

News about *no*: the role of VP-raising and maximality in Malagasy pseudoclefts

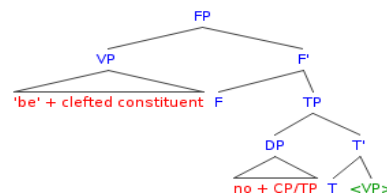
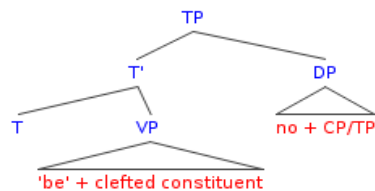
In this poster, I propose an account for the clefting of non-topics in Malagasy. Malagasy is a predicate-initial/VOS language in which the role of the subject/topic in the predicate is encoded through ‘voice’ morphology on the verb. There are three different ‘voices’: Actor Topic (Agent as subject/topic), Theme Topic (Theme as subject/topic), and Circumstantial Topic (VP adjunct or PP argument as subject/topic). Across most syntactic constructions, only the subject/topic is a target for A’ extraction. The VP-raising analysis of Malagasy’s VOS word order (e.g., Rackowski & Travis, 2000) suggests that this constraint results from the VP-remnant becoming an island when fronted.

The general structure of a cleft in Malagasy is shown in (1). The clefted constituent – most often a PP or DP – is followed by the particle *no*, followed by a clause missing the argument or adjunct that corresponds to the clefted phrase. As expected given the observation about A’ extraction being limited to topics, in order to cleft an Agent or Theme, the post-*no* clause must be in Actor Topic or Theme Topic form, respectively; this is shown in (2) and (3), with the gap in topic position underlined. Unexpectedly, however, it is possible to cleft an adjunct or PP argument when the verb is in any of the three voices, as shown in (4)-(6). (Note that the paraphrase for (5)-(8) is the same as that in (4).) In (4), the gap is in topic position, just like (2) and (3). In (5) and (6), which will be referred to as non-topic clefts, it is unclear where the gap is, or whether there is a gap at all. Further complexities include: (i) the ‘bodyguard’ construction in non-topic clefts, shown in bold in (7) and (8), in which the topic precedes *no*; and (ii) the grammaticality of a ‘head’ in topic clefts but not in non-topic clefts, demonstrated in bold in (9)-(13).

My analysis of *no* constructions has four components. First, I support Paul (2001) and Potsdam (2006), who argue that the clefted constituent is the matrix predicate while the *no*-phrase (*no*+TP) is in matrix subject/topic position (shown in (14)), much like pseudocleft constructions in other languages. Second, using the syntax/semantics of free relatives presented by Caponigro (2004), I argue that the *no*-phrase is best described as a DP-like free relative, with *no* acting as a semantic operator triggering maximality into an $\langle e, t \rangle$ complement and creating an entity of type $\langle e \rangle$. Consistent with maximality, the clefted constituent is interpreted as an exhaustive list. Third, I propose that *no* is a D that selects a CP or TP and enables a free relative to occupy the subject/topic position.

Finally, I show that a VP-raising analysis of Malagasy can provide an account of how non-topic PPs are clefted and why the ‘bodyguard’ and ‘head’ appear only in non-topic and topic pseudoclefts, respectively. (The structure given in (15) translates Paul’s (2000) cleft structure into an equivalent VP-raising structure.) Within the *no*-phrase, *no* must always c-command a gap in its complement, in order to compute maximality. The gap and ‘head’ can be straightforwardly accounted for in topic clefts: *no* selects a CP, and the embedded subject/topic, which contains a null or overt ‘head’-like set restrictor, raises to spec,CP, creating a gap. Non-topic clefts are less straightforward and require an appeal to another common construction in Malagasy – post-topic PPs (shown in (16) with the topic underlined and the post-topic PP bolded) – in which a PP escapes from the VP before the VP-remnant raises, remaining low in the clause. By virtue of allowing a non-topic PP to leave the VP, the grammar of Malagasy thus provides one other position aside from the subject/topic that is eligible for a gap: the post-topic PP position. In non-topic clefts, *no* selects a TP and maximality is computed into a low, VP-external, empty PP. The ‘bodyguard’ results from the topic raising to the next highest eligible spec, spec,DP.

- (1) [_{PP/DP} clefted constituent] *no* CP/TP
 (2) Rabe *no* manasa lamba amin'ny savony _____
 Rabe *no* wash-AT clothes with the soap _____
 'The person who washes clothes with soap is Rabe.'
 (3) Ny lamba *no* sasan- dRabe amin'ny savony _____
 The clothes *no* wash-TT GEN.Rabe with the soap _____
 'What Rabe washes with soap are the clothes.'
 (4) Amin'ny savony *no* anasan- dRabe ny lamba _____
 With the soap *no* wash-CT GEN.Rabe the clothes _____
 'What Rabe washes the clothes with is the soap.'
 (5) Amin'ny savony *no* manasa lamba Rabe
 With the soap *no* wash-AT clothes Rabe
 (6) Amin'ny savony *no* sasan- dRabe ny lamba
 With the soap *no* wash-TT GEN.Rabe the clothes
 (7) Amin'ny savony **Rabe** *no* manasa lamba
 (8) Amin'ny savony **ny lamba** *no* sasan-dRabe
 (9) Rabe *no* **lehilahy** (izay) manasa lamba amin'ny savony _____
 Rabe *no* man (that) wash-AT clothes with the soap _____
 'The man who washes clothes with soap is Rabe.'
 (10) Ny lamba *no* **zavatra** (izay) sasan- dRabe amin'ny savony _____
 The clothes *no* thing (that) wash-TT Rabe with the soap _____
 'The things that Rabe washes with soap are the clothes.'
 (11) Amin'ny savony *no* **fomba** (izay) anasan- dRabe ny lamba _____
 With the soap *no* manner (that) wash-CT GEN.Rabe the clothes _____
 'The manner in which Rabe washes clothes is with soap.'
 (12) *Amin'ny savony *no* **fomba** (izay) manasa lamba Rabe
 With the soap *no* manner (that) wash-AT clothes Rabe
 (13) *Amin'ny savony *no* **fomba** (izay) sasan- dRabe ny lamba
 With the soap *no* manner (that) wash-TT GEN.Rabe the clothes
 (14) (15)



(16) Manasa lamba Rabe amin'ny savony

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