

Proceedings of AFLA 7

The Seventh Meeting of the Austronesian Formal
Linguistics Association

Edited by
Marian Klamer

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam
Department of Linguistics
2000

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Preface

This volume consists of papers presented at the seventh meeting of AFLA (Austronesian Formal Linguistics Association), held at the Vrije Universiteit on May 11-13, 2000.

For the first time in the history of AFLA, this meeting was held outside the North-American continent, and contained contributions by speakers from eleven different countries: New Zealand, Australia, Indonesia, Brunei Darussalam, Taiwan, the USA including Hawaii, Canada, the UK, France, Germany, and The Netherlands.

Apart from the languages that are traditionally well-represented at Austronesian conferences, we were happy to see that the program also contained work on relatively small or lesser described languages, such as the minority languages of Taiwan, North-West Borneo, Eastern Indonesia, Papua and Oceania.

Special themes of this conference were Iconicity and Argument marking. The papers in this volume show that the program covered a broad range of subdisciplines -- from discourse grammar, phonology, morphology, syntax, to semantics -- and that the authors are working within various theoretical frameworks. But despite the obvious differences in expertise, interest and background, the atmosphere on the conference was typically AFLA: lively and constructive, with an average rate of attendance of about 80%. The papers in this volume deserve the same rate of attention.

This meeting has again furthered the unwritten mandate of AFLA to encourage the formal study of Austronesian languages, especially work by speaker linguists and junior scholars. Six scholars presented analyses of their native language, and more than half of the 45 participants subscribed as 'student'. This suggests that the future of Austronesian linguistics looks very bright indeed.

The eight edition of Afla will be held in the spring of 2001 at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Boston, USA. The principal organiser will be Ileana Paul.

Marian Klamer, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Proceedings of previous AFLA meetings:

A Selection of the papers of AFLA 2, in 1995 is published as:
Paul, Ileana, Vivianne Phillips, and Lisa Travis (eds.). 2000. *Formal Issues in Austronesian Linguistics*. Dordrecht, Kluwer.

The proceedings of AFLA 3 and AFLA 4 in 1996/1997 are published as:
Pearson, Mathew (ed.). 1998. *Recent papers in Austronesian Linguistics*. UCLA Working Papers in Linguistics 21.

The proceedings of AFLA 6 in 1999 are published as:
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Niuean Nominalization*

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In this paper I will examine various aspects of the nominal clause of Niuean (a VSO Oceanic language of the Tongic subgroup as classified by Pawley, 1966, 1967). In Section 1 I will provide a basic analysis of non-derived Niuean nominal clauses, as described by Seiter (1980), Wilson (1989) and Massam and Sperlich (to appear). In Section 2 I will focus on derived nominalizations, particularly on the case system found therein, from a Minimalist perspective. Although the facts are somewhat ambiguous, as shown in Section 3, I will advance the hypothesis that Niuean, while an Ergative/Absolute (E/A) language at the sentential level, has an intransitive Nominative structure in the nominal clause. This is of interest, because it has often been claimed, most recently and in detail by Alexiadou (1999), that nominal clauses have an ergative structure in a wide range of N/A languages, including Greek, English, Romance and Slavic languages, and Hungarian. In addition, in the typological study of Koptjevskaja-Tamm (1993) this type of nominalization is found only in SVO Nominative/Accusative (N/A) languages.

1. The Structure of the Niuean Nominal Clause

1.1. Basic Word Order

The unmarked word order of a Niuean DP is shown in (1), with an example in (2).

(1) Order of elements

[CaP Det/# N Mods Dem Gen]

- (2) (CaP Det/# N Mods Dem Gen)
e tau mena gahua nā haau
Abs/Com Spec/Pl thing work that you(Gen)
"those tools of yours" (Seiter.117b.45)

The first element in the clause is a portmanteau element which marks both the case of the DP and whether it is proper/pronominal (henceforth termed simply *proper*), or common. In (3) I provide a paradigm of these particles which I term CaP (for *Case*, [+/- *Proper*]). (Seiter 1980 and Clark 1976 each make different analyses of these items.)

* I would like to particularly thank Wolfgang Sperlich as this work has grown out of joint work with him. In addition, I thank Marian Klamer and other AFLA VII organizers and audience members, the University of Toronto Syntax Group, Susan Bejar, William Foley, and Hitay Yukseker for various sorts of help with this work. All errors are mine. This work was supported by a research grant: SSHRCC (#410-97-0493). Data for this paper comes principally from Sperlich (1997), Seiter (1980) and field notes.

