

# Voice and grammatical relations in Lamaholot of eastern Indonesia\*

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## 1 Indonesian-type voice systems and eastern Indonesia

This paper presents an analysis of voice and grammatical relations in the Lewotobi dialect of the Lamaholot language, framing this language and its voice systems in the context of Indonesian-type voice systems. According to Ross (2002), Arka and Ross (2005b), and Himmelmann (2005), among others, Indonesian-type voice systems are characterized by the combination of (i) a voice system with two or three symmetrical voice alternations and (ii) applicative morphology. Geographically, languages with Indonesian-type voice systems are found mainly in Malaysia and western Indonesia.

In contrast, Austronesian languages in eastern Indonesia are believed not to display voice phenomena of this kind (Arka and Ross 2005b, Himmelmann 2005). It is said that languages in this region “either do not show any grammaticized voice alternations at all or the voice alternations are clearly asymmetrical” (Himmelmann 2005:114). However, in this paper, I argue that this characterization is not true of Lamaholot, an Austronesian language of eastern Indonesia; rather this eastern Indonesian language represents voice systems of the Indonesian-type. By closely examining formal variations of voice alternations and factors for voice selection in Lamaholot, I demonstrate that Lamaholot uses periphrastic means, such as agreement markers, verb serialization, and word order, in order to express various voice and transitivity-related oppositions. I also show that two different kinds of grammatical relations are to be posited for the purpose of describing these phenomena: the semantico-syntactic grammatical relations (subject, primary object, secondary object, and oblique) and the pragmatico-syntactic grammatical relation (topic).

This paper is organized as follows. In Section 2, I provide a preliminary sketch of the Lamaholot language and its typological characteristics. This language is almost an isolating language and a typical example of “preposed possessor languages.” In Section 3, however, I demonstrate that this isolating language has various periphrastic means for expressing voice and transitivity-related functional domains. These voice phenomena without voice morphology define and interact with grammatical relations, which are explored in Section 4. In Section 5, then, the topic, another type of grammatical relation, is introduced to describe the Actor-Topic and Undergoer-Topic constructions. Finally, Section 6 concludes this paper with some remarks upon the symmetry of Lamaholot voice systems.

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### 3 Voice oppositions without voice morphology

Lamaholot does not have any morphological means for voice and valence-changing operations, but it uses agreement enclitics, verb serialization and other periphrastic means for these purposes (Nagaya 2009b). In this section, I briefly survey how these functional domains are expressed in Lamaholot. For the sake of convenience, I divided voice and transitivity-related phenomena into two types: *semantically-based* and *pragmatically-motivated* voice phenomena (Shibatani 2006; cf. “semantic and pragmatic de-transitive voice constructions” in Givón 2001).

#### 3.1 Semantically-based voice oppositions

Semantically-based voice alternations are those in which different voice forms represent different conceptual contents in terms of parameters pertaining to the evolution of an action (Shibatani 2006): for instance, does the action extend beyond the agent’s personal sphere or is it confined to it (active vs. middle), does the action achieve the intended effect in a distinct patient (active/ergative vs. antipassive), does the action originate with an agent heading the action chain that is distinct from the agent or patient of the main action (causative vs. non-causative), and so on. In Lamaholot, voice contrasts of this kind are expressed by (i) S-agreement enclitics and (ii) the demonstrative *ia*.

(i) **S-agreement enclitics** Syntactic transitivity of Lamaholot verbs is lexically determined. Some verbs are strictly transitive or intransitive; others are ambitransitive, being used either intransitively or transitively. Although there is no transitivity marker *per se* in this language, the syntactic transitivity of an ambitransitive verb can be explicitly indicated by the existence or absence of the S-agreement enclitics in Table 2, which mark the person and number of an intransitive subject. Since they are only used for intransitive verbs, agreement enclitics function practically as markers of syntactic transitivity and thus express semantically-based voice contrasts by means of an alternation between an intransitive verb with an agreement enclitic and a transitive one without: (2) an antipassive (Health 1976; Levin 1993), (3) a middle/reflexive, and (4) an anticausative.

- (2) Antipassive:
- |   |         |                    |  |
|---|---------|--------------------|--|
| a. go   | kã      | pao.               | (transitive)                             |
| 1SG   | eat.1SG | mango              |  |
| ‘I ate a/the mango.’                              |         |                    |  |
| b. go   | kã      | =nəʔ. <sup>3</sup> | (antipassive/indefinite object deletion) |
| 1SG   | eat.1SG | =1SG               |  |
| ‘I ate (a meal or something one typically eats).’ |         |                    |  |
- (3) Middle/reflexive:
- |                      |       |       |          |             |
|----------------------|-------|-------|----------|-------------|
| a. go                | həbo  | anaʔ  | goʔẽ.    | (causative) |
| 1SG                  | bathe | child | 1SG.POSS |             |
| ‘I bathed my child.’ |       |       |          |             |
| b. go                | həbo  | =əʔ.  | (middle) |             |
| 1SG                  | bathe | =1SG  |          |             |
| ‘I took a bath.’     |       |       |          |             |

<sup>3</sup> The verb for “eat” is the only verb that inflects for person and number and agrees with S and A arguments. Note also that the initial consonant of S-agreement affixes becomes the alveolar nasal [n] after a nasalized vowel.

- (4) Anticausative:
- a. go ləŋa wato. (causative)  
 1SG fall stone  
 ‘I dropped the stone down (accidentally).’
- b. go ləŋa =əʔ. (inchoative)  
 1SG fall =1SG  
 ‘I fell down.’

(ii) **Demonstrative *ia*** One of the functions of the demonstrative *ia* is to introduce an oblique argument. When it is used with verbs of contact, this demonstrative indicates an incomplete or unintended contact. See (5). It is also used in a prepositional recipient construction (Section 4.2).

- (5) Conative alternation:
- a. go tədu =əʔ ia knəbi. (conative)  
 1SG collide =1SG DEM wall  
 ‘I (almost) collided with the wall’ or ‘I collided with the wall (accidentally).’
- b. go tədu knəbi. (non-conative)  
 ‘I collided with the wall (intentionally).’

