Relation Changing Affixes in the Philippines

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1 Introduction

A popular view of the Philippine relation changing affix system (RCA-system) is that the affixes mark different voices and that the Philippine system is underlyingly ergative (Gerdts 1988, de Guzman 1998, Aldridge 2004). In the descriptive literature, the Tagalog infix *-in-*, appearing after the first consonant of the verb in (5) is an "object focus" affix, which places the transitive patient under some kind of privileged information structural position (of an uncertain nature, though probably something like givenness and quite unlike what is called "focus" in pragmatics) which is often called the "pivot". In contrast, the infix *-um-*, appearing after the first consonant of the verb in (6) is an "actor focus" affix, placing the actor as the "pivot". If the transitive object is a "pivot", it is interpreted as specific or wide-scope. If the transitive patient is not a pivot, it is non-specific or narrow scope (subject to some complications, discussed later). Actors are always specific in Tagalog. Tagalog pivots are marked with the determiner or case marker *ang*. Subcategorised arguments which are not pivots are marked with *ng* (pronounced "nang").

(1)   *B⟨in⟩ili ng lalaki ang bahay*
       buy.OF   NG man   ANG house
       'The man bought the house.'

(2)   *B⟨um⟩ili ang lalaki ng bahay*
       buy.AF   ANG man   NG house
       'The man bought a house.'

On the face of it, the alternation between *-um-* and *-in-* is accompanied by switching *ang* and *ng* marking on the actor and patient. Under the ergative view, (5) is a regular transitive sentence, and (6) is an antipassive, that is, intransitivisation of a transitive verb via the demoting of the patient argument. From a typological perspective, Tagalog makes for a very unusual ergative language, and Tagalog actor focus morphology is an unusual antipassive. I discuss problematic data for the ergative/antipassive analysis of the Tagalog RCA-system more fully in the next section. Most prominent is that the putative "antipassive" does not seem to demote the patient argument, rather, the patient retains a core argument status.

Ilokano (Northern Philippines) provides a slightly different picture. Ilokano does not draw a distinction in its determiners between pivot core arguments and non pivot core arguments, both are marked with *ti*. DP arguments of object focus are therefore not morphologically distinguished. Actor focus verbs may either be marked with oblique marking (the determiner *iti*), or with the core argument marker *ti*. In both cases, the argument is interpreted as indefinite (as in Tagalog).

(3) *G⟨in⟩atang ti balay ti lalaki*
     buy.OF   TI house TI man
     'The man bought the house.'

(4) *G⟨imm⟩atang ti lalaki (i)ti balay*
     buy.AF   TI man   TI/ITI house
     'The man bought a house.'

So at least optionally, the actor focus morphology in Ilokano correlates with demoting the patient to an oblique position. Antipassive is therefore a better label for Ilokano actor focus morphology than it is for Tagalog actor focus morphology.

A clear research question in historical morphosyntax therefore arises: does the Ilokano RCA-system represent some intermediary stage between a Tagalog-type RCA-system (where the valence of verbs remains stable between actor focus and object focus, a "symmetrical system" in the terminology of Foley (1998)) and a typologically common valence changing RCA-system (as seen in the more distantly related Indonesian languages for example), in which affixes serve to demote or promote arguments, changing the transitivity of the predicate? This short paper gives a preliminary overview of the comparative, empirical landscape of these two Philippine languages which provides avenues for future pursuits of a historical analysis of the development of Austronesian RCA-systems.

The emerging historical analysis is suggestive of a new way that an ergative system may arise, namely, from a reanalysis of a symmetrical system (like Tagalog) as a demoting/promoting system (like Ilokano). If this path to ergativity is established as plausible, does it come along with ergative properties which are not observed in ergative languages which arise from more commonly documented historical paths, such as the reanalysis of a passive into an ergative system?

2   The Philippine RCA-system in more detail

The Tagalog RCA-system has been a topic of continuing interest in typological and theoretical morphosyntax, with numerous competing accounts. Tagalog is often characterised as conserving the RCA-system of ancestor languages Proto-Malayo-Polynesian and Proto-Austronesian. The central motivation for characterising Proto-Austronesian with a symmetrical-type (Tagalog-type) RCA-system is that similar empirical facts are found in Formosan languages in Taiwan, which form multiple primary branches of the Austronesian family, distinct from the Malayo-Polynesian branch, which contains the Philippine languages (Blust 1977). Philippine languages also occur on disparate subbranches of Malayo-Polynesian, such as the languages of Borneo, Sulawesi, and Madagascar (Ross 2002). Therefore, the Proto-Austronesian is proposed to have a symmetrical-system, and the demoting/promoting systems of other Malayo-Polynesnian languages (e.g., Indonesian languages), represent later developments (Wolff 1973, Ross 2002).

The Philippine RCA-system is typologically unusual. One prominent quirk is the heterogeneity of the morphology: utilising circumfixes, infixes, reduplication, stem alternations, prefixes and suffixes in the same system. Next, the relation changing affixes seem to doubly mark lexical aspect (*ma-* is both stative-marking and actor focus marking), grammatical aspect (RC affixes vary in form and linear position based on whether the verb is perfect, progressive, or future), and modal information (*maka-* is a possibility modal and actor focus).

Another well-discussed feature is that the thematic role of any extracted argument (e.g., by relativisation, raising, topicalisation, etc.) must match the thematic role marked by the verbal affix. The Tagalog example below demonstrates.

(5) *Ang bahay ay   b⟨in⟩ili/*bumili ng lalaki*
     ANG house TOP buy.OF   NG man
     'The man bought **the house**.'

(6) *Ang lalaki ay   b⟨um⟩ili/*binili ng bahay*
     ANG man   TOP buy.AF   NG house
     '**The man** bought a house.'

The pivot enjoys syntactic privileges that other NPs do not, for example, they may control floating quantifiers, secondary predicates, and may be omitted in conjunction reduction. They do not pass all the subject hood diagnostics though, leading most to believe that the notion of subject hood in Philippine languages is split between the pivot and the thematically highest argument. The actor (regardless of whether it is a pivot or not) antecedes reflexives, is controlled in subordinate clauses, and is omitted in imperatives (Manning 1996).

Philippine languages demonstrate a larger inventory of RC affixes than just actor focus and object focus. Tagalog, for example, also has instrumental focus, benefactive focus, locative focus etc. Compared to other languages with a symmetrical voice system, the Tagalog inventory of affixes is quite large. Languages with smaller inventories tend to group non-core roles into a single affix, labelled 'circumstantial focus' (e.g., Malagasy, Paiwan).