(3) Niuean CaP elements

	<u>Common</u>		
	<u>Prep</u>	<u>Case</u>	<u>Art_{common}</u>
Abs			<i>e</i>
Erg		<i>h</i>	<i>e</i>
Gen		<i>h</i>	<i>e</i>
Loc		<i>h</i>	<i>e</i>
Goal	<i>ke</i>	<i>h</i>	<i>e</i>
Source	<i>mai</i>	<i>h</i>	<i>e</i>
Topic	<i>ko</i>		<i>e</i>
Ben	<i>ma</i>		<i>e</i>
Comit	<i>mo</i>		<i>e</i>
Instr	<i>aki</i>		<i>e</i>

	<u>Proper</u>		
	<u>Prep</u>	<u>Case</u>	<u>Art_{proper}</u>
Abs			<i>a</i>
Erg		<i>e</i>	
Gen		<i>h</i>	<i>a</i>
Loc		<i>i</i>	<i>a</i> (human only)
Goal	<i>ki</i>	<i>(i?)*</i>	<i>a</i> (human only)
Source	<i>mai</i>	<i>(i?)*</i>	<i>a</i> (human only)
Topic	<i>ko</i>		
Ben	<i>ma</i>		
Comit	<i>mo</i>		
Instr	<i>aki</i>		<i>a</i>

*It is unclear whether the *i* on the goal and source prepositions is the Case marker or part of the preposition.

Although there are many as yet unsolved issues with the CaP element, it can be seen that there are three main types of DP: unmarked, marked for case, and prepositional. The prepositional cases divide into those which take marked case complements and those which take unmarked case complements. In addition, there are more case distinctions in the proper series than in the common series, and the proper article has a more irregular distribution than the common article.

The second element in the clause is another portmanteau item which marks specificity and number. The basic paradigm as described by Seiter (1980) can be laid out as in (4).

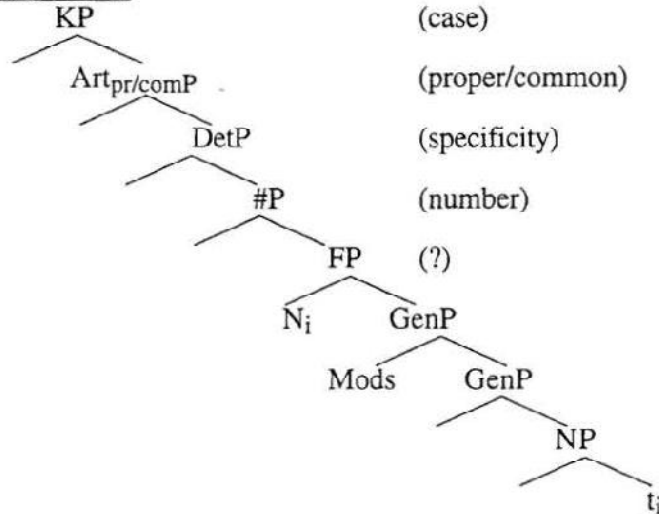
(4)	Plural	Dual	Singular	No #
A. [+Specific] [+/-Definite]	<i>tau</i>	<i>nā</i>	∅	N/A
B. [-Definite] [+/-Specific]	<i>fa_lu a</i>	N/A	<i>taha</i>	N/A
C. [-Specific]	N/A	N/A	N/A	<i>ha</i>

The head noun follows the specificity/number marker, and it is in turn followed by modifiers, a demonstrative (classified here as another modifier), and a genitive phrase.

Putting the above description together with the mass of recent work on cross-linguistic nominal structure (for eg. Abney 1987, Bittner and Hale 1996, Giorgi and Longobardi 1991, Pearce 1998, Ritter 1992, Waite, 1994), I posit the structure in (5) for the Niuean DP. The KP

and ArtP (CaP) heads coalesce, as do the heads of DP and the #P most of the time (but see below, Section 1.b). Some problems here are that the nature of the position that the noun moves to is not clear, and it seems that the NP never has internal structure.

(5) Nominal structure



1.2. Prenominal Genitives (aka Possessive Preposing/Incorporation)

As well as appearing clause finally, the genitive can appear between the CaP and the number particle (or the N if there is no number particle), as shown in (6). The lack of the determiner on the right side of the arrow will be explained below. Examples are given in (7) and (8).

