SUBJECT/OBJECT ASYMMETRIES AND CHAIN FORMATION IN SELAYARESE

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In this paper, we point out two subject/object asymmetries in Selayarese, and propose that in a simple sentence, while the object wh-phrase is base-generated in the object position in the underlying structure, the subject wh-phrase is base-generated in CP SPEC. We then show that this claim provides a uniform account for the two subject/object asymmetries in Selayarese. We also discuss two implications of the proposal: (i) that human language shows the Highest Argument Restriction, and (ii) that some affixes in Selayarese, which do not apparently occupy A-positions, behave like real NPs in A-positions.*

Keywords: chain, Highest Subject Restriction, resumption, Selayarese, subject/object asymmetries

1. Introduction

This paper closely investigates movement phenomena in Selayarese, an Austronesian language spoken on the island of Selayar in the Indonesian province of Sulawesi Selatan, and elucidates the chain formation mechanism in the language. Finer (1991, 1994, 1997) is one of the pioneers in analyzing syntactic properties of Selayarese in the framework of generative grammar. Building on Finer’s seminal work, this paper explores heretofore unnoticed syntactic properties of the language.

Selayarese is an ergative and verb-initial language. In this language, the...
3rd person absolute marker \( i \) is obligatorily on a verb that takes a complement (clause), and the ergative marker is also present on the initial position of the verb, as shown in (1) and (2).\(^1\),\(^2\)

(1) \( \text{la-alle-i kanre-njo i Baso} \)
\( 3E\text{-take-3A food-the} \ h \ Baso \)
‘Baso took the food.’

(2) \( \text{ku-isse?-i kuko la-jañjang-i i Ali i Baso} \)
\( 1E\text{-know-3A that} \ 3E\text{-see-3A h Ali h Baso} \)
‘I know that Baso saw Ali.’

(Finer (1997: 687, ex. 6a) slightly edited)

(1) is a simple sentence. In (1), \( la \) on the verb is the 3rd person ergative marker, and \( i \) is the 3rd person absolute marker. (2) has a complement clause headed by the COMP \( kuko \ ‘that.’ \) Since the matrix verb is transitive, it has the absolute marker \( i \) on it. Note that Basri and Maki (2012) first point out that the complementizer is optional, as shown in (3).

(3) \( \text{ku-isse?-i la-jañjang-i i Ali i Baso} \)
\( 1E\text{-know-3A 3E\text{-see-3A h Ali h Baso} } \)
‘I know that Baso saw Ali.’

Interestingly, the 3rd person absolute marker \( i \) disappears when a wh-phrase is moved across it. Thus, in (4), it is dropped.

(4) \( \text{apa la-alle i Baso} \)
\( \text{what} \ 3E\text{-take h Baso} \)
‘What did Baso take?’

When long distance wh-movement takes place, the absolute marker \( i \) disappears from any verb crossed by the wh-phrase, i.e. both the matrix as well as embedded verbs, and at the same time, the COMP(s) across which the wh-phrase moves must disappear, as shown in (5).

(5) \( \text{apa,} \text{ } \text{mu-isse? (*muko) } \text{la-?alle t_i i Baso} \)
\( \text{what} \text{ } 2E\text{-know that} \ 3E\text{-take h Baso} \)
‘What did you know that Baso took?’

(Finer (1997: 696, ex. 18a) slightly edited)

Investigating the movement phenomena in Selayarese in more detail, we point out two subject/object asymmetries in wh-movement, and propose that

\(^1\) The abbreviations used in this paper are as follows: 1 = first person, 2 = second person, 3 = third person, A = absolutive marker, E = ergative marker, h = [+human] marker, itr = intransitivizer, and R = silent resumptive pronoun.

\(^2\) Selayarese does not have a tense marker, and the tense of the sentence is contextually determined. Therefore, the glosses of the verbs in the examples do not contain tense.
the asymmetries arise from the fact that movement from the subject position in a simple sentence always involves base-generation of the wh-phrase in CP SPEC. We then show two implications of this proposal for the theory of (Selayarese) syntax.

The organization of this paper is as follows. Section 2 reviews relevant aspects of Selayarese syntax as the background to the subsequent sections. Section 3 provides the two subject/object asymmetries in Selayarese. Section 4 proposes that in a simple sentence, while the object wh-phrase cannot be base-generated in CP SPEC, the subject wh-phrase must be base-generated in CP SPEC, and shows that this claim provides a uniform account for the two asymmetries in Selayarese wh-movement reported in Section 3. Section 5 discusses two implications of the proposal. Finally, Section 6 concludes this paper.

2. Background

We present some basic structural properties of Selayarese other than those shown in Section 1. First, as Finer (1994, 1997) shows, Selayarese, a verb-first language, allows two structures in (6).

(6) a. la-alle-i kanre-njo i Baso (VOS)
   3E-take-3A food-the h Baso
   ‘Baso took the food.’

b. la-alle-i i Baso kanre-njo (VSO)
   3E-take-3A h Baso food-the
   ‘Baso took the food.’

Finer (1997) proposes that (6a) has the structure in (7a), and (6b) has the structure in (7b).

