GRAMMATICAL RELATIONS OF PRONOMINAL PREFIXES IN TOBELO LANGUAGE

Rosina F. J. Lekawael[1]

Abstract. In this paper, I presented an overview of grammatical relations of pronominal prefix in Tobelo language. The pronominal prefix carries the information regarding "who" is involved in the situation being described in a word. The pronominal prefixes do not occur in isolation, and so it is impossible to think about, talk about, or write about the pronominal prefixes out of the context of the verb to they are attached. To explain deeper about pronominal prefix, this paper contains of introduction, grammatical relations, then the pronominal prefix systems, syntax and semantic alignment.

Key words: Tobelo language, grammatical relations, pronominal prefix, syntax and semantic alignment.

Language is, in essence, a simple matter. A language is a set of symbols (words) that are used for two basic purposes: to represent items and ideas in the world and to describe situations in which the items are involved. Humans have developed a number of ways to accomplish these tasks, as evidenced by the number of different languages in the world. Tobelo, a mainland language of North Halmahera, like every other language of the world, has a unique set of rules and a grammar. This paper describes about the grammatical relations of pronominal prefix in Tobelo language. It analyzes the pronominal prefixes systems in Tobelo language. Tobelo language has special pronominal prefixes that different from other North Halmahera languages. This topic is taken based on the previous analysis of North Halmahera languages by Hendrik van der Veen (1915) and Gary Holton (2003). The analysis discussed on pronominal prefixes and grammatical relations. Most of my data, especially pronominal systems is strengthen of their writings. I realized that it is complex topic for me. As I said before that Tobelo language is special and interesting one.

The pronominal prefixes carry the information regarding "who" is involved in the situation being described in a word. In Tobelo, the

---
[1] *Rosina F. J. Lekawael adalah dosen Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggeris Fkip Universitas Pattimura, Ambon*

pronominal prefixes is part of semantic alignment, that is, stative intransitive verbs cross-reference their single argument via an undergoer pronominal prefix, while active intransitive verbs cross-reference their single argument via an actor pronominal prefix.

The Linguistic Setting

The Tobelo language (known in Tobelo as o Tobelohoka manga demo) is spoken by approximately 15,000 people, primarily on the island of Halmahera in the Indonesian province of Maluku Utara (North Maluku). Tobelo and several neighboring languages comprise the North Halmahera (NH) group, a closely related language family with no other relatives outside of the island of New Guinea.

Tobelo is spoken primarily on the island of Halmahera, located in the extreme northeast of the Indonesian archipelago, between the island of New Guinea and the Philippine archipelago. The Tobelo-speaking heartland is in the district of Tobelo, located on the western shore of Kao Bay. The district capital, also known as Tobelo, serves as a regional commercial and administrative center and is the largest settlement on Halmahera.

Together with Ternate/Tidore, Sahu, and West Makian, Tobelo and the other Northeast Halmahera languages/dialects form the North Halmahera (NH) family. This family was first recognized by Robide van der Aa (1872) and later rigorously established in Van der Veen's (1915) Rijkuniversiteit thesis. The remaining fifty or so languages spoken in Maluku and North Maluku are Austronesian. The NH family is in turn related to the Bird's Head stock, a group of approximately ten languages spoken west of Cendrawasih Bay in the Indonesian province of Papua (formerly Irian Jaya) on the island of New Guinea. These Bird's Head languages, together with the languages of the NH family, comprise the West Papuan Phylum.

The regional lingua franca is North Moluccan Malay, a local Malay variety which traces its origins to the Malay-speaking sultanates of Ternate and Brunei and has acquired many lexical and grammatical features from the NH languages. With the increase of broadcast media from the Indonesian capital, many Tobelo also have some degree of fluency in standard Indonesian. Most Tobelo speakers are conversationally fluent in Malay. However, this situation of Bilingualism is not new. Some variety of Malay has probably been used as a trade language by the Tobelo since at least the time of the sultanates in the sixteenth century.