(6) CaP Det/# N Mods Gen ----> CaP Gen a # N Mods

(7) a. *e leo ha Sione*
Abs voice Gen Sione "Sione's voice"

b. (*e*) *ha Sione a leo*
Abs Gen Sione a voice "Sione's voice"

(8) a. *Ko e haana a tau hui*
CaP* 3sgGen "a" Pl foot "his feet"

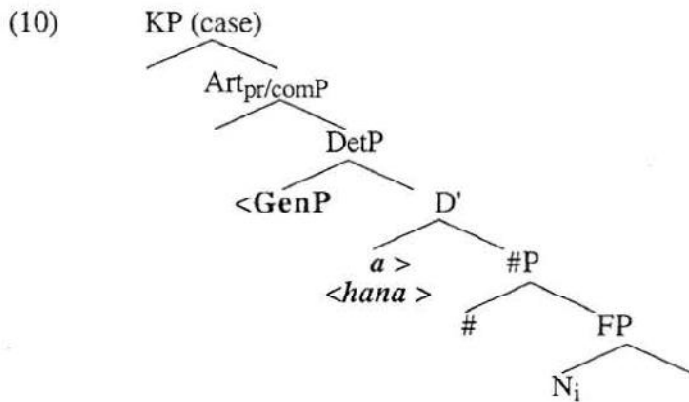
b. *Ko e hana fale*
TopCaP his house "his house" (Sperlich.104)

(7b) shows that the preposed proper genitive is followed by the ligature item *a*. (8a) shows a preposed pronoun, also with *a*, which can be compared with (2). (8b) shows a shortened form of the pronoun which can appear prenominaly, and it does not appear with *a*.

When the genitive is preposed, the DP receives a definite interpretation, as shown in (9). This means that a preposed structure will never appear with an overt determiner marking specificity, but just with an optional number marker (see (4)). Sperlich (1997) states that (8b) receives an even more definite interpretation than (9b).

- (9) a. *Ko e fale haana*
 CaP house his "his house/a house of his" (Sperlich.104)
- b. *Ko e haana a fale*
 CaP his Lig house "his house" (Sperlich.104)

A preposed genitive must be either a pronoun or a proper name (true also, interestingly, in German and Icelandic: Alexiadou 1999:113). Common noun genitives may not prepose. (See Massam and Sperlich, to appear for a discussion of how this preposing is treated in the literature on Polynesian.) Preposing can be accounted for by analyzing the genitive to be in the specifier of DP, as in (10) and considering the ligature *a* to be in the head of DP. Thus we see that Niuean has shifted preposing from the Tongic pattern of pronominal cliticization (Chung, 1973, Wilson, 1982) to an XP movement which includes proper genitives as well as pronominal ones. The ligature item might be related to the proper article *a*. If so, the proper/pronoun constraint on preposing follows from a properness agreement relation between head of DP and specifier of DP. The example in (8b) is analogous to the Tongan cliticization rule, where only short forms of the pronouns can appear in the head of DP, thus usurping the determiner *a*.

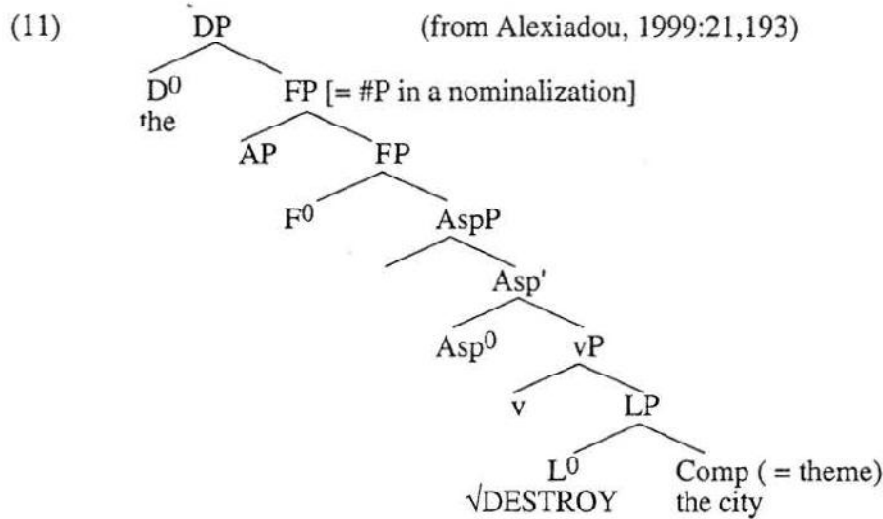


This provides us with the outline of the basic Niuean clause structure.