### 3.2 Pragmatically-motivated voice oppositions

Pragmatically-motivated voice alternations are those in which different voice constructions are contrasted in terms of topicality and other discourse factors. For example, the English passive construction represents such a voice contrast. Its pragmatic function is to indicate that an agent is more topical than a patient by bringing a patient into the subject position.

For pragmatically-motivated voice alternations, Lamaholot uses periphrastic strategies: word order, verb serialization, the demonstrative *ia*, and the third person plural pronoun. As shown in Section 4, these alternations change the grammatical relation of an argument from one relation to another, bringing about different interpretations in reference-tracking.

(i) **Actor-Topic and Undergoer-Topic constructions** Lamaholot has two competing (mono- and di-) transitive constructions, the Actor-Topic and the Undergoer-Topic constructions (Nagaya 2009a, b).<sup>4</sup> The Actor-Topic construction is a transitive clause with Actor-Verb-Undergoer word order, a subject argument being in the sentence-initial position. In the Undergoer-Topic construction, in contrast, a non-subject core argument occupies the sentence-initial position, yielding Undergoer-Actor-Verb word order. In terms of surface structure, the UT construction uses the same UAV word order as inverse in Standard Indonesian (Donohue 2007b, 2008) and passive in Palu’e (Donohue 2005). In Section 5.3, I return to this contrast and demonstrate that neither of the two analyses is applicable to the contrast between the AT and the UT constructions.

(ii) **Antidative and benefactive** The antidative and benefactive alternations are used for promoting a recipient and a beneficiary of high topicality into the primary object position respectively. I return to these constructions in the discussion of the primary object and secondary object in Section 4.2.

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<sup>4</sup> Here “actor” corresponds to A arguments, while “undergoer” is a cover term for P, R, and T arguments.

(iii) **Plural agent constructions** Lamaholot does not have a morphological passive, but expresses an agent's low topicality by means of the third person plural pronoun *ra*. Plural agent constructions in (6) and (7) indicate that someone non-specific or unknown did something to the speaker.<sup>5</sup> This construction may be interpreted as an incipient stage of passive in the sense of “agent-defocusing” (Shibatani 1985).

- (6)    *ra*     *bəŋo*   *go*.  
        3PL   hit     1SG  
        ‘Someone hit me’ or ‘I was hit.’
- (7)    *ra*     *broka*   *go*.  
        3PL   cheat   1SG  
        ‘Someone cheated me’ or ‘I was cheated.’

### 3.3 Summary

Flores languages are said to be isolating languages, and Lamaholot does lack any morphological means for voice oppositions. This Flores language, however, uses periphrastic strategies like agreement markers and word order for distinguishing voice categories. In this sense, Lamaholot has voice alternations without voice morphology (Donohue 2004, 2005; Arka and Kosmas 2005; Shibatani 2008a, 2009a, to name a few). Based on these observations, I examine the grammatical relations of this language in the next section.

## 4 Grammatical relations in Lamaholot

In this and the following sections, I argue that two kinds of grammatical relations must be distinguished in order to fully understand Lamaholot morphosyntax: the semantico-syntactic grammatical relations (subject, primary object, secondary object, and oblique) and the pragmatico-syntactic grammatical relation (topic) (cf. Shibatani 2008a, b, 2009a). The former grammatical relations are semantically-motivated syntactic categories, while the latter is a grammaticalized pragmatic category. A similar distinction is also made in a Lexical-Functional Grammar framework (“argument functions” vs. “nonargument functions,” and “(grammaticalized) discourse functions” vs. “non-discourse functions”; Bresnan 2001:97-98). The A-position and A'-position in a Government and Binding framework is related to the distinction in question, too. The contrast between agent-like subject and topic-like subject has also been a point of contention in Japanese linguistics for centuries (Shibatani 1991), and has long been known as the distinction between role-related and reference-related properties of subjects in Philippine linguistics (Schachter 1976).

In this section, I look closely at the semantico-syntactic grammatical relations. Let us begin by introducing the well-known semantico-syntactic roles listed in (8) (Comrie 1978; Dixon 1979, 1994; Dryer 1986, 2007). For the purpose of this paper, ditransitive clauses are syntactically defined and thus are equivalent to double-object constructions, although they are often semantically captured in typological studies on three-place predicates (Haspelmath 2005; Margetts and Austin 2007).<sup>6</sup>

- (8)    Semantico-syntactic roles:  
        S     Single argument in an intransitive clause  
        A     More agent-like argument in a transitive clause  
        P     More patient-like argument in a transitive clause

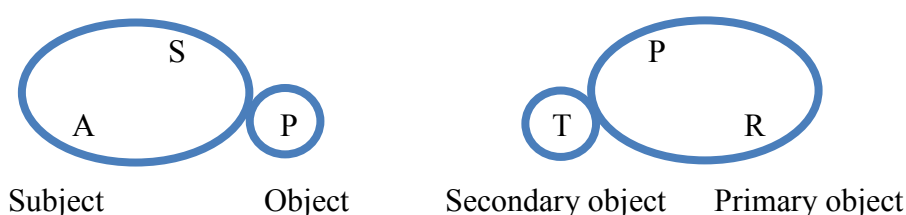
<sup>5</sup> They also have an ordinary interpretation that more than one identifiable person hit the speaker.

<sup>6</sup> Accordingly, an argument bearing a theme role (or a recipient role) is considered as T (or R) only when it appears in a syntactically defined ditransitive clause. See Section 4.2.

- T Theme argument in a ditransitive clause  
 R Recipient argument in a ditransitive clause

Semantico-syntactic grammatical relations refer to those higher-order groupings of these roles that are required in the analysis of grammatical phenomena of an individual language (cf. Dixon 1979, 1994; Dryer 1986, 2007). In Lamaholot, the semantico-syntactic grammatical relations listed in (9) are relevant to its morphosyntactic phenomena and are to be postulated for their description.

