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PREFACE

Although the Austronesian Formal Linguistics Association (AFLA) has been holding annual meetings since 1994, until now it has had no consistent approach to the publication of its *Proceedings*. Papers from AFLA 2 and AFLA 14 were published as edited volumes; in other years the local organizers published the *Proceedings* in their Department's Working Papers series; in still other years no *Proceedings* was published. The 16th annual meeting of AFLA was held May 1-3, 2009, at the University of California, Santa Cruz. During the business meeting, the idea was floated that the *Proceedings* henceforth be published electronically, in a consistent format, at the AFLA website (<http://ling.uwo.ca/afla/>), which is generously hosted by the University of Western Ontario. The initial result is this volume, which has emerged very quickly indeed—less than six months after AFLA 16 was held. Our hope is that on-line publication of this and future volumes of the *Proceedings of AFLA* will enable research on the formal linguistics of Austronesian languages to reach as wide a readership as possible.

We want to thank UCSC's Linguistics Department and its Linguistics Research Center for hosting AFLA 16, the authors for submitting their papers so efficiently, and the University of Western Ontario for hosting the website at which this volume is posted. We also wish to acknowledge the precedent set by the *Proceedings of AFLA 12*, which was published on-line as *UCLA Working Papers in Linguistics* No. 12, and whose stylesheet heavily influenced the stylesheet we constructed for the *Proceedings of AFLA*.

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THE STRUCTURE OF (UN)ERGATIVES*

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This paper argues on the basis of properties of causatives in Niuean (Polynesian), that unergatives are not strictly concealed transitives as is often considered to be the case (Hale and Keyser 1993, 2002, Chomsky 1995). Instead, it is argued that agents are merged in specifier of voice, unergative subjects are merged in specifier of *v*, and objects are merged in complement of *V*. Given this view of basic argument structure, which rests on both the Kratzerian (1996) external subject hypothesis and the verb internal subject hypothesis (e.g. Koopman and Sportiche 1991), the puzzling so-called morphological ergative case system of Niuean becomes a simpler syntactically-based system in which the argument in the specifier of voice receives ergative case, and all other arguments receive absolutive case.

1. Introduction

This short paper considers causative constructions formed with the prefix *faka-* in Niuean (Polynesian), as explored in Gould, Massam and Patchin 2009 (henceforth GMP), and examines in more detail one of the theoretical issues raised by the data brought forward. In particular, I claim here that the Niuean causative provides evidence that, contrary to what is commonly assumed, unergative subjects are not merged in the same position as transitive subjects (at least in Niuean), and thus that unergatives are not, strictly speaking “hidden transitives” (Hale and Keyser 1993, 2002, Chomsky 1995:315-16). This result falls out from the conjunction of Niuean causative data with Pylkkänen's (2002) complement-size typology for causative morphemes. The analysis has further consequences also, as it allows for a straightforward account of the Niuean ergative case system; one in which the cases can be seen as being entirely in sync with the syntax, rather than being a superficial morphological idiosyncrasy. In fact, the analysis presented renders the ergative case system of Niuean almost (but not quite) trivial. In section 2 of the paper I review and augment the data and discussion of GMP 2009. In section 3 of the paper I discuss the consequences for argument structure and case in Niuean. Section 4 concludes the paper.

* The basis of this research was conducted within the Research Opportunity Program (299Y) at the University of Toronto, with funding provided by SSHRCC SRG #410-2005-1112 to Massam. I would like to thank my co-authors of this related earlier work, Isaac Gould and Philip Patchin, as well as Kyumin Kim, Yves Roberge, Donna Starks, Ofania Ikiua, and audience members of AFLA, especially Ileana Paul, Maria Polinsky, Norvin Richards, Lisa Travis, and Vincent Homer. Abbreviations used are as follows: 1—First Person; 2—Second Person; 3—Third Person; Abs—Absolutive; Anaph—Anaphor; C—Common; Dir—Direction; DU—Dual; Emph—Emphatic; Erg—Ergative; Gen—Genitive; Instr—Instrumental; Lig—Ligature; Loc—Locative; Nfut—NonFuture; P—Proper; Perf—Perfect; Pl—Plural; Pred—Predicate; PST—Past; Q—Question; Rel—Relative; Sbj—Subject; Subjv—Subjunctive; Sg—Singular.