In Tagalog, a transitive predicate takes a 'circumstantial' affix, both non-pivot, core arguments (the agent and patient) will be in the *ng* case. In Ilokano, both take the unmarked *ti* case. The following Tagalog sentence has a locative focus verb.

(7) *B⟨in⟩ilh-an   ng lalaki ng isda ang tindahan*
     buy.PERF.LOC.FOC NG man   NG fish ANG store
     'The man bough fish at the store.'

Examples like this are particularly unexpected for the Tagalog-as-ergative analysis. If *ng* is the case assigned to an antipassive object, how does it appear on both the actor and patient? We also find *ng* on intransitive subjects in some cases. Tagalog near-future verbs and elative adjectives appear with *ng* subjects.

(8) *Kaluluto   lang ng lalaki*
     NEAR.FUT.cook only NG man
     'The man is just about to cook.'

(9) *Napakaganda ng lalaki*
     ELAT.beautiful NG man
     'The man is very beautiful.'

We also find that the *ng*-marked object does not behave like an oblique. Obliques in Tagalog can be freely fronted to the left periphery without any further morphosyntactic alternation. *ng*-marked objects cannot be fronted at all.

(10)   a. *B⟨um⟩ili ang lalaki ng isda sa   tindahan*
           buy.AF   ANG man   NG fish OBL store
           'The man bought fish at the store.'

b. *Sa tindahan b⟨um⟩ili ang lalaki ng isda*
OBL store   buy.AF   ANG man   NG fish
'The man bought fish at the store.'

c. **Ng isda b⟨um⟩ili ang lalaki sa tindahan*
NG fish buy.AF   ANG man   OBL store
'The man bought fish at the store.'

This preliminary evidence suggests *ng* marked patients are not obliques, but this requires more diagnostics: for example, do *ng*-marked patients control null arguments of infinitives? The following example shows *ng*-marked arguments of modals control infinitives. Note that (a) some modals have *ng*-marked subjects and (b) *ni* is the equivalent of *ng* for proper names.

(11)   *Kaya ni Manuel na bumili PRO ng bagong kotse*
      can   NG Manuel COMP buy.AF   NG new   car
      'Manuel can buy a new car.'

The following example from Kroeger (1993:47) shows a *ng* marked object controlling an infinitive.

(12)   *Nanghuli ng magnanakaw$_i$ ang polis$_j$ nang PRO$_{i/j}$ pumapasok sa bangko*
      AF.caught NG thief   ANG police COMP   AF.enter   OBL bank
      'The police caught a thief while he was entering the bank.'

Furthermore, if Tagalog and Ilokano actor focus verbs were antipassives, they would be typologically unusual in that they appear on inherently intransitive verbs as well as transitive verbs. In both languages, intransitive verbs obligatorily take some relation changing affix. If the sole argument is "focused" (as opposed to some oblique argument like a location), the intransitive takes the putative "antipassive" affix.

(13)   *S⟨um⟩ayaw ang babae*
      dance.AF   ANG woman
      'The woman danced.'

The antipassive analysis does seem to serve to account for the indefinite, nonspecific semantics of the transitive patient. However, even this generalisation is not without complications. *ng*-marked transitive patients are indeed nonspecific if the actor argument is a clause mate. However, if the *ng*-marked transitive patient is in a subordinate clause, and the actor argument has been raised out of the clause, it may be interpreted as specific. In such sentences, we have a *ng*-marked patient which is core, and specific, and therefore shows none of the properties of a typical antipassive object.

(14)   *kumain ang pusa ng daga*
      eat.AF   ANG cat   NG rat
      'The cat ate a/*the rat.'

(15)   *Binili ko ang pusa-ng kumain ng daga*
      buy.OF 1SG ANG cat-COMP eat.AF   NG rat
      'I bought the cat that ate a/the rat.'

In terms of morphological considerations, Tagalog actor focus morphology is unlike an antipassive in that it is not morphologically derived from the putatively unmarked variant. Actor focus ("antipassive") affixes are *-um-*, *mag-*, *ma-* or *mang-*, while object focus ("transitive") affixes are the morphologically unrelated *-in-*, *-an* or *i-*.

The arguments so far have been of the form "if Tagalog actor focus were an antipassive, it would be a typologically unusual antipassive". This is definitely not evidence against the sub points of the antipassive analysis. In the next section I sketch an analysis of the Tagalog and Ilokano focus systems, and then suggest a historical path from Tagalog and Ilokano, and hypothesise some possible grammars that might represent intermediary stages along a path from Tagalog to Ilokano to Indonesian-type languages.
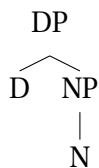
3 A new look at Tagalog actor focus and object focus

I provide an analysis of Tagalog morphological case and then extend the analysis to Ilokano. The analysis of Tagalog has the following properties:
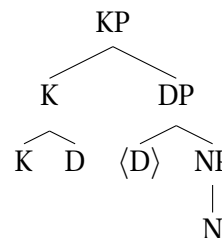
- Tagalog demonstrates two morphological cases: [LOC] for NPs denoting locations (realised as *sa* for lexical nouns and *kay* for proper nouns), and an elsewhere case (realised as *(na)ng* for lexical nouns and *ni* for proper nouns). I'll refer to them as locative and genitive.

- Locative and genitive compete with an unmarked "case", realised by the lack of a case marker (determiners surface as *ang* and *si*). I'll refer to the unmarked case as nominative.

- Nominatives are positionally licensed, other NPs are licensed by locative or genitive case markers.

- Nominatives are positionally licensed in the highest structural position: accounting for their subject like properties (controlling secondary predicates, floating quantifiers), and being closest to T (which assigns nominative "case", or more precisely, licenses an unmarked NP).

The basic structure of a DP which may or may not be embedded under a K head (which assigns case). If a K head is present, the D head moves to the K position.

(16) (a) K-less

```
        DP
       /  \
      D    NP
           |
           N
```

(b) with K-head

```
            KP
          /    \
         K      DP
        / \    /  \
       K   D ⟨D⟩   NP
                    |
                    N
```

Assuming late insertion of phonological material, the locative determiners are inserted into the complex K-D head if the feature match these structures: /kay/ iff K is locative with attached proper name determiner, /sa/ for other locative Ks.