- (9) Semantico-syntactic grammatical relations:  
 a. Subject SUBJ {S, A}  
 b. Primary object PO {P, R}  
 c. Secondary object SO {T}  
 d. Oblique OBL Others



**Figure 1:** Semantico-syntactic grammatical relations

As has been demonstrated by many recent typological works (Dryer 1997; Croft 2001), grammatical relations are construction-specific and thus language-specific concepts. In the rest of this section, I demonstrate how the grammatical relations above are justified in Lamaholot by examining the constructions where S and A are treated alike as opposed to P (Section 4.1), and those where P behaves like R and differently from T (Section 4.2).

#### 4.1 Subjects {S, A} in Lamaholot

There are several morphosyntactic phenomena that constitute evidence that S and A arguments behave alike in Lamaholot. Evidence comes from both the structural coding and behavioral potential of S and A arguments (see Keenan 1976 and Croft 2001 for structural coding and behavioral potential). Two structural coding phenomena are relevant to S and A arguments. First, only S and A arguments can appear directly to the left of the verb without any prepositional marking. Second, only S and A arguments can agree with verbs in terms of person and number. Observe that S/A-agreement prefixes (Table 1) agree with S and A but not P in (10).

- (10) a. S  
 na n-aʔi=aʔ kaeʔ.  
 3SG 3SG-leave=3SG PERFECTIVE  
 ‘He or she has already left.’
- b. A  
 go k-enu tuaʔ.  
 1SG 1SG-drink tuak  
 ‘I drink tuak.’
- c. P  
 \*go n-enu tuaʔ.  
 1SG 3SG-drink tuak  
 Intended for ‘I drink tuak.’

Turning to behavioral potential, only subjects can bind the reflexive expression *wəki* ‘self.’ See (11). Moreover, in the *kədiʔ*-coordination construction, only subjects can control a

gap in the second clause as in (12). Lastly, the addressee of an imperative must be in the subject relation. See (13).

- (11) Reflexive *wəki* ‘self’ construction:
- |    |                         |          |        |          |                     |
|----|-------------------------|----------|--------|----------|---------------------|
| a. | Hugo                    | plewã    | wəki   | nəʔẽ.    | [SUBJ = antecedent, |
|    | Hugo                    | praise   | self   | 3SG.POSS | OBJ = reflexive]    |
|    | ‘Hugo praised himself.’ |          |        |          |                     |
| b. | *wəki                   | nəʔẽ     | plewã  | Hugo.    | *[SUBJ = reflexive, |
|    | self                    | 3SG.POSS | praise | Hugo     | OBJ = antecedent]   |
- (12) *Kədiʔ*-coordination:
- a. S → S:
- |                                    |       |       |   |        |
|------------------------------------|-------|-------|---|--------|
| na                                 | gaka, | kədiʔ | — | gwali. |
| 3SG                                | cry   | then  |   | return |
| ‘S/he cried, and (s/he) returned.’ |       |       |   |        |
- b. A → S, but not P → S:
- |                                     |      |     |       |   |        |
|-------------------------------------|------|-----|-------|---|--------|
| na                                  | bəŋo | go, | kədiʔ | — | gwali. |
| 3SG                                 | hit  | 1SG | then  |   | return |
| ‘S/he hit me, and (s/he) returned.’ |      |     |       |   |        |
- (13) Imperative constructions:
- a. S addressee:
- |            |             |     |     |     |
|------------|-------------|-----|-----|-----|
| mo         | gõ          | =no | kia | ka! |
| 2SG        | eat.2SG=2SG | now | EMP |     |
| ‘You eat!’ |             |     |     |     |
- b. A addressee:
- |                       |         |      |     |     |
|-----------------------|---------|------|-----|-----|
| mo                    | gõ      | ikã  | kia | ka! |
| 2SG                   | eat.2SG | fish | now | EMP |
| ‘You eat (the) fish!’ |         |      |     |     |
- c. P addressee:
- |                                |      |     |     |     |
|--------------------------------|------|-----|-----|-----|
| *ra                            | bəŋo | mo  | kia | ka! |
| 3PL                            | hit  | 2SG | now | EMP |
| Intended for ‘Be hit by them!’ |      |     |     |     |

#### 4.2 Primary object {P, R} and secondary object {T} in Lamaholot

Lamaholot also provides an array of evidence for the primary object relation and the secondary object relation. Let us look at structural coding first. In terms of word order, P and R arguments appear directly to the right of the verb. Even if it is realized as a zero pronoun, the existence of a P or R argument may be indirectly indicated by the absence of S-agreement enclitics. Second, the third person singular pronoun *=roʔ* can be coreferential with only P and R arguments.<sup>7, 8</sup> Observe that in transitive construction (14) *=roʔ* refers to the P argument, while the same pronoun designates the R argument in ditransitive construction (15).

<sup>7</sup> The pronoun *=roʔ* is an enclitic pronoun for the third person singular. It can occur with the free personal pronoun *na*. See (a) and (b). However, it is not an agreement marker; it cannot be used with a lexical noun in the same clause. See (c).

- |     |                     |      |      |     |       |
|-----|---------------------|------|------|-----|-------|
| (a) | Hugo                | bəŋo | =roʔ | na. |       |
|     | Hugo                | hit  | =3SG | 3SG |       |
|     | ‘Hugo hit him/her.’ |      |      |     |       |
| (b) | Hugo                | sorõ | =roʔ | na  | gula. |
|     | Hugo                | give | =3SG | 3SG | candy |

- (14) Transitive construction:  
 go kō =roʔ ia Ika. A-V-P-Location  
 1SG 1SG.eat=3SG DEM Ika SUBJ-PRED-PO-OBL  
 ‘I ate **it** in Ika’s house.’
- (15) Ditransitive/Double-object construction:  
 a. go sorō Ika doi. A-V-R-T  
 1SG give Ika money SUB-PRED-PO-SO  
 ‘I gave Ika money.’  
 b. go sorō =roʔ doi. A-V-R-T  
 1SG give =3SG money SUBJ-PRED-PO-SO  
 ‘I gave **him/her** money.’

Turning to behavioral potential, P, R, and T arguments are involved in two syntactic alternations, the antitdative and the benefactive alternations. My analysis of the two alternations is presented in advance in (16) and (17) for ease of reference.

