

**Javanese Object Voice as an undergoer topic construction: Insights from PPs**

Surabaya Javanese, like many other Indonesian-type languages, possesses an Object Voice (OV) construction characterized by (i) null voice morphology, (ii) fronting of the theme, and (iii) an initiator proclitic obligatorily attached to the verb; the proclitic shows restrictions in person and number: it can only be a first or second person singular pronoun, as seen in (1b).

- (1) a. Siti ng-rangkul anak iku. [AV] b. Anak iku tak/mbok/\*di=rangkul [OV]  
 Siti AV-hug child that child that 1SG/2SG/\*3SG=hug  
 ‘Siti hugged that child.’ ‘I/you/\*he hugged that child.’

Drawing on new data, I argue that this construction is best analyzed an undergoer topic construction, whereby the fronted theme is a topic located in an  $\bar{A}$ -position, contra previous subject analyses for the theme in typologically similar languages, e.g., Acehnese (Legate 2014), Indonesian (Aldridge 2004), Balinese (Natarina 2018), and Central Javanese (Nurhayani 2014). I then demonstrate that the fronted theme mirrors what is conventionally termed ‘subject’ or ‘pivot’ in Philippine-type languages in several important regards.

Surabaya Javanese thus confirms and extends Cole et al.’s (2008) claim that some Indonesian-type languages manifest Philippine-type grammar in their core syntax.

**Javanese OV as an undergoer topic construction.** The fronted theme in Surabaya Javanese’s OV construction behaves like a topic and not a subject in three important regards. **First**, it can surface as a reflexive of the initiator (2) but not vice versa, as observed also in Indonesian (Arka & Manning 1998:7).

- (2) a. [Awak-ku dewe] tak=senengi. [OV] b. [Awak-mu dewe] mbok=benci [OV]  
 [body-1SG self] 1SG=like-I [body-2SG self] 2SG=hate  
 ‘I like myself.’ ‘You dislike yourself.’

Such a binding relation is expected if the fronted theme is a topic, as  $\bar{A}$ -operations such as topicalization are expected to reconstruct for Principle C. If, however, the fronted theme lands in the subject position, this binding relation is unexpected given that promotion-to-subject would in principle rearrange the binding relations in the clause and create a new binder.

**Second**, the sentence-initial position of this construction can be filled either by a DP (2) or by a PP that embeds a **locative, instrument, reason, or beneficiary** phrase. In the latter cases, the theme DP stays in situ postverbally, illustrated in (4a-d).

- (4) a. **Ambek paku** tak=pasang gambar-e. b. **Nang Jakarta** tak=kirim surat-e.  
**with nail** 1SG=hang picture-DET **to Jakarta** 1SG=send letter-DET  
 ‘I hung the picture with a nail.’ ‘I sent the letter to Jakarta.’  
 c. **Mergo alkohol** tak=tendang wong iku. d. **Kanggo koen** tak=bukak-no lawang-e.  
**because alcohol** 1sg=kick person that **for 2SG** 1SG=open-APPL door-DET  
 ‘I kicked that person because of alcohol.’ ‘I opened the door for you.’

The fact that the sentence-initial slot in this construction can be occupied by a PP argues directly against analyzing it as a subject position and lends support to an  $\bar{A}$ -topic analysis.

**Third**, the fronted phrase must be definite and specific (5a), which follows consistently from the topic analysis of the theme. In line with this claim, the initiator in Javanese AV constructions (i.e. agent topic constructions under the current analysis) imposes the same constraint, as seen in (5b).

- (5) a. Tas-\*(e) tak=guwak. b. Wong \*(iku) ng-edol omah-ku.  
 bag-\*(DET) 1SG=throw person \*(DEM) AV-sell house-1SG  
 ‘I have thrown the/\*a bag.’ ‘The/\*a man sold my house.’

Despite other standard diagnostics (e.g. quantifier-variable binding, quantifier floating, crossover effects) are inapplicable here for examining the nature of the theme in the Javanese OV construction due to the person/number restrictions on the initiator clitic, the three