(7) a. \[IP V+I [VP NP_{obj} [VP NP_{subj} [V' t_v t_{obj}]]]] \] (VOS)

b. \[IP V+I [VP NP_{subj} [V' t_v NP_{obj}]] \] (VSO)

In the following, for ease of exposition, we assume (7a) as the underlying structure of Selayarese, unless noticed otherwise.

Second, as Maki and Basri (2010) show, Selayarese allows four patterns of A’-chains shown in (8)–(11), when the sentence contains a complement clause. Note that (8) and (10) were first discussed by Finer (1997). Consider first example (8).

(8) apa mu-isse? la-?alle t i Baso
   what 2E-know 3E-take h Baso
   ‘What did you know that Baso took?’ (M-M)

In (8), the 3rd person absolutive marker \(i\) is not on the verbs in both the
embedded and matrix clauses, and it is actually disallowed in this case. At the same time, (8) does not allow an overt COMP such as *muko* ‘that’ between the two verbs *mu-isse*? ‘2E-know’ and *la-ʔalle* ‘3E-take.’ In this paper, essentially following Finer (1997), we assume the following mechanism for the deletion of the absolutive marker *i* and the [−Q] COMP such as *muko* ‘that.’ Selayarese has a functional head responsible for the absolutive DP, which Finer (1997) calls *Abs*. When the absolutive DP is in situ, it agrees with the head, which is realized as *i*. On the other hand, when it raises to a higher position by wh-movement, for example, it moves through *AbsP SPEC* to the target, and a different type of agreement takes place. Therefore, the head is realized as a morphologically silent element. The [−Q] COMP has a similar property. When nothing moves into its SPEC, or a wh-phrase, for example, is merged into its SPEC by external merge, the head is *optionally* overtly realized. However, when a phrase moves into its SPEC by wh-movement, for example, by internal merge, agreement takes place between the phrase and the head, the latter of which is then realized as a morphologically silent element. Therefore, in (8), the wh-phrase *apa* ‘what’ has undergone successive cyclic movement through CP SPEC of the embedded clause. We represent this chain as (*M-M = movement-movement*), indicating that both the matrix and embedded clauses involve movement. Let us then turn to example (9).

(9) apa mu-isseʔ-i (muko) la-ʔalle-i R i Baso
what 2E-know-3A that 3E-take-3A h Baso
‘What did you know that Baso took?’ (NM-NM)

In (9), the 3rd person absolutive marker *i* is on the verbs in both the embedded and matrix clauses. This indicates that the wh-phrase *apa* ‘what’ is base-generated at CP SPEC of the matrix clause, and binds a silent resumptive pronoun R, which we assume is base-generated in the object position of the embedded clause. We represent this chain as (*NM-NM = nonmovement-nonmovement*), indicating that both the matrix and embedded clauses do not involve movement. Note that (8) and (9) are uniform chains created by either movement or base-generation. Let us now consider the examples with mixed chains. Consider the examples in (10) and (11).

(10) apa mu-isseʔi (muko) la-ʔalle-i R i Baso
what 2E-know that 3E-take-3A h Baso
‘What did you know that Baso took?’ (M-NM)

(11) apa mu-isseʔ-ʔi la-ʔalle t i Baso
what 2E-know-3A 3E-take h Baso
‘What did you know that Baso took?’ (NM-M)
In (10), the 3rd person absolutive marker \( i \) is only on the verb in the embedded clause, and in (11), it is only on the verb in the matrix clause. This indicates that in (10), the wh-phrase \( \text{apa} \) ‘what’ is base-generated at CP SPEC of the embedded clause, and then moves to CP SPEC of the matrix clause, and in (11), the wh-phrase is base-generated at CP SPEC of the matrix clause, and the corresponding operator, base-generated in the original position of the embedded clause marked \( t \), moves to CP SPEC of the embedded clause. We represent these chains as \((\text{M-NM} = \text{movement-nonmovement})\) and \((\text{NM-M} = \text{nonmovement-movement})\), respectively, indicating that the chains in (10) and (11) are composite chains made out of movement and base-generation.

Third, and finally, Finer (1994, 1997) shows that Selayarese exhibits movement of a focused element into the sentence-initial position. Consider the examples in (12).

(12) a. \( \text{la-ʔalle-i kanre-njo i Baso} \)
\[ 3E\text{-take-3A food-the h Baso} \]
‘Baso took the food.’

b. \( \text{kanre-njo la-ʔalle i Baso} \)
\[ \text{food-the 3E-take h Baso} \]
‘Baso took the food.’ \((\text{kanre-njo} = \text{focus})\)

(12a) is an affirmative sentence with no focused element. (12b) is derived from (12a) with \( \text{kanre-njo} \) ‘food-the’ as a focus element being moved to the sentence-initial position. Furthermore, focus movement takes place in embedded clauses as well, as shown in (13b).

(13) a. \( \text{ku-isse?-i kuko la-jañjang-i i Ali i Baso} \)
\[ 1E\text{-know-3A that 3E-see-3A h Ali h Baso} \]
‘I know that Baso saw Ali.’

b. \( \text{ku-isse?-i kuko i Ali la-jañjang i Baso} \)
\[ 1E\text{-know-3A that h Ali 3E-see h Baso} \]
‘I know that Baso saw Ali.’ \((i \text{ Ali} = \text{focus})\)

(Finer (1997: 691))

In (13b), the focused DP \( i \text{ Ali} \) ‘h Ali’ moves across the verb, but is positioned below COMP, which leads Finer (1997) to propose that the landing site of a focused phrase is in the SPEC of Focus Phrase (FP), which is lower than CP, and higher than IP, as shown in (14).

