examine them!'

(58) *Kapàndi -kau yohu la   lumbu kahembi!*
      hide   -2sA here LOC cover bush
      'Hide here under the bushes!'

(59) *Katuda -kau/ -kai nàhu!*
      sleep   -2sA -2pA now
      'Go to sleep now!'

The accusative marking of addressees in imperatives can be connected to the marking of the less controlling verbal argument in the following way. Consider (60), which shows that an imperative addressee can also be marked with a nominative:

(60) *(Ka) u-   kapàndi yohu la   lumbu kahembi!*
      CNJ 2sN- hide   here LOC cover bush
      '(That) you hide here under the bushes!'

The two imperatives (58) and (60) differ in politeness.[30] (58) sounds like an order, and is in fact the standard imperative. Using the nominative, as in

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[29] Across languages there seems to be a natural linkage between S and A in imperatives (Dixon 1994:132), but "[. .] in addition to this universal S/A linkage, imperatives in particular languages may also in some way treat S and O alike. There are languages that have one verbal affix cross-referencing S or O and another cross-referencing A" – i.e. the Kambera accusative versus Kambera nominative and genitive. "For some languages of this type [. .] A can be left unspecified in an imperative, but not S." In Kambera imperatives, S/O are treated alike, and though the accusative S/O marker in imperatives can in principle be omitted, it is commonly present, in contrast to the A marker which is omitted.

[30] The least polite imperative form of an intransitive verb is the one that has no addressee marked, e.g. *mài yohu!* 'come here!'. The conjunction *ka* in (58b) is optional and does not introduce a subjunctive clause.

(60), makes the command into a polite request, because using the nominative in this way expresses respect for the addressee – when giving a command it is more polite to speak to the addressee as if he were in control of the activity (using a nominative) than as if he were not (using an accusative).

The second construction in which S is marked accusatively is in clauses with an emphatically left-dislocated verb. Such clauses always contain an absolutive construction, even when S is agentive. (61) illustrates such a verb dislocation. Observe that the S-marking clitic is accusative -*ya* and has a personal referent, *i Windi*:

(61)   *Tembang, nda tembang -a   -ya$_j$ -pa [i   Windi]$_j$*
      be.stupid NEG be.stupid -MOD -3SA -IMPF ART Windi
      '(As for) being stupid, Windi is no longer stupid'

The S of such emphatically dislocated verbs is obligatorily marked with an accusative and the S may have (and often has) a personal referent, as in the illustration given.[31]

The gloss in (61) gives an indication of the interpretation of a clause with a left dislocated verb plus an accusative S. The difference between the interpretation of such a left-dislocation and an unmarked declarative clause can also be seen by comparing (62a) and (62b):

(62)   a. *Ngangu, nda ngangu -ha$_j$ -pa   [da ina   ama-na]$_j$*
        eat   NEG eat   -3PA -IMPF ART mother father-3SG
        '(As for) eating, his parents don't eat anymore' (I.e. they cannot eat anymore because of e.g. a serious illness)
    b. *Nda da- ngangu -a   da ina   ama -na*
        NEG 3PN- eat   -MOD ART mother father -3SG
        'They don't (want to) eat' (e.g. because they are not hungry)

One of the important distinctions between the two sentences is that the clause with *ngangu* 'eat' in the dislocated construction is interpreted as 'a state of being able to eat' or 'habitually eat' in contrast to the activity sense of the second clause with *ngangu* in the normal position. That is, the S in (62a) is not in control of the state, while (62b) indicates an S in control.

Clauses with an impersonal S are the third type of context in which we often encounter an absolutive construction. (But impersonal referents are not obligatorily marked accusative, cf. the marking of weather verb arguments discussed below).

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[31] That is, we expect a sentence such as (i), where S has an explicitly personal referent, to be grammatical (but this sentence has not been checked with native speakers):

(i)   *Tembang, nda tembang -a   -ka -pa   [nyungga]*
      be.stupid NEG be.stupid -MOD -1SA -IMPF I
      '(As for) being stupid, I am no longer stupid'

In (63) the clitic *-ya* '3sA' functions as an impersonal pronoun. It cannot be interpreted as coreferent with an NP with a personal referent such as *i Windi*, as the indices show. It contrasts with (62a), where the accusative clitic cross-references *da ina ama-na* 'his parents'.

