The Clause Structure of Malagasy:

A Minimalist Approach

by

Matthew Pearson

UCLA Department of Linguistics 405 Hilgard Avenue Los Angeles, California 90095-1543

pearson@humnet.ucla.edu

2001

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the clause structure and word order of Malagasy within the framework of Chomsky's (1995) Minimalist Program and Kayne's (1994) Antisymmetry Theory. In particular, I focus on the status of the clause-final *external argument* (EA), conventionally analyzed as a nominative case-marked *subject*. I consider two major questions about this constituent: What hierarchical position does the EA occupy in the clause structure, and why does it surface in a right-peripheral linear position, following the predicate?

With regard to its syntactic status, I argue that the EA is not a *subject*, but a *topic*, similar in its distribution to clause-initial topics in verb-second languages like Icelandic. I propose that EAs undergo A'-movement to the specifier of a TopP (*topic phrase*) projection, located above tense and below the position of the complementizer. Concerning word order, I show that the right-peripheral position of the EA can be derived via leftward movement of the predicate phrase over the EA in SpecTopP, in a manner consistent with Kayne's Linear Correspondence Axiom. I suggest that predicate-fronting is triggered by the same lexical requirements responsible for T-to-C raising in Icelandic and other languages. The difference is that in Malagasy, unlike in Icelandic, T^0 does not constitute an independent morphological word, and so it cannot be moved without causing the derivation to crash at PF. Since T^0 -movement is unavailable, TP-movement is employed instead. Malagasy may thus be regarded as the phrasal-movement analogue of a verb-second language.

The manuscript is divided into four chapters. In chapter 1 I summarize my analysis and discuss my theoretical assumptions. In chapter 2 I give an overview of Malagasy word order, clause structure, and morphology. I also offer a tentative treatment of the Malagasy voicing system, which I equate with wh-agreement in Chamorro and other languages. In chapter 3 I present evidence from reconstruction and locality effects to show that the EA position behaves as an A'-position rather than a case position, strongly suggesting that the EA is a topic-like element rather than a subject. I also provide an alternative analysis of the well-known wh-extraction restriction in Malagasy. Finally in chapter 4 I discuss my XP-movement analysis of EA-final word order. I cite evidence in favor of this analysis from two domains, speech-act particle placement and word order in embedded clauses.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	ii
Preface	vi
List of abbreviations	viii

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.0. The proposal	1
1.1. Preliminary theoretical assumptions	4
1.1.1. Features and derivations	4
1.1.2. Phrase-structure building, movement, and syntactic relations	6
1.1.3. C-command and the Linear Correspondence Axiom	8
1.2. Outline of the thesis	13

Chapter 2. Predicate-argument structure and verbal morphology

16
17
23
23
26
28
34
38
39
40
47
51
55
57
59

2.4.3. Accusative- and nominative-pivot morphology	62
2.4.4. Applicative formation and the dative- and circumstantial-pivot	66
2.4.5. Voice-marking and wh-agreement: Malagasy versus Chamorro	76
2.5. Summary of chapter 2	79

Chapter 3. *Externalization as A'-movement*

3.0. Introduction	80
3.1. Externalization and the structure of the left-periphery	83
3.1.1. The external argument: Subject or topic?	84
3.1.2. External arguments and V2 topics compared	87
3.1.3. Externalization as movement to SpecTopP	91
3.2. Externalization, reconstruction, and binding	98
3.2.1. The obligatory reconstruction of external arguments	99
3.2.2. Against an A-movement account of binding phenomena	102
3.2.3. The absence of weak crossover	104
3.3. Externalization out of embedded clauses	112
3.3.1. Long-distance externalization and voicing restrictions	113
3.3.2. Long-distance externalization as clausal pied-piping	120
3.4. Voicing restrictions reconsidered	127
3.4.1. Operator movement blocks externalization: Relative clauses	128
3.4.2. Constituent focus as clefting	133
3.4.3. Topic-fronting	139
3.4.4. Topicalization/clefting of non-DPs and the absence of blocking	141
3.5. The subject-like properties of EAs reconsidered	149
3.5.1. Case-marking on pronouns	149
3.5.2. Raising-to-object	150
3.6. Summary of chapter 3	160