(14) \[ \ldots [\text{CP kuko \[ i \text{ Ali \[ \text{IP} \ldots t \ldots \]}]] \]
\[ \text{that h Ali} \]
3. The Asymmetries

Having outlined the particular background, let us now examine two subject/object asymmetries in A’-chain formation in Selayarese. The first asymmetry is that object wh-movement induces deletion of the 3rd person absolutive marker $i$ on the verb, as shown in (15b), while subject wh-movement does not induce deletion of the absolutive marker in the same clause, as shown in (16b).

(15) Object Fronting
   a. *apa la-ʔalle-i i Baso
      what 3E-take-3A h Baso
      ‘What did Baso take?’
   b. apa la-ʔalle i Baso
      what 3E-take h Baso
      ‘What did Baso take?’

(16) Subject Fronting
   a. inai la-ʔalle-i kanre-njo
      who 3E-take-3A food-the
      ‘Who took the food?’
   b. *inai la-ʔalle kanre-njo
      who 3E-take food-the
      ‘Who took the food?’
   c. *inai ʔalle-i kanre-njo
      who take-3A food-the
      ‘Who took the food?’

Note that as (16c) shows, subject wh-fronting does not allow deletion of the 3rd person ergative marker $la$, either.

However, long distance wh-movement allows deletion of the absolutive marker in the upper clause, irrespective of whether it involves movement of the object, as shown in (17b), or the subject, as shown in (18b).

(17) Object Fronting
   a. apa la-isseʔ-i i Ali lako la-ʔalle-i i Baso
      what 3E-know-3A h Ali that 3E-take-3A h Baso
      ‘What did Ali know that Baso took?’ (NM-NM)
   b. apa la-isseʔ i Ali la-ʔalle i Baso
      what 3E-know h Ali 3E-take h Baso
      ‘What did Ali know that Baso took?’ (M-M)
(18) Subject Fronting

a. inai la-isse?i i Ali lako la-?alle-i kanre-njo
   who 3E-know-3A h Ali that 3E-take-3A food-the
   ‘Who did Ali know took the food?’ (NM-NM)

b. inai la-isse?i i Ali (lako) la-?alle-i kanre-njo
   who 3E-know h Ali that 3E-take-3A food-the
   ‘Who did Ali know took the food?’ (M-?)

If we assume the structure in (6a), wh-movement of object and subject involves movement across the verb with the absolutive marker \(i\), no matter whether the verb is in the same clause as the object and the subject or in the upper clause, which would lead us to predict that (16b) should be perfect, contrary to fact.

The second asymmetry is related to the blocking effect by the element that has undergone focus movement. To be specific, while the fronted ob-

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3 Kiss (1998) and Endo (2007), among others, identify two types of focus: identificational focus (= contrastive focus) and information focus (= emphasis), and Rizzi (2004) shows that only the elements with identificational focus/contrastive focus, in contrast to those with information focus/emphasis, belong to the quantificational class, inducing the minimality effect. We are grateful to the second reviewer for bringing this to our attention. Kiss (1998: 245–246) distinguishes the two types of focus by roughly stating the following. “Semantically, the constituent called identification focus represents the value of the variable bound by an abstract operator expressing exhaustive identification, and syntactically, it acts as an operator, moving into a scope position in the specifier of a functional projection, and binding a variable. On the other hand, if a sentence part conveys new, non-presupposed information marked by one or more pitch accents without expressing exhaustive identification performed on a set of contextually or situationally given entities, it is not an identificational focus, but a mere information focus.” Under this guideline, the focused elements in Selayarese presented in this paper are all characterized as identificational/contrastive. To see this, consider the examples in (i)–(iii). Example (i) is a grammatical sentence in Selayarese, where \(i\) \('\)h Ali\('\) is the object of the sentence, and is coreferential with \(na\) ‘3,’ which means ‘his.’

(i) la-jañjang-i ando?-na i Ali
   3E-see-3A mother-3 h Ali
   ‘His, mother saw Ali.’

Finer (1997) shows that when the object undergoes focus movement to the sentence initial position, namely, FP SPEC, the sentence results in a Weak Crossover violation, as shown in example (ii).

(ii) *[i Ali], la-jañjang ando?-na ti,
   h Ali 3E-see mother-3
   ‘*His, mother saw Ali.’

Note here that the fronted object has the contrastive meaning. Let us now consider example (iii). The structure of (iii) is identical to that of (i), but in (iii), the object \(i\) \('\)h Ali\('\) has a phonological stress on it.
ject does not block movement of a wh-phrase across it, the fronted subject does. Consider the examples in (19) and (20).

