The Phrasal Basis of Grammatical Categories

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Formal Representation

- *Lexeme* (Lyons 1977)
  1. (i) stem (*e.g.* phonological representation)
  2. (ii) inflectional class
  3. (iii) syntactic properties
  4. (iv) semantic specifications
Classical Languages (Latin, Ancient Greek)

(i) stem
N: -us (2nd decl) V: -ere (3rd conj)

(ii) inflectional class
N: declension V: conjugation

(iii) syntactic properties
N: case V: tense

(iv) semantic specifications
object event
Formal Representation

- Oceanic Languages
  - Isolating/analytical languages: inflectional grammatical categories are not often realized at the word level, but at the phrasal level
Formal Representation

- Construction Grammar (Fillmore and Kay 1993; Golderg 1995, 2006; Fried and Östen 2004)
  - Meaning-bearing construction schemas (signs, simple or complex) are the basis of grammatical description
  - Constructions are a pre-associated bundle of form-meaning, ranging from individual words to complex sentences, so that the composite meaning of a syntactic complex is not merely the result of rules of combination acting on the meanings of the morphemes of the construction but actually inheres in the abstract structure of the construction itself
Formal Representation

- **Lexeme** (Lyons 1977)

  1. **stem**
  2. **inflectional class**
  3. **syntactic properties**
  4. **semantic specifications**
Languages

Tolai

Whitesands
DP

- **Tolai**

  1(a) a tutana i kita ra bul
      D man 3SG hit D child
      ‘the man hit the child’

  (b) iau a vavina
      1SG D woman
      ‘I’m a/the woman’
Tolai

2(a) pa  u  ngo  ra  va-bilak  diat
NEG  2SG  cease  D  CAUS-bad  3PL.ACC

‘you didn’t stop injuring them’

(b)  u  va-par  iga  kau-gu  uma  ma  ra  ian  ia
2SG  CAUS-ready  now  POSS-1SG.GEN  garden  with  D  eat  3SG.

‘you prepare my garden by eating it’
Whitesands - no DP

3(a) petan t-an-ol rakis nahwel
   woman 3SG-PRF-make already laplap
   ‘The/a woman has made (a) laplap’

(b) kahaw t-am-avir jow
   rat 3SG-PST-defecate turtle
   ‘The rat shat on the turtle’
4(a) *ina vana, ina ga vut-mulai*

1SG.FUT go 1SG.FUT REM come-return

‘I’ll go, I’ll come back later’
Tolai - ‘normal’ predication

4(b) a tutana i kita ra bul
D man 3SG hit D child

‘the man hit the child’

\[
\text{IP} \\
\quad \text{DP} \\
\quad \quad \text{a} \quad \triangle \quad \text{tutana} \\
\quad \text{I'} \\
\quad \quad \text{i} \\
\quad \quad \triangle \quad \text{kita ra bul}
\]
Tolai - ‘object-denoting’ predication

5(a) a kaliku i ga boroi lua

D python 3SG REM pig before

‘the python has been a big before’
Tolai - ‘object-denoting’ predication

5(b) au ina tutana tuna

1SG 1SG.FUT man real

‘I’ll be a real man’
Whitesands - ‘normal’ predication

6(a) in t-at-etei nawəwə

3SG 3SG-CONT-write book.ACC

‘He is writing a book’
Whitesands - ‘normal’ predication

6(b) jow  ja-k-eles  ik
1SG  1SG-NPST-carry  2SG

‘I’ll carry you’
Whitesands - *‘object-denoting’ predication

7(a) *jow  ja-k-tem

1SG  1SG-NPST-man

*‘I am a man’

(b)  ik  petan!

2SG woman

‘you are a woman!’
Constituent Categories

- Oceanic Languages
  - IP is established for Tolai and Whitesands
    - Tolai IP can take any complement to I (object or event-denoting words)
    - Whitesands IP cannot take NP complement
  - DP is established for Tolai
    - this can take any complement to D (object or event-denoting words)
  - No evidence for DP in Whitesands
- Is there further evidence for NP or VP?
Constituent Categories

- Is there evidence for NP or VP?
- This distinction is made by the assignment of case:

8(a) and (b)
Constituent Categories

- *Tolai* - Accusative assignment is a property of VP

9(a) and (b)
Constituent Categories

- Tolai - “inalienable possession” - transitive object-denoting, genitive assignment

10(a)  bala-gu  
   belly-1SG.GEN  
   ‘my belly’

```
  a
  |
  v
 bala

  |
  v
 X
  |
  v
 bala

  |
  v
 DP
  |
  v
 CASE:GEN
```
Constituent Categories

- **Tolai** - “inalienable possession” - transitive object-denoting, genitive assignment

  11(a)  a  bala  i  ra  boroi
  D  belly  GEN  D  pig
  ‘The pig’s belly’

```
  DP
     .
    D
     .
  a

  NP
     X
     .
     D
     .
  bala  i  ra

  XP
     .
  boroi

  CASE:GEN
```
Constituent Categories

- Whitesands - Accusative assignment

12(a) and (b)
Constituent Categories

- Whitesands - “inalienable possession” - transitive object-denoting, genitive assignment