(17) (a) /kay/ ⇔

```
                  K
                /   \
    [CAT   K  ]   [CAT   D     ]
    [SEM   LOC]   [SEM   PROPER]
```

(b) /sa/ ⇔

```
                  K
                /   \
    [CAT   K  ]   [CAT   D]
    [SEM   LOC]
```
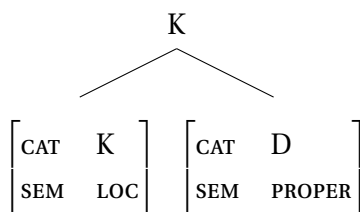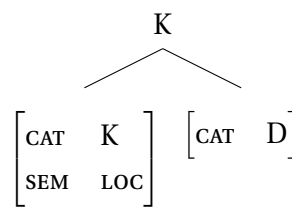
Non-locative K-heads are phonologised as /n-/, which due to phonotactic constraints replaces the initial consonant of its attached D, e.g., if D is /si/, and K is /n-/, the underlying /nsi/ is spelled out as [ni].

(18) /n/ $\Leftrightarrow$ $\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & \text{K} \end{bmatrix}$

Determiners are spelled out as *ang* for lexical nouns and *si* for proper nouns.

(19) (a) /si/ $\Leftrightarrow$ $\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & \text{D} \\ \text{SEM} & \text{PROPER} \end{bmatrix}$ (b) /ang/ $\Leftrightarrow$ $\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & \text{D} \end{bmatrix}$

The full paradigm of determiners below is therefore generated, so long as the superset principle is maintained (phonologisation rules with more specific feature specifications apply first).

(20)

	PROPER	LEXICAL
NOM	*si*	*ang*
GEN	*ni*	*nang* (orthographically *ng*)
LOC	*sa*	*kay*

The analysis makes a clear hypothesis about whether these Tagalog particles are determiners or case markers. The locative and genitive series are hybrids, the nominative series particles are determiners. The case licensing requirement is a feature on D, which I note as [*u*Case]. The D enters the derivation with the [*u*Case] feature, and it must be eliminated or the derivation will crash. [*u*Case] may only be eliminated by a case assigning head. The case assigning heads in the language are T and K.

The arrangement of nominative and genitive DPs in the clause is based on selection and an overarching constraint: if T is present, it *must* assign nominative case (it must license an *ang*/*si* NP). Here is a sketch of an actor focus intransitive. The grammatical left version has T assign nominative to the sole argument, the ungrammatical version is ruled out as T's [NOM] feature is unassigned. Verb-intial word order is generated via head-movement or predicate fronting.
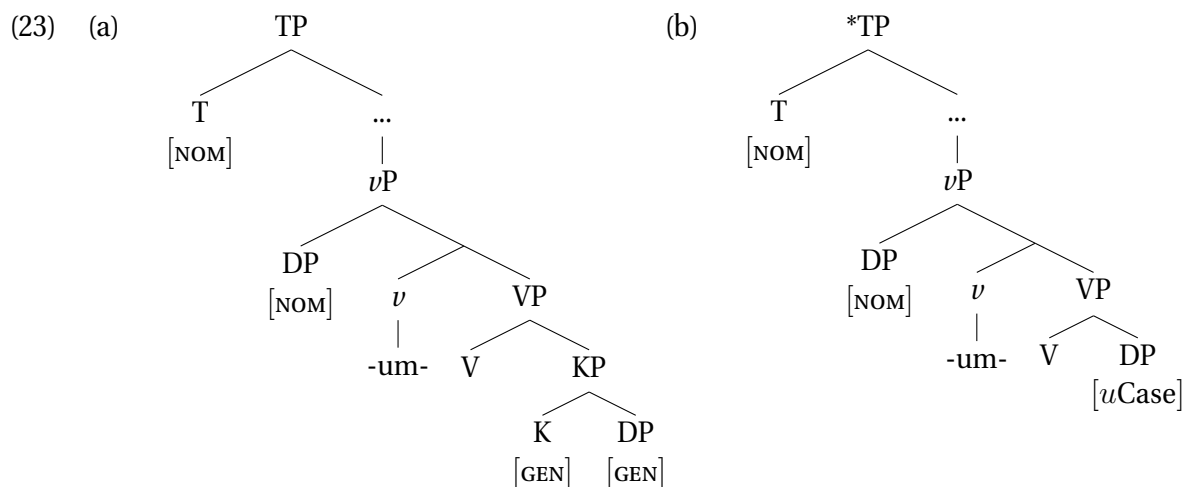
(21)
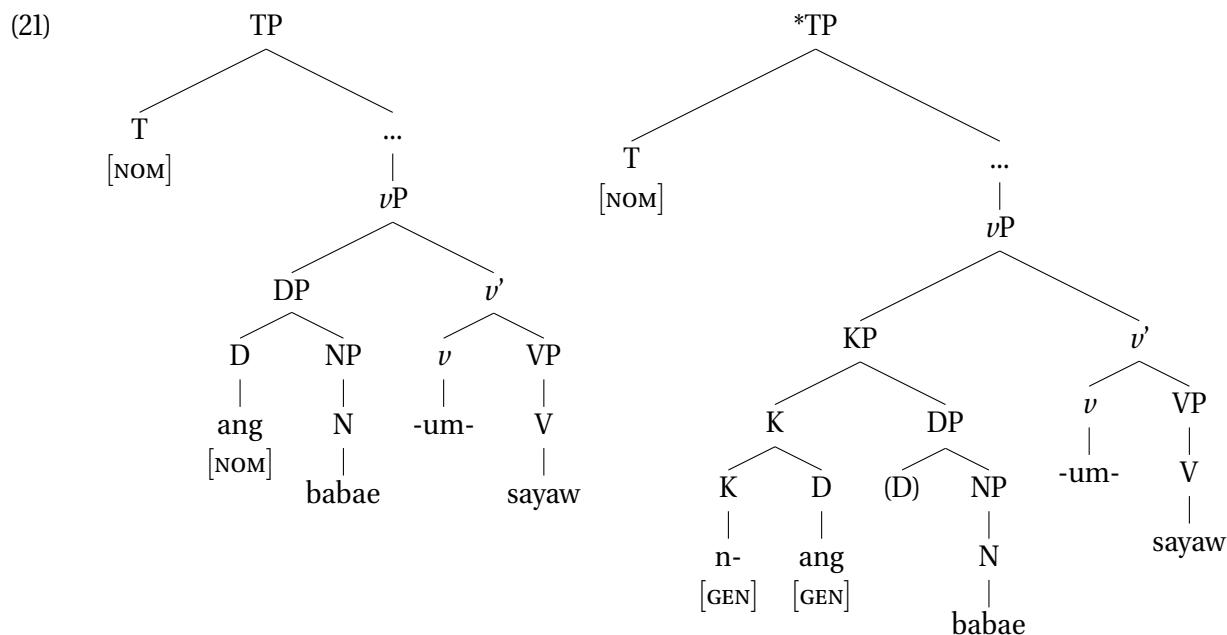
The object-focus/actor-focus paradigm is generated without much further stipulation. I will take the relation changing affixes to be positioned in *v*, and to select whether their specifier contains a (non-locative) KP or a DP.

