A note on extraction from object position in Javanese and other Javanic languages

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It is widely believed that in the Austronesian languages of Indonesia, only subjects can be relativized. According to this view, cases of apparent object relativization are actually instances of subject relativization, in which the D-structure object has first been moved to subject position via an affixless variant of passivization. We shall argue, however, that this proposal is false with respect to Javanese. We argue that Javanese, unlike, for example, standard Indonesian, lacks affixless passivization. Hence, apparent object relativization does, in fact, instantiate direct relativization from object position.

1. Object extraction and the nasal prefix

A widely held view among Austronesianists is that in the Austronesian languages of Indonesia, only subjects can be relativized. Sneddon (1996) states that only subjects can be relativized in Indonesian; Davies (1998) argues that this is also the case in Madurese, and, going beyond the languages of Indonesia, Paul (1998) does the same for Malagasy. Chung (1976) and Cole and Hermann (1998), however, argue that, in addition to subjects, objects can be relativized in Indonesian. In this paper, we will examine the status of this claim with regard to another Western Austronesian language, Javanese. Our discussion will be based on the Javanese spoken in Central Java in the city of Semarang. We will conclude that Semarang Javanese (hereafter, Javanese) behaves like Indonesian as described in Chung (1976) and Cole and Hermann (1998) in this respect and not like Madurese as described by Davies (1998): in short, we will argue that both subjects and objects can be relativized in Javanese.

The question of what can be relativized in the languages in question is related to a particular morphological pattern common to these languages, the presence or

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* Javanese is spoken by more than 70,000,000 speakers on the island of Java. Our consultants are native to the city Semarang and speak the central dialect of the language. We base our claims entirely on the Javanese of Semarang and make no claim about other dialects of Javanese. A characteristic of Javanese is the existence of clearly defined formal (Kromo) and informal (Ngoko) registers. All of the examples in this paper are drawn from the informal register.

The research reported on in this paper was supported by the following grants from the National Science Foundation: SBR-9121167, SBR-9729519 and INT-9423291.
absence of a nasal prefix on the verb.\(^1\) We shall illustrate this pattern in Javanese. At first glance, it appears to be uncontroverial that an object can be relativized in Javanese:

1. **Budi** maca buku kuwi.
   Budi m-waca buku kuwi
   Budi N-read book that
   'Budi read that book'

2. **Buku** kuwi [DP [CP sing Budi waca]].
   buku kuwi sing Budi waca
   book that SING Budi read
   'That book is the one that Budi read'

3. **Apa** [DP [CP sing Budi waca]]?
   apa sing Budi waca
   what SING Budi read
   'What did Budi read?'

(1) shows an active sentence; (2) shows a relativized object in a headless relative clause (\textit{sing} is a complementizer that occurs only in relative clauses). (3) shows that the same pattern holds in clefted \textit{wh}-questions, a construction made up of an \textit{in situ} question word in subject position and a headless relative clause in predicate position.\(^2\)

Although it appears as though the object has been relativized directly from object position in (2) and (3), a closer look reveals a difference between the verb in (1) and those in (2) and (3); namely, the verb has lost its nasal prefix in the cases of apparent object relativization. If the nasal prefix remains on the verb, the resulting sentence is ungrammatical:

4. **Buku** kuwi [DP [CP sing Budi maca]].
   buku kuwi sing Budi m-waca
   book that SING Budi N-read
   'That book is the one that Budi read.'

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\(^1\) In Javanese, this morphological pattern involves a nasal prefix which assimilates to the place of articulation of the following consonant. In other languages, the realization of this prefix is slightly different; however, we will refer to the prefix as the "nasal prefix" throughout the paper, with the understanding that the prefix pattern remains the same no matter how the prefix is realized in an individual language.

\(^2\) Javanese is a \textit{wh}-\textit{in situ} language. Questions in which the \textit{wh}-word appears to have been moved (as in (3)) are really DP DP sentences in which the question word (\textit{in situ}) is the subject and a headless relative clause is the predicate. Our arguments in favor of this analysis will not be discussed here, however, as they are beyond the scope of this note.
(4) shows that the presence of the nasal prefix is ungrammatical in a relative clause in apparent object relativization; (5) shows that the nasal prefix is also ungrammatical in a clefted wh-question which contains an object relative clause.

