Verb-initial in non-verbal clauses?

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1. Basic and non-basic clause types

- Both (1a) and (1b) are grammatical; which is more basic? Among other approaches, we can examine the degree of morphological markedness: (1b) is less basic than (1a) (number of morphemes, frequency, range of pragmatic associations).

(1) a. The woman tickled the cat. Agt V Pat
     b. The cat was tickled by the woman. Pat V Agt

- Tukang Besi (Austronesian language of central Indonesia, verbal clauses are basically predicate-initial, (2). An alternative order is shown in (3), (pragmatically marked).

(2) No-wila na wowine i wunua. 3R-go NOM woman OBL:I house
   ‘The woman is going to the house.’

(3) Te wowine no-wila i wunua. CORE woman 3R-go OBL:I house
   ‘The woman is going to the house.’

- nonverbal clauses: two competing strategies, shown in (4) - (5) (The same variation is also found with locational or directional predicates). (4) and (5) are much more similar to each other than are (2) and (3).

(‘nonverbal clause’: the predicate is a DP. Adjectives incorporate into an empty V0 position when predicative (Donohue 1999b, Baker 2003))

(4) Te guru na wowine. CORE teacher NOM woman
(5) Te wowine te guru. CORE woman CORE teacher
   ‘The woman is a teacher.’

- DP_a = DP_b, with no verbal copula.

- which of (4) and (5) is more ‘basic’, and which is ‘marked’?

(4) could be be more basic, based on the similarities it shares with (2) (predicate-initial order, S marked with nominative case na)? What about case marking?

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* Thanks to Jane Simpson for clarifying my thoughts, and Eric Potsdam for getting me started again.

Assuming basic order is predicate-initial

(6) a. IP b. CP
   I’ DP DPPRAG IP
   I VP/DP I …

Assuming basic order is not predicate-initial

(7) a. IP b. CP
   IP DP I’ I’ IP
   I DP I DPPRAG DP …

2. **Harmonic and disharmonic orders**

- (in most languages) the position of a verbal predicate in a clause is indicative of the position of a nonverbal predicate in a clause.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbal clause order</th>
<th>Nonverbal clause order (if harmonic with verbal order)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOV</td>
<td>S PRED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVO</td>
<td>S PRED PRED S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>VOS PRED S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVS</td>
<td>OSV PRED S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSV</td>
<td>least frequent S PRED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(eg., Tok Pisin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(eg., Tagalog)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- many languages do NOT retain harmonic relationships between all heads and their modifiers, (eg., the universal tendenc for adjectives to follow nouns).
- languages for which the basic order is not subject-initial will show a subject-initial variant. Thus, Tagalog.

(9) a. *Ang babae ay l<um>a-lakad.* b. *L<um>a-lakad ang babae.*
               NOM woman AY RED<AV>-walk                  RED<AV>-walk NOM woman
     ‘The woman is walking.’                        ‘The woman is walking.’

               NOM woman AY teacher                     teacher NOM woman
     ‘The woman is the one who is the teacher.’   ‘The woman is a teacher.’

- The variant orders of Tukang Besi clauses are not so easy. The same number of morphemes is used in predicate-initial and non-predicate initial clauses.
- pragmatic constraints as a means of investigating the different clause orders
- the order of elements is disharmonic between verbal and nonverbal clauses

3. **Outline sketch of Tukang Besi basic clauses**

- verbs show obligatory agreement for the S or A by verbal prefixes, and optional agreement for the P by enclitic. Case marking choices are shown in (14).
Case marking in Tukang Besi

(11) nominative  na  marks the subject of the clause
    genitive  nu
    oblique  i / di
    core  te  marks non-subject core arguments, or terms

The gloss ‘nominative’ is used here in the tradition found in, amongst others, and Kroeger (1993). It refers to a case that marks the grammatical subject of the clause.

    1SG-arrive  OBL.R  house
    ‘I arrived at the house.’