(22) (a) /-um-/ $\Leftrightarrow$ $\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & v \\ \text{SPEC} & \text{DP} \end{bmatrix}$ (b) /-in/ $\Leftrightarrow$ $\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & v \\ \text{SPEC} & \text{KP[-LOC]} \end{bmatrix}$

The next stipulation is that all verb roots which subcategorise for a complement may select a DP or a KP.
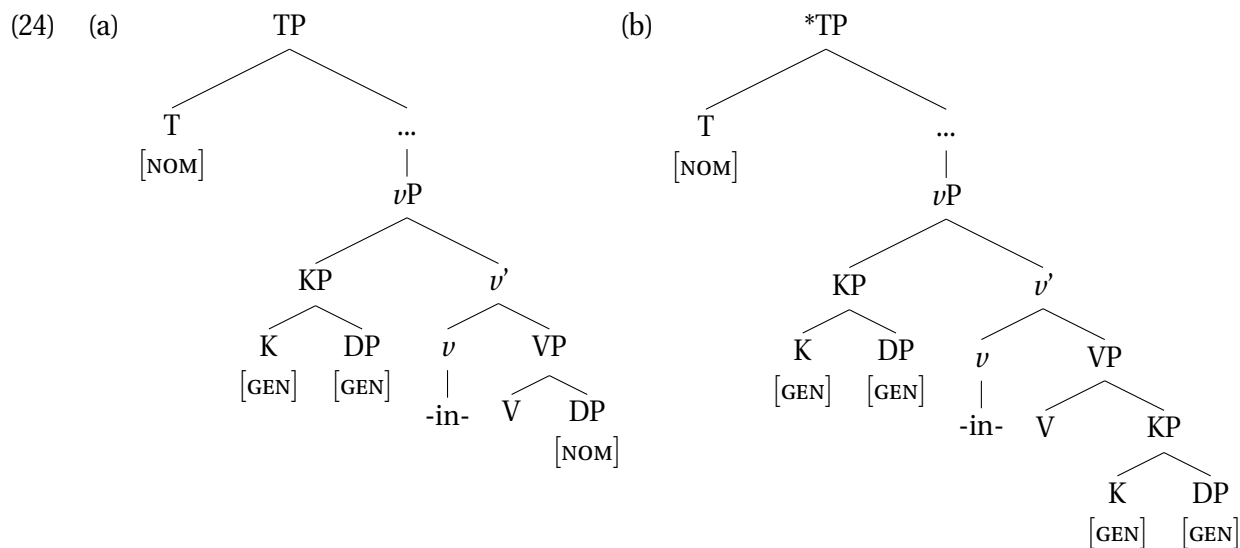
Actor focus and transitive

(23a) generates the *ang*-actor:*ng*-patient case frame we observe in actor focus sentences, satisfying the DP selectional requirement of *-um-*, and T gets to assign case. (23b), with an ungrammatical *ang*-actor:*ang*-patient frame, fails as the patient is unable to be licensed. Any frame with a *ng*-marked actor (*ng*-actor:*ang*-patient or *ng*-actor:*ng*-patient) fails due to the selectional requirement of *-um-* (DP specifier). The latter doubly fails as T does not assign case.
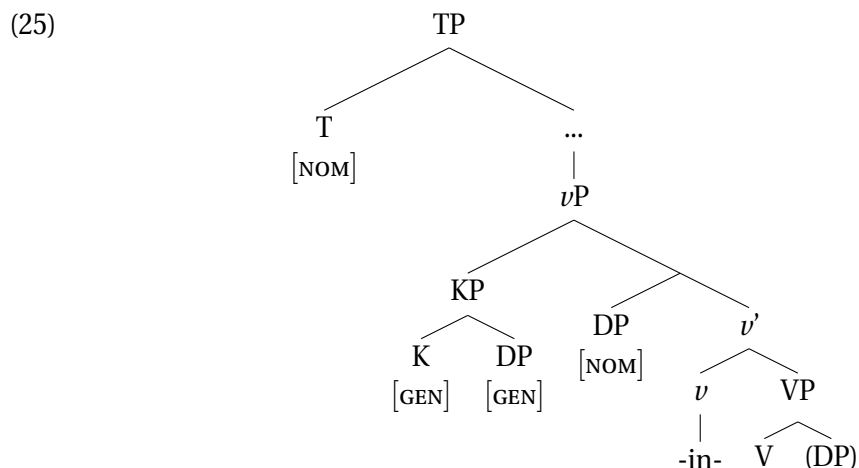
(23) (a)

```
              TP
           /      \
          T        ...
        [NOM]       |
                    vP
                 /      \
               DP        \
             [NOM]    v      VP
                      |    /    \
                    -um-  V      KP
                              /     \
                             K       DP
                           [GEN]   [GEN]
```

(b)

```
              *TP
           /      \
          T        ...
        [NOM]       |
                    vP
                 /      \
               DP        \
             [NOM]    v      VP
                      |    /    \
                    -um-  V      DP
                              [uCase]
```

Object focus and transitive

The trees in (24) have KPs in the specifier of *v*P as per the selectional requirements of *-in-*.

(24) (a)

```
              TP
           /      \
          T        ...
        [NOM]       |
                    vP
                 /      \
               KP        v'
              /  \      /   \
             K    DP   v     VP
          [GEN] [GEN]  |    /   \
                     -in-  V     DP
                              [NOM]
```

(b)

```
              *TP
           /      \
          T        ...
        [NOM]       |
                    vP
                 /      \
               KP        v'
              /  \      /   \
             K    DP   v     VP
          [GEN] [GEN]  |    /   \
                     -in-  V     KP
                              /     \
                             K       DP
                           [GEN]   [GEN]
```

7

The tree in (24b) fails as T is not able to assign nominative case. This leaves us with the *ng*-actor:*ang*-patient as the only correct option. Any case frames with an *ang*-marked actor is ruled out due to the KP selectional requirement of *-in-*.