Background Of Grammatical Relations

Among the non-Austronesian languages of Eastern Indonesia one commonly finds pronominal systems which exhibit more than one morphological pattern for indexing single arguments of intransitive verbs.

In such languages core arguments are semantically aligned. That is the two patterns for making the single argument of an intransitive verb are distinguished not only formally, but also semantically. Active or agentive arguments follow one pattern, while stative or patientive arguments follow another. The formal realization of semantic alignment in terms of the assignment of distinct pronominal prefixes for active and stative intransitive verbs is likely to be a recent feature of North Halmahera languages. The pronominal prefixes systems in North Halmahera languages have been traditionally characterized as having nominative-accussative alignment (van der Veen, 1915). However, many North Halmahera languages contain a distinct subclass of stative or objective intransitive verbs which index their single argument via the object paradigm. Tobelo, though superficially accusative displays characteristic properties of semantically aligned systems (Holton, 2003). The systems appear because of North Halmahera languages have different structure of the person-marking paradigm. This thing affects the variation not only pronominal prefixes and alignment patterns, but also grammatical relations.

The study of grammatical relations was ceded to various formal schools, such as Relational Grammar (RG), Lexical-Functional Grammar (LFG) or Government and Binding (GB). Within the syntax of a language, grammatical relations determine such things as word order, case marking, verb agreement, and the possibilities of anaphora (co- and disjoint reference) among nominal. Other approaches to grammatical relations have considered them to name classes of constituents that share clusters of properties, including most prominently structural positions or case marking. Still others have claimed that grammatical relations are primitives in syntactic theory, but are related essentially to semantic roles.

The grammatical relations are defined as the relation between the syntactic-semantic functions at the clause level, which in turn operate on the basis of what are generally referred to as semantic roles (Peterson, J.M., 1998). The grammatical relations follow an active-stative or split-intransitive pattern in that clauses with a single core argument cross-reference the single argument via subjective or objective pronominal prefixes on the verb, depending on the lexical aspect of the construction. In the most extreme case, that of active-stative, the nominal morphology of what would pass for subject is split according to semantic roles (agent, patient). In order to analyze the grammatical relational especially pronominal prefix, the examples are constructed in intransitive verbs. Intransitive verb is a class of verb which does not take an object (Thomas, L.,1993). Active intransitive verbs employ only the subjective prefixes. While, stative intransitive verbs employ only the objective prefixes, though the objective prefix must be preceded with third-person non-human subjective prefix i-.

Pronominal Prefixes Systems In Tobelo Language

The basic construction of the verb consists of prepronominal prefix, pronominal prefix, the verb base, and aspect suffix. All verbs contain at least a pronominal prefix and verb base (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuscarora_language). Before I come to the discussion of pronominal prefix, I will explain the meanings first. Prepronominal prefixes can indicate tense, direction, and location. As it sounds, pronominal prefixes identify pronouns with regards to the verb, including person, number, and gender. The pronominal prefixes do not occur in isolation, and so it is impossible to think about, talk about, or write about the pronominal prefixes out of the context of the verb to they are attached. The verb base is, generally, exactly what it sounds like: it is the barest form of the verb. This is a verb stem that consists solely of one verb root. Verb stems can be made of more than just a verb root. Aspect suffixes are temporal indicators, and are used with all indicative verbs. "Aspect" is with respect to duration or frequency; "tense" is with respect to the point in time at which the verb's action takes place. My focus here in on the pronominal prefix in Tobelo language.

Pronominal prefix refers to the core arguments of the clause. The prefix appears in the verb whether or not there are coreferential independent nominal in the clause as well, but it is referential in its own right. The pronominal prefixes show grammatical agent/patient patterning. The semantic basis underlying the system is still clear. Agent prefixes typically represent participants who are actively in control and instigating events or states. Patient prefixes typically represent participant who are affected by a situation but not in control.

Tobelo verbs are morphologically distinguished by presence of person-marking prefixes cross-referencing at least one or two nominal arguments. There is no obligatory verbal inflection other than the person-marking prefixes. Inflected verbs can be divided into three categories according to which set of person-marking prefixes is used. Transitive verbs employ both subjective and objective pronominal prefixes.