2. Characteristics of *faka-* (see Gould, Massam and Patchin 2009)

GMP (2009) present an overview of uses of Niuean *faka-*, and outline several theoretical issues raised by the data. They base their conclusions primarily on data and discussion from Sperlich's (1997) dictionary, through a study of over 1200 *faka-* sentences from the dictionary (sourced as 'Sp'), as well as sentences from Seiter's (1980) grammar (sourced as 'Se') and various textual sources, such as *Niue: A History* (sourced as 'NAH'). In this section, I review and augment their core results.

2.1. Basic Uses of *faka-*

The canonical use of *faka-* is as a causative prefix. The most common examples consist of *faka-* prefixed to a verb, which in its non-causative use is usually intransitive; either stative (CAUSE BE embarrassed) (1a) or active (CAUSE DO fly) (1b).

- (1) a. Kua fakafuafuakelea e ia a mautolu.
 PERF *faka*-embarrassed ERG.P 3.SG ABS.P 1.PL.EXCL
 'He caused us embarrassment.' (Sp)
- b. Kua fakalele e ia e manulele.
 PERF *faka*-fly ERG.P 3.SG ABS.C bird
 'He made the bird fly.' (Sp)

Faka- can also prefix to a nominal, as shown below, to give the meaning CAUSE HAVE frills.¹

- (2) Fakafefe e tau lima he tāpulu.
Faka-frills ABS.C PL sleeves GEN.C dress
 'Sew the frills on the sleeves of the dress.' (Sp)

Faka- can also be used to form adverbials, as in (3). I set this use aside in this paper (but see footnote 3).

- (3) Liu e tama mohe mo e tugolo faka-lahi.
 turn ABS.C child sleep and snore *faka*-big
 'The son pretended to be asleep again and snored loudly.' (NAH.24)

In addition, *faka-* can prefix to a verb that is usually transitive, as in (4a), where the non-causative transitive use of the verb is illustrated in (4b).

¹ It should be noted that assigning words to word classes such as *noun*, *intransitive verb*, etc. is difficult in Niuean, as it is in Oceanic languages in general because there is much flexibility, so that, for example, a stem like *fefe* in (2) might be analysed as adjectival rather than nominal. I simply assume here for the most part the word classes provided by Sperlich (1997).

- (4) a. Kua fakateka nī e ia haana a tama he tā kilikiki.
 PERF *faka*-bowl EMPH ERG.P 3.SG 3.SG.GENLIG child LOC.C match cricket
 ‘He made his own child bowl in the cricket game.’ (Sp)
- b. Kua teka e ia e polo.
 PERF bowl ERG.P 3.SG ABS.C ball
 ‘He bowled the ball.’ (Sp)

Let us consider the argument structure of the causativized transitive verb. In the following discussion, I use the terms “original agent” etc. in a trans-sentential descriptive way, and not in a formal derivational sense. A transitive verb has two arguments. Given that the causative morpheme usually adds an argument, the logical argument structure of a causativized transitive verb includes three arguments (CAUSER, CAUSEE (= original agent), and original THEME/PATIENT), so it seems that at least one of the three arguments must be ‘demoted’ from subject/object status. As has been much discussed in the extensive causative literature (e.g. Comrie 1975, 1985, Song, 1996, 2001), the mapping strategies of such derived three-argument verbs vary cross-linguistically.² In Niuean, GMP identify two mapping strategies. The first is where the added causer argument is mapped as a transitive subject, and the causee or original agent is mapped as a transitive object, and the original theme/patient is not expressed at all. This is seen in (4), where the original theme/patient *polo* “ball”, as seen in (4b), is not expressed in the causative sentence (4a).

A second strategy for mapping discussed in GMP utilizes the instrumental applicative marker *aki*.