(63) *Jàka nda nyumu, meti -ya*$_{k/*j}$ *-ka làti * [*i Windi*]$_j$
CNJ NEG you die -3sA -PRF in.fact ART Windi
'Without you, we would die/have died'
(lit. 'One$_k$ would have died' vs. * 'Windi$_j$ would have died'[32])

Additional illustrations are given in (64). In (64a) the verb is not dislocated and the accusative clitic has an impersonal referent. In such a construction, the referent cannot be personal, as shown in (64b,c). For a personal interpretation, the S must be marked differently, using e.g. the continuative construction, as in (64d). In sentence (64e), on the other hand, the verb is dislocated, and here the referent of the accusative clitic *can* be personal.

(64) a. *Mbeni -ya -ka nú*
be.angry-3sA -PRF DEI
'One is angry/people are angry'
b. * *Mbeni -ya*$_j$ *-ka nú [na tau]*$_j$
be.angry -3sA -PRF DEI ART person
Intended reading: 'One is angry/the people are angry'
c. * *Mbeni -ya*$_j$ *-ka nú [i Umbu Mada]*$_j$
be.angry -3sA -PRF DEI ART Sir Mada
Intended reading: 'Mr Mada is angry'
d. *Mbeni -nanya*$_j$ *-ka nú [i Umbu Mada]*$_j$
be.angry -3s.CONT -PRF DEI ART Sir Mada
'Mr Mada is (feeling/getting/being) angry'
e. *Mbeni, nda mbeni -a -ya*$_j$ *-pa [i Umbu Mada]*$_j$
be.angry NEG be.angry -MOD -3sA -IMPF ART Sir Mada
'(As for) being angry, Mr Mada is no longer angry'

In other words, an S that is marked with *-ya* '3sA' is often impersonal. It is therefore not surprising to find *-ya* being used to express distance or politeness, as illustrated in (65), where the same question is asked informally in (65a) using a second person genitive clitic, and formally in (65b) with a third person (impersonal) accusative clitic:

(65) a. *Nggàra mài -mu?*
what come -2sG
'Why (do) you come/what do you want from me?' (familiar)

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[32] *Jàka nda nyumu, meti -nanya*$_j$ *-ka làti i Windi*$_j$
CNJ NEG you die -3sA -PRF in.fact ART Windi
'Without you, Windi$_j$ would have died'

    b. *Nggàra mài -ya -i   nú?*
        what   come -3sA -again DEI
        'What can I do for you?' (formal)

In (65b) the accusative S marker *-ya* has an impersonal referent, and thereby the question is made less confronting, and more formal. We saw above that using the accusative suggests that the S is less actively involved in the situation expressed by the verb; in this case, the addressee is referred to as a someone who is part of the situation and not actively involved in 'coming to get something'. In (65b), on the other hand, the clitic has a personal referent and this question is more informal/familiar. The contrast between (65a,b) illustrates a clearly pragmatic use of the accusative marking of S. (Note that this pragmatic use is exactly the mirror image of the S marking in imperatives discussed above).

An accusatively marked S is not limited to simple clauses: it may also be used to mark a matrix S controlling the subject of an embedded clause, which is then rendered impersonal. In (66a) below the matrix S is marked with an accusative clitic (for comparison, consider the nominative S of *mài* in (10) above). In (66b) the matrix S is also marked with an accusative clitic, but using the first person singular forces a personal interpretation of the matrix S which renders the clause ungrammatical:

(66) a. *Mài -ya pa- mandura   -bia -pa yohu!*
         come -3sA CTR- wait.endlessly -MOD -IMPF here
         'Coming only to wait endlessly here! (lit.: One comes to wait endlessly here)'[33]
    b. **Mai -ka pa- mandura   -bia -pa yohu*
         come -1sA CTR- wait.endlessly -MOD -IMPF here
         Intended reading: 'I've come only to wait endlessly here'

In other words, a matrix S in control structures can be marked accusatively but it must have an impersonal interpretation (hence can only be third person singular accusative).