- (16) Antitdative alternation (← Topicality of a recipient)<sup>9</sup>  
 a. Prepositional recipient construction:  
 Agent Verb Theme *ia* Recipient  
 SUBJ PRED PO DEM OBL  
 b. Double-object construction:  
 Agent Verb Recipient Theme  
 SUBJ PRED PO SO
- (17) Benefactive alternation (← Topicality of a beneficiary)  
 a. Benefactive serial verb construction (with a bivalent predicate):  
 Agent Verb Patient *neĩ/sorō* Beneficiary  
 SUBJ PRED PO give OBL  
 b. Benefactive construction:  
 Agent Predicate Beneficiary Patient  
 SUBJ PRED PO OBL (*chômeur*)

The antitdative alternation is one where the double-object construction is contrasted with the prepositional recipient construction in terms of the topicality of a recipient. Compare (15) and (18). The recipient *Ika* is foregrounded in the former, while the theme *doi* ‘money’ is highlighted in the latter. Crucially, what is referred to by =roʔ is the recipient in double-object construction (15)b but the theme in prepositional recipient construction (18)b. Only

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- (c) ‘Hugo gave him/her a candy.’  
 \*Hugo bəŋo =roʔ gblakĩ.  
 Hugo hit =3SG man  
 Intended for ‘Hugo hit the man.’

8 Since P and R arguments are treated alike and T differently, Lamaholot ditransitive constructions represent a secundative alignment type in the typology of alignment patterns for ditransitive clauses (Haspelmath 2005; Siewierska 2003). However, this observation is true only when the enclitic pronoun =roʔ appears in a sentence. If not, this language shows a neutral alignment.

9 Like Lamaholot, English has two common constructions for representing R and T arguments in ditransitive clauses, namely, the double-object construction and the prepositional object construction. Dryer (2007:254) notes: “Many other languages employ constructions which are similar to one or the other of these two constructions in English, though it is less common to have both constructions, the way English does.”



verbs of giving and sending, namely, *neĩ* ‘give’, *sorõ* ‘give’ and *gnato* ‘send’ can be involved in this alternation.

- (18) Prepositional recipient construction:
- |    |                            |      |       |     |      |                  |
|----|----------------------------|------|-------|-----|------|------------------|
| a. | go                         | sorõ | doi   | ia  | Ika. | A-V-P-Recipient  |
|    | 1SG                        | give | money | DEM | Ika  | SUBJ-PRED-PO-OBL |
|    | ‘I gave money to Ika.’     |      |       |     |      |                  |
| b. | go                         | sorõ | =ro?  | ia  | Ika. | A-V-P-Recipient  |
|    | 1SG                        | give | =3SG  | DEM | Ika  | SUBJ-PRED-PO-OBL |
|    | ‘I gave <b>it</b> to Ika.’ |      |       |     |      |                  |

In my analysis, the recipient argument bears the oblique relation in a prepositional recipient construction, because it is marked by the demonstrative *ia* (see (5) and (14) again). This is further borne out by its interaction with the Undergoer-Topic construction. First, observe that the UT construction distinguishes core arguments from non-core arguments: unlike core arguments, oblique arguments such as a companion and an instrument cannot be in the sentence-initial topic position of the UT construction. See (19) and (20).

- (19) Companion SVC:
- |    |                      |      |        |        |                          |
|----|----------------------|------|--------|--------|--------------------------|
| a. | go                   | pana | k-ã?ã  | Ika.   | [AT: Topic = Agent]      |
|    | 1SG                  | walk | 1SG-do | Ika    |                          |
|    | ‘I walked with Ika.’ |      |        |        |                          |
| b. | *Ika                 | go   | pana   | k-ã?ã. | *[UT: Topic = Companion] |
- (20) Instrument SVC:
- |    |                                   |       |      |       |       |           |                           |
|----|-----------------------------------|-------|------|-------|-------|-----------|---------------------------|
| a. | go                                | poro? | ikã  | pake  | hepe  | te?ẽ.     | [AT: Topic = Agent]       |
|    | 1SG                               | cut   | fish | use   | knife | here.POSS |                           |
|    | ‘I cut the fish with this knife.’ |       |      |       |       |           |                           |
| b. | *hepe                             | te?ẽ, | go   | poro? | ikã   | pake.     | *[UT: Topic = Instrument] |

Consider next the combination of the UT construction with the double-object and the prepositional recipient constructions. Both the recipient and the theme can occupy the topic position in the double-object construction as in (21), while only the theme can be in the topic in the prepositional recipient construction as in (22). This strengthens the case that the recipient participant is in the oblique relation in the prepositional recipient construction, whereas the theme is still a core argument in the double-object construction.

- (21) UT construction + Double-object construction:
- |    |       |     |      |       |                     |
|----|-------|-----|------|-------|---------------------|
| a. | Ika,  | go  | sorõ | gula. | [Topic = Recipient] |
|    | Ika   | 1SG | give | candy |                     |
| b. | gula, | go  | sorõ | Ika.  | [Topic = Theme]     |
|    | candy | 1SG | give | Ika   |                     |
- (22) UT construction + Prepositional recipient construction:
- |    |       |     |      |       |      |                      |
|----|-------|-----|------|-------|------|----------------------|
| a. | doi,  | go  | sorõ | ia    | Ika. | [Topic = Theme]      |
|    | money | 1SG | give | DEM   | Ika  |                      |
| b. | *Ika, | go  | sorõ | doi   | ia.  | *[Topic = Recipient] |
|    | Ika   | 1SG | give | money | DEM  |                      |

To summarize, the double-object construction is a syntactically ditransitive construction, taking a recipient as PO and a theme as SO. The PO status of a recipient is guaranteed by co-

reference with the pronominal enclitic *=ro?*. Moreover, the core-argument status of PO and SO is supported by the fact that both can be topicalized in UT constructions. On the other hand, the prepositional recipient construction is a syntactically transitive construction that takes a theme as PO with a recipient as OBL. Taken together, the function of an antidative alternation lies in the manipulation of the topicality of a recipient. A recipient is foregrounded in the double-object construction but backgrounded in the prepositional recipient construction.