- (5) a. Kua fakatotō aki e ia e kato e tama haaku.
 PERF *faka*-hold INSTR ERG.P 3.SG ABS.C basket ABS.C child 1.SG.GEN
 ‘She made my child hold the basket.’ (Sp)
- b. Ne totō e ia e kapiniu.
 PST hold ERG.P 3.SG ABS.C cup
 ‘He held the cup [in his hand].’ (Sp)

In (5a), the causer is mapped as transitive subject, the causee or original agent is mapped as transitive object, and the original theme/patient is licensed by the instrumental applicative marker *aki*. That it is the original theme/patient that is licensed by *aki* is evidenced by the optionality of expression of the theme, and by the unmarked word order: parallel to the regular instrumental applicative sentence, I consider that the argument associated with *aki* appears before the other non-applied object.

The canonical use of *aki* is as an instrumental preposition or as a post-predicate applicative marker, as shown below (Seiter 1980, Massam 1998, Ball to appear), where a

² Causatives are complex constructions, and many of their properties have been studied that will not be addressed in this paper. One important property concerns the degree of fusion of the causing event and the result (Song 1996, 2001, Travis to appear). Although this may also have an impact on the structure of the causative constructions as discussed by Travis, I set this aside in this paper.

prepositional instrument can be expressed as an applied object, and the preposition appears as an applicative marker within the verbal complex.

- (6) a. Kua hele tuai e Sione e falaoa aki e titipi haana.
 PERF cut PERF ERG.P Sione ABS.C bread INSTR ABS.C knife 3.SG.GEN
 ‘Sione has cut the bread with his knife.’ (Se:243)
- b. Kua hele aki tuai e Sione e titipi haana e falaoa.
 PERF cut INSTRPERF ERG.P Sione ABS.C knife 3.SG.GEN ABS.C bread
 ‘Sione has cut the bread with his knife.’ (Se:244)

This pattern, where, in case of causativization of a transitive verb the causee is mapped as direct object, places Niuean in a minority typologically. Comrie (1975, 1985) considers that in both the canonical and the alternate mapping patterns for causativization of basically transitive verbs, the original theme/patient remains mapped as direct object and the causee or original agent is mapped to another position. Canonically, it appears in the next available grammatical role, that of indirect object, as in, for example, Turkish. Comrie also considers two other patterns, that of ‘doubling’, where both the causee and the original theme/patient are mapped as direct objects, as in, for example, Ewenki, and that of ‘extended demotion’ where the causee or original agent is marked with an oblique case, such as in Finnish, instead of the expected indirect object case. (See extensive discussion in Song 1996, 2001.) In Niuean, unusually, it seems that the original theme/patient is removed from its direct object position, allowing the causee or original agent to be thus mapped. The original theme/patient is either not expressed, or can be re-introduced as an instrumental applied direct object. (See also Kozinsky and Polinsky 1993.)

There is also a third strategy for mapping transitive causatives, not discussed in GMP, which is to map the causee or original agent as an object, as in the previous two strategies, and the original theme/patient as an incorporated object as seen below. (7c) shows the basic transitive verb (in an imperative sentence), which is causativized in (7b). (Note that in (7b), the causer/agent has been focused and thus appears in sentence initial position, preceded by *ko*.)

- (7) a. Ua fakatakitaki kato e koe haku tama.
 NEG.IMP *faka*-hold basket ABS.P 2.SG 1SG.GEN child
 ‘Don't you make my child hold your bags.’ (Sp)
- b. Ko koe ne fakafuefue lago haaku a tama.
 PRED 2.SG NFUT *faka*-chase fly 1.SG.GEN LIG child
 ‘You made my child chase away flies.’ (Sp)
- c. Fuefue e tau lago he tau mena kai
 chase ABS.C PL fly LOC.C PL thing eat
 ‘Chase the flies away from the food.’ (Sp)

There are thus three strategies in Niuean to causativize a basically transitive verb, as discussed above.