2. The Case of Nominalized Clauses

2.1. Nominalization in N/A languages (Alexiadou, 1999)

Alexiadou (1999) examines nominalizations in a variety of languages, including Greek and English. She concludes that "aspects of nominal syntax are closely related to patterns of ergativity" (p.2) and that "the light verb included in process nominals does not project an agent" nor does it assign accusative case (p.109). She provides the following structure.



She considers the nominal to be a lexical root (L) which only acquires nominal status by virtue of appearing with nominal functional projections (cf. the concept of precategorial roots as in Foley, 2000). The lexical head moves to FP, which in a nominal would be #P, to be in the domain of the determiner and the object moves to specifier of AspP to check genitive case. (See Alexiadou, 1999 for full detail). The principal aspect of her analysis for us is that she argues that nominalized clauses have a deficient light verb, which does not assign accusative case, nor an external theta role. In this way, she claims, the light verb is an unaccusative light verb (see also den Dikken and Sybesma 1998, Harley and Noyer 1998, Marantz, 1997). Because the external theta role is not assigned to specifier of light v, it can appear only as an oblique (12a), a possessor (12b) or not at all (12c). This clears the way for the object to get the one available structural case - genitive - marked with *of* in English.

- (12) a. the destruction of the city by the Romans
 b. the Romans' destruction of the city
 c. the destruction of the city

Alexiadou develops the idea, often proposed in the literature, that in N/A languages nominalized clausal structure is analogous to unaccusative, passive, and in particular, ergative clause structure, and she argues therefore that nominal clauses are ergative in structure. In her view, ergative languages have deficient light verbs also, which do not assign external theta roles, nor accusative case. For this reason, external arguments in ergative languages must appear in prepositional or oblique cases such as locative, genitive, or not at all. Alexiadou also points out that ergative arguments also share another property with by-phrases in nominal clauses: they are secondary cases in that they are only possible if there is a theme expressed.

Given the hypothesis that nominalizations are ergative in N/A languages, it is interesting to ask what case patterns nominalizations show in ergative languages (see Koptjevskaja-Tamm, 1992 for many other examples). On the one hand, since ergative languages already have a deficient light verb (but see below for a different view), we might expect that in an ergative language the case system of the nominal phrase will be identical to the verbal phrase. On the other hand, we might find a sort of antipassive situation (as discussed by Silverstein, 1986). The argument which targets and eliminates the external case/argument in a N/A language, might well target and eliminate the internal case/argument in an E/A language. In the next section, I

will argue that it is essentially the latter situation we find in Niuean, though as I will demonstrate in Section 3, the data remain somewhat ambiguous on this point.

2.2. Nominalization in an E/A language

Examples of nominalized clauses appear in (13).

- (13) a. *Ne tāmāte e Tofua e kulī*
Pst kill **Erg** Tofua **Abs** dog
 "Tofua killed the dog."
- b. *ke he tāmāte e Tofua e kulī*
GoalCaP kill **Erg** Tofua **Abs** dog
 "(about) Tofua's killing the dog" (Seiter.82a.119)
- (14) a. *e tele haaku i a ia*
Abs kick **meGen** **Loc** **Art** **him**
 "my kicking him" (Seiter.89b.121)
- b. *e pākia haaku he pilu nā*
Abs injured **meGen** on knife that
 "my being injured on that knife" (Seiter.83b.119)
- c. *e fano he tagata ia ki Niu Silani*
Abs go **Gen** man that to New Zealand
 "that man's going to New Zealand" (Seiter.84b.119)

Nominalizations in Niuean can be formed by simply replacing the Tense-Aspect-Mood particle (TAM) with a CaP particle, as in (13a,b). The rest of the clause is unchanged. Another option is shown in (14a,b,c) where, as well as the TAM becoming a CaP, we also see case changes. In particular, in (14a) the argument which would be ergative in a verbal clause is expressed as genitive in the nominal clause, and the argument which would be absolutive in the verbal clause is expressed as locative in the nominal clause. Finally we see two examples of intransitive clauses in (14b,c), one semantically active and one semantically passive. In both of these, the argument which would have been absolutive in the verbal clause appears in the genitive case.

