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Subject and Specificity: The Case of Tagalog*

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1. Introduction

In Tagalog subjects (*ang*-marked elements)¹ are obligatorily specific while objects are obligatorily non-specific, as shown in (1).

- (1) a. *agent = subject*
m-pag-lu-luto ang lalaki ng adobo para sa asawa (=magluluto)²
 AV-pag-asp-cook ANG man CS adobo P DAT spouse
 “*The man will cook adobo for his wife.*”
 (**A man will cook adobo for his wife.*)
 (**The man will cook the adobo for his wife.*)

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¹ These are what are traditionally called ‘topics’ in the Austronesian literature. A more accurate term would be ‘structural subjects’, as I show in this paper.

² AV=Actor Voice, TV=Theme Voice, BV=Benefactive Voice, DAT=Dative Case, CS=Structural Case, asp=aspect, ANG=subject marking

b. *theme = subject*

Ø-lu-lutu-in ng lalaki ang adobo para sa asawa
 asp-cook-TV CS man ANG adobo P DAT spouse
 “The man will cook *the* adobo for his wife.”³
 (*The man will cook adobo for his wife.)

The pattern, however, does not hold for objects in the passive-like Benefactive Voice, which allows for specific objects, as shown in (2).

(2) *benefactive = subject*

i-pag-lu-luto ng lalaki ng adobo ang asawa
 BV-pag-asp-cook CS man CS adobo ANG spouse
 “The man will cook (the) adobo for his wife.”

The requirement that some elements be specific has led to the claim that these ‘subjects’ are not subjects at all, but rather are some kind of topic phrase. However, this does not explain either the obligatory non-specificity of un-promoted themes or the obligatory presence in every clause of an *ang*-marked element, since true topics are not required in every clause in the same way subjects are.

Connected to the specificity requirements, the dis/appearance of the *pag* morpheme seems to correlate with the specificity and subjecthood of the theme. *Pag* is present on the verb when the theme is not the subject, as in (1a), but it is obligatorily absent when the theme has ‘passivized’ in (1b). In the benefactive voice it surfaces again, as in (2).

An additional question is raised by Travis 2001, who argues that the reason the subject position is the target for processes such as applicativization and possessor raising in many Austronesian languages is because Austronesian languages lack a derived object position. In a more well-studied language like Chichewa these constructions seem to create objects, but in Austronesian a derived subject is created instead (subjects are underlined).

(3) a. *Applicatives in Chichewa*

Mlimi a-ku-dul-ir-a nkandwe mitengo
 farmer cut-for fox trees
 “The farmer is cutting trees for the fox.”

³ This sentence can also mean “A man will cook the adobo for his wife”. There is no specificity restriction on non-subject agents, probably due to their structural position at the edge of vP, to be discussed further below.

- b. *Applicatives in Malagasy*
 Nividian'ny lehilahy lamba ny ankizy
 PST-CT-buy-DET man clothing DET child
 "The man bought the clothing for the children." (Travis 2001)

In this paper I argue for a unified account of these phenomena. Specifically, I first review arguments from Kroeger 1993 that Tagalog subjects are not topics in the pragmatic sense. Instead, I argue that they are arguments which have shifted in a manner familiar from object-shift in Germanic languages, thus accounting for the specificity requirements on subjects. It is this shifting which puts these arguments in a position to Agree with T, which gives rise to the voice agreement pattern. From this account it follows that these languages appear to lack derived objects precisely because the derived object position is the one that leads to subject agreement on T. This analysis also captures the difference between the Tagalog voice system, which is passive-like in its promotion of an object to subject, and passive constructions in a language like English. There is no absorption of case or demotion of arguments to oblique status in Tagalog passive-like structures, and on the other hand there are no specificity requirements on arguments in the English passive. The reason that these two constructions have such different properties despite their surface similarity is because they result from different processes – passivization in English and argument-shift in Tagalog. Finally, I present morphological evidence for the existence of an EPP feature on vP which is signified by the presence or absence of *pag*. I argue here that *pag* is an anti-EPP morpheme whose absence indicates the occurrence of object-shift.