2.2. The complements of *faka-*

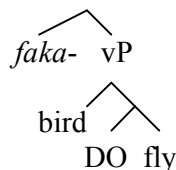
GMP conclude their paper with a discussion of the structural analysis of *faka-*, with reference to Pylkkänen's (2002) typology of causatives. Pylkkänen proposes two parameters for causatives cross-linguistically. The one relevant to this paper concerns the size of the complement taken by the causative morpheme, termed CAUS. Pylkkänen's findings are that there are three possible complements for causative heads. First, a causative might be *root selecting*. In this case, the complement of CAUS is a non-categorical root. In such cases, unergatives and transitives cannot be causativized, since in her system, these necessarily consist of a root and the categorial head *v*. In addition, no category-referring morphology can appear between CAUS and the root (e.g. the Japanese lexical causative). Second, a causative might be *vP selecting*. In this case, verb-categorial referring morphology and adverbs can appear between CAUS and the verb. The complement is only vP and not voiceP, thus no external-argument referring morphology can appear between CAUS and the verbal complement (e.g. the Finnish *-tta* causative). Finally, CAUS might be *voiceP or phase selecting*. In such cases, morphology making reference to external arguments (eg. agent oriented adverbs, high applicatives) can appear between CAUS and the root (e.g. Luganda and Venda).

On the basis of the data presented, GMP argue that Niuean *faka-* is vP selecting. It is clearly not root-selecting, as category-referring morphology can appear under *faka-*, such as the verbal prefix *ma-* in (8), as well as the reduplication on the verb.³

- (8) Niuean causative *faka-* is not root-selecting
 Faka-ma-lipi-lipi 'make (more than one thing) be broken'
 (reduplication and stativizer *ma-* below *faka-*)

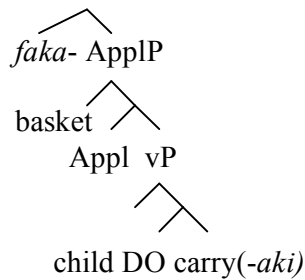
At first glance we might think that *faka-* is phase or voice selecting, since the original agent or causee can be expressed (5a). However, given that Niuean ergative case is inherent case assigned by voice to an animate agent (Massam 2006), it is clear that the complement of *faka-* is not voiceP or phase selecting, because it is never possible for an ergative (transitive) agent to occur under *faka-*. Instead, the complement of *faka-* is a vP. Furthermore, GMP claim, following Kim (2008), that this vP can be topped with an AppIP, which licenses in its specifier the original theme/patient argument of the stem verb. Their analysis is schematized in (9).

- (9)a. Causativization of a Niuean Intransitive



³ It might be possible to analyze the adverbial uses of *faka-* as cases where *faka-* selects a root, thus such stems have no argument structure, although the fact that they can be reduplicated might rule this out.

- b. Causativization of a Niuean transitive (cf. Kim 2008)



3. The Structures

GMP do not explicitly address the analysis of causatives formed on unaccusative verbs. In a way, such cases are the easiest to analyze, but once they are brought into the picture, questions arise. Let us assume (10) to be the basic structure of a causative unaccusative, such as the sentence with *fakafuafuakelea* in (1a) (where Vc is the abbreviation of voice).⁴

- (10) [_{TP} Predicate T [_{vP} Caus/Agent Vc [*<faka->* [_{vP} v [_{vP} <V> Theme]]]
<faka-V>]

Two comments are in order. First, I assume that *faka-* prefixes to the verb, by mechanisms I put aside for the moment,⁵ and the resulting *faka-V* complex serves as the predicate of the sentence, thus moving to specifier of TP as do all predicates in Niuean (Massam 2000, 2001a). Second, I adopt the view that the light *v* is present in all verb phrases including unaccusatives, and has meanings such as HAVE, DO, and BE. (See, for example, Marantz 1997, Folli and Harley 2005.)

The structure in (10) accounts for examples such as (1a), in which *faka-* attaches to an unaccusative verb. In such cases, *faka-* is clearly vP-selecting, given our assumptions. However, more discussion is now required for the unergative and transitive complements of *faka-*.

