A TENTATIVE
CASE GRAMMAR IN
BENA-BENA

Term Paper
651
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INTRODUCTION

The nature of New Guinea Highland languages demands that this paper begin with a clarification of the notion of sentence. To linguists working in these languages, the sentence is an utterance of variable length containing any number of verbs[1] but which is characterized by a certain type of closure: that is, by the form of the final verb of the string. This form of the verb has been termed "sentence final" (Wurm 19)[2] because it occurs at the end of the sentence (thus functioning as a sentence closure unit) and is different in form (morphologically distinguished) from "sentence medial" verb forms which occur in a string or sequence within the sentence.

For the purposes of this paper, attention will be centred around that form of a sentence which contains but one clause (i.e. a final verb form plus any noun phrases which are pertinent). This is, in effect, a kind of abstraction of the essence of the sentence, but such one-clause sentences do in fact occur, and they appear to equate with the generative concept of "sentence" (S $\rightarrow$ NP,VP). It is in this sense that I will use the term here.

In terms of performance, the minimal form of the Bena-bena sentence (from either point of view) is a verb. And from the generative view of sentence, such minimal forms are very frequently occurring, since a string of verbs may thus be viewed as a string of sentences.

Later in this paper there will be a theoretical discussion on the status of syntax versus morphology; and of the primacy of free forms of subject and object in opposition to bound verbal forms. But for this early part of the paper the sentence will be viewed as stated above, and will be taken to contain, in its minimal base form, an obligatory Subject, optional Object, Locative , Indirect Object and Instrument, and obligatory Predicate, in that order:

Subj. O . L . IO . I . P

Thus Subj. is viewed as an essential part of the base form of S which may be deleted in the surface structure.

Note While limiting attention to certain features of the language, I am in no way restricting or skewing the data under consideration, apart from treating Subj. as obligatory.

PHRASE STRUCTURE RULES.

1. S $\longrightarrow$ Nom (Acc)(Loc)(Dat)(Inst) VP

2. Nom $\longrightarrow$ { Ag / Act }

3. Acc $\longrightarrow$ (Subs) Goal

4. Dat $\longrightarrow$ { Rec / Ref }

5. { Ag / Act / Subs / Goal / Rec / Ref / Loc / Inst } $\rightarrow$ NP$^{\frown}$(K) (1)

6. NP $\longrightarrow$ { (Det) (Adj) N (N) / N$^{\frown}$S }

7. VP $\longrightarrow$ (Mod) $(V)^{n}$ MV

8. MV $\longrightarrow$ (Affix) { (Affix) V / V (Affix) BV } Affix (2)

P.S. Rule 1. S → Nom (Acc)(Loc)(Dat)(Inst) VP

In its minimal form, S can be rewritten as S → Nom VP. All other optional entities of case are shown as potentially co-occurring, but constraints of co-occurrence are not written into the rule. The case frame for each verb (as accounted for in its lexical entry) selects those entities of case which can occur with it and with each other.

Examples of constraints within the typical S would be:

	Nom	Acc	Dat	Inst	VP	
*	kai	buku	pana'mo[3]	kayahi	li	emibo
	you	book	boy	with your hand	take	give

Such a sequence is not allowed, but, to express such an utterance, it would require two sentences cojoined:

Nom	Acc	Inst	VP	Dat	VP
kai	buku	kayahi	lito	pana'mo	emibo
you	book	with your hand	take and	boy	give

(Note that Nom has been deleted in the surface structure of the second sentence. Such deletions occur regardless of the mood of the verb.)

P.S. Rule 2. Nom → { Ag / Act }

Agent and Actor are differentiated but belong to Nom. because they are in the same syntactic relationship to the verb (?) and appear to be mutually exclusive.

Agent is comprised of Noun or Pronoun or Proper Noun. The Noun takes the case markers[4]:

- uba'i singular
- male'i dual
- magi plural

The last two however, do not mark Agent unambiguously since they are portmanteau morphemes and can occur attached to the noun of Acc. signalling duality or plurality of the Goal of the sentence, whereas -uba'i can never occur in Acc. That is, -uba'i signals primarily Agent, and not so much number, in the sentence. It should be noted too, that -uba'i may occur with inanimate agents (see examples below).