    1SG-slip  OBL.R  mud
    ‘I slipped in the mud.’

(13) a.  Ku-elo=’e  na  ana-ana.
    1SG-call=3P  NOM  child-RED
    ‘I called the children.’

b.  Ku-elo  te  ana-ana.
    1SG-call  CORE  child-RED
    ‘I called (some) children.’

(14) a.  No-elo=aku  te  ana-ana.
    3R-call=1SG.P  CORE  child-RED
    ‘The children called me.’

b.  Ane=ho  no-elo=aku.
    exist=yet  3R-call=1SG.P
    ‘They’re still calling me.’

•  head-initial:  N  Adj,  N  Num,  N  Dem,  N  Gen,  N  Rel,  Pr  NP,  Neg  V,  Aux  V

Preference for prefixing/procliticising morphology, rather than suffixing/encliticising

(15)  No-to-pa-po-ho(N)-rau=mo.
    3R-PASS-CAUS-REC-RED-VRB-yell=PF
    ‘They were made to yell at each other.’

4.  Variation in order: verbal clauses

(16) !#  Ku-rato  na  iaku  di  wunua.
    1SG-arrive  NOM  1SG  OBL.R  house
    ‘I arrived at the house.’

(17)  Te  iaku  ku-rato  di  wunua.
    CORE  1SG  1SG-arrive  OBL.R  house
    ‘I arrived at the house.’

•  the argument that may appear preverbally is the one that would be expected to appear with nominative case na if postverbal. When preverbal, however, it must appear with the generic (term) case marker te.

5.  Locating the predicate: auxiliary placement

AUX  PRED  S

(18) a.  Ane=ho  no-wila  na  wowinei  wunua.
    exist=yet  3R-go  NOM  woman  OBL:I  house
    ‘The woman is still going to the house.’

b.  *  nowila  aneho  na  wowine  i  wunua.

c.  *  nowila  na  wowine  aneho  i  wunua.

S  AUX  PRED

(19) a.  Te  wowine  ane=ho  no-wila  i  wunua.
    CORE  woman  exist=yet  3R-go  OBL:I  house
    ‘The woman is still going to the house.’

b.  *  Aneho  te  wowine  nowila  i  wunua.
• nonverbal clauses:

\[
\text{AUX} \quad \text{PRED} \quad \text{S}
\]

(20) a. \textit{Ane=ho te guru } \textit{na wowine}.  
\begin{center}
be=yet \quad \text{CORE} \quad \text{teacher} \quad \text{NOM} \quad \text{woman}
\end{center}

‘The woman is still a teacher.’

b. * \textit{Te guru aneho na wowine}.

(21) a. \textit{Te wowine aneho te guru}.
\begin{center}
CORE \quad \text{woman} \quad \text{be=yet} \quad \text{CORE} \quad \text{teacher}
\end{center}

‘The woman is still a teacher.’

b. * \textit{Aneho te wowine te guru}.  
(grammatical with the marked reading ‘It’s still the woman who is the teacher.’)

• Exactly similar results are found if we examine the appearance of negation: in all cases it must precede the predicate.

6. **Positional variation and pragmatic focus: question placement**

Constraints on content question formation

(22) Questions for an argument that we expect to find with \textit{na} marking if postverbal are only felicitous through an apparent cleft strategy.

(23) * \textit{No-wila na emai i wunua}?  
\begin{center}
3R-go \quad \text{NOM} \quad \text{who} \quad \text{OBL} \quad \text{I} \quad \text{house}
\end{center}

‘Who is going to the house?’  
(compare with (2))

(24) * \textit{Te emai no-wila i wunua}?  
\begin{center}
CORE \quad \text{who} \quad \text{3R-go} \quad \text{OBL} \quad \text{I} \quad \text{house}
\end{center}

‘Who is going to the house?’  
(compare with (3))

(25) \textit{Te emai na w<um>ila i wunua}?  
\begin{center}
CORE \quad \text{who} \quad \text{NOM} \quad \text{go<SI>} \quad \text{OBL} \quad \text{I} \quad \text{house}
\end{center}

‘Who is going to the house?’