(19) a. la-isseʔ-i i Ali lako kanre-njo laʔalle i Baso 3E-know-3A h Ali that food-the 3E-take h Baso ‘Ali knew that Baso took the food.’ (kanre-njo = focus)

(20) a. Subject Fronting
iani la-isseʔ i Ali (lako) kanre-njo laʔalle who 3E-know h Ali that food-the 3E-take ‘Who did Ali know took the food?’ (kanre-njo = focus)

(19a) contains a focused element in the embedded clause, which originates from the object position of the embedded clause, and (19b) contains a focused element in the embedded clause, which originates from the subject position of the embedded clause. (20a) involves movement of the subject wh-phrase which originates from the embedded clause across the focused element, and the example is perfectly grammatical. On the other hand, (20b) involves movement of the object wh-phrase which originates from the embedded clause across the focused element, and the example is totally ungrammatical. This is the second subject/object asymmetry. According to Finer (1994), Finer (1991) first found this contrast. Finer (1997) argues that (20b) is ungrammatical, as the object wh-phrase moves across an operator in an A′-position. However, Finer (1997) does not discuss why example (20a) is grammatical. If the same operation is involved in (20a), the example should be predicted to be ungrammatical on a par with (20b), contrary to fact.

(iii) la-jañjang-i andoʔ-na [i Ali]
3E-see-3A mother-3 h Ali
‘His mother saw Ali.’

In (iii), there is no effect of the phonological stress on i Ali ‘h Ali,’ and the sentence is perfectly grammatical. Therefore, in Selayarese, a fronted constituent, which will be placed in FP SPEC, is an identificational focus/contrastive focus.
4. Proposal

Let us consider what the two subject/object asymmetries in Selayarese suggest. We argue that they suggest an asymmetry in terms of base generation of arguments in Selayarese. To be specific, we propose that in a simple sentence, while the subject wh-phrase is base-generated in CP SPEC, which binds the resumptive pronoun which appears as an ergative marker on the verb, the object wh-phrase cannot be base-generated in CP SPEC, but rather, necessarily involves movement into CP SPEC, crossing the verb with the absolutive marker, which in turn is deleted by this movement. Under this proposal, the basic structures of the main clauses with wh-movement are those in (21a, b), and the basic structures of the clauses with an embedded clause are those in (22a, b).

(21) Matrix Clauses
   a. Object Fronting
      \[ [CP \ \text{wh(OBJ)}] [IP \ \text{Erg(SUBJ)-V+I-Abs(OBJ)} \ t(OBJ) \ \text{SUBJ}]]
   b. Subject Fronting
      \[ [CP \ \text{wh(SUBJ)}] [IP \ \text{Erg(SUBJ)-V+I-Abs(OBJ)} \ OBJ \ R(SUBJ)]]

(22) Clauses with an Embedded Clause
   a. Object Fronting
      \[ [CP \ \text{wh(OBJ)}] [IP \ \text{Erg(SUBJ)-V+I-Abs(OBJ)}] [CP \ t(OBJ) \ C] [IP \ \text{Erg(SUBJ)-V+I-Abs(OBJ)} \ t(OBJ) \ \text{SUBJ}]]]
   b. Subject Fronting
      \[ [CP \ \text{wh(SUBJ)}] [IP \ \text{Erg(SUBJ)-V+I-Abs(OBJ)}] [CP \ t(SUBJ) \ (C) [IP \ \text{Erg(SUBJ)-V+I-Abs(OBJ)} \ OBJ \ R(SUBJ)]]]]

In (21a), the object wh-phrase moves across the verb with the absolutive marker \(i\), which is to be deleted, and then moves to CP SPEC. On the other hand, in (21b), the subject wh-phrase does not originate from the subject position in the underlying structure, but is base-generated in CP SPEC. Therefore, it does not move across the verb with the absolutive marker \(i\), so that it remains intact, unlike object wh-phrase movement. Also, in the subject position in the underlying structure, the silent resumptive pronoun is base-generated, which constitutes an A′-chain with the wh-phrase in CP SPEC.

In (22a), the object wh-phrase base-generated in the embedded clause first moves to CP SPEC of the embedded clause across the verb with the absolutive marker \(i\), and the overt COMP and the absolutive marker are to be deleted. It then moves into CP SEPC of the matrix clause across the verb with the absolutive marker \(i\), which is to be deleted. On the other hand, in
(22b), the subject wh-phrase is base-generated in CP SPEC of the embedded clause. In this case, the overt COMP is optional. Then, it moves into CP SPEC of the matrix clause across the verb with the absolutive marker $i$, which is to be deleted. Therefore, it does not move across the verb with the absolutive marker $i$ in the embedded clause, so that it remains intact, unlike what we see with object wh-movement. Also, in the subject position in the underlying structure, the silent resumptive pronoun is base-generated, which constitutes an A'-chain with the wh-phrase in CP SPEC of the matrix clause.

