Документация языка натиоро: к проблеме вариативного порядка слов

Documentation of the Natioro language: towards the problem of variable word order

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Natioro language

- Natioro (Samu Kunee) < Gur < Niger-Congo
- 4000 – 5500 speakers
- Contacts with Senoufo and Dioula (< Mande)

Documentation of Natioro

- 2018 – 2020, Burkina Faso

- In sum, 3 months of fieldwork

- Dictionary (~ 1 500 items)

- Corpus (~ 35 min, different genres: dialogues, instructions, narratives about traditions, tales and riddles)

Basic features

- Tonal language (3 levels)
- Nominal classification: classifiers can (and must) be deleted in some contexts:

1. sīsi-**ā**   'rice.cake-CL'
   sīsî fɔ: 'white rice cake'

2. kàfɛ́ŋ-**wà**   'donkey-CL'
   kàfɛ́ŋ kāabà   'one donkey'

Focus of the talk

- SVO in Perfective/SOV in Imperfective:

1. nā^n cèrē ^{L}tà^n-wà

   1SG   throw.PFV   stone-CL

   'I threw a stone'.

2. nā-mí   tā^n-wà   cèrē-w^n

   1SG-ACC   stone-CL   throw-IPFV

   'I am throwing stones'.

- DO marking:

3. pō^n-wā   tā ^{L}nà-mì

   dog-CL   bite.PFV   1SG-ACC

   'A/the dog bit me'.

Imperfective pattern

Resultative forms:

1.   **n$\overline{\text{a}}$-mí**   p$\overline{\text{ı}}$lá = ká

        1SG-ACC   soft = RES

2.   ***n$\overline{\text{a}}$**   p$\overline{\text{ı}}$lá = ká

        1SG   soft = RES

        'I am tired'.

Full clausal structure (IPFV-type)

S – (AUX) – O – V

- The AUX slot can be filled with TAM markers which are compatible with Imperfective and Resultative forms

1. ʔɲĩ̄ĩ̀   nā^n tɔ́   cɛ̀:nɛ̀-w̄^{n}
   yesterday   1SG   PST   hunt-IPFV
   'Yesterday I was hunting'.

No elements in S – AUX/PFV sequences

- No elements can intervene between the subject and the verb:

AUX SENTENCES

1. a. s̄ān̄ī nā-mí lō̄ⁿ swè = :
   tomorrow 1SG-ACC FUT go.NMLZ
   pòlīsī = `: tɔ̄
   police DAT

   b. *nā-mí s̄ān̄ī lō̄ⁿ swè = :
   1SG-ACC tomorrow FUT go.NMLZ
   pòlīsī = `: tɔ̄
   police DAT
   'Tomorrow I will go to the police'.

No elements in S – AUX/PFV sequences

PFV SENTENCES

1. a. nā̄   ɲā:nā̄   ʔɲīī̄   bā̄:bā̄   kàwā̄^H

   1SG   buy.PFV   yesterday   sheep   meat

   b. *nā̄   ʔɲīī̄   ɲā:nā̄   bā̄:bā̄   kàwā̄^H

   1SG   yesterday   buy.PFV   sheep   meat

   'Yesterday I bought some sheep meat'.

Clausal structure

S – (AUX)   –   [O   –   V]

GENERALIZATION:

- All elements expressing tense meanings occupy the AUX slot
- All elements expressing aspect meanings are suffixed to the verbal form
- PFV is incompatible with PST:

1. *mádū   **tó**   wɔlɔ

     M.   PST   lie.PFV

     Int.: 'Madou laid down'.

Clausal structure

S – (AUX) – [O – V]

GENERALIZATION:
- All elements expressing tense meanings occupy the AUX slot
- All elements expressing aspect meanings are suffixed to the verbal form

S – TP – [VP] -AspP

No coordination of PFV and IPFV-patterned predications

1. mādāmú   yî   à   wɔ́ɔ́
   M.   stand.PFV   CRD   say.PFV
   'Madamou stood up and said…' [corpus]
2. *mádū   pâ   à   tòònìŋ=gā
   M.   come.PFV.MED   CRD   sit=RES
   Int.: 'Madou came and is sitting'.

3. mádū   kíníŋ=gá   [à   wɔ̄lɔ̄]
   M.   lay=RES   CRD   sleep.PFV
   'Madou laid down and got asleep'.

Hypothesis:

- **ALL** OV-structures are predications of the same syntactic type which is different from TP

- Nominal predications?

- Verb in such structures cannot assign accusative case to internal arguments

  => (Pseudo-)incorporation?

Nominal predications?