One wrinkle is that (24a) should be ungrammatical if the Phase Impenetrability Condition is assumed (no feature checking across a phase-head (i.e., across C, *v*, or D)). This is actually a strength of the analysis. If the PIC is assumed, it should voce the nominative DP in (24a) to raise out of the VP. It should therefore escape "existential closure" as per Diesing (1991). Her theory of existential closure states that any VP internal argument should be interpreted as non-specific. Assuming the PIC, and this version of Existential Closure theory predicts that *ng*-marked patients of actor focus verbs (VP internal) should be non-specific, while *ang*-marked patients must raise out of the VP to get case, and therefore be interpreted as specific.

(25)

```
                          TP
                    ┌──────┴──────┐
                    T            ...
                  [NOM]           │
                                 vP
                           ┌──────┴──────┐
                          KP            ┌┴────────┐
                       ┌───┴───┐       DP        v'
                       K      DP     [NOM]    ┌───┴───┐
                     [GEN]  [GEN]            v       VP
                                             │      ┌─┴──┐
                                           -in-    V  (DP)
```

Constructing the paradigm

A fact that is not commonly brought up in the theoretical literature on Tagalog is that non-core focus markers are morphologically complex. The following table puts a selection of focus affixes (in all aspects) to demonstrate. Note that CV means reduplication of the initial consonant and vowel of the root. If there is no onset, only the vowel is reduplicated. N is a homorganic nasal.

	NON-FINITE	PERFECT	PROGRESSIVE	FUTURE	notes
ActFocI	-um-	-um-	CumV	CV-	
ActFocII	mag-	nag-	nagCV-	magCV-	
ObjFocI	-in	-in-	CinV	CV–in	
ObjFocII	i-	i-in-	iCinV-	iCV	
ObjFocIII	-an	-in–an	CinV–an	CV–an	
DirFoc	-an	-in–an	CinV–an	CV–an	same as OFocIII
BenFoc	i-	i-in-	iCinV-	iCV	same as OFocII
InsFoc	ipaN-	ipinaN-	ipinaNCV-	ipaNCV	OFocII with /paN/
ReasFoc	ika-	ikina-	ikinaCV-	ikaCV	OFocII with /ka/

(26)

This looks very complex, but it can be significantly reduced by some simple rules.

- CV reduplication denotes that the event has not finished: [-PERF]

- /-in-/ infix denotes that the event has started: [+INCIP], [-PERF] and [+INCIP] gets progressive (started but not finished), and both /-in-/ and CV are present.

8

- /-in-/ infix deletes if competing with the Actor Focus I infix /-um-/.

- [+INCIP] Actor Focus II /minag-/ reduces to /nag-/

- Object Focus I suffix /-in/ deletes in the presence of the homophonous [+INCIP] infix /-in-/

We can generate this paradigm with the following lexical items. Firstly, two distinct aspectual heads, which control for whether the event has finished and whether it has started. Each of the two aspectual heads has two possible values. They are phonologised via the following rules.

(27) (a) /CV-/ $\Leftrightarrow$ $\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & \text{AspI} \\ \text{SEM} & \text{[-PERF]} \end{bmatrix}$ (b) /-ø-/ $\Leftrightarrow$ $\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & \text{AspI} \end{bmatrix}$

  (c) /-in-/ $\Rightarrow$ $\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & \text{AspII} \\ \text{SEM} & \text{[+INCIP]} \end{bmatrix}$ (d) /-ø-/ $\Leftrightarrow$ $\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & \text{AspII} \end{bmatrix}$

Next, there are five values for v. This is a departure from previous analyses which put all focus morphemes in v. The vs are realised by the following rules.

(28) (a) /-um-/ $\Leftrightarrow$ $\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & v \\ \text{SEM} & \text{[ActFoc1]} \\ \text{SPEC} & \text{DP} \end{bmatrix}$ (b) /mag-/ $\Leftrightarrow$ $\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & v \\ \text{SEM} & \text{[ActFoc2]} \\ \text{SPEC} & \text{DP} \end{bmatrix}$

  (c) /-in/ $\Rightarrow$ $\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & v \\ \text{SEM} & \text{[ObjFoc]} \\ \text{SPEC} & \text{KP} \end{bmatrix}$ (d) /paN-/ $\Rightarrow$ $\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & v \\ \text{SEM} & \text{[InsFoc]} \\ \text{SPEC} & \text{KP} \end{bmatrix}$
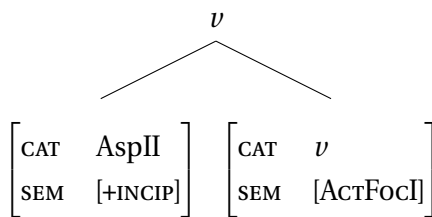
  (e) /ka-/ $\Rightarrow$ $\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & v \\ \text{SEM} & \text{[ReasFoc]} \\ \text{SPEC} & \text{KP} \end{bmatrix}$

The first three trigger morphophonological processes with the [-INCIP] infix /-in-/. The following is a structure showing the morphological constituency of a verb. I will stipulate that AspII lowers to v, in order to get the locality for these morphophonological processes right.
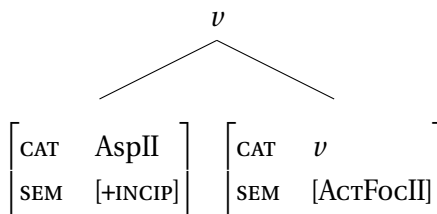
(29)
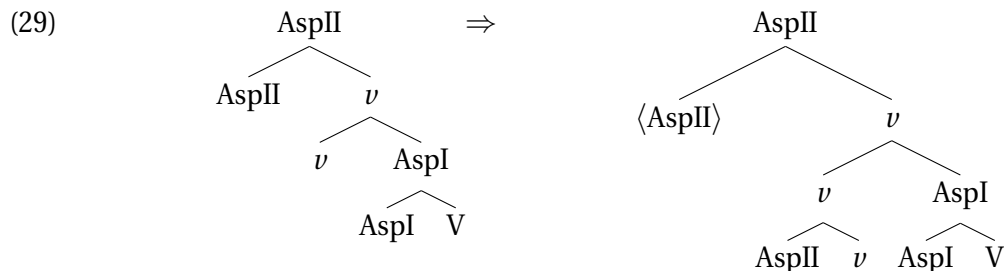
The following morphophonological processes account for the distribution of the [-INCIP] infix /-in-/: it deletes next to /-um-/, it fuses with /mag-/ to become /nag-/, and it triggers the deletion of the /-in/ object focus suffix.
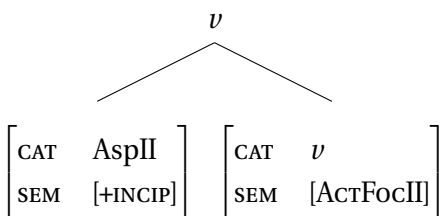
(30) (a) /-um-/ ⇔

v

$$\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & \text{AspII} \\ \text{SEM} & [\text{+INCIP}] \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & v \\ \text{SEM} & [\text{ActFocI}] \end{bmatrix}$$