With this proposal, let us reexamine the examples related to the two subject/object asymmetries. First, the claim that in a simple sentence, the subject wh-phrase is base-generated in CP SPEC, while the object wh-phrase is not, provides an adequate account for the ungrammaticality of (15a) and (16b), since in (15a), the object wh-phrase cannot be base-generated in CP SPEC, so that it must be base-generated in the object position of the clause, and moves to CP SPEC, crossing the verb with the absolutive marker $i$, which in turn is to be deleted, and in (16b), the subject wh-phrase, which is base-generated in CP SPEC, does not move across the verb with the absolutive marker $i$, which is then not to be elided. At the same time, the proposed claim also accounts for the deletion of the absolutive marker on the verb in the upper clause and the overt COMP in the embedded clause in object wh-movement in (17b) and the deletion of the absolutive marker on the verb in the upper clause in subject wh-movement in (18b). In (17b), the object wh-phrase first moves into CP SPEC of the embedded clause, which is to delete the overt COMP, and then moves into CP SPEC of the matrix clause across the verb with the absolutive marker $i$, which is then to be deleted. In (18b), the subject wh-phrase is base-generated in CP SPEC of the embedded clause, where the overt COMP is optional, and then moves into CP SPEC of the matrix clause across the verb with the absolutive marker $i$, which is then to be elided.

Second, the claim also explains the second subject/object asymmetry under the well-established minimality condition. In the following discussion, we assume Rizzi’s (2004) feature-based Relativized Minimality, which is precisely summarized in Endo (2007). Rizzi (2004) proposes that local relations must be satisfied in a minimal configuration defined in (23).

(23) Y is in a Minimal Configuration (MC) with X iff there is no Z such that

a. $Z$ is of the same structural type as X, and

b. $Z$ intervenes between X and Y.

(Rizzi (2004: 225) slightly edited)
“Structural type” in (23a) means either heads or specifiers, and the latter are further classified into the feature classes shown in (24).

(24) a. Argumental: person, number, gender, case  
    b. Quantificational: Wh, Neg, measure, focus, and so on\(^4\)  
    c. Modifier: evaluative, epistemic, Neg, frequentative, and so on  
    d. Topic  
    (Endo (2007: 25) slightly edited)

Then, in the configuration in (25), locality holds between X and Y unless some Z intervenes between X and Y, where Z is of the same feature class as X, Z c-commands Y, and Z does not c-command X.

(25) …X…Z…Y…

With this feature-based Relativized Minimality, let us consider the contrast between (20a) and (20b), whose precise structures are shown in (26a) and (26b), respectively.

(26) a. Subject Fronting  
    
    \[
    \begin{array}{c}
    \text{[CP inai } \text{[IP la-isse?i} \text{ i Ali } \text{[CP t(inai) (C) [FP kanre-njo} \\
    \text{who 3E-know-3A h Ali who food-the} \\
    \text{[IP la?-alle-t} \text{t(kanre-njo) R(inai)]]}\]}
    \end{array}
    \]

    ‘Who did Ali know took the food?’

    b. Object Fronting  
    
    \[
    \begin{array}{c}
    \text{*[CP apa } \text{[IP la-isse?i} \text{ i Ali } \text{[CP t(apa) } \text{[FP i Baso} \\
    \text{what 3E-know-3A h Ali what h Baso} \\
    \text{[IP la?-alle-t} \text{t(apa) t(i Baso)]} \]
    \end{array}
    \]

    ‘What did Ali know that Baso took?’

In (26a), the subject wh-phrase inai ‘who’ is base-generated in CP SPEC of the embedded clause, which is higher than the landing site of the focused object kanre-njo ‘food-the,’ which is in FP SPEC of the embedded clause. Therefore, the former does not move across the latter in the derivation, and thus, causes no violation of the feature-based Relativized Minimality. On the other hand, in (26b), the object wh-phrase apa ‘what’ cannot be base-generated in CP SPEC of the embedded clause in principle, and is base-generated in the object position of the embedded clause. Then, it moves across the focused subject i Baso ‘h Baso’ in FP SPEC of the embedded clause into CP SPEC of the embedded clause on the way to CP SPEC of the matrix clause. This derivation violates the feature-based Rela-

\(^4\) In (24b), ‘focus’ is understood to be identificational focus/contrastive focus.
tivized Minimality, since both the wh-feature and focus feature are quantificationally by (24b), and the wh-phrase moves across the focus phrase in this derivation. Therefore, example (26b) is predicted to be ungrammatical.

Thus, the single proposal that in a simple sentence, while the subject wh-phrase is base-generated in CP SPEC, the object wh-phrase cannot be base-generated in CP SPEC, but rather, necessarily involves movement to CP SPEC, provides adequate explanations for the two subject/object asymmetries in A’-chain formation in Selayarese.\(^5\)

5. Implications

The proposed claim has two interesting implications for the theory of (Selayarese) grammar. They are related to the Highest Subject Restriction in Irish (McCloskey (1979, 1990)), and the Condition on Weak Crossover (WCO). First, let us consider the first implication by reviewing the Highest Subject Restriction (HSR) in Irish stated in (27).

\[(27)\] The Highest Subject Restriction (HSR)

In languages which have a fully grammaticized resumptive strategy, the only position from which resumptive pronouns are excluded is the highest subject position within the relative clause.

(McCloskey (1979))

To see the HSR effect, let us review the basic properties of the relative clause construction and the wh-construction in Irish. Irish has three types of complementizers: the [−Q] marker, the direct relative marker, and the

\(^5\) The proposed claim also correctly predicts the superiority effect in Selayarese, as shown in examples (i) and (ii).

(i) inai ng-alle apa
    who itr-take what
    ‘Who took what?’

(ii) *apa la-alle inai
    what 3E-take who
    ‘What did who take?’