1.1. Introduction to Voice Marking

In Tagalog any DP may be the subject of the clause (evidenced by *ang*-marking on the DP), cross-referenced by agreement morphology on the verb. In (4a), for instance, the agent is the *ang*-marked element and the verb has an *m*- prefix which agrees with the agent. In (b), the theme is *ang*-marked and the verb has an *-in* suffix which agrees with this DP. Similarly, the verb in the Benefactive Voice clause in (c) displays benefactive agreement in the form of the *i*- prefix.⁴

- (4) a. **m**-pag-lu-luto ang lalaki ng adobo para sa asawa (=magluluto)
 AV-pag-asp-cook ANG man CS adobo P DAT spouse
 "The man will cook adobo for his wife."

⁴ There are more voice options than these – Instrumental Voice, Locative Voice, Directional Voice, etc. – but I will concentrate on just these three core cases here.

- b. Ø-lu-lutu-in ng lalaki ang adobo para sa asawa
asp-cook-TV CS man ANG adobo P DAT spouse
“The man will cook the adobo.”
- c. i-pag-lu-luto ng lalaki ng adobo ang asawa
BV-pag-asp-cook CS man CS adobo ANG spouse
“The man will cook (the) adobo for his wife.”

2. Not topics

Because of their obligatory specificity, it has sometimes been claimed that the *ang*-marked DPs of Tagalog are in fact topics rather than true subjects (McKaughan 1958, McKaughan 1962, Carrier-Duncan 1985). Kroeger 1993 uses the following definitions from Bresnan and Mchombo 1987 in order to evaluate this claim.

- (5) **Topics** are “what is under discussion, whether previously mentioned or assumed in discourse” and are presupposed information.

Focus “expresses CONTRAST, in the sense of Chafe 1976; it designates something that is NOT presupposed (relative to some context)” (p. 746).

As Kroeger argues, topic and focus should thus be mutually incompatible, since the same thing cannot be presupposed and not presupposed at the same time. The relevant fact here is that putative ‘topics’ in Tagalog can bear pragmatic focus. For instance, the answer to a *wh*-question carries pragmatic focus because it is new information. In Tagalog this answer is perfectly compatible with being *ang*-marked (as in (6a)) or not (as in (6b)).

- (6) Ano ba ang binili mo sa pamilihan?
what QUES ANG asp-buy-TV you DAT market
“What did you buy at the market?”

a. Binili ko itong _____ damit.
asp.TV-buy I this.ANG-LK dress
“I bought this dress.”

b. Bumili ako ng gatas.
asp.AV-buy I.ANG CS milk
“I bought some milk.”

(Kroeger 1993, p. 63)

Also, selective contrast denies a presupposition and bears focus, but it too is compatible with *ang*-marking in Tagalog, as shown by (7).

- (7) Q: Nakita mo ba si Armand?
NONVOL.asp.TV-see you QUES ANG Armand
“Did you find Armand?”
- A: Hinahanap ko si Bing, hindi si Armand,
asp.TV-search I ANG Bing NEG ANG Armand
“I am looking for Bing, not Armand.” (Kroeger 1993, p. 63)

I thus conclude with Kroeger 1993 that Tagalog ‘topics’ are not topics in the pragmatic sense.⁵

3. Similarities to Germanic

If they do not look like topics, then the question arises: What do these *ang*-marked arguments really resemble? Shifted objects of Germanic are also sensitive to specificity requirements: when specific they must shift out of their base position and when non-specific they must remain within the VP. This is strikingly similar to the Tagalog requirement that themes in their base position be non-specific while shifted or ‘subject’ elements (which presumably have moved from their base position) must be specific. This section explores the parallel by presenting the facts of Icelandic object shift, to be compared with Tagalog in the following section.

In Icelandic, specific objects shift out of VP and nonspecifics do not. Pronouns obligatorily shift (they are obligatorily specific), as seen in (8c) and (8d). Shifting is to a position to the left of VP-adjoined adverbs and negation.