The use of the impersonal pronoun may also be relevant with respect to weather verbs, because such verbs are often considered to be exceptional verbs in e.g. having an un(der)specified argument or having no argument at all. Kambera weather verbs are given in:[34]

(67) *ha.ledak* 'be clear; windy and sunny' (cf. (68)),
     upung 'to earthquake (V)' (* *na upung* 'the earthquake (N)')
     ka.bila.k 'flash with lightning'
     ka.nduru.k 'to thunder'

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[33] Context: a person who had come in time for a meeting but had to wait a long time for the others to arrive exclaimed that he'd been wasting his time sitting there waiting.

[34] The language has few weather verbs, perhaps because the weather on Sumba does not show much variation in general. *Urang* 'rain' is a noun that can be used predicatively.

These verbs pattern with the other intransitive verbs, including activity verbs like *pa. lài* 'run' or state verbs like *miting* 'be black'. This is illustrated in): the S of the weather verb *haledak* 'be clear weather: windy and sunny' can be marked with a nominative, as in (68a), or with a genitive, as in (68b), it may occur in a continuative construction, as in (68c), or in an absolute construction, as in (68d).[35,36]

(68) a. ***Na-*** *haledak ba ta-* *kabeli*
      3SN- be.clear CNJ 1PN- return
      'It was clear when we returned'

   b. *Lalu haledak* ***-na***
      too be.clear -3SG
      'He is very cheerful'

   c. *Ba da- hàla -ka,* *haledak* ***-nanya*** *-ka*[37] *na katiku-na*
      CNJ 3SA- finish -PRF be.clear -3S.CONT -PRF ART head -3SG
      'When they finished, his worries disappeared (lit. his head became clear)'

   d. *Lalu haledak* ***-ya***
      be.clear   -3SA
      'It's very clear (weather)'

(Note that the impersonal S of *haledak* can also be marked with a nominative (68a), which shows that impersonal referents are not necessarily marked with the accusative).

The weather verbs behave just like any other intransitive verb as far as the marking of their (impersonal) S goes. There is thus no reason to assume that weather verbs differ from the other intransitive verbs in the amount of lexically specified information concerning the morphosyntactic behaviour of their sole argument. At the same time, crosslinguistic evidence that the information about the arguments of weather verbs is (or needs to be) specified in the lexicon is scarce. If we assume that Kambera weather verbs are no exception to this, the fact that arguments of Kambera weather verbs behave morpho-syntactically no different than the arguments of other (active, stative[38]) intransitive verbs is an indication

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[35] (38) does not contain an illustration of a clause with doubly marked subjects of weather verbs because my database does not contain such a clause and I have not had the opportunity to check with informants whether such a construction would be grammatical.

[36] Observe that in (68b,d) the verb is modified by the preverbal degree adverb *lalu*, which is not the case in (68a,c). In the clauses where *lalu* is present it provides a natural context for the subject marking in these clauses. In general, verbs that are modified by degree adverbs (such as *lalu*) occur in nominal clauses – i.e. they prefer to have a genitive subject rather than an (unmarked) nominative. Alternatively, verbs modified by degree adverbs may also have an accusatively marked S, as in (68d). I will come back to this immediately below. Additional information about constructions with degree adverbs can be found in Klamer (1994).

[37] The presence of the perfective clitic *-ka* makes that the process has reached an endpoint (i.e. that it is an achievement predicate). Without *-ka* the meaning of the sentence would be 'his worries are disappearing'.

[38] The term 'stative' is used descriptively and does not refer to a specific *lexical* class of intransitive verbs in Kambera, cf. the discussion in section 5.

that the lexical entry of Kambera intransitives in general can be as simple as that of the weather verbs. I will return to this in section 5.