In Selayarese, when the object is indefinite, the intransitivizer ng is prefixed to the verb, as shown in (i). In (i), the subject wh-phrase is in CP SPEC, and the object wh-phrase is in situ. However, when the subject wh-phrase is not base-generated in CP SPEC, and the object wh-phrase moves to CP SPEC, the sentence becomes ungrammatical, as (ii) shows. Since the base structure can be VOS, the object wh-phrase can move to CP SPEC without crossing the subject wh-phrase. Therefore, the superiority effect is correctly expected under the claim that the subject wh-phrase must be base-generated in CP SPEC in a simple sentence.
indirect relative marker. The [−Q] marker is realized as either go (non-past) or gur (past), and this behaves in the same fashion as English [−Q] COMP that. The direct and indirect relative markers appear in relative clauses and wh-interrogatives, among others.\(^\text{6}\) The basic form of the two markers is a, but the direct relative marker induces Lenition and the indirect relative marker Eclipsis/Nasalization on a following element. Therefore, McCloskey (1979) proposes to use aL for the former, and aN for the latter. The direct relative marker is realized as a (non-past and past), and the indirect relative marker as either a (non-past) or ar (past).\(^\text{7}\) In this paper, following McCloskey (1979), we use the symbols aL and aN for the direct relative marker and the indirect relative marker, respectively.

Irish allows both the movement and resumption strategies for the relative clause construction and the wh-construction. Consider the examples in (28) and (29), which involve movement (represented as M (= movement))/resumption (represented as NM (= nonmovement)) of the object.

\[(28)\]
\[
a. \quad \text{an carr a cheannaigh Seán t} \\
\quad \text{the car aL bought John} \\
\quad \text{‘the car that John bought’} \quad \text{(M)}
\]
\[
b. \quad \text{an carr ar cheannaigh Seán é} \\
\quad \text{the car aN bought John it} \\
\quad \text{‘the car that John bought’} \quad \text{(NM)}
\]

\[(29)\]
\[
a. \quad \text{Cad é a cheannaigh Seán t} \\
\quad \text{what aL bought John} \\
\quad \text{‘What did John buy?’} \quad \text{(M)}
\]
\[
b. \quad \text{Cad é ar cheannaigh Seán é} \\
\quad \text{what aN bought John it} \\
\quad \text{‘What did John buy?’} \quad \text{(NM)}
\]

All these examples are grammatical in Irish. However, both constructions cannot allow the resumption strategy for the subject, while they can allow the movement strategy for the subject, as shown in (30) and (31).

\(^{6}\) See McCloskey (1979) and Chung and McCloskey (1987), among others.

\(^{7}\) Note that the indirect relative marker in the past form, whose default form is ar, is realized as a in front of a handful of irregular verbs such as bí/táim ‘to be,’ déan ‘to do,’ faigh ‘to get,’ feic ‘to see,’ and tèigh ‘to go.’
SUBJECT/OBJECT ASYMMETRIES AND CHAIN FORMATION IN SELAYARESE

(30) a. an fear a chenannaigh t an carr
    the man aL bought the car
    ‘the man who bought the car’ (M)

b. *an fear ar chenannaigh sé an carr
    the man aN bought he the car
    ‘the man who bought the car’ (NM)

(31) a. Cé a chenannaigh t an carr?
    who aL bought the car
    ‘Who bought the car?’ (M)

b. *Cé ar chenannaigh sé an carr?
    who aN bought he the car
    ‘Who bought the car?’ (NM)

In (30b) and (31b), the resumptive pronoun is in the highest subject position, in violation of the HSR in (27), although (31b) is a wh-question, not a relative clause.

However, resumptive pronouns are permitted in the subject position of the embedded clauses, as shown in (32a) and (33a), where they are not in the highest subject position, but in the second highest position.

(32) a. an fear a gcreideann tú gur chenannaigh sé an carr
    the man aN believe you that bought he the car
    ‘the man who you believe bought the car’

b. an carr a gcreideann tú gur chenannaigh Seán é
    the car aN believe you that bought John it
    ‘the car which you believe that John bought’

(33) a. Cé a gcreideann tú gur chenannaigh sé an carr?
    who aN believe you that bought he the car
    ‘Who do you believe bought the car?’

b. Cad é a gcreideann tú gur chenannaigh Seán é?
    what aN believe you that bought John it
    ‘What do you believe that John bought?’

Let us now turn to the related examples in Selayarese. As we saw with the wh-interrogatives in (16) and (15), reproduced as (34) and (35), the resumption strategy cannot be permitted for the object.

(34) Subject Fronting

a. inai la-ʔalle-i kanre-njo
    who 3E-take-3A food-the
    ‘Who took the food?’ (NM)

b. *inai la-ʔalle kanre-njo
    who 3E-take food-the
‘Who took the food?’ (M)

(35) Object Fronting
a. *apa la-ʔalle-i i Baso
   what 3E-take-3A h Baso
   ‘What did Baso take?’ (NM)
b. apa la-ʔalle i Baso
   what 3E-take h Baso
   ‘What did Baso take?’ (M)

The contrast between (34a) and (35a) thus shows the Highest Object Restriction (HOR) rather than the HSR. The data in (36) and (37), which involve an embedded clause, confirm the HOR, since the resumption strategy is allowed for the object in the embedded clause.