This antidative alternation is similar to, but functionally different from, the benefactive alternation, in which benefactive serial verb constructions (SVCs) are opposed with the benefactive construction in terms of the topicality of a beneficiary. On the one hand, Lamaholot introduces a beneficiary into a clause by serializing the verb of giving (either *neĩ* or *sorõ* ‘give’). See (23).

- (23) Benefactive SVC:
- |                               |       |       |          |                   |
|-------------------------------|-------|-------|----------|-------------------|
| a. go                         | soka  | neĩ   | Ika.     | S-V-Beneficiary   |
| 1SG                           | dance | give  | Ika      | SUBJ-PRED-OBL     |
| ‘I dance for Ika.’            |       |       |          |                   |
| b. go                         | hope  | gula  | neĩ Ika. | A-V-P-Beneficiary |
| 1SG                           | buy   | candy | give Ika | SUBJ-PRED-PO-OBL  |
| ‘I bought candies for Ika.’   |       |       |          |                   |
| c. go                         | hope  | =ro?  | neĩ Ika. | A-V-P-Beneficiary |
| 1SG                           | buy   | =3SG  | give Ika | SUBJ-PRED-PO-OBL  |
| ‘I bought <b>it</b> for Ika.’ |       |       |          |                   |

On the other hand, a relatively large number of transitive verbs of transaction and creation (BUY-verbs, COOK-verbs, etc.) can promote a beneficiary participant of high topicality into the primary object position. Compare (23) and (24). Notice that what is referred to by *=ro?* is the beneficiary argument, not the theme argument, in (24).

- (24) Benefactive construction:
- |  |      |      |       |                          |
|--|------|------|-------|--------------------------|
| a. go  | hope | Ika  | gula. | A-V-P(Beneficiary)-Theme |
| 1SG  | buy  | Ika  | candy | SUBJ-PRED-PO-OBL         |
| ‘I bought Ika candies.’ (cf. (23)b)            |      |      |       |                          |
| b. go  | hope | =ro? | gula. | A-V-P(Beneficiary)-Theme |
| 1SG  | buy  | =3SG | candy | SUBJ-PRED-PO-OBL         |
| ‘I bought <b>him/her</b> candies.’ (cf. (23)c) |      |      |       |                          |

The oblique status of the theme in (24) is again confirmed by means of the UT construction. When the benefactive construction in (24) takes a UT construction, only the beneficiary can be in the sentence-initial topic position. This shows that the theme is in the oblique relation.

- (25) UT construction + Benefactive construction:
- |                         |     |      |       |                       |
|-------------------------|-----|------|-------|-----------------------|
| a. Ika,                 | go  | hope | gula. | [Topic = Beneficiary] |
| Ika                     | 1SG | buy  | candy |                       |
| ‘I bought Ika a candy.’ |     |      |       |                       |
| b. *gula,               | go  | hope | Ika.  | *[Topic = Theme]      |
| candy                   | 1SG | buy  | Ika   |                       |

Thus, the antidative and the benefactive alternations look superficially similar but work in a different way (Dryer 1986; cf. Goldberg 2002), and can be understood only by distinguishing PO, SO and OBL. The primary object in Lamaholot can be defined by its position in a clause and by co-reference with the enclitic pronoun =*roʔ*. It is also involved in the antidative and the benefactive alternations. In these two alternations, the division between PO/SO and OBL is highlighted. The former can be in the sentence-initial topic position in UT constructions, but the latter cannot.<sup>10</sup>

### 4.3 Summary

In this section I have discussed the semantico-syntactic grammatical relations in Lamaholot, and argued that SUBJ, PO and SO can be distinguished in terms of the morphosyntactic phenomena summarized in Table 3.

**Table 3:** Semantico-syntactic grammatical relations in Lamaholot

SUBJ {S, A}	PO {P, R}	SO {T}
[ <u>  </u> V (NP)]	[NP V <u>  </u> ]	[NP V NP <u>  </u> ]
Agreement	Enclitic pronoun = <i>roʔ</i>	Antidative
Reflexivization	Antidative	UT construction
<i>Kədiʔ</i> -coordination	Benefactive	
Addressee of an imperative	UT construction	

## 5 Subject and topic: Actor-Topic and Undergoer-Topic constructions

As mentioned in Section 3.2, Lamaholot has two competing transitive constructions, the Actor-Topic and the Undergoer-Topic constructions. The Actor-Topic construction is a transitive clause with AVU word order, a subject argument being in the sentence-initial topic position. In the Undergoer-Topic construction, in contrast, a non-subject core argument (either PO or SO) occupies the topic position, yielding UAV word order. To illustrate, I compare the examples in (26). Importantly, there is no surface difference between the two constructions, either on the verb or on the nominals, except in word order. Although its

<sup>10</sup> Although there is no space to fully develop this argument here, the secondary object in Lamaholot should be considered as OBJ<sub>0</sub> in an LFG framework (Bresnan 2001; Falk 2001): it is better defined as “a family of secondary OBJ functions associated with a particular, language-specific set of thematic roles” (Dalrymple 2006). In Lamaholot, two OBJ<sub>0</sub>s can be posited, OBJ<sub>THEME</sub> for ditransitive events and OBJ<sub>STIMULUS</sub> for mental events. Verbs of mental events, such as LOVE-verbs and HATE-verbs, take an experiencer as SUBJ and a stimulus as OBJ<sub>STIMULUS</sub>. See (i). As is often the case with other Indonesian languages (Palu’e (Donohue 2005), Manggarai (Arka 2008), and Indonesian (Musgrave 2008)), OBJ<sub>STIMULUS</sub> is marked differently from OBJ but can be in the TOP relation in the Undergoer-Topic constructions. See (ii). It can even acquire reference-tracking properties associated with TOP such as relativization. The defining features of OBJ<sub>0</sub> in Lamaholot are, therefore, (a) thematically fixed, (b) appear only in ditransitive or mental events, (c) do not appear adjacent to the main verb and receive non-core marking, and (d) can be in the topic relation in the UT construction.