2. Bare passive and direct extraction

We shall consider two hypotheses which purport to explain the distribution of the nasal prefix in Javanese and related Javanic languages. One hypothesis, which mirrors Snaddon's (1996) and Davies' (1998) analyses of Indonesian and Madurese respectively, we will call the Bare Passive Hypothesis. The other hypothesis, which follows the proposals of Chung (1976) and Cole and Hermon (1998), we will call the Direct Extraction Hypothesis.

The Bare Passive Hypothesis claims that in order for objects to be relativized, they must first be passivized and become the subjects of their clauses; relativization then occurs from the subject position. A derivation for object relativization would be along the following lines:

6. a. Input to Bare Passivization
   \[ [\text{DP} \ [\text{CP} \ \text{sing} \ [\_ \ Budi \ \_waca \ \text{OP}]]] \]
   SING Budi pass-read OP
   \[ [\text{DP} \ [\text{CP} \ \text{SING} \ [\_ \ \text{AGENT} \ \_\text{-VERB} \ \text{PATIENT}]]] \]
   b. Output of Bare Passivization and Input to Relativization
   \[ [\text{DP} \ [\text{CP} \ \text{sing} \ \text{OP}_1 \ \text{Budi} \ \_waca \ t_{ij}]] \]
   SING OP Budi pass-read
   \[ [\text{DP} \ [\text{CP} \ \text{SING} \ \text{PATIENT} \ \text{AGENT} \ \_\text{-VERB} \ t_{ij}]] \]
   c. Output of Relativization
   \[ [\text{DP} \ [\text{CP} \ \text{OP}_1 \ \text{sing} \ [t_i \ \text{Budi} \ \_waca \ t_{ij}]]] \]
   SING Budi pass-read
   \[ [\text{DP} \ [\text{CP} \ \text{PATIENT} \ \text{SING} \ [t_i \ \text{AGENT} \ \_\text{-VERB} \ t_{ij}]]] \]

(6a) shows the D-structure of the bare passive, in which the verb bears a null rather than a nasal prefix; then, in (6b), the patient moves to subject position within the clause, presumably to receive case, as in other languages. Note that the loss of the nasal prefix under the Bare Passive Hypothesis is due to the fact that the bare passive verb form simply has a null prefix which indicates passive, rather than the active nasal prefix. In (6c), the patient (the D-structure object) has been relativized from subject position. The Bare Passive Hypothesis claims that direct A'-movement of the patient from object position in (6a) would be ungrammatical.
In contrast, the Direct Extraction Hypothesis claims that both subjects and objects can be extracted directly by A'-movement. According to this hypothesis, the nasal prefix is lost whenever a nominal argument is moved across the verb, perhaps as a form of \(w\)-agreement along the lines proposed by Chung (1991) for Chamorro.\(^3\) This hypothesis can account for the predictions made by the Bare Passive Hypothesis, since it predicts that any passive subject can be relativized; but the Direct Extraction Hypothesis also makes a further prediction, which is that objects can be relativized without first needing to become passive subjects. The derivation of relative clauses according to the Direct Extraction Hypothesis is illustrated in (7) and (8):

For subjects:

7. a. Input to Relativization (Headless Relative Clause)
   \[
   \text{[DP [CP sing [IP OP maca buku]]]} \\
   \text{SING [IP OP N-read book]} \\
   \text{[DP [CP SING [IP SUBJECT N-VERB OBJECT]]]} \\
   \]
   b. Output of Relativization
   \[
   \text{[DP [CP OP1 sing [IP t1 maca buku]]]} \\
   \text{OP1 SING [IP N-read book]} \\
   \text{[DP [CP SUBJECT SING [IP t1 N-VERB OBJECT]]]} \\
   \]

For objects:

8. a. Input to Relativization (Headless Relative Clause)
   \[
   \text{[DP [CP sing [IP Budi maca OP]]]} \\
   \text{SING [IP Budi N-read OP]} \\
   \text{[DP [CP SING [IP SUBJECT N-VERB OBJECT]]]} \\
   \]
   b. Output of Relativization
   \[
   \text{[DP [CP OP1 sing [IP Budi waca t1]]]} \\
   \text{OP1 SING [IP Budi read]} \\
   \text{[DP [CP OBJECT SING [IP SUBJECT VERB t1]]]} \\
   \]

(7a) shows that the nasal prefix is present before subject relativization; (7b) shows the output of subject relativization. There is no loss of nasal morphology since in this case there is no movement across the verb. (8a) shows that, as in (7a), the nasal prefix is present before object relativization. (8b) shows the relativized object and the corresponding loss in nasal morphology due to movement across the verb.\(^4\)

\(^3\) We hope to discuss the mechanisms by which the nasal prefix is lost in future work.

\(^4\) We do not wish to claim that the nasal prefix is literally deleted in the derivation. This is to be taken as shorthand for the claim that movement across the verb (perhaps to specifier of VP or to specifier of a functional projection above the verb) licenses the omission of the nasal prefix.
3. The non-existence of bare passive in Javanese

The Bare Passive Hypothesis is based on the assumption that in Javanese, like Indonesian, bare passives exist in the language. However, this assumption is incorrect and the Bare Passive construction is not found in Javanese.³ Compare the wellformedness of bare passives in Indonesian and the illformedness of these sentences in Javanese.

9. a. Indonesian
   Buku ini ku-baca.
   Book this 1SG-read
   'This book is read by me'
   
b. Javanese
   *Buku kuwi aku waca.
   buku kuwi aku waca
   book this 1SG read
   'A book is read by me'

10. a. Indonesian
    Anjing Budi kau-bunuh.
    dog Budi 2SG-kill
    'Budi's dog was killed by you'
    
b. Javanese
    *Asume Budi kowe pateni.
    asu-ne Budi kowe pateni
    dog-NE Budi 2SG kill
    'Budi's dog was killed by you'

11. a. Indonesian
    Durian itu Budi pilih.⁶
    durian that Budi select
    'That durian was selected by Budi.'
    
b. Javanese
    *Siti Budi kepuk.
    Siti Budi kepuk
    Siti Budi hit
    'Siti was hit by Budi'

³ This is in contradiction to what we claimed in our presentation at the AFLA VI conference. At that time we believed that the bare passive existed in Javanese, but that it was subject to a variety of licensing conditions. It became clear subsequent to the conference that the initial judgments collected were incorrect and that the bare passive does not actually exist in Javanese.

⁶ Indonesian speakers vary with regard to whether they accept the bare passive with a non-pronominal agent. Nearly all speakers will accept (11a) when it is addressed to Budi and is translated as 'that durian was selected by you.'
Since, unlike Indonesian, the bare passive construction does not occur in Javanese, the Bare Passive Hypothesis predicts that apparent object extraction will not occur in this language. This prediction, however, is false:

   buku-ne sing aku waca lucu
   book-NE SING 1SG read funny
   'The book that I read is funny'

13. Bukune sing ngendi sing kowe waca?
   buku-ne sing ngendi sing kowe waca
   book-NE SING where SING 2SG read
   'Which book was read by you?'

    montor sing Siti setir abang
    car SING Siti drive red
    'The car that Siti drives is red'

Compare (12), (13), and (14) to (9b), (10b), and (11b), respectively. In the examples of (12-14), the nasal prefix is lost and there is apparent object relativization. Since the Bare Passive is excluded as a possible derivation for these sentences, we conclude that direct extraction from object position occurs in Javanese.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, we believe that Javanese is like Indonesian but unlike Madurese as described by Davies, in that there is clear evidence for A'-movement from positions other than the matrix subject. This is despite the very similar distributions of the nasal prefix in Javanese and Madurese.

References