An important point here is that, as argued in GMP, the applicative argument in Niuean causatives corresponds to the original theme/patient. The core complement of a causative head taking a basically transitive clause is thus essentially an unergative phrase, consisting of a doer and the action they are doing. Such sentences are seen in (1b) with a basically unergative complement under *faka-* and in (4a) with a basically transitive complement under *faka-*. Under the causative, these two types are the same. As presented above, the core unergative complement

⁴ I do not assume *faka-* to be voice-bundling in the sense of Pytkänen 2002 since it is not necessary to express a causer in Niuean causatives. This is outlined in GMP 2009, and the issue was included in the talk version of this paper. I leave it aside in this written version, due to space considerations.

⁵ In particular, I assume that there is a roll-up derivation within vP to derive the order of the verb and the post-verbal particles, and that there is an object shift operation to bring the vP internal argument out of vP to a middle field position below voice where absolutive is assigned, and that there is a movement to Specifier of TP of the vP predicate phrase, which contains *faka-* and the vP emptied of arguments (Massam to appear). In case of noun incorporation, the (NP) object does not undergo shift (Massam 2001a).

can be topped with an applicative phrase, which introduces the original theme/patient, now as an instrument.⁶ The question then arises as to the position of the unergative doer argument. Is it merged in the same position as the unaccusative argument, that is, as complement to V as in (11)? Or is it merged in specifier of vP as in (12)?

(11) [_{TP} Predicate T⁰ [_{vCP} Caus/Agent Vc [_{vP} *<faka->* [_{vP} v [_{vP} *<V>* Doer]]]]
<faka-V>

(12) [_{TP} Predicate T⁰ [_{vCP} Caus/Agent Vc [_{vP} *<faka->* [_{vP} Doer v [_{vP} *<V>*]]]]
<faka-V>

The answer is clear when we consider the data in (7a,b) with the incorporated objects. Since Niuean incorporated objects NPs are argued to be merged in and to remain in object position, with vP fronting to Specifier of TP (Massam 2001a) the incorporated object in (7a), for example, fills the sister of V position, and the unergative doer argument must then be in specifier of vP, as indeed we would expect of an unergative argument. The correct representation for (1b) is thus (12). The schemata for (7a), with an incorporated NP object, is in (13). Non-incorporated DP objects shift out of vP to receive absolutive case, as do unergative subjects.

(13) [_{TP} Predicate T⁰ [_{vCP} Caus/Agent Vc [_{vP} *<faka->* [_{vP} Doer v [_{vP} *<V NP_{theme>}*]]]]]
<faka-V NP_{theme>}

For completeness, a causative with an embedded ApplP, as (5a), is schematized in (14).

(14) [_{TP} Predicate T⁰ [_{vCP} Caus/Agent Vc [_{vP} *<faka->* [_{ApplP} Theme Appl⁰ [_{vP} Doer v [_{vP} *<V >*]]]]]
<faka-V>

From the above, the conclusions are fairly clear. The facts argue that the complement of *faka-* can be an unaccusative, an unergative, or an unergative topped with an APPL P.⁷ The complement can never be a voice P with an ergative agent. If variations in complement choices are tied to size of complement, as in Pylkkänen 2002, the availability of unergatives but not full transitives under the Niuean causative presents a compelling argument that the agent of a transitive verb is not merged in the same position as the doer of an unergative verb (in Niuean), casting a shadow on the popular notion that an unergative is essentially identical to a transitive, with a concealed object (Hale and Keyser 1993, 2002, Chomsky 1995) Instead, an unergative argument bears a similarity to an unaccusative argument in that it is merged within vP, and not in voice. This similarity is made manifest in Niuean in that both the unergative and the

⁶ It is an interesting question, and one I will not explore here, whether the semantic role of the original theme/patient remains the same, with the instrumental applicative being used as a grammatical licenser only, or whether the role is shifted in the causative sentence, so that the original theme/patient is now an instrument instead of or in addition to theme/patient.

⁷ It is impossible to top an unaccusative phrase with an applicative. I assume this is tied to a constraint on applicatives that to be licensed, they require some degree of causation in the sentence, i.e. either voice or CAUS.

unaccusative argument receive internal (absolutive) case, arguably because both are merged below the middle field where absolutive is assigned.