The fourth context in which we encounter absolutive constructions is when a verb is modified by degree adverbs. In (68d) above the degree adverb *lalu* 'too' modifies *haledak* 'be clear' and the (impersonal) S is marked accusatively. In (69) below, *dira* 'extremely' and *ai lulu* 'very' are the (preverbal and postverbal) degree adverbs that modify *mayila* 'be needy', and here the accusatively marked S has a personal referent:

(69)   *Dira   mayila   ai lulu -kama*
       extremely be.needy very -1pA
       'We are so very, very poor'

Consider the marking of the argument of *mbeni* 'be angry' in (70). In (70a) the verb is modified for degree, S has a personal referent and is marked accusatively. b,c) show that S must be marked nominatively when the verb is not modified for degree. When S has an impersonal referent it may be marked accusatively, as in (71).

(70)   *Hina   -ka hi na- pàda   -ya*[39] . . .
            recently -PRF CNJ 3sN- experience -3sA
            'Only now he feels/experiences . . .

       a. . . . *ba lalu mbeni   -ha*ⱼ [*da aya   -na*]ⱼ
            CNJ too be.angry -3pA ART elder.sibling -3sG
            . . . that his brothers are very angry'

       b. . . . *ba da-*ⱼ *mbeni   [da aya -na*]ⱼ
            CNJ 3pN- be.angry ART elder.sibling -3sG
            . . . that his brothers are angry'

       c.* . . . *ba mbeni   -ha*ⱼ [*da aya   -na*]ⱼ
            CNJ be.angry -3pA ART elder.sibling -3sG
            Intended reading: . . .that his brothers are angry'

(71)   *Mbeni   -ya -ka nú*
       be.angry -3sA -PRF DEI
       'One was angry/(The) people were angry'

In other words, the accusative marking of S is preferred in contexts where verbs are emphatically fronted or modified for degree and in contexts where S has an impersonal referent. Additional illustrations are given in (72).

(72) a. *Ka dira   hangàtar -ha -ka*
         CNJ extremely be.amazed -3pA -PRF
         'So they were extremely amazed'

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[39] The singular object clitic refers to the second clause, *not* to the S of the second clause, which is plural here.

b. *'Iss . . .' wà-da ba **da**- hangàtar*
   EXC   say-3pG CNJ 3pN- be.amazed
   ' "Wow", they said amazed'

c. *Da- mài pa- kandura -ya pakariang   hangàtar-**da***
   3ps- come CTR- stare   -3sA accompanied.by be.amazed-3pG
   'They came to stare at him in amazement' (lit. ' . . . accompanied
   by their amazement)

d. *Ka hangàtar **-nanya** -ka yena tau kawini*
   CNJ be amazed -3s.CONT -PRF this.one person female
   'So this woman was feeling amazed/amazing herself'

In (72a) the S of the verb *hangàtar* 'be amazed' occurs in the absolutive construction and is modified for degree. (72b,c,d) show that the S of *hangàtar* can also be expressed with a nominative or genitive clitic or occur in the continuative aspect construction.

The absolutive construction is a marked construction, both in terms of frequency of use and in requiring specific contexts where emphasis is being put on the situation expressed by the verb.

The accusative marking of S is not determined by sentence structure only; the sentences in (73) show that it is optional:

(73) a. *Hí -ma -a   -ya$_j$ -ka [i   Umbu Mada]$_{NPj}$ una*
     cry -EMP -MOD -3sA -PRF ART Sir Mada   EMP.3s
     'Sir Mada just cried and cried' (i.e. could do nothing else)

   b. *Hí -ma -a   **-nanya$_j$** -ka [i   Umbu Mada]$_{NPj}$ una*
     cry -EMP -MOD -3s.CONT -PRF ART Sir Mada   EMP.3s
     'Mr Mada was crying' (but could have chosen not to)

The S NP in (73a) is *Umbu Mada* and it is cross-referenced with an accusative clitic. In (73b) the S NP is again *Umbu Mada* and it is marked on the verb with the continuative construction. The semantic contrast between (73a,b) is indicated in the translations: the subject in (73a) is presented as having less control on his crying, i.e. as being in a state of crying that he can do little about, whereas in (73b) he can.