- (8) a. Nemandinn las bokkina ekki
students-the-NOM read book-the-ACC not
“The students didn’t read the book.” (Thrainsson 2001)
- b. Hann las ekki bækur
he read not books
“He didn’t read books.”
- c. ?*Hann las bækur ekki
he read books not (Diesing 1995)

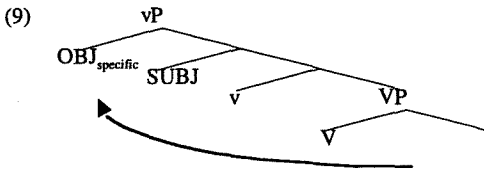
⁵Of course, even if *ang*-marked elements could be construed as topics, this would not necessarily explain anything about Tagalog clause structure, because we would still have no explanation for their mandatory presence in every clause or for the specificity requirements on themes.

d. Nemandinn las hana ekki
 students-the-NOM read it not
 "The students didn't read it."

e. *Nemandinn las ekki hana
 students-the-NOM read not it
 "The students didn't read it."

(Thrainsson 2001)

Chomsky 2001 analyzes object shift of this sort as a result of an EPP feature on vP which requires an object that Agrees with v to raise to the specifier position of v. At the level of the semantics, the position at the edge of the vP phase is assigned a specific interpretation and elements internal to vP are assigned a non-specific one. This EPP position is only present when it will have an effect on semantic outcome of the sentence, as in the case of a wh-word which must raise to the EPP position of vP in order to be able to further raise to C, or for a specific object which must raise in order to receive the correct interpretation (see Chomsky 2001 for specifics of the analysis). This analysis thus requires that any specific argument must raise to the edge of vP in order to receive the correct interpretation (the same intuition captured in Diesing 1992). A rough diagram of the resulting structure is given in (9).



In the case of verbs with more than one object, such as ditransitives, the higher argument must shift first (McGinnis 1998, Bruening 2001). So if an indirect object shifts the direct object may also do so, but without shifting the higher argument the lower one cannot move, making the relatively standard assumption that the indirect object begins in a position higher than the direct object (Marantz 1993, Bruening 2001, Pytkkanen 2000, among others). As observed by Bruening 2001, this is simply a case of movement obeying Superiority/Shortest (Richards 1997).

(10) Eg lana Mariu baekurnar ekki
 I lend Maria the books not
 "I do not lend Maria the books." (judgments vary according to intonation)

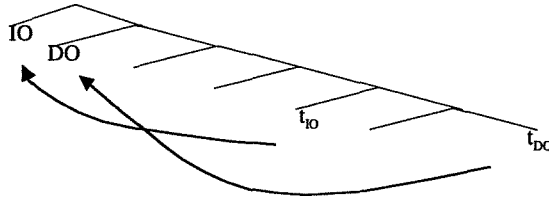
(11) a. ?*Eg lana baekurnar ekki Mariu.
 I lend the books not Maria

b. Eg lana Mariu ekki baekurnar.
 I lend Maria not the books
 "I do not lend the books to Maria."

(Collins and Thrainsson 1996)

Once the indirect object raises the direct object may raise and tuck-in – in the sense of Richards 1997 – to a specifier below it. This double-argument shifting results in a structure something like the one in (12).

(12)



4. Analysis of Tagalog⁶

Having examined the Germanic pattern, the Tagalog system now seems relatively straightforward. In fact, almost everything needed to account for the Tagalog pattern is already present in Chomsky's analysis of Germanic object shift.

4.1. TV clauses

In Theme Voice clauses the theme is the *ang*-marked argument with which the verb agrees, as repeated in (13).

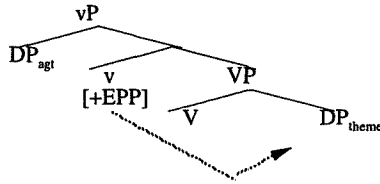
- (13) lu-lutu-in ng lalaki ang adobo
 asp-cook-TV CS man ANG adobo
 "The man will cook the adobo."

Applying an object shift analysis to this sentence, the first step is for *v* to Agree with the specific theme. Next, since *v* has an [EPP] feature in this case (because it is necessary for the correct semantic interpretation) the theme must raise to the edge of *vP* to check it. At this point, the ϕ -features of the DP are marked for deletion in the sense of Pesetsky and Torrego 2001 but are not deleted until the next phase level, CP.⁷ When the theme shifts it does not tuck-in below the agent, due to a (perhaps universal?) requirement that specifiers made available in this manner be outside of thematic specifiers, as hypothesized in Chomsky 1999, 2000.

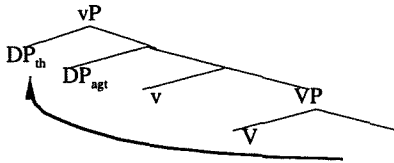
⁶ See also Richards (in progress) for a similar analysis.