The basic structures are shown below, for each type of sentence. Recall that the predicate, that is the vP remant (after shift out of vP of any vP internal DP argument), undergoes fronting to the specifier of TP.

(15) a. Transitive

[_{TP} Predicate T [_{vCP} Agent Vc [_{AbsP} Theme_i Abs [_{vP} v [_{vP} V <Theme_i>]]]]]

b. Unaccusative

[_{TP} Predicate T [_{AbsP} Theme_i Abs [_{vP} v [_{vP} V <Theme_i>]]]]]

c. Unergative/(Incorporated Object Construction)

[_{TP} Predicate T [_{AbsP} Doer_i Abs [_{vP} <Doer_i> v [_{vP} V (NP_{Theme})]]]]]

In spite of the fact that unergatives resemble intransitives rather than transitives in merging their argument(s) internally to vP, in another way, unergatives are like transitives and not like unaccusatives, in that they merge an argument outside VP. This is of particular interest in light of the history of thought about the structure of transitivity. In this paper, as has been maintained fairly consistently in the literature, unaccusative arguments are identical to transitive objects in being merged in the same position, here, as sister to V. An unergative argument, on the other hand, corresponds to a subject as envisioned within an updated Verb Internal Subject Hypothesis (e.g. Koopman and Sportiche 1991), being merged in specifier of vP, and allowing an overt object to be merged in the verb complement position: cognate objects in some languages, pseudo-incorporated objects in Niuean. However, a Niuean transitive subject corresponds to a subject as envisioned within the Kratzerian or neo-Davidsonian view of subjects (Kratzer 1996), where the agent is merged completely outside of VP (or here, vP) in the specifier of Voice. These two hypotheses about subjects have been developed to account for the same class of arguments, namely transitive subjects, and have been extended to include unergative subjects, but, at least in Niuean, it seems that both hypotheses are needed, but for two different types of subject: transitive and unergative.

Such a view of Niuean clause structure has many positive outcomes. It is consistent with the view of Niuean ergative case that it is an inherent case, assigned only to animate agents of transitive verbs. It also allows for a uniform analysis of Niuean causativization, in that *faka-* always takes a vP complement (which can have an APPI P above it).

However, there is one outcome of particular note. This analysis renders the Niuean ergative case system fairly trivial in that it accords perfectly with the syntax of the language, as in (16).

(16) Niuean case system

- a. Ergative is assigned to specifier of voice (inherently, i.e. along with the agent role)
- b. Absolutive is assigned to vP internal arguments.⁸

Since absolutive is a structural case (Massam 2005), and since arguments evacuate vP before it fronts, I have posited a middle field absolutive position, to which an internal DP argument shifts.

4. Conclusion

Niuean ergativity has traditionally been considered to fall under the morphological type of ergativity, in which an essentially accusative-based language for some reason does not reflect its structure in its morphology. Such languages raise intriguing questions: why would a language choose such a mismatch between syntax and morphology? (See Legate 2008 for one possible answer.) This short paper provides a solution to this puzzle. I have argued that unergative subjects are merged in a lower position than transitive subjects (perhaps in all languages; at least in Niuean). Once this is established, one key factor in Niuean ergativity becomes the lack of a grammatical subject (or nominative) position (Massam 2001b), while another key factor is that the internal case position is higher than vP. A grammatical subject position is a necessary ingredient for a nominative-accusative system, as it is the locus of the melding together of transitive and unergative arguments as nominative. Instead, Niuean has no grammatical subject position (Massam 2001b), and assigns inherent (ergative) case to the specifier of voice. In the Niuean ergative system, there is rather, a melding together of the unergative and unaccusative arguments through movement to the absolutive position above vP and below voice. Assuming unergatives are not hidden transitives, then once the characteristics of no grammatical subject and a middle field case position are established, the Niuean case system can be seen to simply and fully reflect the grammatical structure of the language. This argumentation rests on the Pytkäinen (2002) view that causative morphemes select specific sizes of complements.

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⁸ It might be possible to see absolutive case as the absence of case, rather than as an assigned case, but I leave this aside here.

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