- (i) go brea =əʔ k-əʔəʔ Nia. [AT construction]  
 1SG like =1SG 1SG-do Nia  
 ‘I like Nia.’
- (ii) Nia, go brea=əʔ. [UT construction]  
 ‘Nia, I like.’

precise characterization is discussed in Section 5.2, I refer to the sentence-initial argument in the AT and UT constructions as the topic.

- (26) a. AT construction:  
 Tanti bəŋo Ika. A(=TOP)-V-P  
 Tanti hit Ika  
 ‘Tanti hit Ika.’  
 b. UT construction:  
 Ika, Tanti bəŋo. P(=TOP)-A-V  
 Ika Tanti hit  
 ‘Ika, Tanti hit (her).’

In this section, I examine the nature of the AT-UT contrast in detail and make the following arguments. First, the UT constructions are pragmatically marked constructions (Section 5.1). Second, the topic relation needs to be posited for a better understanding of the contrast between the AT and the UT constructions (Section 5.2). Third and more crucially, this alternation does not change the semantico-syntactic grammatical relations (Section 5.3). My analysis of the two constructions is presented in advance in (27).

- (27) Actor-Topic and Undergoer-Topic constructions (← Topicality of an undergoer)
- a. Actor-Topic construction:
- |                          |       |      |         |
|--------------------------|-------|------|---------|
| Argument structure:      | Agent | Verb | Patient |
| Semantico-syntactic GRs: | SUBJ  | PRED | OBJ     |
| Pragmatico-syntactic GR: | TOP   |      |         |
- b. Undergoer-Topic construction:
- |                          |         |       |      |
|--------------------------|---------|-------|------|
| Argument structure:      | Patient | Agent | Verb |
| Semantico-syntactic GRs: | OBJ     | SUBJ  | PRED |
| Pragmatico-syntactic GR: | TOP     |       |      |

### 5.1 Pragmatics of the AT and the UT constructions

According to native Lamaholot speakers’ intuition, there is no doubt that AT constructions is more basic than UT constructions. When they were asked, my consultants clearly stated that an AT construction is more *biasa* “usual” than its UT counterpart. In elicitation sessions, they usually used an AT construction to answer the present author’s questions. This observation is also borne out by text frequency. UT constructions rarely occur in the text data available at this point.

If AT constructions are basic and unmarked, then what is the best analysis of UT constructions? Analyzing the same constructional contrast in another Flores language, Palu’e, Donohue (2005) concludes that its UT construction is passive, via which an undergoer is promoted into the clause initial subject position (see also Arka and Kosmas 2005 for Manggarai passive; cf. Shibatani 2009a). Is this analysis also applicable to Lamaholot? In order to answer this question, it is necessary to examine more details of UT constructions here.

The most prominent characteristic of UT constructions is that they show properties often associated with topicalization or marked topic constructions in other languages (see “Y-movement” and “L-dislocation” in Givón 2001: Chapters 15 and 16). First, intonationally distinct contour is usually found on the undergoer of UT constructions. Second, intonational break (pause) is optionally placed after the undergoer of UT constructions. These characteristics are also found in topicalization of obliques as in (28).

- (28) go    pana    k-ãʔã    Hugo.  
 1SG    walk    1SG-do Hugo  
 ‘I walked with Hugo.’  
 → kãʔã    Hugo, go    pana.

Third, UT constructions can be used only in main clauses, as is often the case with topicalization in topic-prominent languages such as Chinese and Japanese.<sup>11</sup>

These formal characteristics suggest that UT constructions share some features with topicalization. This raises a question about the pragmatic status of the undergoer of UT constructions. Interestingly, there exist pragmatic constraints on it. First, the undergoer of UT constructions cannot be the focus of answer in question-and-answer pairs. The portion of a sentence that corresponds to the answer of question is considered as focus (Halliday 1967). An undergoer can be the focus in an AT construction, but cannot in a UT construction, although an actor can be so in either construction. Compare (29) and (30).

- (29) Agent is the focus of answer:  
 Q: hege            gã    ikã    peʔẽ?  
     who            eat.3SG fish    that.POSS  
 ‘Who ate that fish?’  
 A1: AT construction:  
     **Hugo**        gã    ikã    peʔẽ.  
     **Hugo**        eat.3SG fish    that.POSS  
 ‘**Hugo** ate that fish.’  
 A2: UT construction:  
     ikã peʔẽ, **Hugo** gã.  
 ‘That fish, Hugo ate.’
- (30) Patient is the focus of answer:  
 Q: Hugo            gã    a:?  
     Hugo            eat.3SG what  
 ‘What did Hugo eat?’  
 A1: AT construction:  
     Hugo            gã    **ikã**.  
     Hugo            eat.3SG **fish**  
 ‘Hugo ate **fish**.’  
 A2: UT construction:  
     ?? **ikã**,        Hugo gã.  
     **fish**        Hugo eat.3SG  
 Intended for ‘Fish, Hugo ate.’

Second, the undergoer of UT constructions cannot be the focus of negation. In (31), the fish *hua* is the focus of negation, being contrasted with the fish *kowi*. It cannot be in the sentence-initial topic position.

- (31) a. AT construction:  
     go    kã    **ikã**    **hua**    həlaʔ,    kũ    ikã    kowiʔ.  
     1SG eat.1SG **fish**    **tuna**    NEG    but    fish    kowi

<sup>11</sup> For this reason, it is not possible to use control constructions and other PRO-related constructions as syntactic tests for distinguishing subject and topic in this language (cf. Shibatani 2008a, b, 2009a).

‘I don’t eat **hua**, but kowi.’

b. UT construction:

\***ikō hua**, go kō hōlaʔ, kū ikō kowiʔ.  
**fish tuna** 1SG eat.1SGNEG but fish kowi  
 Intended for ‘I don’t eat **hua**, but kowi.’

The data above show that the undergoer of UT constructions cannot be narrowly focused. In other words, it conveys topical/presupposed information rather than focal information.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, the UT constructions are best analyzed as topicalization.

## 5.2 Establishing the topic relation

The discussions in Section 5.1 might give the impression that the topic relation in Lamaholot is only defined in terms of left-dislocation and pragmatic presupposition and that it does not have any syntactic function, like the English topicalization. However, that is not the case. In this section, I claim that the topic relation in Lamaholot does display several behavioral properties that cannot be reduced to any simple semantic role or information structure and must be treated as another grammatical relation in this language.