⁷ See Chomsky 2001, Pesetsky and Torrego 2001, and Bruening 2001 for discussion of other cases where features are "marked for deletion" (P&T) through Agree but not erased until the phase level, and are thus free to participate in subsequent Agree relations.

(14) a

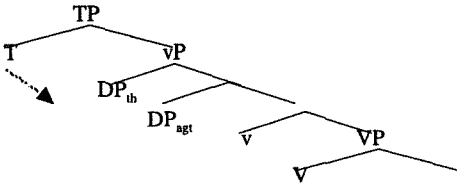


b.



The next step in the derivation is for T to be merged in above vP. Once present, T requires an Agree relation with a DP, so it probes for one in its domain. The closest DP is the theme which raised to the edge of vP, so Agree obtains between T and the theme.

(15)



Agree between T and the theme results in the spell-out of theme features on T (which is voice agreement) and *ang*-marking on the theme.

Notice that this configuration is exactly like the one discussed by Chomsky 2001 as a case where the shifted XP would block matching of the Spec (subject) with a higher probe (his (47)):

(16) $[_{ZP} \dots P \dots [_{HP} XP [Spec [H YP]]]]$

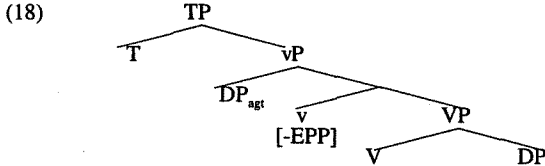
The difference is that in Tagalog this blocking does not lead to deviance, since the shifted element is free to Agree with the Probe itself, instead of just causing a crash by preventing match with the subject. In this way Tagalog actually provides a clearer case of argument shift than other languages do, since no extra operations (such as Chomsky's "TH/Ex" operation to move the shifted theme out of the way for subject Agree) are required to explain why this shifting does not in fact block Agree with the subject; it does block Agree but the result is grammatical in Tagalog. Tagalog is in this sense the more basic case while Icelandic and English are marked in not allowing this type of construction.

4.2. AV clauses

In Agent Voice clauses the theme is non-specific, which suggests that it does not raise to the EPP position of vP.

- (17) **m-pag-lu-luto** ang lalaki ng adobo (=magluluto)
 AV-pag-asp-cook ANG man CS adobo
 “The man will cook (*the) adobo.”

In this case, *v* is merged in without [EPP] feature, allowing the theme to remain in its original position within VP. When T is merged into the structure and must Agree with some DP, the agent is the closest potential satisfier of the relation, so Agree obtains between T and the agent. This Agree relation results in agent agreement morphology on T and *ang* marking on the DP.



The obligatory non-specificity of the theme in AV sentences follows directly from this analysis, because if the theme were specific it would have raised and thus destroyed the configuration necessary for Agent Voice. We thus get for free an account of the apparent specificity requirements on themes (as opposed to subjects), something which is unexplained on the *ang*-as-topic hypothesis.

4.3. Benefactives

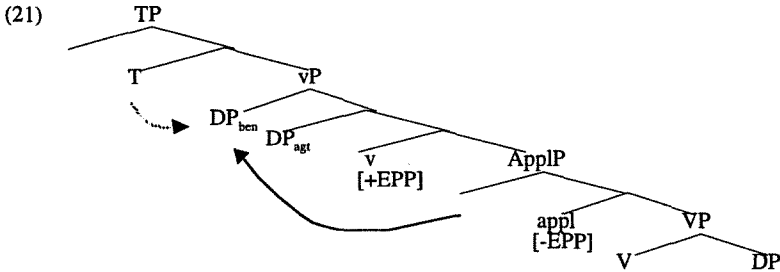
Benefactive arguments are introduced in the benefactive voice without any preposition (19a), while non-BV clause benefactives are introduced in PPs (19b)

- (19) a. **itinawa** ng lalaki ang kanyang asawa.
 BV.asp-laugh CS man ANG his wife
 “The man laughed for his wife.”
- b. ang lalaki ay tumawa [para sa kanyang asawa]
 ANG man AY AV.asp-laugh P DAT his spouse
 “The man laughed for his wife.”

