

Another Look at *No*: Pseudo-Clefts and Temporal Clauses in Malagasy

Here I compare two apparently distinct functions of the particle *no* in Malagasy, and consider ways to subsume them under a single analysis. Typically *no* occurs in the *focus construction* (FC). Malagasy clauses are normally verb-initial, with a clause-final subject of predication (*trigger*), whose grammatical role determines the voice form of the verb (1) (*trigger* underlined). However, when a DP is contrastively focused, it appears fronted and is followed by *no*, which forms a constituent (the *no-phrase*) with the remainder of the clause (2) (Paul 2001). The focused DP is obligatorily coindexed with a 'gap', or null trigger (presumably an empty operator chain) within the *no-phrase*. Paul (2001) and Potsdam (2006) analyze the FC as a pseudo-cleft. They show that the focused phrase patterns as the matrix predicate, and argue that *no* introduces a headless relative acting as matrix trigger. This parallels the pseudo-cleft analysis of the *ang-focus* construction in Tagalog (Kroeger 1993, Richards 1998). However, while it is relatively straightforward to analyze *ang*-phrases as headless relatives (*ang* is the normal determiner marking triggers in Tagalog), this is not true of *no*-phrases: *No* does not occur as a determiner outside the FC. Also, unlike its Tagalog counterpart, the Malagasy FC can be used to focus PPs as well as DPs (3). Here the *no-phrase* appears not to contain a gap, but instead has an overt trigger controlling the voice of the verb, and thus resembles a full clause rather than a headless relative. Such sentences are an apparent problem for the pseudo-cleft analysis.

Besides being a focus marker, *no* appears to act as a clause linker in sentences such as (4), illustrating the *temporal-no construction* (TC). I present evidence suggesting that here, as in the FC, *no* forms a constituent with what follows, which patterns as an embedded clause (notice that, as in (3), the *no-phrase* seems not to contain a gap). In the TC, the *no-phrase* denotes a punctual event whose temporal span is contained within, or defines the endpoint for, the span of the event denoted by the main clause. There are various information-structure parallels between the FC and TC. For instance, evidence from question-answer pairs and scope of sentential negation shows that in both cases the *no-phrase* is interpreted as presuppositional.

After discussing the semantics of the TC in some detail, I consider how it might be structurally related to the FC. First I discuss the possibility that it is a subcase of the FC—i.e., the TC is a predicational pseudo-cleft, where the *no-phrase* is the matrix trigger. Under this analysis, (4) differs from (2)-(3) only in that the clefted constituent is a CP rather than a DP or PP. I argue that this is incorrect. Using data from clitic placement and the distribution of complementizers, I show that it is the DP preceding *no* (e.g., *aho* in (4a)), rather than the *no-phrase* itself, which patterns as the matrix trigger. From this, I conclude that the *no-phrase* in TC sentences is an extraposed clausal adjunct. Note that adjunct clauses in Malagasy are normally extraposed. Moreover, 'scene-setting' adverbs and PPs, which specify the spatio-temporal context of the event, often occur at the right-periphery of the clause, following the trigger (5).

I argue that although *no*-phrases act as subjects of predication in FC sentences and as adjuncts in TC sentences, they share the property of being interpreted as variable restrictions. Syntactically, all *no*-phrases contain a gap (an empty operator chain) and act as modifiers for null topics. I propose that Malagasy clauses contain (up to) two topics—i.e., predicate-external arguments occupying A'-positions. Most clauses contain an individual-denoting topic argument, identified by the trigger and expressing the subject of predication. In addition, stage-level clauses contain a topicalized spatio-temporal event argument E (cf. Kratzer 1995, et al.). This E argument is phonologically null, but may be modified by an overt element such as an adverbial, as in (5) (cf. Demirdache & Uribe-Etxebarria 2004). In TCs, the *no-phrase* restricts the topicalized E of the matrix clause; alongside the trigger, the *no-phrase* contains a 'hidden' gap corresponding to its own E (I assume that coindexation of matrix and embedded E is interpreted as temporal overlap). FCs like (2) contain a nominal (i.e., individual-level) predicate; since the matrix clause lacks an E, the *no-phrase* necessarily restricts a null trigger, yielding a pseudo-cleft-like construction. Finally, in (3), as in (4), the *no-phrase* contains a 'hidden' gap denoting the event argument E; the PP is predicated (in neo-Davidsonian fashion) of E, yielding the reading 'The event such that the woman wrote the letter is with a pen'.

- (1) a. Nanoratra taratasy tamin' ny penina ny...vehivavy (AT: trigger = 'actor')
 Pst.AT.write letter with Det pen Det woman
 'The woman wrote a/the letter with the pen'
- b. Nosoratan' ny vehivavy tamin' ny penina ny...taratasy (TT: trigger = 'theme')
 Pst.TT.write Det woman with Det pen Det letter
 'The woman wrote the letter with the pen'
- (2) a. Ny vehivavy_i [**no** nanoratra taratasy tamin' ny penina *a*]
 Det woman Pst.AT.write letter with Det pen
 'It's *the woman* who wrote a/the letter with the pen'
- b. Ny taratasy_i [**no** nosoratan' ny vehivavy tamin' ny penina *a*]
 Det letter Pst.TT.write Det woman with Det pen
 'It's *the letter* that the woman wrote with the pen'
- (3) a. Tamin' ny penina [**no** nanoratra taratasy ny...vehivavy]
 with Det pen Pst.AT.write letter Det woman
 'It's *with the pen* that the woman wrote a/the letter'
- b. Tamin' ny penina [**no** nosoratan' ny vehivavy ny...taratasy]
 with Det pen Pst.TT.write Det woman Det letter
 'It's *with the pen* that the woman wrote the letter'
- (4) a. Nandoko ny trano aho [**no** nandalo ny...namako]
 Pst.AT.paint Det house 1sg Pst.AT.pass Det friend.1sg
 'I was painting the house when my friend passed by'
- b. Nijery fahitalavitra Rakoto [**no** injay naneno ny...telefaonina]
 Pst.AT.look:at television Rakoto voilà Pst.AT.ring Det telephone
 'Rakoto was watching television when suddenly the phone rang'
- (5) Nanoratra taratasy ny...vehivavy *omaly*
 Pst.AT.write letter Det woman yesterday
 'The woman wrote a/the letter yesterday'

- Demirdache, H. & M. Uribe-Etxebarria. (2004). The syntax of time adverbs. *The Syntax of Time*, ed. Guéron and Lecarme. MIT Press.
- Kratzer, A. (1995). Stage-level and individual-level predicates. *The Generic Book*, ed. Carlson and Pelletier. University of Chicago Press.
- Kroeger, P. (1993). *Phrase Structure and Grammatical Relations in Tagalog*. CSLI.
- Paul, I. (2001). Concealed pseudo-clefts. *Lingua* 111, 707-727.
- Potsdam, E. (2006). The cleft structure of Malagasy wh-questions. *Clause Structure and Adjuncts in Austronesian Languages*, ed. Gärtner, Law, and Sabel. Mouton de Gruyter.
- Richards, N. (1998). Syntax vs. semantics in Tagalog wh-extraction. *UCLA Occasional Papers in Linguistics* 21: *Recent Papers in Austronesian Linguistics*, ed. M. Pearson. UCLA.