(b) /nag-/ ⇔

v

$$\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & \text{AspII} \\ \text{SEM} & [\text{+INCIP}] \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & v \\ \text{SEM} & [\text{ActFocII}] \end{bmatrix}$$

(c) /-in-/ ⇔

v

$$\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & \text{AspII} \\ \text{SEM} & [\text{+INCIP}] \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & v \\ \text{SEM} & [\text{ActFocII}] \end{bmatrix}$$
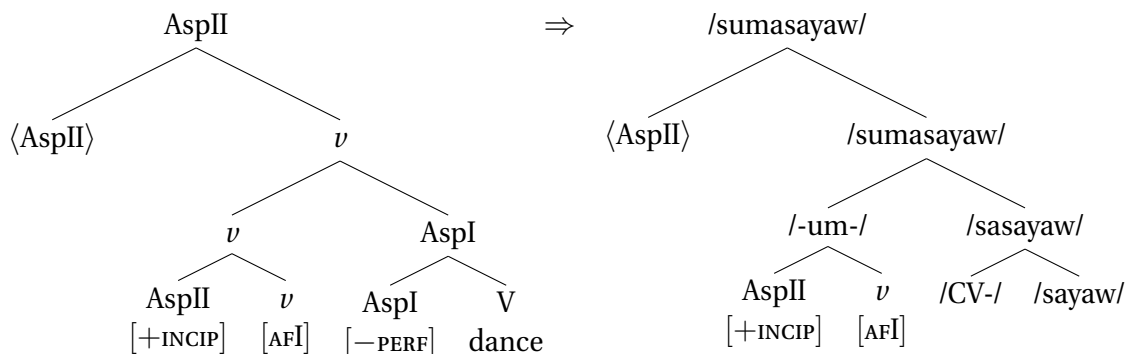
The following is an example phonologisation of a progressive actor focus verb.

(31)

In the interests of space, I will not talk about the benefactive and directional focus. Though a full account will show why the directional focus affix is bracketed outside both aspectual affixes, and why it must occur with the instrumental and reason focus affixes.

4   Extending to Ilokano

Recall the Tagalog case/determiner system in the table repeated below. Tagalog draws a distinction in its DPs between pivot arguments, and core arguments which are not pivots (including possessors). I have labelled these two categories as nominative and genitive.

(32)   Tagalog

	PROPER	LEXICAL
NOM	*si*	*ang*
GEN	*ni*	*nang* (orthographically *ng*)
LOC	*sa*	*kay*

Ilokano does not draw this distinction. Core DPs (including possessors) are morphologically identical. (33) is a transitive sentence with both arguments marked with *ti*. (34) has a possessive where the possessor is marked with *ti*

(33)   *G⟨in⟩atang ti balay ti lalaki*
      buy.OF   TI house TI man
      'The man bought the house.'

(34)   *Ulep met ti apelyido ti lalaki.*
      Ulep also TI surname TI man
      'The man's surname is Ulep also.'

We can capture this by collapsing the NOM and GEN categories into a single category: CORE.

(35)   Ilokano

	PROPER	LEXICAL
CORE	*ni*	*ti*
OBL	*kenni*	*iti*

There are two ways of capturing the development from Tagalog to Ilokano. One way is that Ilokano's genitive case marker corresponding to Tagalog /n-/ is null in Ilokano. This is unattractive as it requires a freely insertable null licensor of DPs. A second way is that a greater variety of functional heads in Ilokano may licensed unmarked DPs. Only T may license unmarked DPs in Tagalog, where in Ilokano, D and transitive *v* may also license unmarked DPs. Under this analysis, Ilokano simply lacks a genitive case. This is the analysis I will pursue.

Firstly, these are the morphological rules for realising determiners and case markers in the language. Like Tagalog, I will assume D-to-K raising takes place, that K may license an unvalued Case feature on D.

(36)   (a) /ni/ ⇔ $\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & \text{D} \\ \text{SEM} & \text{PROPER} \end{bmatrix}$ (b) /ti/ ⇔ $\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & \text{D} \end{bmatrix}$

The two determiners trigger allomorphy in the oblique case markers.

(37)   (a) /ken/ ⇔ $\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & \text{K} \\ \text{SEM} & \text{OBL} \end{bmatrix}$ / __/ni/]$_K$ (b) /i/ ⇔ $\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & \text{K} \\ \text{SEM} & \text{OBL} \end{bmatrix}$ / __/ti/]$_K$

In both Ilokano and Tagalog, Ds must be licensed. I propose that any functional head comes with a parameter setting determining whether the head is a case licensor or not. If the head is a licensor, there is a further parameter setting – either the head must assign its case feature and license a DP (otherwise the derivation will crash), or the head must assign its case feature to any DP in its syntactic domain, but if there is no DP, the derivation will not crash.

(38)

Functional Head
    Licensor   Non-Licensor
*must license*   *must license where possible*
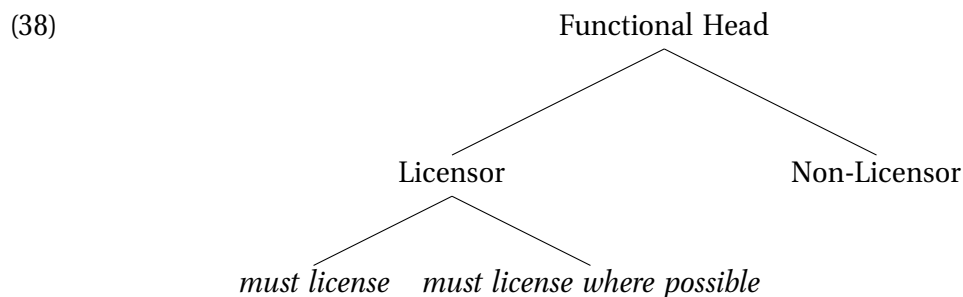
Using this typology of licensing capabilities, we can directly compare the case licensing parameter settings of each relevant head in Tagalog and Ilokano. In both languages, T licenses unmarked arguments. Further, in both languages have case-licensing heads K which always license their sister DP, however, Tagalog has a K-head devoted to licensing core arguments, while Ilokano lacks this option. Ilokano core arguments must be licensed by other functional heads.