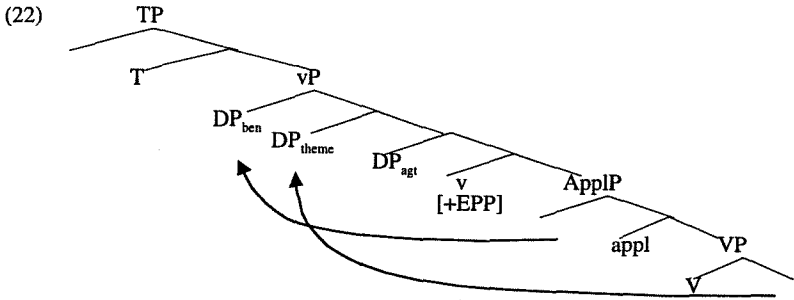
As has been noted by Pykkanen (2000, 2001) benefactives and agents are both introduced outside VP and in some sense form a class of external arguments (crucially different from internal arguments). In other words, they are introduced by the same general kind of head – vP or ApplP – which is in the range of projections above VP. In the derivation of a BV clause, I assume the benefactive is introduced in an ApplP above VP (to be explained in more detail below).

As in the TV cases, v must Agree with some DP in its domain, and when it probes for one the benefactive argument is closest. Since the benefactive is specific, v must have an [EPP] feature, causing the benefactive to raise to the edge of the phase. From there, the derivation proceeds as before: T is merged in and Agrees with the closest DP, which is the shifted one, resulting in benefactive greement on T and in *ang*-marking on the benefactive itself. This is shown in (21) for a transitive sentence like the one in (20).

- (20) i-pag-lu-luto ng lalaki ng adobo ang asawa
 BV-pag-asp-cook CS man CS adobo ANG spouse
 “The man will cook (the) adobo for his wife.”



The surprising fact that themes are optionally specific in the benefactive voice is now recognizable as just another case of tucking-in below an already-shifted object, as in Icelandic ditransitives. The theme is optionally specific in BV because once the features of v have been checked by the raising of the benefactive DP, the theme DP is free to raise to that position (if it is specific) and tuck-in below the benefactive, as shown in (22). However, even after both arguments have shifted, T agreement will still spell-out the features of the benefactive, since this is still the closest argument to T.



Importantly, argument shift in Icelandic and Tagalog seems to be constrained by exactly the same superiority condition: The higher argument must shift first in order to license shifting of the lower one. This analysis correctly predicts the impossibility of applicativized benefactives in TV, since that construction would violate superiority.⁸

4.4. The importance of *pag*

Tagalog, unlike Germanic, offers overt evidence for the various [+EPP]/[-EPP] heads which enable specificity-shift: the *pag* morpheme. This morpheme is present in AV and BV clauses and absent in TVs.

- (23) a. **m-pag-lu-luto** ang lalaki ng adobo para sa asawa (=magluluto)
 AV-pag-asp-cook ANG man CS adobo P DAT spouse
 "The man will cook adobo for his wife."
- b. **Ø-lu-lutu-in** ng lalaki ang adobo para sa asawa
 asp-cook-TV CS man ANG adobo P DAT spoust
 "The man will cook the adobo."
- c. **i-pag-lu-luto** ng lalaki ng adobo ang asawa
 BV-pag-asp-cook CS man CS adobo ANG spouse
 "The man will cook (the) adobo for his wife."

pag has been characterized as a lexical causative and seems to be connected to transitivity in some way (Travis 1999, Maclachlan 1989), properties which make it look like the head of vP (the verbalizing head where the external argument is introduced). Its position adjacent to the root, inside T agreement (as in (23)) is suggestive support for this

⁸ See footnote 9 for more discussion.

view. Also, most transitive roots take *pag* (in Actor/Benefactive Voice), (24), while the majority of intransitive roots do not take *pag*, (25).

