VIDEO ELICITATION[1]

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Subproject	Patterns of pronominal marking in the AP languages
Task	Elicited descriptions of video stimuli
Goal	Explore the variation within the Alor-Pantar languages of the patterns of pronominal marking verbs

A. Background

The aim of this subproject is to study the variation in the patterns of pronominal marking in the non-Austronesian languages of Alor and Pantar with the help of short video elicitation stimuli. All of these languages share the typologically rare trait that they mark objects or undergoers on the verbs, rather than subjects or actors (Siewierska 2011). However, there is considerable within-group variation as to how this is done and also what the relevant semantic parameters are which govern the indexation patterns. For instance, Teiwa (Klamer 2010) aligns its arguments on a nominative-accusative basis indexing the object of many (but not all) transitive verbs. The prime factor which determines whether a verb indexes its object is animacy (Klamer and Kratochvíl 2006, Klamer 2010). Abui (Kratochvíl 2007, 2011), on the other hand, has a semantic alignment system, in which the undergoer is marked on the verb. In intransitive clauses, more undergoer-like arguments are indexed, e.g., 'He is ill', whereas more actor-like ones are not, e.g., 'He runs'. Animacy plays a role in the choice of prefix for undergoers in Abui, but is not as important and pervasive as in Teiwa. The video clips are meant to explore this field in a systematic way.

We designed suitable clips in the following way. We know from Klamer's work that animacy is of high importance in Teiwa. Arkadiev (2008) identifies four different semantic notions that can govern semantic alignment system in the languages of the world:

- Stative/dynamic: Loma (SW Mande language from Liberia and Guinea)
- Telicity:[2] Georgian (Kartvelian, S Caucasus)
- Volitionality: Bats and Tabassaran (Nakh-Dagestanian, N Caucasus)
- Affectedness: Central Pomo (Pomoan, California)

We chose five factors which (could) have an impact on the indexation patterns, each with two values:

[1] This manual is inspired in structure and wording by Bohnemeyer, Bowerman and Brown (2001), Bowerman, Gullberg, Majid, and Narasimhan (2004) and Evans, Levinson, Enfield, Gaby, and Majid (2004).
[2] 'Telic' loosely defined as "denoting a change of state", 'atelic' as "unbounded process or activity"

(1) Number of participants: 1 vs. 2
(2) Dynamicity: Stative vs. Dynamic
(3) Telicity: Telic vs. Atelic
(4) Volitionality: Volitional vs. Non-volitional
(5) Animacy: Animate vs. Inanimate

From this, we constructed a possibility space in which we systematically varied all values. The Animacy value only varies for S/O, i.e. the single argument of 1-participant predicates and for the second argument of 2-participant verbs. The factor Volitionality varies only with respect to the first argument of 2-participant predicates.

Hence, we have $2^5 = 32$ logical possibilities or cells. These are further cut down since two value combinations are logically incompatible, namely the combination of [-Animate] and [+Volitional] and the combination of [+Telic] and [-Dynamic]. As there (generally) are no volitional inanimates or telic states, these value combinations have been eliminated.

The possible distinction between Actor and Undergoer has not been taken into account because to include this as a factor seems like interpreting participants as either actors or undergoers. To put it differently, why would we classify the sole participant in a 'fall'-event in any language as an Actor rather than an Undergoer? While English codes such a participant as an Actor, Abui treats it as an Undergoer. Distinctions between Actor and Undergoer are made within certain languages, rather than being part of the logical possibility space.

This eliminates 7 cases from the one-participants predicates. There are 4 telic states and 3 additional volitional inanimates. The fourth case with the combination "volitional inanimate" is also a telic state (ruled out as a possible combination, see above).

For two-participant verbs, only four cases have to be eliminated, namely the four telic states. As volitionality and animacy are coded for different participants, a combination of these is no problem.

We end up with 21 cases (32-7-4= 21). For each remaining cell (i.e. combination of values) we selected two predications which illustrate this specific combination of values. Hence, there are 42 clips.

In choosing suitable verbs for each cell in the possibility space we used the following ranked criteria:

- Appropriateness: Is the event possibly inappropriate to show? Although practicality issue come in as well, therefore *'give birth', *'vomit', *'die'.

- Centrality: Is the event a clear exponent of a particular value combination? For instance, ‘run towards somebody’ is a more central candidate for a telic 2-participant event than the semelfactive event ‘hit somebody’, which some categorize as atelic (Comrie 1976).
- Degree of cognacy: How many cognates or groups of cognates does a verb have within AP?
- Practicality: Is the event easy to film? Therefore, we chose ‘run’ rather than ‘fly’.