Questioning not in-situ: cleft analysis

(26) \[
\text{[DP Te [NP \quad \ldots \quad ]] \quad [DP na [NP \quad \emptyset \quad [RC \quad \ldots \quad ]]]}
\]


(27) \[
\text{[DP Te [NP \quad \ldots \quad ]] \quad [DP na [NP \quad \ldots \quad ]]}\]

• the predicate can be questioned, only in the verb-initial clause types. Sentences such as

(29) \textit{Te ia no-ha’a=mo?}  
\begin{center}
CORE \quad \text{3SG} \quad \text{3R-how=PF}
\end{center}

‘What is she doing?’

(28) \textit{No-ha’a=mo na ia?}  
\begin{center}
3R-how=PF \quad \text{NOM} \quad \text{3SG}
\end{center}

‘What is she doing?’

an argument that is \textbf{NOT} eligible for \textit{na}-marking: in situ
7. **Positional variation in nonverbal clauses**

- questioning the predicate is possible. (33) is more constrained: possible only if the subject of the clause is not presupposed information. The strategy in (32) is more common.

(32) a. Te emai na wowine iso?  
   CORE woman NOM 3R-what  
   ‘Who is the woman?’

(33) a. Te wowine iso te emai?  
   CORE woman yonCORE who  
   ‘Who is she?’

For both sentence types it is ungrammatical for the non-predicate DP to be questioned:

(34) * Te guru na emai?  
    CORE teacher NOM who  
    ‘Who is a teacher?’

(35) * Te emai te guru.  
    CORE woman CORE teacher  
    (“The teacher is her.”)

- It is possible for a predicate that is not initial to present focussed information (though not interrogative focus).

(36) a. Te emai na atu?  
    CORE who NOM that  
    ‘Who’s that (there with you)?’

b. Te ia ana te iai=si.  
   CORE 3SG this CORE younger.sibling=1SG.GEN  
   ‘This one here is my younger sister.’

Topical/given material: only the non-predicate DP may be pronominalised.

(37) a. Te guru na ia.  
    CORE teacher NOM 3SG  
    ‘She is a teacher.’

b. * Te ia na wowine.  
   CORE 3SG NOM woman  
   (“The woman is she/her.”)  
   NOT: ‘She is a woman.’

(38) a. Te ia te guru.  
    CORE 3SG CORE teacher  
    ‘She is a teacher.’

b. * Te guru te ia.  
   CORE teacher CORE 3SG  
   (“The teacher is her.”)

- (4) (PRED S) must be considered to be pragmatically marked, and functionally restricted. (2) necessarily has contrastive focus on the predicate. The fact that the focus is on the predicate of the clause is compatible with the existence of verbal interrogatives, such as seen in (28) and (29), which must be initial in their clause. A focussed predicate interpretation is not compatible with a clause involving an initial subject:

(39) a. Te wowine iso, no-karajaa-m-paira?  
    CORE woman yon 3R-work-LNKR-what  
    ‘That woman, what work does she do?’
b.  *Te ia te guru=su.*  
   CORE  3SG  CORE  teacher=1SG.GEN  
   ‘She’s my teacher.’

a.’ *Te sunsu=’u?*  
   CORE  relative=2SG.GEN  
   ‘(She’s) your relative?’

b.’ *Mbea’e, te guru=su na ia.*  
   not  CORE  teacher=1SG.GEN  NOM  3SG  
   ‘No, she’s MY TEACHER.’

**Nonverbal clauses:**

- the PRED of a nonverbal clause cannot be given, or topical, but may be focussed if initial;
- the S of a nonverbal clause cannot bear question focus, but may be topical;
- the PRED of a *Te NP na NP* clause must be focussed.