The construction used in (74) suggests a situation in which Mr Mada is most helpless. The S NP is marked accusatively here, as in (73a), but note that, in contrast to (73a), the S NP in (74) is an NP containing a relative clause with the verb *ningu* 'be (here)': *na ma-ninya lai Umbu Mada* 'what was at Mr Mada's' which can also be glossed: 'what Mr Mada had.'[40] So the S of (74) is an NP describing the *situation* Mr Mada is in and using this structure suggests that Mr Mada is completely out of control.

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[40] Compare (i): (i) *Ningu woka -mu?*
          be.here garden -2sG
          'Do you have a garden (lit.: is your garden?)'

(74) *Hí -ma -a   -ya$_j$ [na [ma- ni -nya lai   Umbu Mada]]$_j$
      cry -EMP -MOD -3SA ART RM- be -3SD LOC Sir Mada
      'Mr Mada did nothing but crying'
      (lit.: 'It (was) only crying that was at Mr. Mada's; Mr. Mada had
      nothing but crying')

To conclude, in this section we showed how verbal predicates with
accusatively marked S's contrast with predicates that have S's marked
otherwise. We saw that this contrast cannot be described in purely
structural terms. The function of the absolutive construction was char-
acterised in terms of control/activity versus non-control/non-activity
(Merlan 1985, Mithun 1991): S is marked accusatively to suggest that it
is less actively involved in the situation expressed by the verb than we
would expect from the canonical meaning of the verb. The semantic
parameter which is relevant for marking S like O in Kambera is therefore
'control' (as in e.g. Acehnese, Durie 1985).[41]

4.3.3. *Exceptional intransitive verbs: no accusative S for ta.-derivations.*
Crosslinguistically, it seems that non-agentive, telic and directional verbs
are more liable to occur in absolutive ('unaccusative') constructions than
other verbs (cf. Merlan 1985, Levin and Rappaport 1992, among others).
In Kambera, however, all intransitive verbs may occur in the absolutive
construction, except for the one very specific class of derived intransitives
that was mentioned above: the derivations with *ta*. Examples of these are
repeated in (76). Apart from this exceptional class, there is no evidence of
a separate lexical class of intransitives with accusatively marked S's.

The verbs in (75) have been recorded in spontaneous (unelicited)
absolutive constructions. The verbs include not only non-agentive, telic
or directional verbs, but also agentive, atelic and non-directional verbs.
That the latter types of verbs may be used in absolutive constructions too,
suggests that it is not the lexical semantics of the verb which determines
when S is marked like O in Kambera.

(75) **activity:**   **stative:**
     pa.bànjar   'talk/chatter'   *jangga*   'be.high'
     ngangu   'eat'   *hàmu*   'be.good'
     laku   'go'   *kudu*   'be.small'
     directional: *tembang*   'be.stupid'
     mài   'come'   *ka.hingir*   'be.clean/clear (water)'
     luhu   'leave'   *ma.yila*   'be.poor'
     event: *ha.ledak*   'be.clear (weather)'
     tàka   'arrive'   *ha.rui*   'be.in.trouble'
     hí   'cry'   *ha.nduka*   'have.problems'
     meti   'die/be.dead'   *ha.ngunja*   'sit.idly'
     kalit   'grow dark'   *ha.ngàtar*   'be.amazed'

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[41] Because not only volitional S's are variably marked, volition is not the relevant parameter.

Derivations with *ta.*, illustrated in (25) and repeated as (76), are exceptional in this respect. They cannot have an accusatively marked S, as illustrated by the illformedness of (77a) below. On the other hand, the grammaticality of (77b) indicates that the S of a *ta.*-verb can be marked with a nominative.[42]

(76) *bunggah* 'X open Y'   *ta.bunggah* 'Y be.open (unexpectedly etc.)'[43]
    lunggur 'X scrape Y' *ta.lunggur* 'Y be.sore (accidentally etc.)'
    mbutuh 'Y slip.off'   *ta.mbutuh* 'Y slip.off (unexpectedly etc.)'
    lukur 'Y be.huddled' *ta.lukur* 'Y be.huddled (involuntarily)'
    nggàjir 'Y shake'   *ta.nggàjir* 'Y shake (involuntarily etc.)'