(39)

	Tagalog	Ilokano
T	always	always
K_{gen}	always	not available
K_{obl}	always	always
$v_{act.foc}$	never	where possible
$v_{obj.foc}$	never	always
D	never	always

An Ilokano intransitive sentence is sketched below. It is structurally identical to the Tagalog intransitive sentence above.

(40) *Ag-digos ti lalaki.*
AF-swim   TI   man
'The man went swimming.'

(41)
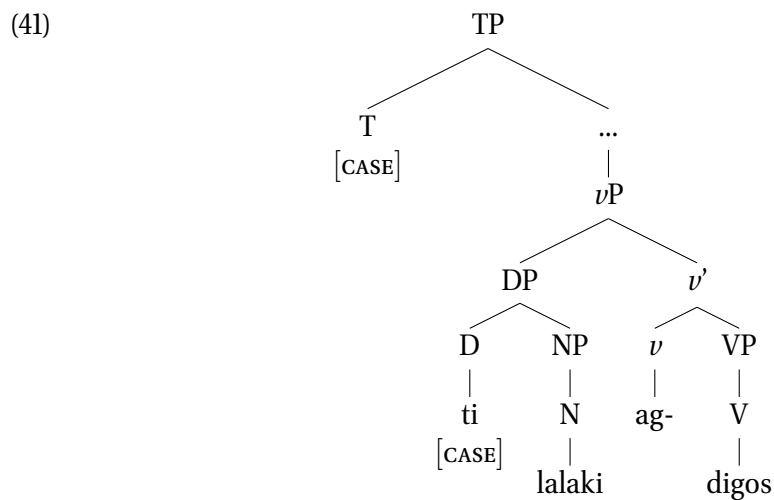
The lexical entries for Ilokano actor focus and object focus are also similar to the Tagalog versions. There are some important differences. Object focus v in Ilokano selects for a DP subject (Tagalog selects for a self-licensing KP), and object focus v in Ilokano assigns case to a DP in its c-command domain (i.e., the object).
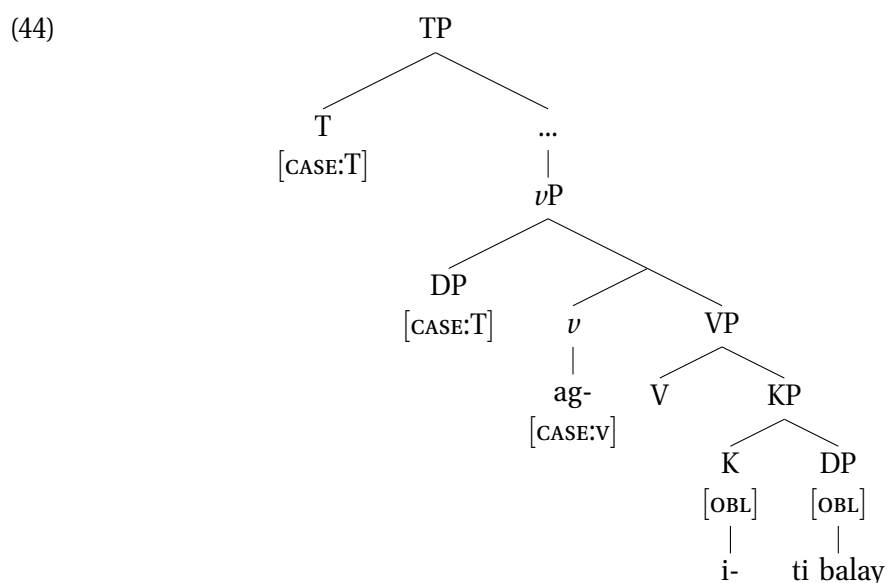
Actor focus and transitive

Recall that Ilokano actor focus patients may either be oblique, or unmarked.

(42) *G⟨imm⟩atang ti lalaki (i)ti   balay*
buy.AF   TI   man   TI/ITI house
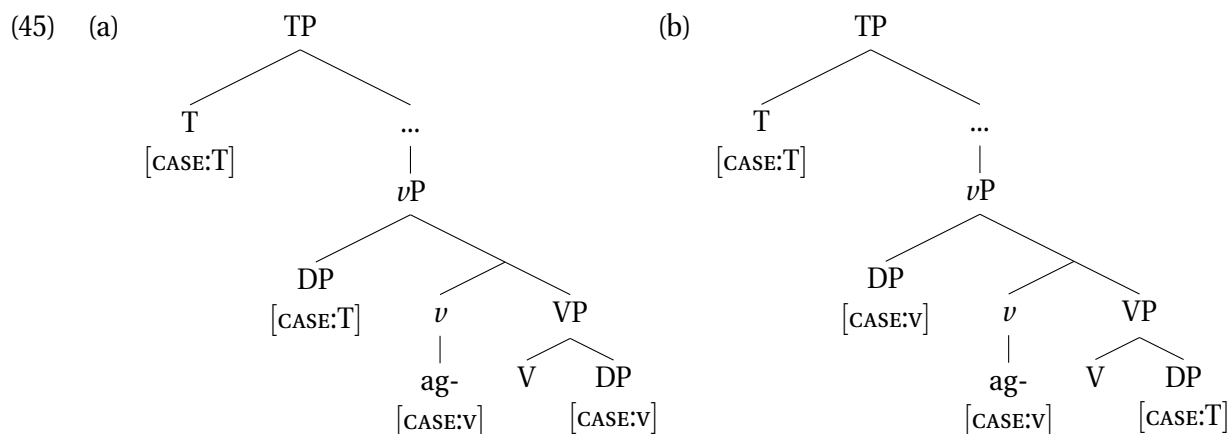'The man bought a house.'

This is in contrast to Tagalog whose actor focus objects must always be marked by *n-*. I put this distinction down to differences in the lexical entries for actor focus *v*-heads:

(43) (a) TAG: /mag-/ ⇔ $\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & v \\ \text{SEM} & \text{ACT.FOC} \\ \text{SPEC} & \text{DP} \\ \text{CASE.LIC} & never \end{bmatrix}$ (b) ILO: /ag-/ ⇔ $\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & v \\ \text{SEM} & \text{ACT.FOC} \\ \text{SPEC} & \text{DP} \\ \text{CASE.LIC} & where\ possible \end{bmatrix}$

With an actor focus *v* in Ilokano, the subject will be generated as a DP, and the object may either be a KP or DP. If it is a KP, the subject must be licensed by T (so that T's case feature will be discharged). The case feature on *v* is able to be left unassigned, so there is nothing preventing the object being generated as a self-licensing KP. This structure is therefore identical to a Tagalog actor focus sentence.