As has been revealed through the examination of the antidative and the benefactive alternations, only core arguments can be topicalized in the UT constructions. In other words, the topic is a grouping of topical A, P, R, and T. In terms of structural coding, the topic relation appears in the sentence-initial position. As for behavioral potential, only topics can control a gap in the second clause in the *kia gə* coordination. The AT-UT contrast results in different interpretations. See (32) and (33).

(32) TOP → S

a. AT construction:

Besa n-oi Hugo kia gə — plaʔe.  
 Besa 3SG-see Hugo CONJ CONJ run  
 ‘Besa saw Hugo and then (Besa) ran away.’

b. UT construction:

Hugo, Besa n-oi kia gə — plaʔe.  
 Hugo Besa 3SG-see CONJ CONJ run  
 ‘Hugo, Besa saw (him) and then (Hugo) ran away.’

(33) TOP → S

a. AT construction:

Ika bəŋo Nia kia gə — plaʔe.  
 Ika hit Nia CONJ CONJ run  
 ‘Ika hit Nia and then (Ika) ran away.’

b. UT construction:

Nia, Ika bəŋo kia gə — plaʔe.  
 Nia Ika hit CONJ CONJ run  
 ‘Nia, Ika hit (her) and then (Nia) ran away.’

<sup>12</sup> This sentence-initial position of UT constructions, however, somehow mysteriously accommodates *wh*-words as well. See (a).

(a) a: mo gōʔ  
 what 2SG eat.2SG  
 ‘What did you eat?’

Another topic-related construction is relativization. Only nominals bearing the topic relation (and a possessor of such nominals) can be relativized, regardless of their semantico-syntactic grammatical relation (cf. Kuno 1973<sup>13</sup>; Schachter 1973, 1976).<sup>14</sup>

- (34) SUBJ (S)  
 ana? yang [ \_\_\_ n-a?i =a? Larantuka n-ai] səna.  
 person REL 3SG-go=3SG Larantuka 3SG-go cool  
 ‘The person who went to Larantuka is cool.’
- (35) SUBJ (A)  
 ana? yang [ \_\_\_ kriə laŋo? te?ə] səna.  
 person REL work house here.POSS cool  
 ‘The person who built this house is cool.’
- (36) PO (P)  
 ana? yang [ \_\_\_ go bəŋo] səna.  
 person REL 1SG hit cool  
 ‘The person who I hit is cool.’
- (37) Recipient:  
 a. PO (R = Recipient) in the double-object construction:  
 Ika ana? yang [ \_\_\_ go neĩ gula].  
 Ika person REL 1SG give candy  
 ‘Ika is the one whom I gave a candy.’  
 b. OBL (Recipient) in the prepositional recipient construction:  
 \*Ika ana? yang [go neĩ gula ia \_\_\_].  
 Ika person REL 1SG give Ika DEM  
 Intended for ‘Ika is the one who I gave a candy to.’
- (38) Theme:  
 a. SO (T = Theme) in the double-object construction:  
 te?ə gula yang [ \_\_\_ go neĩ Ika].  
 here.POSS candy REL 1SG give Ika  
 ‘This is the candy I gave Ika.’  
 b. PO (P = Theme) in the prepositional recipient construction:  
 te?ə gula yang [ \_\_\_ go neĩ ia Ika].  
 here.POSS candy REL 1SG give DEM Ika  
 ‘This is the candy I gave to Ika.’
- (39) Theme:  
 a. PO (P = Theme) in the benefactive SVC:  
 te?ə gula yang [ \_\_\_ go hope neĩ Ika].  
 here.POSS candy REL 1SG buy give Ika  
 ‘This is the candy I bought for Ika.’  
 b. OBL (Theme) in the benefactive construction:  
 \*te?ə gula yang [go hope Ika \_\_\_].  
 here.POSS candy REL 1SG buy Ika  
 Intended for ‘This is the candy I bought Ika.’
- (40) Beneficiary:  
 a. OBL (Beneficiary) in the benefactive SVC:

13 Kuno (1973)’s theory of relativization: “what is relativized is not an ordinary noun phrase, but the theme (NP-wa) [i.e. topic ---NN] of the relative clause.” (ibid. 2)

14 See Shibatani (2009b) for a nominalization-based account for relativization.

- \*Ika anaʔ yang [go hope gula neĩ \_\_\_]  
 Ika person REL 1SG buy candy give  
 Intended for ‘Ika is the person who I bought a candy for.’
- b. PO (Beneficiary) in the benefactive construction:  
 Ika anaʔ yang [\_\_\_ go hope gula]  
 Ika person REL 1SG buy candy  
 ‘Ika is the person who I bought a candy.’
- (41) OBL (Companion):  
 \*Ika anaʔ yang [go pana k-əʔə \_\_\_].  
 Ika person REL 1SG walk 1SG-do  
 Intended for ‘Ika is the person with whom I walked.’
- (42) OBL (Instrument):  
 \*teʔə hepe yang [go poroʔ ikə pake \_\_\_].  
 here.POSS knife REL 1SG cut fish use  
 Intended for ‘This is the knife with which I cut the fish.’
- (43) POSS of TOP:  
 ra məla ata dikə oto =kə.  
 3PL steal person car =POSS  
 ‘They stole the person’s car.’
- UT construction:  
 ata dikə oto =kə, ra məla.  
 ‘The person’s car, they stole.’
- Relativization:  
 ata dikə yang [\_\_\_ oto =kə ra məla] səna.  
 ‘The person whose car they stole is cool.’

As Kunio Nishiyama (p.c.) points out, this constraint on relativization may be explained in terms of a syntactic constraint on A-bar movement. In Lamaholot *wh*-questions, however, *wh*-words occur *in situ*, not triggering *wh*-movement (but see footnote 12). Moreover, a *wh*-word can appear in a position that is not relativizable. In (44), for instance, the *wh*-word *hege* ‘who’ follows the serialized verb *neĩ* ‘give’ but the sentence is grammatical. Remember that the object of a serialized verb cannot be topicalized and thus is not relativizable as in (40)a. Therefore, it is difficult to postulate a single A-bar constraint on both relativization and *wh*-question in this language.

