

Matters of locality in exceptional Tagalog A'-extraction

OVERVIEW A central topic in research on the syntax of Tagalog and related languages is the restriction on A'-extraction, whereby only nominative arguments can be targeted for such processes. This paper investigates a broad range of attested exceptions to the nominative-only extraction restriction together, and argues that seemingly disparate behavior can in fact be understood in a systematic way that in turn informs the analysis of Tagalog A'-extraction in general. Specifically, I argued that A'-dependencies targeting any kind of DP is subject to a locality restriction whereby the target must either (i) have escaped the thematic domain (*vP*, *aP*, etc.) through independently available means, or (ii) appear in reduced environments that lack an inflectional layer. Thus, we arrive at an account of Tagalog A'-extraction that unifies the cases that conform to the restriction with those that do not.

RESTRICTION AND EXCEPTION It is widely known and reported that for an Actor Voice clause like (1), relativization can target the nominative agent (2), but not the genitive theme (3).

- (1) Uminom ang aso ng tubig (2) aso=ng uminom ng tubig (3)*tubig na uminom ang aso
 drank.AV NOM dog GEN water dog=LK drank.AV GEN water water LK drank.AV NOM dog
 'The dog drank water.' 'dog that drank water' ('water the dog drank')

Exceptions to the restriction comprise two broad classes: (i) those targeting adjuncts and oblique arguments—which are structurally distinct from examples like (2), and have been argued to involve distinct formation mechanisms (Aldridge 2002; Hsieh 2020)—and (ii) those targeting genitive arguments, which are structurally parallel to the canonical cases, and form the focus of this paper. Examples of the latter class include relativization of a possessor (4), and of a genitive agent (5).

- (4) guro=ng tumatahol [ang aso <ng guro>] (5)?aso=ng ininom <ng aso> ang tubig
 teacher=LK barking.AV NOM dog GEN teacher dog=LK drank.PV GEN dog NOM water
 'teacher whose dog is barking' 'dog that drank the water'

INDEPENDENT MOVEMENT I claim that exceptions like (4-5) can be accounted for and unified with the nominative-targeting cases by assuming that extraction in Tagalog is licensed by the following independently available movement processes: (A) promotion of an argument to the nominative-marked position, deriving the canonical extraction behavior in (2); and (B) an understudied process that I call GENITIVE INVERSION, whereby pronominal agents and possessors appear in a pre-verbal or pre-nominal position (6-7).

- (6) **Aking** bibilhin <ko> ang damit. (7) Malinis [ang **aking** damit <ko>].
 1SG.LK will.buy.PV 1SG.GEN NOM clothes clean NOM 1SG.LK clothes 1SG.GEN
 'I will buy the clothes.' 'My clothes are clean.'

Genitive inversion derives an asymmetry in accessibility between internal and external arguments. Although examples like (3) that target genitive themes are ill-formed, it has been observed (Pizarro-Guevara and Wagers 2018) that extraction of genitive agents is possible, if marked (5). Since genitive inversion is only possible with external but not internal arguments, this movement can only feed satisfaction of locality for external arguments, deriving the asymmetry.

I further propose that genitive inversion is necessary to derive the patterns under consideration, and that the inherently high base position of the external argument is not sufficient for satisfying locality (contra Erlewine and Lim 2018 for Bikol). Consider possessor subextraction, which has been observed to be possible only out of nominative arguments, as in (4) (Ceña 1979). Such

extraction is impossible out of other arguments, including in-situ genitive agents, as in (8). This is explained, as only nominative arguments can simultaneously escape the thematic domain as well as allow for internal genitive inversion of the possessor. (I provide further details in the talk.)

- (8) *guro=ng ininom [ng aso <ng guro>] ang tubig
 teacher=LK drank.PV GEN dog GEN teacher NOM water
 ('teacher whose dog drank the water')

More generally, multiple instances of the two movements also systematically derive other extraction configurations. Notably, long-distance extraction and the known restrictions on the voice form of the matrix verb (see [Rackowski and Richards 2005](#)) are accounted for as two instances of promotion to nominative for targeting an embedded nominative argument, or as genitive inversion and promotion to nominative for targeting an embedded genitive agent.

REDUCED STRUCTURE Aside from the above movement processes, reduced structure also plays a role. In environments that lack a true inflectional layer, such as the recent perfective form, no escape is necessary. Thus, while such environments typically lack the movement operations described above, both agents and themes can undergo extraction out of them ([McGinn 1988](#)).

- (9) baboy na kai~inom lang <ng b.> ng tubig (10) tubig na kai~inom lang ng baboy <ng t.>
 pig C RPFV~drink only GEN GEN water water C RPFV~drink only GEN pig GEN
 'pig that has just drunk (the) water' 'water that the pig has just drunk'

Crucially, the absence of the inflectional layer and unavailability of the movement operations do not necessarily go hand in hand. Various intensified adjective forms in Tagalog uniformly lack a nominative argument (11) and do not allow genitive inversion (12).

- (11) {Napaka-/Kay/Ang} taba ng baboy! (12) *Aking {napaka-/kay/ang} taba <ko>!
 very- KAY ANG fat GEN pig 1SG.LK very- KAY ANG fat 1SG.GEN
 'The pig is {so/very} fat!' ('I'm {so/very} fat!')

However, these constructions differ whether or not they contain (adjectival) inflectional structure. For instance, only the *ang*-adjective form can bear plural marking (13-14). The current proposal thus predicts extraction to be possible only with *napaka*- and *kay*-adjectives, and not with *ang*-adjectives, as the latter construction both (i) contains an inflectional layer, and is thus not sufficiently reduced, and (ii) lacks the necessary movement operations to license extraction (i.e., promotion to nominative, genitive inversion). We see in (15-16) that this prediction is borne out.

- (13) *{Napaka-/Kay} ta~taba nila! (14) Ang ta~taba nila!
 very KAY PL~fat 3PL.GEN ANG PL~fat 3PL.GEN
 'They're {very/so} fat!' 'They're so fat!'
 (15) baboy na {napaka-/kay} taba (16) *baboy na ang taba
 pig LK very- KAY fat pig LK ANG fat
 'pig that is {very/so} fat' ('pig that is so fat')

REFERENCES Aldridge, E. 2002. Nominalization and Wh-movement in Seediq and Tagalog. *Lang. & Linguist.* 3; Ceña, R. 1979. Tagalog counterexamples to the Accessibility Hierarchy. *Studies in Phil. Linguist.* 3; Hsieh, H. 2020. Beyond nominative: A broader view of A'-dependencies in Tagalog. PhD Diss., McGill; McGinn, R. 1988. Government and Case in Tagalog. *Studies in Austronesian Linguist.* Ohio U. P.; Pizarro-Guevara, J and Wagers M. 2018. Agent extraction under patient voice in Tagalog is acceptable... *AFLA* 25; Rackowski, A & Richards, N. 2005. Phase edge and extraction: A Tagalog case study. *Linguistic Inquiry* 36.