- (24) TRANSITIVE ROOTS: *ligpit* ‘put away’, *luto* ‘cook’, *mahal* ‘love’, *nakaw* ‘steal’, *pinta* ‘paint’, *plantsa* ‘iron’, *punas* ‘wipe’, *regalo* ‘give a gift’, *sabi* ‘say’, *sauli* ‘return something borrowed or taken’, *sikap* ‘strive’....
- (25) INTRANSITIVE ROOTS: *alling* ‘become well, good’, *ganda* ‘become pretty’, *gising* ‘wake up’, *haba* ‘become long’, *iyak* ‘cry’, *kilos* ‘move, do something’, *lakad* ‘walk’, *lakas* ‘become strong’, *laki* ‘become big’, *lamig* ‘become cold’, *langoy* ‘swim’

In addition, there are several verbs which exhibit alternations: transitive with and intransitive without *pag* (cited in the AV *mag*-form). This again suggests that *pag* is in the locus of transitivity alternations, vP.

- (26) *bukas* ‘open’ (intr.) vs. (m)ag*bukas* ‘open (trans.)’
hagis ‘be thrown’ vs. (m)ag*hagis* ‘throw’
handa ‘get ready’ vs. (m)ag*handa* ‘prepare’
higa ‘lie down (intr.)’ vs. (m)ag*higa* ‘place in a reclining position’
hinga ‘breathe’ vs. (m)ag*hinga* ‘reveal one’s feelings’
hint ‘stop’ vs. (m)ag*hint* ‘stop (trans.)’
ingay ‘become noisy’ vs. (m)ag*ingay* ‘make noise’
init ‘become hot’ vs. (m)ag*init* ‘heat’
intindi ‘understand’ vs. (m)ag*intindi* ‘attend to, take charge of’

Crucially, however, *pag* is only spelled-out in the presence of an unshifted theme. For those transitive verbs that do take *pag* in some voices, it is *always* absent in Theme Voice:

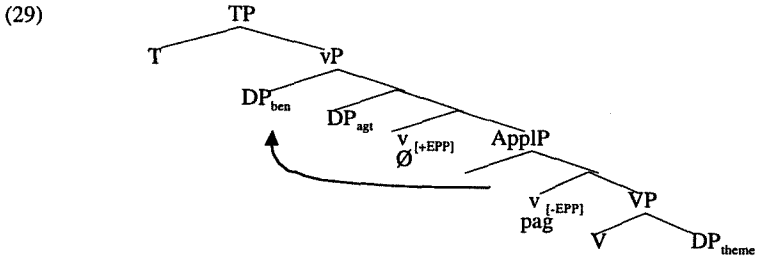
- (27) a. m+**pag**-ku-kula sila ng mga damit. (magkukula)
 AV-pag-asp-bleach they.ANG CS pl. clothes
 “They are going to bleach some clothes.”
- b. i-Ø-ku-kula nila ang mga damit
 TV-Ø-asp-bleach they ANG pl. clothes
 “They are going to bleach the clothes.” (Schachter 1972) p. 297

Given these two properties – transitivity and sensitivity to unshifted objects – I suggest here that *pag* is actually the anti-EPP version of the head of vP; *pag* is an anti-EPP morpheme. The opposite value of the feature ([–EPP]) is realized as the null allomorph.

- (28) Spell-out of *v*:
 [+EPP, +transitive] ↔ ∅
 [-EPP, +transitive] ↔ pag

The presence of an overt anti-EPP marker on *vP* provides evidence which is not available in previously-examined languages (Germanic) in favor of Chomsky’s analysis of object shift as resulting from an EPP feature on *vP*.

If this is the analysis of *pag* in the case of AV clauses, then the question arises of whether it has the same function when it occurs on BV verbs. In order to maintain the most constrained analysis of Tagalog morphosyntax, it would be best to find unified conditions on the appearance of *pag* on BV and AV verbs. As has already been mentioned, ApplP and *vP* may be classed together as basically the same kind of head, whose spell-out we might expect to be conditioned in the same way. Exploiting this similarity, I suggest that on a BV verb *pag* occurs as the head of ApplP, which has a [-EPP] feature (we know this because the theme does not have to be specific and so does not have to shift). The head of *vP* has a [+EPP] feature, evidenced by its spell-out as ∅.⁹ The derivation then proceeds in a familiar manner, with the higher [EPP] feature attracting the benefactive and being spelled-out as ∅, while the lower head has a [-EPP] feature and is realized as *pag*.