13(a) and (b)

NP

N

narfa

belly

CASE:GEN

NP

k

1SG

NP

nepik

tail

CASE:GEN

NP

kahaw

rat
What do other functional heads do? e.g. POSS

Different assignment of case:

14(a) and (b)
Constituent Categories

- What do the functional heads do?
  - Different assignment of case:
    - Tolai

15(a) and (b)

![Diagram of Constituent Categories]

1. IP
   - DP
     - I
       - CASE:NOM
   - I'
     - XP
2. POSSP
   - DP
     - POSS
       - CASE:GEN
     - NP
Constituent Categories

- *Tolai* - ‘normal’ predication

17(a)  
\[
\begin{align*}
17(a) & \quad a \quad tutana \quad i \quad kita \quad ra \quad bul \\
D & \quad man \quad 3SG \quad hit \quad D \quad child \\
\text{‘the man hit the child’}
\end{align*}
\]
Constituent Categories

- Tolai - “Alienable” Possession

18(a)  ka-na   vavina
POSS-3SG.GEN  woman
‘His wife’
What do the functional heads do?

- Different assignment of case:
  - Whitesands

16(a) and (b)
WS - ‘normal’ predication

19(a) kitah k-awt-əmnem nəkawə
3PL 3-HAB.PL-drink kava

‘We drink kava’
Constituent Categories

- Whitesands: “Alienable” Possession

20(a)  
\[
\text{raha-} \quad \text{jetemimi} \\
\text{POSS-3SG GEN} \quad \text{human} \\
\text{‘His wife’}
\]
Constituent Categories

- *Whitesands* - POSS and transitive object-denoting together

\[
23(h)\text{raha-}k \quad \text{narme-}n \\
\text{POSS-1SG.GEN} \quad \text{photo-3SG.GEN}
\]

‘My photo of you’
Nominalization

- Can the proposed grammar account for nominalization in WS and T?
  - Tolai - intransitivization plus incorporation, NO case assignment
  - Whitesands - case assignment
Nominalization

- Tolai - ‘event-denoting’ words in DPs with incorporation

21  (a) *dia mome ra tava
    3PL drink.TR D water
    ‘they drank the water’

  (b) *dia momo-na-tava
    3PL drink.ITR-C-water
    ‘they drank water’, ‘they water-drank’

  (c) a m-in-omo-na-tava
    D [NMLZ].drink.ITR.C-water
    ‘the drinking of water’

  (d) *a m-in-ome ra tava
    D [NMLZ].drink.TR D water
Nominalization

- Tolai - ‘event-denoting’ words in DPs with incorporation

22(e)  
\[
\begin{align*}
D & \quad [\text{NMLZ}].\text{drink.I TR-C-water} \\
\text{POSS} & \quad \text{GEN} \\
\text{D} & \quad \text{man}
\end{align*}
\]

‘the man’s drinking of water’
Nominalization

- Whitesands - NMLZ case assignment *(Hammond 2009)*

- *n*-ROOT-*ien*

23(a)  

\[ \begin{align*}
    jow & \quad ja-k-eles & \quad ik \\
    1SG & \quad 1SG-NPST-carry.SG & \quad 2SG.ACC \\
\end{align*} \]

‘I’ll carry you’

(b)  

\[ \begin{align*}
    ja-k-arun & \quad n-eles-ien & \quad ik, \\
    1SG-NPST-know & \quad NMLZ-carry.SG-NMLZ & \quad 2SG.ACC \\
    m-u-ari & \quad ES-DU-landwards \\
\end{align*} \]

‘I am able to carry you, we’ll go landwards’
Nominalization

- Whitesands - NMLZ case assignment

23(c)  na-at-aniekiek  e  n-etei-i'en  nəwəwə
2-CONT.SG-too.much  OBL  NMLZ-write-NMLZ  book.ACC
‘You write books too much’

(d)  t-am-asiru  la-k
3SG-PST-help  ALL-1SG
‘He helped me’

(e)  raha-n  n-asiru-i'en  la-k  t-evur
POSS-3SG.GEN  NMLZ-help-NMLZ  ALL-1SG  3SG.NPST-good
‘His helping me was nice’
Nominalization

- Whitesands - NMLZ case assignment

23(f) ja-k-arun n-eles-ien ik,
1SG-NPST-know NMLZ-carry.SG-NMLZ 2SG.ACC
'I am able to carry you'

[Nominalization diagram]
Whitesands - NMLZ, NP selection

23(g)  
raha-k  
POSS-1SG.GEN

n-asum-ien  
NMLZ-make.garden-NMLZ

‘My garden’

Nominalization
Oceanic languages have a preference for phrasal grammatical categories.

Constituents are defined through complement selection and case assignment.

- **Tolai** - functional categories D and I with complements XP. NP and VP internally defined by structural properties of case assignment. No coherent syntactic categories of N and V.

- **Whitesands** - loss of D has created a distinct N category. NP and VP internally defined by structural properties of case assignment (transitive). VP is also externally defined as the only potential complement of I so a distinct V category is defined by being the head of VP.

- **Both languages** - NP is externally defined as the only potential complement of POSS