- (44) mo hope gula neĩ hege?  
 2SG buy candy give who  
 ‘Who did you buy a candy for?’

To summarize, the Undergoer-Topic construction is not a mere topicalization but involves inter-clausal reference-tracking phenomena. In order to make a full description of the phenomena, it is necessary to posit the topic relation independently of the semantico-syntactic grammatical relations. The difference between topic and subject/object is that the former is a grammaticalized pragmatic function, while the latter is a grammaticalized semantic function.

### 5.3 Subject and topic

At the beginning of this section, I mentioned that similar construction types, namely transitive clauses with UAV word order, in other Indonesian languages have been analyzed



differently by different researchers. To name a few, the Palu'e UAV construction is analyzed as passive [U = SUBJ, A = OBL] (Donohue 2005), while the Standard Indonesian UAV construction is considered inverse [U = SUBJ, A = OBJ] (Donohue 2007b, 2008).

The Lamaholot UT or UAV construction, however, rejects these analyses, because S and A arguments work as subject relative to the subject-related phenomena examined in Section 4.1, in either the AT or UT construction. First, the AT-UT contrast does not change agreement patterns. As in (45), A arguments agree with the verb in both the AT and the UT constructions. Even in the reflexivization of the UT construction, A arguments still control a reflexive expression. See (46). In the *kədi?* coordination, again, the AT-UT contrast does not change the interpretation of the sentences. Only A arguments can control a gap in the second clause. See (47). Lastly, the addressee of an imperative must be an A argument even in UT constructions as in (48).

- (45) Agreement:
- |    |                          |           |      |           |         |                   |
|----|--------------------------|-----------|------|-----------|---------|-------------------|
| a. | go                       | k-enu     | tua? | te?ě      | k-waro. | [AT; A agreement] |
|    | 1SG                      | 1SG-drink | tuak | here.POSS | 1SG-can |                   |
|    | 'I can drink this tuak.' |           |      |           |         |                   |
| b. | tua?                     | te?ě,     | go   | k-enu     | k-waro. | [UT; A agreement] |
|    | tuak                     | here.POSS | 1SG  | 1SG-drink | 1SG-can |                   |
- (46) Reflexivization + UT construction:
- |    |                          |          |          |        |                    |  |
|----|--------------------------|----------|----------|--------|--------------------|--|
| a. | wəki                     | nə?ě,    | Hugo     | plewā. | [SUB = antecedent, |  |
|    | self                     | 3SG.POSS | Hugo     | praise | OBJ = reflexive]   |  |
|    | 'Himself, Hugo praised.' |          |          |        |                    |  |
| b. | *Hugo,                   | wəki     | nə?ě     | plewā. | *[SUB = reflexive, |  |
|    | Hugo                     | self     | 3SG.POSS | praise | OBJ = antecedent]  |  |
- (47) *Kədi?* 'kemudian' coordination:
- |    |                                      |      |       |       |   |        |             |
|----|--------------------------------------|------|-------|-------|---|--------|-------------|
| a. | na                                   | bəŋo | go,   | kədi? | — | gwali. | [AT; A → S] |
|    | 3SG                                  | hit  | 1SG   | then  |   | return |             |
|    | 'S/he hit me, and (s/he) returned.'  |      |       |       |   |        |             |
| b. | go,                                  | na   | bəŋo, | kədi? | — | gwali. | [UT; A → S] |
|    | 1SG                                  | 3SG  | hit   | then  |   | return |             |
|    | 'Me, s/he hit, and (s/he) returned.' |      |       |       |   |        |             |
- (48) Imperative constructions + UT construction:
- |    |                                |     |         |     |     |
|----|--------------------------------|-----|---------|-----|-----|
| a. | A addressee:                   |     |         |     |     |
|    | ikā,                           | mo  | gō      | kia | ka! |
|    | fish                           | 2SG | eat.2SG | now | EMP |
|    | 'You eat (the) fish!'          |     |         |     |     |
| b. | P addressee:                   |     |         |     |     |
|    | *mo,                           | ra  | bəŋo    | kia | ka! |
|    | 2SG                            | 3PL | hit     | now | EMP |
|    | Intended for 'Be hit by them!' |     |         |     |     |

The data examined above clearly show that the alternation between AT and UT does not change semantico-syntactic grammatical relations like subject and object. Therefore, it is not appropriate to analyze this alternation as passive or inverse, which necessarily changes such grammatical relations. Instead, it is needed to postulate the topic relation independently of subject and object. Thus, the function of this alternation lies in changing the topic relation from one argument to another for pragmatic and reference-tracking purposes. The differences between subject and topic are summarized in Table 4.

**Table 4:** Subject and topic in Lamaholot

SUBJ {S, A}	TOP {Topical A, P, R, T}
Agreement	Sentence-initial position
Reflexivization	Relativization
<i>Kadi</i> coordination	<i>Kia gə</i> -coordination
Addressee of an imperative	

## 6 Conclusions

In this paper I have argued that Lamaholot, a Flores language with typical eastern Indonesian features, displays voice phenomena with periphrastic strategies. It has also been demonstrated how these voice phenomena change and interact with grammatical relations. Our conclusion is that two different sets of grammatical relations are required for a better understanding of these voice phenomena.

By way of conclusion, let us consider the question posed at the beginning of this paper, namely, the symmetry of Lamaholot voice systems. On the one hand, voice contrasts made by agreement markers, verb serialization, and the demonstrative *ia* are asymmetrical voice alternations in that one construction is syntactically more complex than another. In particular, the antidative and benefactive alternations serve much the same functions as the applicative morphology of Indonesian-type voice systems. On the other hand, the alternation between AT and UT is a symmetrical one; the two constructions differ only in word order. Importantly, this alternation does not affect the alignment of the semantico-syntactic grammatical relations. Therefore, this eastern Indonesian language displays a symmetrical non-demotional voice alternation, which is characteristic of symmetrical voice languages in the Philippines and western Indonesia.

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