Chapter 4. Word order and clause structure

4.0.	Introduction	162	

4.1. Prev	ious accounts of Malagasy clause structure	165
4.2. An X	P-movement analysis of Malagasy word order	171
4.2.1.	Deriving EA-final order through phrasal movement	172
4.2.2.	The position of clause-final adverbials	179
4.2.3.	The position of extraposed clauses	182
4.3. Pred	icate-initial order and verb-second order	186
4.3.1.	The structure of verb-second clauses	188
4.3.2.	Malagasy order as the XP-movement analogue of V2	196
4.3.3.	Raising into the C-domain as feature inheritance	198
4.3.4.	Generalized pied-piping and X ⁰ - versus XP-adjunction	203
4.4. Evid	ence for predicate raising	208
4.4.1.	The question particle as a second-position element	209
4.4.2.	Inverted order in embedded clauses	224
4.5. Sum	mary of chapter 4	242

Bibliography

244

PREFACE

This manuscript is a revised version of my Ph.D. dissertation, completed in December of 2000. Numerous changes, both major and minor, have been made to the organization and analysis. An expanded version is planned for later this year, which will include further refinements to the analysis of the Malagasy voicing system given in chapter 2, as well as an additional chapter covering the derivation of word order within the predicate phrase.

There are many people who contributed in different ways to this work, and I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge them: Special thanks go to the co-chairs of my dissertation committee, Tim Stowell and Ed Keenan. To Ed I owe a tremendous debt for reintroducing me to Malagasy, for putting me in touch with native speakers, for finding me texts and sources, for keeping me honest about the data, and for his unending encouragement and enthusiasm. His love of Malagasy, and his sheer delight in finding out new things about it, are truly infectious. I am also immensely grateful to Tim for taking over as my day-to-day thesis advisor when Ed's duties as department chair became overwhelming. Tim is the one who talked me through the writing process step by step, made sure I stayed on track, gave exquisitely detailed comments on every draft, comforted me when I was feeling discouraged, and generally kept me from losing it. His influence—and in particular his insistence on clarity and good organization—shaped the evolution of the dissertation from the beginning. My ideas, my argumentation, my presentation, even my punctuation, have all been improved considerably by working with him.

Many thanks to my other committee members as well: Thanks to Hilda Koopman, for teaching me so much about how to do linguistics, and for helping me to stay focused by asking the right questions. And thanks to Claudia Parodi for being there when I needed her.

Of course, there would be no dissertation without the generosity of the Malagasy native speakers who gave me their time and knowledge. I would especially like to thank Noro Ramahatafandry Brady, my consultant for the last six years, for her patience, interest, and good humor, and for making the hour-long drive from La Cañada to Westwood every week so that I could torture her with quantifier scope judgements. *Misaotra betsaka tompoko!* Also, a big *misoatra* to Andrianaivo Fidiniaina ("Fidy") for answering all those emails, and to Saholy Hanitriniaina for some much-needed second opinions. Thanks should also go to Charles Randriamasimanana, Jeannot-Fils Ranaivoson, Haga Ramahatafandry, Roger-Bruno Rabenilaina, and Cécile Manoro-hanta, for occasional judgements and important insights. All errors of fact and interpretation are of course my own. (While I'm at it, thanks to D'Gary, Dama Mahaleo, Rossy, Tarika Sammy, Jaojoby, Mama Sana, Tarika Rakoto Frah, and Tarika Ramilison for providing an appropriate soundtrack to my dissertation-writing experience.)

Thanks to all the professors under whom I worked and studied while at UCLA and elsewhere: Anna Szabolcsi, Anoop Mahajan, Dominique Sportiche, Donca Steriade, Bruce Hayes, Susie Curtiss, Ed Stabler, Pat Keating, and Mark Baker. Thanks to Richard Kayne, Marcel den Dikken, Peter Svenonius, Anders Holmberg, Guglielmo Cinque, and Sjef Barbiers for their interest and encouragement. And thanks as well to John Haviland and Paul Kroeber for getting me started in linguistics in the first place.