(36) Subject Fronting
a. inai la-issiʔ-i i Ali lako la-ʔalle-i kanre-njo
   who 3E-know-3A h Ali that 3E-take-3A food-the
   ‘Who did Ali know took the food?’ (NM-NM)
b. inai la-issiʔ i Ali lako la-ʔalle-i kanre-njo
   who 3E-know h Ali that 3E-take-3A food-the
   ‘Who did Ali know took the food?’ (M-NM)

(37) Object Fronting
a. apa la-issiʔ-i i Ali lako la-ʔalle-i i Baso
   what 3E-know-3A h Ali that 3E-take-3A h Baso
   ‘What did Ali know that Baso took?’ (NM-NM)
b. apa la-issiʔ i Ali lako la-ʔalle-i i Baso
   what 3E-know h Ali that 3E-take-3A h Baso
   ‘What did Ali know that Baso took?’ (M-NM)

The same is observed with relative clauses. The examples in (38a) and (39a) indicate that the resumption strategy cannot be permitted for the object.

(38) Subject Fronting
a. inni to-la-erang-injo-i kanre-njo
   this.is person-3E-bring-the-3A food-the
   ‘This is the man who brought the food.’ (NM)
b. *inni to-la-erang-injo kanre-njo
   this.is person-3E-bring-the food-the
   ‘This is the man who brought the food.’ (M)
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(39) Object Fronting
   a. *inni kanre (nu) la-erang-injo-i i Baso
      this.is food which 3E-bring-the-3A h Baso
      ‘This is the food which Baso brought.’      (NM)
   b. inni kanre (nu) la-erang-injo i Baso
      this.is food which 3E-bring-the h Baso
      ‘This is the food which Baso brought.’      (M)

On the other hand, the data in (40) and (41), which involve an embedded clause, confirm the HOR, since the resumption strategy is allowed for the object in the embedded clause.

(40) Subject Fronting
   a. inni to-la-isseʔ-injo-i i Ali lako la-erang-i
      this.is person-3E-know-the-3A h Ali that 3E-bring-3A
      kanre-njo
      food-the
      ‘This is the man who Ali knows brought the food.’     (NM-NM)
   b. inni to-la-isseʔ-injo i Ali lako la-erang-i
      this.is person-3E-know-the h Ali that 3E-bring-3A
      kanre-njo
      food-the
      ‘This is the man who Ali knows brought the food.’     (M-NM)

(41) Object Fronting
   a. inni kanre (nu) la-isseʔ-injo-i i Ali lako la-erang-i
      this.is food which 3E-know-the-3A h Ali that 3E-bring-3A
      i h Baso
      ‘This is the food which Ali knows that Baso brought.’
      (NM-NM)
   b. inni kanre (nu) la-isseʔ-injo i Ali lako la-erang-i i
      this.is food which 3E-know-the h Ali that 3E-bring-3A h
      Baso
      Baso
      ‘This is the food which Ali knows that Baso brought.’     (M-NM)

Thus, the above data suggest that Selayarese shows the HOR. Putting together the HSR in Irish and the HOR in Selayarese, we propose that these suggest the existence of the Highest Argument Restriction in human language.

Let us then turn to the second implication. Selayarese exhibits the Weak Crossover (WCO) phenomena. Below, we assume Koopman and Spor-tiche’s (1983) Bijection Principle in (42) to derive the WCO effect for the
sake of discussion.

(42) Bijection Principle

There is a bijective correspondence between variables and A'-positions.

(42) essentially states that each variable is locally bound by one and only one A'-position, and every A'-position locally binds one and only one A-position, with the definition of “variable,” as in Chomsky (1981), which does not distinguish between pronominal elements and empty categories (wh-traces). With (42) in mind, let us consider the examples in (43) and (44).

(43) a. la-jañjang-i ando?-na i Ali
    3E-see-3A mother-3 h Ali
    ‘Ali saw hisi mother.’
  b. la-jañjang-i i Ali ando?-na
    3E-see-3A h Ali mother-3
    ‘Ali saw hisi mother.’

(44) a. *inai la-jañjang ando?-na
    who 3E-see mother-3
    ‘Who_i did hisi mother see?’
  b. inai la-jañjang-i ando?-na
    who 3E-see-3A mother-3
    ‘Who_i saw hisi mother?’

(Finer (1994: 167))

Selayarese allows VOS and VSO, as shown in (43a) and (43b), respectively. In (44a), the wh-phrase inai ‘who’ is the object of the sentence, and is moved to the sentence-initial position, with the 3rd person absolutive marker i deleted. In (44b), the wh-phrase inai ‘who’ is the subject of the sentence, so that it is base-generated in CP SPEC, with the 3rd person absolutive marker i undeleted. The fact is that only (44a) is ungrammatical.

Suppose, for the sake of discussion, that the base structure for (44a) happens to be (7a), reproduced as (45a), and the base structure for (44b) happens to be (7b), reproduced as (45b).