1) The same Past marking in nominal predications:

1. tn̄dìŋgá   siátá   **tɔ́**   nā   cwá

   before   S.   PST   1SG   wife

   'Sata was my wife before'.

2) Accusative marking is preserved in constructions with nominalizations:

2. ní   mā   pìnɛ̄

   1SG.ACC   2SG   eat.NMLZ

   'I want to eat'.   [corpus]

(Pseudo)incorporation?

- In compounds, nominal stems can occur both with and without classifiers:

1. byē^n-wā   'rope-CL'

   byē^n-wā   kūŋgwá   'tip of the rope'

   byē^n kūŋgwá   'tip of the rope'

- Cases where stems occur without classifiers were attested in Imperfective clauses:

2. ā   tā^n nɛ̀-w̄^{n}

   3sg   beer   drink-IPFV

   'He is drinking beer' (*tā^n-wā* 'beer').

(Pseudo)incorporation?

Accusative cannot be assigned in Imperfectives:

DITRANSITIVE CONSTRUCTIONS

1. má **kɔ̄ⁿ** **nā-mí** pōrō
   2SG.ACC give.PFV 1SG-ACC something
   'You gave me a small gift'.

2. má **[nā/*nā-mí kɔ̄ⁿˋ]** pōrō
   2SG.ACC 1SG/1SG-ACC give.IPFV something
   kpɛ̄=ˋ pá
   day all
   'You give me small gifts every day'.

(Pseudo)incorporation?

Verb and direct object can be interrupted in Perfective but not in Imperfective:

1) mádū̄   dībī̄   **à**   **fāŋá**   swá-bòndà
   M.   shut.PFV   COM   force   house-door.POSS
   'Madu shut the door with force'.

2) mádū̄   swá-bòndà   dìbǐ-w̄ⁿ   **à**   **fāŋá**
   M.   house-door.POSS   shut-IPFV   COM   force
   'Madu shut the door with force'.

3) *mádū̄   swá-bòndà   **à**   **fāŋá**   dìbǐ-w̄ⁿ
   M.   house-door.POSS   COM   force   shut-IPFV
   Int.: 'Madu shuts the door with force'.

(Pseudo)incorporation?

Wh-movement:

1. **pè**　　　mádū̄　wɛ́sɛ́　　　yà?

   thing　　　M.　　break.PFV　　Q

   'What did Madou break?'

2. ***pè** siāt̄a̅　sō̄-ẃⁿ　　　kwā̄=̀:t̄ɔ　　yā̄?

   S.　thing　sell-IPFV　　　market DAT　Q

   '#What sells Sata at the market?'

3. **ūspmà**　　**fīnà=**:nā̄-mí　　　*(wā̄)　b̄ɪl̄a̅=ká?

   clothes　　what　1SG-ACC　　　DEM　put.on=RES

   'What kind of shirt did I wear?'
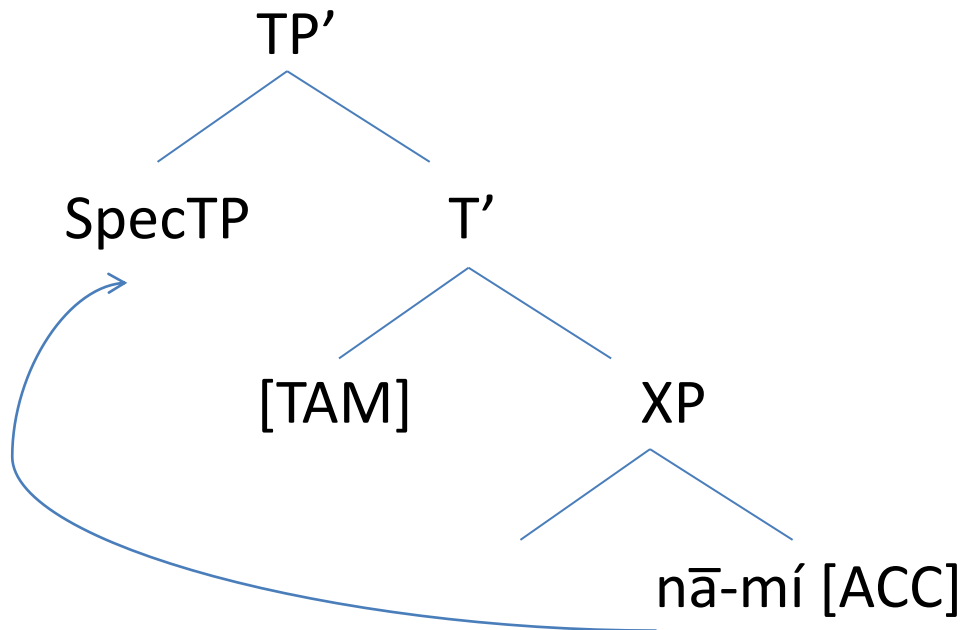
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Accusative subject problem

- Let us suppose that accusative (in Imperfective-type clauses) and nominative (in Perfective ones) are assigned by the same head XP

- In this case, it is hard to explain why the same head assigns two different cases depending on the TAM form of the verb

- A more elegant explanation is needed

Accusative NP raising?