(77) a. *[Na ài nuna]*$_{NPj}$ *ta.mbuta -ya$_j$ -ka dàngu amung*
        ART tree that.one drop out -3SA -PRF with root

    b. *[Na ài nuna]*$_{NPj}$ *na-$_j$ ta.mbuta dàngu amung*
        ART tree that.one 3SN- drop out with root
        'That tree is uprooted'

This pattern is especially odd because *ta.*-derivations express uncontrolled, unintentional, involuntary or unexpected achievements. At first glance, we would therefore expect their argument (not active by definition) to be accusatively marked rather than nominative. At the least, marking this argument accusatively should be an *option*, contrary to fact, as seen in (77a). In other words, the one Kambera argument type that resembles an object most closely in its lexical semantics is the only one that *cannot* be marked like O.

Although the non-activity semantics of this argument do not force the analysis of the single argument of *ta.*-verbs as being similar to an underlying object, what this (again) shows is that (in Kambera) there is no obvious connection between the notion of underlying object (or internal argument) and the fact that S is marked accusatively, i.e. occurs in the absolute construction.

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[42] Another exceptional feature of these verbs is that the S need not be marked on the verb at all, as in (i), and that their S cannot be marked genitively or with the continuative constructions.

(i) *Na ài nuna ta.mbuta -ka dàngu amung*
   ART tree that.one drop.out -PRF with root
   'That tree is uprooted'

[43] A relative structure is involved when a passive-like notion ('be opened (by someone)') is expressed. In (ia) the relativization has an explicit agent (*-na*); in (ib) the relativization functions as a nominal predicate with the subject *-ya* (analogous to structures like (50)–(52) above):

(i) a. *Pindu pa- bunggah -na*
     door RM- open -3SG
     'A door (that is) opened by him'

   b. *[Pa-bunggah]*$_{Nominal\ predicate}$ *-ya$_j$ [na pindu]$_j$*
     RM-open -3SA ART door
     'The door it (is the one that is) opened'

In the previous sections we saw that there is a variation in when Kambera marks the S argument like O: in some constructions it is obligatory (e.g. when the predicate is non-verbal or in imperatives), in other cases it is optional, determined by discourse or pragmatic motivations, while in the case of the *ta.*-verbs it is disallowed altogether. The Unaccusativity Hypothesis and related proposals (Perlmutter 1978, Burzio 1981), which suppose that there is a close link between an underlying object and an S in absolutive constructions cannot explain this variation. In the next section I will tentatively propose an alternative account.

5. Conclusions and discussion

We have seen that the absolutive/accusative-S construction is used to indicate that S has less control (relative to A) on the activity expressed by the verb. In other words, that Kambera is a fluid-S language of the stative-active type (Merlan 1985, Holisky 1987, Dixon 1994). The following contexts for the absolutive construction were discussed:

— When the predicate is non-verbal, S is marked like O because S is either identical to or located at the situation expressed by the predicate, that is: inherently non-active.
— When the predicate is verbal, S is marked like O when the verb receives more emphasis than the verbal argument. Typically, this is the case in imperatives, but it is also a characteristic of emphatically left-dislocated VPs, VPs modified for (excessive) degree, and impersonal clauses.
— When S is marked like O outside these contexts, it indicates the *relative* degree of active involvement of S in the situation expressed by the verb: an accusative S suggests less active involvement than the canonical meaning of the verb would lead us to expect it presents the argument as part of the situation more than being actively involved in it.

Thus, sometimes the absolutive construction is obligatory, in other cases it is optional and determined by discourse or pragmatic motivations, whereas in the case of the *ta.*-verbs it is disallowed altogether.

There is no direct connection between, on the one hand, marking S like O in an absolutive construction and, on the other hand, the type of syntactic configurational information present either in the lexical entry of a verb ('the argument of this verb is internal/external') or at underlying syntactic structure ('the argument of this verb is an underlying object/subject').

Five different S markings are possible and they are used in distinct contexts. The morphological shape of any S-marking clitic reflects more information than just the information that is specified in the lexical entry

of the intransitive verb and therefore cannot be determined by lexical properties of the verb alone.