(45) a. \[ [IP V+I [VP NP_{obj} [VP NP_{subj} [v' t_v t_{obj}]]]] ] (VOS)
  b. \[ [IP V+I [VP NP_{subj} [v' t_v NP_{obj}]]] ] (VSO)

Then, the generalization about the WCO in Selayarese is that the LF representation in (46a) leads to ungrammaticality, while the one in (46b) does not.

(46) a. *[\[WH_i_{obj} V t_i [pro_i N_{subj}]] (wh_i, t_i, hisi mother)
  b. \[\[WH_i_{subj} V R_i [pro_i N_{obj}]] (wh_i, R_i, hisi mother)

Note here that in (46a), the wh-phrase in CP SPEC locally A'-binds one and only one A-position, namely, the trace t_i, just as in the case of (46b),
where the wh-phrase locally A'-binds one and only one A-position, namely, the resumptive pronoun \( R_i \). Nonetheless, only the former is ungrammatical. Therefore, (46a) poses the question as to why it shows the WCO effect, in spite of the fact that the LF representations of both (46a) and (46b) are identical in the relevant respects.

Note, however, that the verb has the 3rd person ergative marker \( la \) corresponding to \([\text{pro}_i N]_{\text{subj}} \) in (46a), and the 3rd person ergative marker \( la \) corresponding to \([\text{pro}_i N]_{\text{obj}} \) in (46b), so that the LF representations of (46a, b) look like (47a, b), respectively.

(47) 
\[ \begin{align*}
\text{a. } & (\text{wh}_i, \text{la}(= \text{his}_i \text{ mother}), t_i, \text{his}_i \text{ mother}) \\
\text{b. } & (\text{wh}_i, \text{la}_i(= \text{he}), R_i, \text{his}_i \text{ mother})
\end{align*} \]

In (47a), \( \text{wh}_i \) locally A'-binds more than one variable, namely, \( \text{his}_i \) within \( la \) and its own trace \( t_i \). In (47b), if the ergative marker \( la_i \), which is embedded in the verbal complex, does not c-command the other arguments \( (R_i \text{ and } \text{his}_i) \), \( \text{wh}_i \) locally A'-binds more than one variable, namely, \( la_i \) and \( R_i \), and again, no contrast would be expected between (47a) and (47b). However, in (47b), \( \text{wh}_i \) will locally A'-bind one and only one variable \( la_i \), the ergative marker that corresponds to it, under the assumption that the position of the ergative marker, although it is embedded in a verbal complex, counts as an A-position, and c-commands the other arguments \( (R_i \text{ and } \text{his}_i) \), so that it blocks \( \text{wh}_i \)'s local A'-binding of them. Thus, the contrast between (47a) and (47b) is only expected by a condition such as the Bijection Principle along with the assumption that the position of the ergative marker counts as an A-position, and c-commands the other arguments in the sentence. Therefore, the above discussion suggests that in languages like Selayarese, the affixes, which do not apparently occupy A-positions, behave like real NPs in A-positions.

The question remains as to why Selayarese shows the HOR, in other words, why the object wh-phrase cannot be base-generated in CP SPEC in a simple sentence. The first reviewer suggests that if the relevant affixes behave like real NPs in A-positions, responsible for inducing the WCO effect, the fact that the object wh-phrase cannot be base-generated in CP SPEC in a simple sentence, can be attributed to the Strong Crossover (SCO) effect, which we assume is derived from Condition C of Binding Theory (Chomsky (1981)). Example (i) is a case of SCO, and the definition of Condition C is provided in (ii).

(i) *Who_i did he_i see t_i?  
(ii) Condition C of Binding Theory  
\[ \text{An R-expression/variable must be A-free.} \quad \text{(Chomsky (1981) slightly edited)} \]

In (i), the wh-trace is A-bound by the co-indexed pronoun, and thus violates (ii).
6. Conclusion

In this paper, we presented two subject/object asymmetries in Selayarese, and proposed that in a simple sentence, while the object wh-phrase is base-generated in the object position in the underlying structure, the subject wh-phrase is base-generated in CP SPEC. We then showed that this claim provides a uniform account for the two subject/object asymmetries in Selayarese. We also discussed two implications of the proposal for the theory of (Selayarese) grammar.

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With this in mind, consider the examples in (35), whose relevant structures are shown in (iii).

(iii) a. *WH_i Erg-V-Abs_i R_i Sub
    b. WH_i Erg-V t_i Sub

If Abs_i behaves like a real argument, (iiiia) results in an SCO violation, as it A-binds the silent resumptive pronoun. However, it is elided in (iiib) by virtue of wh-movement, and thus, no SCO violation results. Therefore, the SCO-based approach can properly handle (iiiia).

However, this approach is faced with a problem when the object wh-phrase is separated from the resumptive pronoun by a CP boundary, as shown in (37a), whose relevant structure is shown in (iv).

(iv) WH_i … Erg-V-Abs [CP … Erg-V-Abs, R_i Sub]

The structure in (iv) is well-formed. However, the resumptive pronoun is A-bound by Abs_s, a violation of Condition C, just like the corresponding SCO structure in English shown in example (v).

(v) *Who_i do you think [CP that hei saw t_i]?

Thus, the question still remains as to what factor distinguishes (iv) from (v), which we leave for future research.
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[received December 5, 2012, revised and accepted July 18, 2013]

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