(1) to-ni-gohara
     1-2-hit
     I hit you

Active intransitive verbs employ only the subjective prefixes.

(2) to-tagi
     1-go
     I go

Stative intransitive verbs employ only the objective prefixes, though the objective prefix must be preceded with third-person non-human subjective prefix i-.

(3)   i-hi-bole
      3-1-tired
      I'm tired

Most verb roots admit only a subset of these three inflectional patterns. A large class of verbs may inflect in either the active intransitive or stative intransitive patterns.

(4)   wo-eluku
      3m-tell.lie
      He lies

Pronominal arguments are the sole locus of grammatical relations in Tobelo language. Core arguments of both intransitive and transitive verbs are unmarked for case. The pronominal system distinguishes first-person plural inclusive and exclusive. Third person singular distinguishes masculine and feminine (human). Third person plural distinguishes human and non-human. Personal pronouns are shown in the table below.

	singular	Plural
1	ngohi	ngomi (EXC) ngone (INC)
2	ngona	Ngini
3	una (nga) (MASC) mun (nga) (FEM)	ona (nga) (human) ena (nga) (non-human)

The same independent pronouns are used to reference the SA, Sp, A, and P macro-roles. This is exemplified by the first singular pronoun *ngohi* in the following examples.

(5)   ngohi to-tagi
      1SG   1SG.A-go
      I am going

(6)   ngohi i-hi-tagi
      1SG   3A-1SG.U-tired
      I am tired

(7)   ngohi to-ni-gohara
      1SG   1SG.A-2SG.U-hit
      I hit you

In Tobelo, the actor prefix is obligatory with all verbs. This constraint holds even when an independent pronoun or nominal argument is present, as the following examples demonstrate.

(8) una   wo-lio
    3MASC 3SG.MASC.A-go.home
    He went home (una lio)

(9) Johanis wo-lio
    J.   3SG.MASC.A-go.home
    Johanis went home (Johanis lio)

    In Tobelo, actor pronominal prefixes are obligatory even in imperative constructions.

(10) no-lio
    2SG.A-go.home
    Go home! (lio)

    Tobelo verbs cross-reference at least one and as many as two core arguments via a system of personal prefixes. Arguments are realized on, or linked to, some syntactic paradigms. There two paradigms of personal prefixes, subjective and objective. For intransitive verbs the choice between these two paradigms is governed by lexical aspect (Holton 1997). Active intransitive predicates cross-reference their single argument via the subjective paradigm; stative intransitive predicates cross-reference their single argument via the objective paradigm. Both paradigms index the person and number of the referent.

	Singular	Plural
1	to-	ho- (INC) mi- (EXC)
2	no-	ni-
3m	wo-	yo-
3f	mo-	
3	i-	

    The third-person singular subjective prefixes distinguish masculine, feminine and non-human. the third-person plural prefixes distinguish animate and inanimate. Both singular non-human and plural inanimate are indexed by the prefix i-. First and second person subjective inflection is straightforward.

    Dynamic, telic events cross-reference a single argument via the subjective paradigm, as in the following examples.

(11) mo-bata
    3f-jump
    She jumped

(12) mo-hángeru

    3f-sneeze
    She sneezed

The prototypical semantic agent is a controlling participant in a temporally dynamic event who also performs effects or instigates the event, as with the verb –bata jump. Other verbs which follow this pattern include the following.

(13) Controlling, performing participants of intransitive events

mo-hioru	she paddles
mo-hoho	she flies
mo-oara	she runs
mo-ohiki	she bathes
mo-olyomo	she eats
mo-temo	she speaks
mo-dumunu	she dives
mo-toimi	she shoots

Even arguments which are not semantic controllers of an event use the subjective paradigm, as with the verb –hángeru sneeze. Other verbs which follow this pattern include the following.