(40) a. *No-wila na ia di wunua.*  
   3R-go  NOM  3SG  OBL:R  house  
   ‘She went to the house.’

b.  *Nowila di wunua.*

(41)  
   *Te ia no-wila di wunua.*  
   CORE  3SG  3R-go  OBL:R  house  
   ‘She went to the house.’

• in (42) the identity of *Wa Inggi* has been established by (42)a”. Given that the second speaker cannot felicitously be contrasting *Wa Inggi* with another person, it is not grammatical for (42)b” to include a subject in preverbal position. The preverbal subject in a verbal clause cannot represent given information.2

(42) a.  *E, La Ode!*  
   Hey  Mr. Sir  yes  2SG.R-why=PF  
   ‘Hey, sir!’  
   ‘Yes, what’s up?’

a.’  *Ara te Wa Inggi …?*  
   if  CORE  Mrs. Inggi  yes  
   ‘(You know) Wa Inggi …?’  
   ‘Yes…’

b.’  *Oho.*

a.”  *No-wila di ‘umpa?*  
   3R-go  OBL:R  where  
   ‘Where did she go?’

b.”  *(*Te ia / *Te Wa Inggi) no-waliako kua kampo=no.*  
   CORE  3SG  CORE  Mrs. Inggi  3R-return  ALL  village=3GEN  
   ‘She (*She, *Wa Inggi) went back to her village.’

**Verbal clauses:**

- the PRED of a verbal clause cannot be given, or topical

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2 It is possibly, though, given that her identity has already been established beyond question, for the subject to be coded postverbally. Thus, in addition to *Nowaliako kua kampono*, it would be acceptable for (42)b” to be coded as *Nowaliako na Wa Inggi kua kampono*. 
• only the first element of a verbal clause may be focussed
• only the last element of a verbal clause may be topical
• the S of a Te NP PRED verbal clause must be focussed

Table 3. Characteristics of the different clause types by position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pragmatic feature</th>
<th>A (PRED na S)</th>
<th>B (Te S PRED)</th>
<th>C (Te S te PRED)</th>
<th>D (Te PRED na S)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus on initial?</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+!</td>
<td>(+)</td>
<td>+!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on final?</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic on initial?</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic on final?</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral initial?</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral final?</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: +: this combination is compatible with the clause type listed. –: this combination is not compatible with the clause type listed. +!: this combination is obligatory with the clause type listed. Thus Te S PRED clauses allow, but do not require, the final element (the verb) to be topical, but do not allow the verb to show focus. They require that the initial NP must be focussed.

Table 4. Differences between clause types, by position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. Characteristics of the different clause types by function

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pragmatic feature</th>
<th>A (PRED na S)</th>
<th>B (Te S PRED)</th>
<th>C (Te S te PRED)</th>
<th>D (Te PRED na S)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus on S?</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>+!</td>
<td>(+)</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on PRED</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic on S?</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic on PRED?</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral S?</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral PRED?</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: as for Table 3.

Table 6. Differences between clause types, by function

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• the Te S te PRED clause type should be equated with the V PRED na S verbal clause
• verbal clauses are basically head-initial, but nonverbal clauses are head-final.
8. Word order: syntax split with a lexical basis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic verbal clause</th>
<th>Basic non-verbal clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(43) a. IP</td>
<td>b. IP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’</td>
<td>DP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>VP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IP [Spec]</td>
<td>IP [Spec]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’ [Comp]</td>
<td>I’ [Comp]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- this is the only headedness difference in the language.
- the difference does not concern the position of the head *per se*, but rather the position of the Spec in the phrase; this difference depends on the lexical class of the Complement of the clause.
- difference in the parametric setting for clauses in Tukang Besi based on lexical category. ‘Split syntax’
- well-known, typically based on animacy, main/subordinate clause status, or TAM.
- Tukang Besi data show that it is possible for the position of the head and the complement to depend on lexical factors as well.