B. Task

1. Materials

The task consists of 42 video clips to be described by the consultants. The clips have been divided into two sets, a core set and a peripheral set, each consisting of 21 clips. From the pair of clips for each combination of factors, one clip is in the core set, one is in the peripheral set. The clips have been randomly ordered within their sets and afterwards been numbered from C01 to C21 (core set) and P01 to P21 (peripheral set).

The clips are named in the following way, e.g., C14_sit_down_01.mp4.

The initial letter identifies a clip as belonging either to the core (C) or the peripheral (P) set. The letter is followed by a number, which indicates the order in which the clips are to be tested. Then comes a short characterization of the event shown in the clip. The final number before the file extension refers to the number of the clip before randomization.

For example: C14_sit_down_01.mp4 – This clip belongs to the core set, it is number 14 in the randomized clip order, it depicts a man sitting down, before randomization it was clip number 01, and it is a MP4-file.

Do test the clips on your laptop before you go to field!

2. Requirements

Laptop with Windows Media Player (or indeed any player which handles MPEG-4 video files) or Quicktime (for Mac). The videos have a sound track which is not essential for understanding what is going on but which provides ambient sounds, so make sure you turn up the volume on your laptop. Without sound the clips will probably come across as less natural. Record responses on audio- and/or video-tape with an external microphone.

3. Number of speakers

Run the stimuli with four different couples of speakers. If feasible, it might be a good idea to have one speaker describe the clips to the other, who is sitting behind the computer screen and is not able to see the clips. That way the speaker doing the experiment has someone to address when describing the clips. If this is not feasible or undesirable for any reason, having both speakers looking at the clips will also be fine. For each speaker, you should record full meta-data, such as age, sex, education, language used in the task, other languages known by the speaker, etc. Of course, it is fine to run the experiment with individual speakers rather than pairs of speakers.

4. Procedure

(1) Audio- and/or video-tape each elicitation session.

(2) You and your speaker(s) sit in front of the laptop. Explain to each speaker that they will see scenes in which someone does something or something happens, and that they should afterwards describe what happened. You then prompt them after each clip, saying "Can you describe the scene?". You can stop prompting speakers in this way once it's no longer necessary. The first three clips are for warm-up to allow you and the speaker to practice the procedure.

(3) You can repeat a clip as often as you need to, if the speaker wants to see it again. You can also go back to a previous clip, if necessary. If the speaker does not recognize an object in a clip you can explain what it is.

(4) It is crucial that you get a description of the event depicted in the clip that includes a verb which roughly corresponds to the English verb in the clip label. If that doesn't happen you might have to probe for the intended verb.

For example, it is conceivable that a speaker describes a scene in which a man is "lying" on the ground as "There is a man on the ground". Similarly, if a speaker gives a description of possible intentions the agent might have, like "He's cleaning up' (for *wash plate*), or "He wants the man to come to him" (for *pull person*), or a very general description of the scene, you should immediately probe for the intended verb. If a speaker uses a serial verb construction make sure this is the most basic way of encoding the event.

5. Further probing and elicitation

While carrying out the procedure outlined above opportunities for further probing might suggest themselves. This does not have to be done with every single speaker.

In some cases, you might want to probe further whether the indexing patterns of a verb change when the animacy value of the object/undergoer changes.[3] It might for example be possible to use some of the verbs of spatial configuration, such as 'stand' and 'lie', with inanimates (as in English). Or you might want to find out what happens to the indexing patterns, if a child falls instead of a coconut?

Another point for further probing is following up on any alternative verbs which a speaker might have used in the description of a particular event. What is the exact meaning of the verb? What are its indexing patterns?

It might be worth enquiring further into what happens to indexation when the volitionality of the Agent (e.g., Agent does something inadvertently) or the telicity of the event (e.g., 'eating bananas' vs. 'eat a banana up') change. It'll probably turn out quite quickly whether something is going on there.

Some events will very likely be described with a serial verb construction. In that case, make sure that this is the most basic way of encoding the event.

Finally, for the clips where it makes sense, you could ask the speakers to imagine that they themselves *did or were done to* what was shown in the clip, went home to their spouse and told them about it. This would yield a 1st person singular participant (in the agent or patient role) and will be helpful in finding out about or excluding person effects. Again, it won't be necessary to do this with all speakers and it might well turn out that it only works with some.

6. Attachment

Attached is a file called "List_of_video_clips.doc". In it you find a list of all video clips for the task. Each row provides information on the combination of factors which define a given cell in the possibility space. For each cell, there are two clips. The verb describing the main event in each clip is given numbered from 01-42 (original numbering). There is a short description of the event depicted in each clip. Finally, the name of the clip file is given. Core clips appear in boldface.

References

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[3] For some verbs, we have incorporated this contrast into the stimuli (e.g., there is one clip 'bump into person' and one clip 'bump into tree').

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