- - Null subject parameter
- *General rule*:

  Fill the subject position with a non-zero NP obligatorily. If there is no good candidate, just fill it with something.

- No zero subject sentences are possible in Natioro, even in pro-drop/ellipsis contexts:

1.   {Q: Has Madou come?}

   *pâ

   come.PFV

   Int.: 'He has come'.

Accusative NP raising?

- Proposal: in Imperfective-type clauses, the accusative is assigned first, and then the accusative-marked NP is moved to the subject position

Accusative NP raising?

- Under this approach, the DO (= pseudoincorporated) phrase does not receive any case

- Then the external argument is assigned the accusative case, since it cannot receive any other case marking

- According to the non-null subject requirement, the only accessible NP is promoted to the subject position

Accusative case assignment

- [Wood 2017]

  Accusative Subject Generalization (ASG): *Accusative subjects in Icelandic are never thematic arguments of morphologically intransitive verbs*

- "Accusative is assigned to a DP as dependent case, when that DP is c-commanded by a higher nominative or accusative DP" [ibid.: 250]

- The cases are computed on the basis of hierarchical relations between DPs (see also [Mc Fadden 2004]):

  a. [*Case Domain . . .* DP$_{Unmarked}$ *. . .* DP$_{Unmarked}$ *. . .*]

     DP c-commands DP from an A-position →

  b. [*Case Domain . . .* DP-CASE1 . . . DP-CASE2 . . .] =

  c. [*Case Domain . . .* DP-NOM . . . DP-ACC . . .]

Accusative case assignment

- Under this approach, accusative subjects must receive case from DPs c-commanding them (even if they are zero pronouns, like in Icelandic)

- However, there are no such DPs in Natioro Imperfective clauses

Accusative case assignment

- Accusative is assigned by vP [Chomsky 1989; 1991; 1995]

- If this is so, accusative can be assigned only to the external argument

- What is the head assigning the Accusative?

Alternative explanation?

- For some reasons, accusative case needs to be assigned first in all clauses

- Most Perfective clauses have two arguments, so both nominative and accusative can be assigned

- **PROBLEM**: If the verb has a single argument, it is predicted that the accusative case is assigned first

  => verbs with a single argument must assign the accusative case to it

- A possible solution could be postulation of a mechanism which would prevent assignment of accusative

Middle voice forms

- In Natioro, there are middle voice forms which operate only on Perfective forms
- They are marked by tone-lowering (usually accompanied by prolongation of the final vowel)
- Middle voice forms do not have external arguments in their argument structure since they cannot be expressed overtly:

1. mádū̄   dī=˥ᷓ   (*à   zàkî)

   M.   kill.PFV=MED COM   Z.

   'Madou kil

- Samue (Wara) language: no middle voice and no accusative marking in Imperfective [Ouattara 2015]

Middle voice forms

+agent, -theme:

1. mádū̄   cā̄=ˋ:^{n}

   M.   lie.PFV=MED

   'Madou lied'.

+agent, ±theme:

2. mádū̄   sùmà=:

   M.   know.PFV=MED

   'Madou knows something'

-agent, +theme:

3. bā̄:bā̄   lā̄lī=ˋ:

   sheep   drip=MED

   'The sheep got lost'.

Middle voice forms

- Only two arguments (S and O) are subject to middle voice alternation. Any other NPs/PPs are not.

1. nā^n kānî   nā   mɔ́tɔ́   siātā   tɔ̄

   1SG   show.PFV   1SG   bike   S.   DAT

   'I showed my bike to Sata'.

2. *siātā   kānī=ˋ   nā   mɔ́tɔ́

   S.   show=MED   1SG   bike

   Int.: 'Sata was shown my bike'.

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Conclusion

- Perfective and Imperfective clauses in Natioro follow different patterns of case assignment

- If they cannot be reduced to each other, an explanation is needed why the accusative is assigned to the external argument (without any other argument which would occupy the higher position)

- If cases are assigned in a uniform way, then for some reasons accusative must be assigned first and marked are clauses which cannot assign accusative