(44)

```
                        TP
                    ┌───┴────┐
                    T        ...
                 [CASE:T]     │
                             vP
                         ┌────┴─────┐
                         DP         
                      [CASE:T]  ┌───┴────┐
                                v        VP
                                │    ┌───┴───┐
                               ag-   V       KP
                             [CASE:V]    ┌───┴───┐
                                         K       DP
                                       [OBL]    [OBL]
                                         │        │
                                         i-    ti balay
```

Where the object is generated as a DP, the Ilokano actor focus *v*-head is able to license it. There are two logical possibilities as I see it: T assigns its case to the subject, and *v* assigns its case to the object: (a). Or *v* assigns its case to the subject in its specifier, and T assigns case to the object.

(45) (a)

```
                 TP
             ┌───┴────┐
             T        ...
          [CASE:T]     │
                      vP
                  ┌────┴─────┐
                  DP         
               [CASE:T]  ┌───┴────┐
                         v        VP
                         │    ┌───┴───┐
                        ag-   V       DP
                      [CASE:V]      [CASE:V]
```

(b)

```
                 TP
             ┌───┴────┐
             T        ...
          [CASE:T]     │
                      vP
                  ┌────┴─────┐
                  DP         
               [CASE:V]  ┌───┴────┐
                         v        VP
                         │    ┌───┴───┐
                        ag-   V       DP
                      [CASE:V]      [CASE:T]
```

13

I favour option (a), where the subject takes case from T. In (41-45), there is a parallelism between the subjects. If the subject is a pronominal clitic, it is is from the AK series listed in the table below, and never from the KO series.

(46)   *G⟨imm⟩atang=ak/*ko (i)ti balay*
        buy.AF=1SG   TI/ITI   house
        'I bought a house.'

	AK clitics	KO clitics:
1SG:	=ak,	=ko (=k after vowels or *an/en*)
2SG:	=ka,	=mo (=m after vowels or *an/en*)
3SG:	=ø,	=na
1DU.ex:	=ta,	=ta
1PL.ex:	=kami,	=mi
1PL.in:	=tayo,	=tayo
2PL:	=kayo,	=yo
3PL:	=da,	=da

(47) is the example number for the table above.

Having the subjects in (41-45) get assigned the same case makes the rule for generating an AK pronoun very easy.

(48)   /=ak/ $\Leftrightarrow$ $\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & \text{D} \\ \text{SEM} & \text{1SG} \\ \text{CASE} & [\text{CASE:T}] \end{bmatrix}$

The simple parameter setting in actor focus *v* from *never assigning case* to *can assign case*, generates the right paradigm for Ilokano vs. Tagalog. In fact, actor focus sentences in Ilokano look rather like a European nominative-accusative language. This suggests a path of historical development: a defective *v*-head which cannot license case gives rise to a symmetrical RCA-system like Tagalog's. If an actor focus *v* in a symmetrical system gains the ability to license an unmarked argument, we begin to see a typical nominative-accusative like system like the one in Ilokano (as well as in Indonesian, Japanese, English, etc).

Of course, Ilokano is not a nominative-accusative language. This is due to its object focus *v* head, which I will discuss in the final subsection of this paper.

Object focus and transitive

Object focus verbs in Ilokano must take two *ti* DPs. If the arguments are pronouns, the subject is from the KO series, and the object is from AK series.

(49)   *G⟨in⟩atang ti lalaki (*i)ti balay*
        buy.OF   TI   man   TI   house
        'The man bought a house.'

(50)   *G⟨in⟩atang=na=ak   (= Ginatangnak)*
        buy.OF=3SG.ABS=1SG.ERG
        'I bought him.'

The object focus *v* heads for both Tagalog and Ilokano are represented by these lexical entries:

(51) (a) TAG: /-in/ ⇔ $\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & v \\ \text{SEM} & \text{OBJ.FOC} \\ \text{SPEC} & \text{KP} \\ \text{CASE.LIC} & \textit{never} \end{bmatrix}$ (b) ILO: /-en/ ⇔ $\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & v \\ \text{SEM} & \text{OBJ.FOC} \\ \text{SPEC} & \text{DP} \\ \text{CASE.LIC} & \textit{always} \end{bmatrix}$

There are two differences: Ilokano object focus verbs have DP rather than KP subjects, and Ilokano object focus verbs can case license an argument. Tagalog object focus verbs must use the dummy case licensor *n-*.

As with the actor focus verbs, we have a similar dilemma. Does T assign case to the subject and the object focus *v* to the object, or vice versa? Simple DPs are not illustrative: they are both unmarked.

(52) (a)   (b)

Following the same reasoning as before: where the =AK series of pronouns morphologically spell out pronouns which are licensed by T, we are forced into saying that T licenses the object and the correct structure is (52b). This means that object focus *v* assigns case to its specifier. As in Tagalog, T can only assign case within its phase, so the object DP must raise out of the VP, escaping existential closure and being interpreted as specific. The lexical entry for a =KO pronoun is stated below. It gets spelled out where the =AK series does not, not only as the subject of an object focus verb, but also possessors, as well as the objects of prepositions.

(53) /=ko/ ⇔ $\begin{bmatrix} \text{CAT} & \text{D} \\ \text{SEM} & \text{1SG} \end{bmatrix}$

Tagalog and Ilokano object focus *v*-heads license their subjects in only slightly different ways. Tagalog has the *v*-head select a KP with a K head that can license its DP complement. Ilokano shifts the licensor role to the *v*-head itself, which licenses the bare DP in its complement. Coupled with the T licensing the object (exactly as in Tagalog), this gives rise to the appearance of an ergative system in the pronominal domain: a distinguished morphological form for transitive subjects, and a single morphological form for intransitive subjects and transitive objects.

This simple change (moving the licensing ability to *v*) suggests a path from a symmetrical RCA-system to an ergative-absolutive system, like those seen in Samoan and Tongan.

5   Conclusion

This paper has laid a foundation for talking about symmetrical "voice" systems as seen in Tagalog. I have suggested that they arise from licensing DPs via a case licensing preposition n-, and the inability of v to license unmarked arguments, leaving only one unmarked argument in a clause able to be licensed (by T). Ilokano represents a development from a symmetrical system, in that the licensing ability is transferred to the v-head. Here is where the language begins a path towards a familiar nominative-accusative system (if v assigns case downward), or an ergative-absolutive system (if v assigns case to its specifier).

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