(14) Performing, non controlling participants of intransitive events

mo-adono	she reaches
mo-ari	she cries
mo-gegoto	she worry
mo-gehanga	she yawn
mo-gogere	she lives/dwells
mo-guroko	she snores
mo-iete	she laughs
mo-wunenge	she vomits

From these examples it is clear that semantic agency is not the governing factor determining the choice of verbal cross-reference paradigm for intransitive verbs. Events, not just actions, follow the active subjective paradigm.

In contrast, states (non-events) employ the objective paradigm. That is, stative intransitive verb cross-reference their single argument via the objective pronominal prefixes on the verb. Stative verbs still require a pleonastic subjective prefix i- to precede the object prefix. Examples include the following.

(15) i-mi-gogama
    3-3f-shiver

She's shivering

(16) i-mi-kioko
    3-3f-sleepy
    She's sleepy

(17) i-mi-puturungu
    3-3f-strong
    She's strong

(18) i-mi-bole
    3-3f-tired
    She's tired

Stative verbs may include both those with affected and unaffected participants.

(19) Stative intransitive verbs with affected participants
    Mo-darato   she is storm-bound
    Mo-gogama   she is shivering
    Mo-mongoro   she is fainting
    Mo-pehaka   she is wet
    Mo-tilibu   she is pregnant

(20) Stative intransitive verbs with unaffected participants
    Mo-dapalyu   she is depressed
    Mo-hahini   she is hungry
    Mo-hauku   she is hot
    Mo-kuata   she is strong
    Mo-modongo   she is angry
    Mo-omu   she is jealous

A substantial number of Tobelo intransitive verb roots may occur in either active or stative form, that is, with subjective or objective cross-reference paradigm. Besides, it can occur with either actor or undergoer morphology, with concomitant difference in lexical semantics. Some examples are given below.

(21)
	active	stative
-birahi	rejoice	be happy
-eluku	tell lies	be a liar
-hihanga	go astray	be lost
-kioko	go to sleep	be asleep
-lihiti	sprain	have a sprain
-modongo	fear	be afraid
-ngamo	quarrel	be quarrelsome

-tikiti   cough   cough continuously
-tohata   angry   evil

A subclass of such verb roots is a set of verbs in which the difference in construal between active and stative forms distinguishes inchoative meanings. For these verbs, the active intransitive form, cross-referenced by the subjective paradigm, denotes coming into the state described by the stative form. Thus, for each of the following three pairs of verbs, the first cross-references the single argument using the subjective paradigm and has an inchoative meaning. The second cross-references the single argument using the objective paradigm and has a stative meaning.

(22) a. wo-daluku-ohi
        3m-intoicated-DUR
        He's getting drunk

     b.   i-wi-daluku
        3-3m-drunk
        He's drunk

(23) a.   mo-hiri
        3f-sick
        She's getting sick

     b. i-mi-hiri
        3-3f-sick
        She's sick

The objective paradigm makes the same semantic distinctions as the subjective paradigm. Objective prefixes always occur together with a subjective prefix. In the case of intransitive verbs which inflect for the objective paradigm, the i- subjective prefix is used.

(24) i-hi-pehaka
     3-1-wet
     I am wet

(25) i-mi-pehaka
     3-3f-wet
     She is wet

The object person-marking prefixes are shown in the following table.

	Singular	Plural
1	hi-	na- (INC)

		mi- (EXC)
2	ni-	ni-
3m	wi-	ɑ ɑ -
3f	mi-	
3		ɑ -

Many intransitive verbs may inflect with either the subjective or objective paradigm, with concomitant difference in lexical aspect.

(26) to-birahi
     1-happy
     I am happy

(27) i-hi-birahi
     3-1-happy
     I am happy

Syntax Alignment

A formally nominative-accusative alignment of grammatical relations is found in Tobelo. It has a distinct set of undergoer pronominal prefixes which index the P macro-role. The actor prefix slot is occupied by the 3rd person non-human prefix *i* - (glossed 3A), and the verbal argument is indexed via an undergoer prefix, as in (28) below.

(28) to-boa
     1SG.A-arrive
     I arrived

(29) i-hi-maata
     3A-1SG.U-cold
     I am cold

The same undergoer prefix is used to index the P argument of transitive verbs.