I have learned a great deal about Malagasy by exchanging information and insights with Ileana Paul and Lisa Travis. Many thanks to them, and to my other Austronesianist colleagues (Norvin Richards, Miriam Meyerhoff, Diane Massam, Paul Lassettre, Andrea Rackowski, and many others) for lots of interesting, entertaining, and useful discussions. Thanks to my fellow students at UCLA and environs: Victoria Anderson, Tonia Androutsopoulou, Mary Baltazani, Gerhard Brugger, Leston Buell, Joe Buffington, Ivano Caponigro, Katherine Crosswhite, Peter Hallman, Chai-Shune Hsu, John Foreman, Ed Garrett, Matt Gordon, Henk Harkema, Roland Hinterhölzl, Murat Kural, Felicia Lee, Deo Ngonyani, Michael Nkemnji, Brian Potter, Marcus Smith, Temmi Szalai, Nhlanhla Thwala, Harrold Torrence, Stefano Vegnaduzzo, and Kie Zuraw (not to mention Brian Zuraw, who gave me a place to live for three months). And for making my year in Wisconsin such a blast, thanks to Monica Macaulay and Joe Salmons, Hooi-Ling Soh, Mürvet Enç, Becca Kavanagh, Marianne Milligan, Jason Roberts, Chris Reyes, Katie Paul, Ed Himelblau, Jackie Drummy, Andrew Sihler, and Richard Ganoung and Norm Eberhardt.

Thanks to the friendly linguistics department staff, John Bulger, Patrick Manalastas, and Natasha Brown Levy, for doing a million tiny favors for me, and for making sure I didn't lose my way in the maze of UCLA bureaucracy. And a special thanks to Anna Meyer, for bailing me out of more jams than I care to remember.

Thanks to friends, past and present, for keeping me sane all these years: Michael Albanese, Paul Anderson, Molly Barham, Rajesh Bhatt, Sally Caves, Heather Cleary, John Coulter, Mike Crewdson, Bill Doebler, Dirk Elzinga, Elinor Friedberg, Peter Hammond, Insung Hwang, Julie Landweber, John Lewis, Eric Lynxwiler, Gaurav Mathur, Phil McKinley, Dennis Miles, Derek Milne, Antone Minard, Benjamin Munson, David Pendleton, Tony Pi, Sahondra Rabenarivo (my first Malagasy consultant), Jeff Scott, Jim Senter, Rachel Shaw, Juliette Wells, Rodney Yoder, Sam Zinner, the crew on CONLANG, and of course Rocky.

Thanks to my parents Sybil Mooney and Steve Pearson, and to Robyn Hunt and Michael Mooney, for all their love and support. Thanks to my brother and roommate Justin. And thanks to my grandfather, C. Robert Pearson, who's been waiting for this for *years*.

Finally, thanks to Daniel for your love and emotional support, for running all those errands, for believing I would finish even when I didn't believe it myself, and for changing my life in every conceivable way. I love you very much!

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1ex	first person plural exclusive	Foc	focus particle
1 in	first person plural inclusive	FS	free state
1s	first person singular	Fut	future tense particle
2p	second person plural	Imp	imperative
2s	second person singular	Incpl	incompletive
3	third person (singular or plural)	Inf	infinitive
3p	third person plural	Irr	irrealis tense/mood
3s	third person singular	Lnk	linking morpheme
Acc	accusative case	М	masculine
AccP	accusative-pivot voice	Neg	negative marker
Ag	agent phrase	Nom	nominative case
Appl	applicative morpheme	NomP	nominative-pivot voice
Aux	auxiliary	Obj	object, objective case
Comp	complementizer	Obl	oblique prefix
Cpl	completive	Perf	perfective aspect
CrcP	circumstantial-pivot voice	Pres	present tense
CS	construct state	Pst	past tense
Dat	dative case	Qu	yes/no question particle
DatP	dative-pivot voice	Recip	reciprocal prefix
Det	determiner	Redup	reduplicated stem
Emph	emphatic particle	Rel	relativizer
Encl	enclitic	Subj	subject
Erg	ergative case	Тор	topic particle
Excl	exclamatory particle	TrnP	translative-pivot voice
F	feminine	Wh	wh-expletive/operator