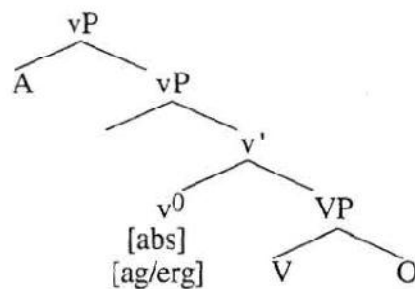
I will henceforth employ the "ASO" terminology of Dixon (1979, 1994). I will use A to refer to the agent of a transitive clause, S to refer to the single argument of an intransitive clause and O to refer to the other argument of a transitive clause. We can see that A and S pattern together in taking genitive case in the nominalized clause, hence, that Niuean exhibits an nominative pattern in the nominalized clause, as seen in (15). This was observed by Seiter (1980) as evidenced in his naming the locative case in nominalized transitive clauses "fake accusative". He states (p.302) that this case is bizarre, since it is not clear why absolutive could not be used to mark the object, as in verbal clauses. (He provides a historical discussion which we will not review here, except to note that the Niuean locative is morphologically the same as the accusative in other Polynesian languages.)

Table 1 (see Alexiadou, 1999)

	English clause	Nominalization	Niuean clause	Nominalization
A:	Nom	{PP, Poss}	Erg	Gen
O:	Acc	Gen	Abs	Loc
S:	Nom	Gen	Abs	Gen

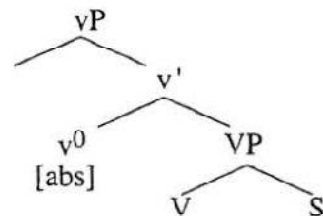
In providing an analysis of the Niuean nominalized clause, it is necessary first to show that Alexiadou's characterization of ergativity does not fit Niuean. There are two principal reasons why it does not. First, the ergative DP in Niuean does not act as an oblique or prepositional argument for any operation, such as wh-extraction, quantifier float, raising, etc. Second, the [Pred/Erg/Abs] word order of Niuean does not allow for an analysis in which absolutive moves to check case in a position higher than the ergative DP (such as in Specifier of TP, for example), which is what we would expect if the ergative were an oblique case within VP. Instead, I propose that Niuean has a rich, fully functional transitive light verb which in a transitive clause checks case (abs) against the internal argument and also assigns an external theta role along with an inherent case to its specifier position (Woolford, 1997, Ura, 1998). This is schematized in (15).

(15) Transitive Clause



What is different about Niuean (vs English), then, is that the agent receives case in situ and that absolutive is "super strong" and must be checked immediately, prior to merge of the external object, violating Chomsky's (1995) claim that Merge will always occur before Move. (Another option is that the object moves after merge of the subject, but that it "tucks in" (Richards 1997). A transitive v_{max}, then, has two specifiers, one by move and one by merge. Intransitive clauses are as in (16).

(16) Intransitive Clause

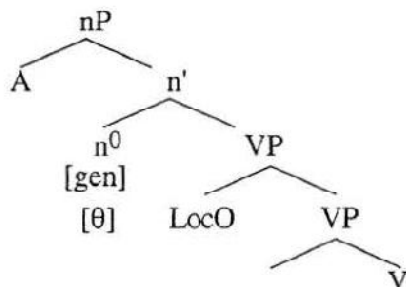


The intransitive light verb here is lacking the external case/theta package but retains absolutive case, which causes the internal argument to undergo object shift. For unergatives,

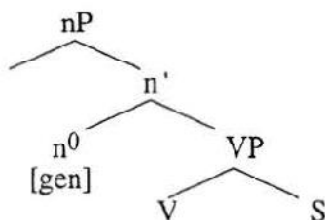
this same analysis might hold, or the single S argument could be merged directly into specifier of the light verb to maintain the unaccusative/unergative distinction (for which I have found no evidence in Niuean). Either way, all S arguments check absolutive case in specifier of v_{max}.

We now turn to nominalization clauses, where the light head is deficient, just as it is in Alexiadou's analysis. In Niuean, the light verb, more properly termed a light noun since it has such a different feature composition, is as in (17). Its deficiency, compared to the verbal counterpart lies in the absence of absolutive case. Also, in the light noun, the external case is not tied to a particular theta role, unlike the ergative case.