Ag.	Acc.	VP
bomouba	kala	ho'ehibe
the man	dog	hit
bomale'i	kala	he'eha'ibe
two men	dog	hit
bomagi	kala	he'ehabe
the men	dog	hit

And,

Ag	Acc	VP
bomouba	kalamale'i	etoho'ehibe
the man	two dogs	hit
bomouba	kalamagi	enoho'ehibe
the man	the dogs	hit

But not:

* bomagi kalauba he'ehabe

Also:

efahuba	nigigusa	tala ho'ehibe
the stone	my foot	crushed

Ag	Acc	VP
nagami'uba water (river)	lukesa post	tele bi'ehibe tore out

Pronouns preclude the use of -uba because pronouns occur in Nom only; never in Acc, thus there is no occasion for ambiguity between Ag and Goal.

Proper Nouns are marked for Ag case by -u. For example:

Nom	Loc	VP
Yoyosou Yoyoso	foyaga to garden	nobibe goes

Actor is the unmarked Nom. case which occurs in intransitive sentences.

It is very likely that Agent and Actor could have been handled as a composite under the label Agent only, since both could be thought of as sharing the same syntactic relationship to the verb, because the verbal suffixes are the same with both cases, but Actor and Agent cannot both occur in the same sentence. This is really just the old circular problem of the transitive-intransitive dichotomy - whether the verbs are intrinsically transitive or intransitive, or whether it is simply that an object is present or not. Here the problem is whether there is just one case, Agent, that is marked when the sentence contains an object and unmarked otherwise, or whether there are two cases, Agent and Actor, which contribute to the case frames that select transitive or intransitive verbs respectively.

P.S. Rule 3. Acc ⟶ (Subs) Goal

The Accusative case includes Goal which is unmarked. But it also includes (optionally) an interesting Substitution case, which is a marked case. Subs can only occur if the sentence contains Goal also. Here the noun phrase marked Subs is that which is substituted or exchanged (animate or inanimate) in order to acquire the Goal. Subs. case contains the notion "instead of" or "in exchange for", and is marked by -loti'i. For example:

Nom	Subs	Goal	VP
Nani I	efapoloti'i in exchange for money	nose'na food	mina filube will buy
Kai you	pa'niloti'i for my daughter	babu yaga nimilane many pigs will give me	

Nom	Subs	Goal	VP
Nani I	yaga'niloti'i for my pigs	bulumaka yaga cattle	nebesibe like (want)

Examples of Goal without Subs:

Nom	Goal	VP
pana'i[4] boy	maya sweet potato	nonabe eats
panauba boy	yaga pig	kene noibe chases

P.S. Rule 4. Dat ⟶ { Rec / Ref }

Dative case represents the indirect object of a transitive sentence. It includes Recipient and Referent cases, but

note that these two are mutually exclusive.

Recipient case is unmarked, but is commonly deleted in the surface structure because it is indicated by one of a complete set of verbal prefixes in the verb phrase. When not deleted it is strictly ordered in relation to Accusative which it follows. The verbal prefixes for Recipient are obligatory regardless of whether the free form (noun phrase) occurs in the surface structure or not.

Examples:

Nom	Acc	Rec	VP
nani	nose'na	afo'nifu	emi'ohube
I	food	my father	gave him
nani	hepa'mo	(kai)	kelepilube
I	village	(you)	will show you

Referent case is marked by -kumu'i or -mu'i. (it appears that there is a preference for -kumu'i with animate nouns and -mu'i with inanimate nouns. Both can be used with pronouns, though -kumu'i shows a higher frequency of use than -mu'i when attached to pronouns.) Verbal concord is optional with Referent case, but when it does occur a special Benefactive verb (to be discussed later) is used as the base for the same set of prefixes as mentioned above. Referent case represents a relationship of the verb to someone or something being referred to can be roughly translated by the English "for", "on account of", "concerning" or, sometimes, "because of".

Examples:

Nom	Ref	VP
(kai) (you)	nanikumu'i to/about me	nolapiye are you speaking
Makiu Mark	ito'afikumu'i for his mother	yibi nohibe cries
nani I	nalalu'nifikumu'i for my friend	hu etalube will do (it)for him

Nom	Ref	Acc	Vp
Afopau Afopa	pa'akumu'i on account of his daughter	yaga pig	nohabe kills

Recipient case and Referent case , apart from being unmarked and marked respectively, also differ in two other respects:

1. Recipient requires Accusative as a prior case (that is it depends on the occurrence of Acc); Referent does not.

2. The occurrence excludes the use of Locative or Instrument in the same sentence; Referent does not.

P.S. Rule 5. $\left\{\begin{array}{l}\text{Ag}\\ \text{Act}\\ \text{Subs}\\ \text{Goal}\\ \text{Rec}\\ \text{Ref}\\ \text{Loc}\\ \text{Inst}\end{array}\right\} \longrightarrow \text{NP}\widehat{\ }(\text{K})$