Neither Kambera syntax, nor the language's word formation nor its morphosyntax shows evidence that the language formally distinguishes between classes of intransitives (with the exception of the *ta.*-derivations). The evidence can be summarized as follows:

(i) The majority of the intransitive verbs can optionally occur in the absolutive construction, i.e. it is not reserved for one separate class of 'unaccusative' verbs.

(ii) Intransitive verbs can also mark S with the nominative and genitive, and in addition they can appear in the continuative construction and (presumably) in the double subject construction. That is, if we would claim that verbs occuring in the absolutive construction form a separate lexical class, we would have to assume multiple lexical entries for every Kambera intransitive verb since all of them can occur in various other constructions as well, leading to enormous redundancy in the lexicon.

(iii) In embedded structures (control, relativization) and in morphological derivation (causativization) intransitives behave alike in the sense that there is not one particular class of verbs patterning S with O and another class where S patterns with A (i.e. there are no lexical classes of so-called 'unaccusatives' and 'unergatives').

All Kambera intransitive predicates (including the non-verbal predicates, excluding the *ta.*-verbs) can be characterized with a similar simple lexical structure, as illustrated in (78), where 'predicate' is shorthand for the lexical semantic properties of the *predicate*' and '(x)' represents the fact that the predicate has one argument x.

(78) **predicate'**(x)

Crucially, there need not be a distinction between intransitives with internal and external arguments, and the semantic/thematic content of the argument (as e.g. PATIENT or THEME) need not be specified in the lexicon.[44]

To account for the optionality of the absolutive construction I propose to make use of the distinction between the inherent lexical meaning and the possible, cancellable meaning of a verb. Verbs with active interpretations can easily get less (or non-) active interpretations when they occur in the absolutive construction, whereas the reverse does not apply. This suggests that the notion of activity is not part of the inherent lexical meaning of the verb but rather an implicature based on the semantic properties of the actor (e.g. animacy) and the lexical properties of the verb (Dowty 1991).

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[44] This proposal relates to similar proposals for reduction of the lexically represented information on intransitives and their arguments that have been made e.g. within Lexical Decomposition Grammar (e.g. Joppen & Wunderlich 1995) and Role and Reference Grammar (Foley & Van Valin 1984, Van Valin 1993, Kishimoto 1996).

This amounts to saying that in Kambera basic predicates are stative a conclusion in line with the well-known verb classification of Vendler (1967) and Dowty (1979). It also implies that the language does not have intransitive root verbs that are inherently active.

This perspective provides an explanation for the exceptional behaviour of the *ta.*-derivations, the only intransitives that do not allow their S to be marked accusatively. The *ta.* prefix productively derives intransitive verbs from transitive and intransitive bases. This productive morphology derives the lexical specifications of the verb – the derivation with *ta.* gives the verb an *absolute* non-active interpretation. This rules out the notion of *relative* non-activity that triggers the choice for the accusative marking of S with the other intransitive verbs. In a sense, the addition of the derivational morpheme *ta.*- makes the lexical semantics of the base "invisible", because *ta.*-'s feature of absolute non-activeness replaces to the relative non-activeness of the base.

We can test the validity of this account by looking at the anticausative derivation. This derivation looks similar to the *ta.*-derivation because both derivations result in intransitive non-active verbs. However, anticausatives differ from *ta.*-derivations because (i) they do not have a regular, productively derived non-active interpretation, and (ii) they are no longer analysed as morphologically complex. In other words, the prefix in anticausatives no longer carries its own lexical semantics. Thus an anticausative verb, like morphologically simplex intransitive verbs, may be interpreted as *relatively* non-active. So anticausatives differ from the productive *ta.*-verbs because the non-active interpretation is not a part of their *inherent* lexical specification (anymore). In this way, the concept of cancellable semantic properties in the lexical conceptual structure of verbs accounts for the behaviour of the larger part of Kambera intransitive verbs. As a bonus, this concept also provides the key to understanding the exceptional case marking properties of one particular group of Kambera intransitive verbs, the *ta.*-derivations.

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