(17) Transitive Nominalization



(18) Intransitive Nominalization



One assumes here that the absence of absolutive case rules out the possibility for a direct object. There is no way for the internal argument to get direct case, hence it must appear in oblique locative case (parallel to the external argument appearing as a by-phrase in English nominalizations). But the question remains why it is not possible for the object to undergo object shift to receive genitive case, thereby forcing the external argument to be inexpressible as a direct argument. This is because genitive, unlike absolutive, is not "super strong", but merely strong, thus merge of the external argument will precede movement of the internal argument. When the external argument is merged, it checks genitive case. In intransitive n_{max} clauses, if there is no external theta role to be assigned, the internal argument is called upon to undergo move to check genitive case. Transitive nominalizations in Niuean are thus unergative-like in that the light noun assigns an external theta role and case, but there is no direct object, no accusative case. Instead, the object appears as a locative oblique. Alternatively we could view locative as accusative, as Seiter does, but since it has the morphology of locative, I consider it oblique. The analysis of the case of O as oblique renders Niuean nominalization different from other Polynesian languages, and also different from other ergative languages. According to Koptjevskaya-Tamm (1992), the pattern of genitive A,S and oblique O is limited to SVO N/A languages.

3. Two Unsolved Problems

The above analysis is interesting in cross linguistic terms and it accounts for the Niuean data presented so far. There are two crucial problems remaining however, which I cannot fully explain as yet. First, it is not always possible for an A argument to be expressed as genitive, in particular, a common A argument may not be expressed as a genitive. Second, it is possible, under certain circumstances, for the O argument to be expressed as a genitive argument. This latter situation is shown in (19), which, according to Seiter (1980) is a "formal" register construction. In (19), the O is genitive, and the A is ergative.

- (19) *e kotofa haaku e lautolu ke fakamatala*
 Abs choose meGen Erg they Sbjctv speak
 "my being chosen by them to speak" (Seiter.87a.120)

Each of the above facts might provoke a completely different analysis from the one presented in this paper, more in line with that of Chung (1973) who claimed that no A argument, only S arguments can be genitive in Niuean. In other words, an analysis which rules out A as Genitive is half right and an analysis which rules in A as Genitive is half right. The first would be a E/A analysis, and the second, an N/A analysis. Also, if the construction in (19) is fully admitted into the paradigm, then O can be Genitive, also suggestive of a E/A pattern.

It is not directly apparent that a common A argument cannot be ergative, since common ergative and common genitive are both marked with *he*. Nonetheless we know, as Seiter (1980) demonstrates, that the case of *he kulī* "dog" in (20) is ergative and not genitive, as the O argument in this clause must have absolutive and may not have locative case. Absolutive partners with ergative, not genitive case.

- (20)a. *e gagau he kulī kō a au*
 Abs bite Erg dog that Abs me
 "That dog's biting me." (Seiter.91a.121)
- b. **e gagau he kulī kō i a au*
 Nom bite Gen dog that Loc Pers me
 ("That dog's biting me.") (Seiter.91b.121)

The full range of possibilities in Niuean is thus as shown in (21). Note that if the genitive in a nominalized clause is proper, it can undergo preposing, just as a genitive in a non-derived clause.

- (21) **A_{proper}** can be genitive
A_{common} cannot be genitive
S can be genitive
O can be genitive but is marked, **formal**
- A_{proper}** can be preposed
S_{proper} can be preposed
O cannot be preposed
A.S_{common} cannot be preposed

I do not have an explanation for why common A arguments cannot be genitive. Seiter suggests it is not possible because the genitive *he* marking in a nominalized clause would be

ambiguous between common ergative and common genitive. It does seem suggestive that the two case markings are identical, which is not the case for proper ergative (*e*) and proper genitive (*ha*), or common or proper absolutive (*e,a*) and common or proper genitive (*he,ha*). But it is difficult to see how this could be formalized.

As for the situation with O being realized as genitive, as in (19), I depend here on Seiter's observation that this construction is a marked one, restricted to a formal register. If it is a frozen sentence type, we can explain why the genitive O, even if proper, cannot be preposed.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, if we put aside the two cases discussed in the preceding section, it appears that Niuean, an E/A language in the verbal clause, switches to an intransitive Nominative system in the nominalization system. In this, it appears to exhibit a reverse situation of that presented for N/A languages such as English, by, for example, Alexiadou (1999). Many N/A languages are said to switch from a N/A system in the verbal clause to an unaccusative system in the nominalization system. Niuean is also unusual in the typology developed in Koptjevskaja-Tamm in that it is a VSO E/A language exhibiting a pattern of nominalization found by her only in SVO N/A languages.

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