Disharmonies

a disharmonic relationship between verbal and nonverbal clauses is rare: Záparo, Ge’ez, Arabic, Enggano, Palauan. Enggano and Palauan are similar to Tukang Besi (in this and many other respects). The Záparo (Peeke 1962) case is illuminating:

- In Záparo the basic order in clauses is SVO, but the S follows a nominal or adjectival predicate. Other word order facts (Záparo has consistently head-final order for modifiers in the clause, and is postpositional rather than prepositional) suggest that there was a recent shift to SVO order.

The word order facts of Záparo challenge us to examine diachronic scenarios as well as synchronic ones for Tukang Besi.

Massam (2000):

- Niuean verbs are attracted to a PRED feature, not simply a VERB feature, since nonverbal predicates also show predicate-initial order in clauses.
- in Tukang Besi we find exactly the asymmetry that we would expect if the attracting feature was VERB, rather than a general PRED.

Why does Tukang Besi exhibit the disharmony it does?

Tukang Besi conservatism: verb-initial order (but different verbal morphology)

- role-marking morphology (in TkB, -um-, (n)i-) also used in nominalisations; verbal agreement means that verbal and nonverbal clauses are much more readily distinguished than in Tagalog. Unsurprising that nominal and verbal clauses should be treated differently in terms of some other parameter, such as word order.
Table 7. Word order trends in selected western Austronesian language areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>area</th>
<th>language</th>
<th>clausal order</th>
<th>NP order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>north</td>
<td>Taiwan, Philippines</td>
<td>VOS</td>
<td>NP_{pred} S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sulawesi</td>
<td>VOS ~ SVO</td>
<td>NP_{pred} S ~ S N_{pred}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>south,</td>
<td>Indonesian</td>
<td>SVO</td>
<td>S N_{pred}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>south-east</td>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>SVO</td>
<td>S N_{pred}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(44) a. ang baro-ng bago
NOM dress-LNKR new
‘the new dress’

b. ang bago-ng baro
NOM new-LNKR dress
(Tagalog)

(45) a. te wurai wo’ou
CORE sarong new
‘the new sarong’

b. *te wo’ou wurai
CORE new sarong
(Tukang Besi)

(46) a. sarung baru
sarong new
‘the new sarong’

b. *baru sarong
new sarong
(Indonesian)

• But where is the motivation for the clausal word order change?

Northern Austronesian languages are verb-initial. Southern languages are subject-initial.

(47) Perempuan (sedang) jalan kaki.
woman PROG walk leg
‘The woman is walking.’

• trend towards subject-initiality influence of the pre-Austronesian populations they came into contact with in what is now Indonesia (Donohue 2005). Tukang Besi has acquired some of the word-order traits of a southern Austronesian language.

• subject initiality, is also being acquired.

• the (presumably) original PRED-initial feature, formalised by Massam, has been degraded to a verb-initial one. This degradation was licensed by the increasing morphological differentiation of verbs and nouns.


• nominal predicates are the least eventive imaginable: they encode states, rather than events, and are typically not gradable or time-variable (though there are exceptions).

• unable to take aspect marking.

(70) a. No-wila=mo na wowine.
3R-go=PF NOM woman
‘The woman has gone.’

b. *Te wowine te guru=mo.
CORE woman CORE teacher=PF
(‘The woman is now a teacher.’)

c. Te wowine no-jari guru=mo.
CORE woman 3R-become teacher=PF
‘The woman is now a teacher.’ / ‘The woman has become a teacher.’

• verbal clauses are predicate-initial, but nonverbal clauses are subject-initial. subject-initiality is the result of southern Austronesian areal influence,

South Austronesian trends can already be seen in the rigid head-initial order of NP elements, and the development of pronominal agreement on the verb (south-east)
References

*Map 1.* VS and SV orders in the South-west Pacific

*Map 2.* NA and AN orders in the South-west Pacific