The Phrasal Basis of Grammatical Category Distinction

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Classical Languages (e.g. Latin)

TOLAI (all data here and following from Mosel (1984) and Rinderknecht (1987))

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'

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'

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1 ABS 'absolutive', ACC 'accusative', CAUS 'causative', C 'complimentizer', CONT 'continuous', DU 'dual', FUT 'future', GEN 'genitive', HAB 'habitual', ITR 'intransitive', N- 'non', NEG 'negative', NMLZ 'nominalizer', NOM 'nominative', PRF 'perfect/ive', POSS 'possessive', PL 'plural', PST 'past', REM 'remote', SG 'singular', TR 'transitive'
WHITESANDS

3(a) petan t-an-ol rakis nahwel  
woman 3SG-PRF-make already lapwel  
The/a woman has made (a) laplap
(b) kahaw t-am-avoir jow  
rat 3SG-PST-defecate turtle  
The rat shat on the turtle

TOLAI

4(a) ina vana, ina ga vut-mulai  
1SG.FUT go 1SG.FUT REM come-return  
I’ll go, I’ll come back later’
(b) a tutana i kita ra bul  
D man 3SG hit D child  
‘the man hit the child’

5(a) a kaliku i ga boroi lua  
D python 3SG REM pig before  
‘the python has been a pig before’
(b) au ina tutana tuna  
1SG 1SG.FUT man real  
I’ll be a real man’

WHITESANDS

6(a) in t-at-etei nawa  
3SG 3SG-PRT-write book.ACC  
‘He is writing a book’
(b) jow ja-k-eles ik  
1SG 1SG-NPST-carry 2SG  
‘I’ll carry you’
7(a) *jow ja-k-tem 
   1SG 1SG-NPST-man 
   *'I am a man'  
(b) ik petan! 
   2SG woman 
   'you are a woman'

8 (a) and (b)

TOLAI

9 (a) and (b)

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

(b)


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

WHITESANDS
12 (a) amnem nəkawə
   drink kava
   'drink kava'
(b) oh jow
   hit 1SG
   'hit me'

13 (a) narfa-k
   belly-1SG
   'my belly' (Whitesands)
(b) nepik-kahaw
   tail-rat
   'the rat’s tail' (Whitesands)

13(a) and (b)
TOLAI

17 (a)  
a tutana i kita ra bul  
D man 3SG hit D child  
'the man hit the child'

18 (a)  
ka-na vavina  
POSS-3SG.GEN woman  
'His wife'

WHITESANDS

19 (a)  
kitah k-awt-ɔmnem nɔkawɔ  
3PL 3-HAB.PL-drink kava  
'We drink kava' (Whitesands)
20(a)  
raha- \( k \)  
jetemimi  
POSS-3SG.GEN  
human  
‘His wife’ (Whitesands)

TOLAI  
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  

(e)  
a  
m-in-omo-na-tava  
ka  
i  
ra  
tutana  
D  
[NMLZ].drink.ITR-C-water  
POSS  
GEN  
D  
man  
‘the man’s drinking of water’
WHITESANDS

23(a)  
jow  
ja-k-eles  
  ik
1SG  1SG-NPST-carrySG  2SG.ACC
'I'll carry you'

(b)  
ja-k-arun  
n-eles-ien  
  ik,
1SG-NPST-know  NMLZ-carry.SG-NMLZ  2SG.ACC
m-u-ari
ES-DU-landwards
'I am able to carry you, we'll go landwards'

Nominalization

NP
NMLZ

VP

V

NP

n- -ien

elles

ik

CASE:ACC

(c)  
na-at-aniekiek  
e  
n-etei-ien  
nawawa
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-ien  
  la-k  
t-evur
POSS-3SG.GEN  NMLZ-help-NMLZ  ALL-1SG  3SG.NPST-good
'His helping me was nice'

(g)  
raha-k  
n-asum-ien
POSS-1SG.GEN  NMLZ-make.garden-NMLZ
'Ve go'

Nominalization

NP

VP

V

NP

n- -ien

elles

ik

CASE:ACC

Nominalization

NP

NP

VP

V

NP

n- -ien

elles

ik

CASE:ACC
**Summary**

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

**References**