4.5. Pronouns

Pronouns in Tagalog are second-position clitics. As in Germanic, they are obligatorily specific. When both the subject and the object are pronouns, the use of Theme Voice is

⁹ The requirement for a [+EPP] feature on this head is slightly puzzling. If true, it requires that indirect objects or benefactive applicatives in Tagalog be specific, although the reason for this is not obvious. Spanish, however, apparently has a similar requirement that indirect objects, which are clitic-doubled, are specific (Karlos Arregi, p.c). There is also a preference in English for indirect objects to be specific, at least when the direct object is non-specific (?I gave a girl the book). On the other hand, some Tagalog speakers accept clauses with applicativized non-specific benefactives (Mark Cuezon p.c.), which means that, in those dialects at least, there may be no restriction on specificity for benefactives.

forced, meaning that in this case the theme must shift to the EPP position. It is ungrammatical to use the un-shifted theme, AV version of the verb, as shown in (30b).¹⁰

- (30) a. sinampal niya ako.
 TV.asp-slap he I.ANG
 ‘‘He slapped me.’’
- b. *sumampal siya ko.
 AV.asp-slap 3SG.ANG me
 ‘‘He slapped me.’’

These examples demonstrate that pronouns cannot remain unshifted inside VP. Even if they are 2nd position clitics and always move to a higher position in the morphological or phonological component, they still are impossible as unshifted objects in the syntax. The presence of a pronominal theme forces the form of the verb that corresponds to object shift

5. Clausal Subjects

The analysis presented thus far does not predict the existence of clausal subjects in Tagalog, since CPs presumably do not bear specificity features and thus should not participate in argument shift. They are, however, possible, as discussed by Richards (in progress), which presents an analysis of *wh*-extraction that actually does predict their existence in Tagalog. His analysis also arrives at the conclusion that CP subjects must move to the edge of the *vP* phase, although for different reasons than the DPs discussed in this paper.

Richards notes that extraction in Tagalog is licensed only from subjects, rather than from objects, which is the opposite of the normal pattern observed cross-linguistically. In order to extract out of an embedded clause in Tagalog, that clause must be the subject of the higher clause, (31a). It is ungrammatical to extract out of a non-promoted clause, (31b).

- (31) a. Ano ang sinabi ni Juan [na kinain _____ ni Maria e]?
 what ANG TV.asp-say CS J. that asp.TV-eat CS M.
 ‘‘What did Juan say that Maria ate?’’

¹⁰ If AV is required for some other reason (e.g. extracting the agent) a dative alternant of the pronoun may be used to circumvent this requirement.

(i) Sino ang sumampal siya sa akin.
 Who ANG AV.asp-slap 3SG.ANG DAT me
 ‘‘Who slapped me?’’

- b. *Ano ang nagsabi si Juan [na kinain ni Maria e]?
 what ANG AV.asp-pag-say ANG J. that asp.TT-eat CS M.
 “What did Juan say that Maria ate?”

Building on work by Ceplova (2001), Richards argues that CPs and DPs are transparent to extraction only if they are in a position to move to the edge of a phase (see those papers for arguments about why this should be so). Since ‘subjects’ in Tagalog are precisely those DPs which have moved to the edge of a phase, the pattern of extraction only out of subjects is exactly what is predicted by the Richards/Ceplova theory. After movement of the CP to the edge of the phase, the merger of T and the establishment of voice agreement will proceed as in the voices discussed above, with the further stipulation that moved CPs are also viable matches for the probe-goal relation initiated by T (see Pesetsky and Toerrego 2001 for a discussion of the possibility that CPs may bear phi-features and also an analysis of clausal subjects in English). The convergence of two possible reasons for movement to the edge of the phase – specificity in the case of DPs and extraction in the case of CPs – is a desirable result, since it explains the possibility of clausal subjects without necessitating a resort to specificity features on CP, which would be difficult to motivate both theoretically and empirically.

6. Conclusion

In this paper I have argued that Tagalog ‘subjects’ are the product of a combination of object shift and T agreement with the closest DP. Once they are viewed in this manner, a number of puzzling aspects of Tagalog syntax fall into place:

- The specificity requirements on subjects and objects
- The correlation between the appearance of *pag* and shifting the theme
- The lack of derived objects

In addition, Tagalog provides evidence for the [EPP] feature on vP and its presence in object shift, a feature which is hypothesized to exist in the theory of Chomsky 2001, but is not overt in previously examined languages.

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