(30) no-hi-tidingi
     2SG.A-1SG.u-punch
      You punched me

The *i-* prefix in Tobelo stative verbs is the same prefix used to index non-human (animate and inanimate) referents of active transitive verbs.

(31) i-boa
     3A-arrive

It (non-human) arrived

(32) ma-kapam i-ma-idulu
ART-ship   3A-REFL-turn.over
The ship turned around

However, in the case of Tobelo stative verbs the *i-* prefix has no definite reference or
antecedent. The i-prefix in Tobelo stative verb constructions functions as a nonreferring
pleonastic subject which marks the presence of an experiencer object.

Semantic Alignment

Tobelo language shows robust formal patterns of semantic alignment based on a distinct pronoun choice for active and stative intransitive verbs. The formal realization of semantic alignment seen in some modern languages is an epiphenomenon resulting from: (i) our pre-theoretical insistence on using macro-roles to analyse grammatical relations; and (ii) an underlying semantic categorization of verbs based on lexical.
The pronominal prefix systems in Tobelo language has been traditionally characterized
as having nominative-accusative alignment (van der Veen 1915). However, many North Halmahera languages contain a distinct subclass of 'stative' or 'objective' intransitive verbs which index their single argument via the 'object' paradigm. In at least some North Halmahera languages there is no syntactic evidence on which to distinguish a formal object relation which aligns P as opposed to S and A roles. Tobelo, though superficially accusative displays characteristic properties of semantically aligned systems (Holton 2003).
In Tobelo language the pronominal prefixes can be argued to be semantically aligned: stative intransitive verbs cross-reference their single argument via an undergoer pronominal prefix, while active intransitive verbs crossreference their single argument via an actor pronominal prefix. That is not to say that all intransitive verb roots may be categorized as either active or stative; in fact, many verb roots may occur as either active intransitive or stative intransitive (or indeed transitive) forms, with corresponding pronominal morphology. In spite of the close correspondence between lexical forms, active intransitive verbs in one language may be stative in another.

Conclusion

Tobelo, though superficially accusative displays characteristic properties of semantically aligned systems (Holton, 2003). The systems

appear because of North Halmahera languages have different structure of the person-marking paradigm. Verbs are morphologically distinguished by presence of person-marking prefixes cross-referencing at least one or two nominal arguments. There is no obligatory verbal inflection other than the person-marking prefixes. Inflected verbs can be divided into three categories according to which set of person-marking prefixes is used. Transitive verbs employ both subjective and objective pronominal prefixes. Active intransitive verbs employ only the subjective prefixes. While, stative intransitive verbs employ only the objective prefixes, though the objective prefix must be preceded with third-person non-human subjective prefix i-.

The pronominal prefix systems in Tobelo language contain a distinct subclass of 'stative' or 'objective' intransitive verbs which index their single argument via the 'object' paradigm. In at least some North Halmahera languages there is no syntactic evidence on which to distinguish a formal object relation which aligns P as opposed to S and A roles. Tobelo, though superficially accusative displays characteristic properties of semantically aligned systems (Holton 2003).

In Tobelo language the pronominal prefixes can be semantically aligned. Stative intransitive verbs cross-reference their single argument via an undergoer pronominal prefix, while active intransitive verbs cross-reference their single argument via an actor pronominal prefix.

References:

Holton, G. (2003). *Tobelo.* Published by Lincolm Europa.

Peterson, J.M. (1998). *Grammatical Relations in Pali and The Emergence of Ergativity in Indo-Aryan.* Published by Lincolm Europa.

Robide van der Aa, Pieter Jan Batist Carel (1872). *Vluchtige opmerkingen over de talen der Halmahera-groep. Bijdragen tot de Taal, Land en Volkenkunde.*

Thomas, L. (1993). *Beginning Syntax.* Blackwell Publisher, UK.

Van der Veen, H. (1915) *De Noord-Halmahera'se Taalgroep tegenover de Austronesiese talen.* Leiden: Van Nifterik.

Internet:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuscarora_language