Any of the cases above can be formalized as $C \longrightarrow NP\widehat{\ }(K)$ where C denotes case and K denotes a case marking affix or particle. The parenthesis indicates that some cases

are so marked whilst others do not have a case marking affix or particle. It should be noted also that even in some of the cases which have the marking affix, this affix is not always present. (As has already been mentioned Agent is unmarked if the agent is pronoun.) Thus from this point of view also(K) is seen as optional.(6)

Of the first 6 cases already described, there is only the observation to note that in keeping with an ergative type language, the Accusative case is completely unmarked, and from frequency counts in text has much the higher occurrence of any of the cases in Bena-bena.

Locative case is a marked case and has the largest set of case marking morphemes:

-ga "to/at"

-to -lo "on/to/at"

-ti "from"

-gu "in"

etcetera

Since the case usage of these morphemes is parallel, all the examples are given with the same marker which is a combination of the first two listed above.(-toga). -toga is an interesting example because of its scope of application (both literal and figurative usage).

Examples:

Nom	Loc	VP
(nani)	hepatoga	bilube
(I)	to village	will go

Nom	Loc	VP	
(nani) (I)	afo'nifuloga to my father	bilube will go	

Acc	Loc	VP	
efahi money	nanitoga at me	meni'ibe is not	"I have no money"

Nom	Loc	VP	
(kai) (you)	Anututoga to God	agoya hu emibo obedience give	"Obey God"
(kai) (you)	afokafuloga to your father	keheli emibo hear give	"Give heed to your father"

Some of the examples given above show that in some instances Locative seems to parallel Dative (perhaps this explains why Recipient and Locative cannot co-occur).

Instrument case is marked by the morpheme -tu'i which translates as "with/ by means of" and can precede or follow the Accusative in its syntactic order. There is a constraint on the use of -tu'i in that any noun which is conceived of as being an inalienable part of a whole which is functioning as Agent cannot take tu'i. For example:

	Nom	Inst	VP	
*	nani	nigigusatu'i	i'ohube	is not permitted,
but	nani I	nigigusa (with)my foot	i'ohube kicked	is correct.
and	nani I	efapotu'i with stone	ho'ohube hit	

Instrument cannot occur as Agent of a sentence, and in support of this note the following example of both inanimate Agent and Instrument in the same sentence

(even though examples of this type are fairly rare):

Ag	Acc	Inst	VP
yasiuba	efaha'ni	mumusopatu'i	ifi to'ehibe
wind	my money	with dust	covered

Instrument can occur where the Accusative is not shown in the surface structure of the sentence:

Nom	Inst	VP
ai	efapotu'i	ho'ehibe
he	with stone	hit (it)
(nani)	emita'nitu'i	laga nohube
(I)	with my knife	cut (i)

The following examples show the variable syntactic order of Instrument in relation to Accusative:

Nom.	Acc	Inst	VP
panauba	yagamo	nagatu'i	ieli nohibe
boy	the pig	with rope	leads

Nom	Inst	Acc	VP
panauba	efapotu'i	lukesa	ho'ehibe
boy	with stone	post	hit

Locative and Instrument may co-occur in the same sentence (but as mentioned before Instrument cannot co-occur with Recipient but requires the use of a second sentence):

Nom	Loc	Acc	Inst	VP
nani	kosalo	osifa'i	osapotu'i	keyelube
I	on mountain	snake	with stick	killed

Instrument case does not replace an adverbial component of manner (e.g. English "with haste") because all manner adverbs are derivations of verbs and function like verbs in the VP of a sentence (see example under VP).

P.S. Rule 6. $NP \longrightarrow \left\{ \begin{matrix} (Det)\ (Adj)\ N\ (N) \\ N\ S \end{matrix} \right\}$

This rule states that the Noun Phrase is comprised of a Noun or a Sentence, where N may be preceded by an optional Determiner and, or Adjective; it also allows for the obligatory noun to be followed by an optional noun (which is a nominalized adjective or a noun in apposition). Examples:

Det	Adj	N
ya'ma	hetofa	bo
that	good	man

Det	N	Adj
ya'ma	bo	sipina
that	man	big one

N (9) S			Acc	VP
yaga	yago	ego'ohunanauba	kokole	no'ehibe
pig	yesterday	the one I saw	chicken	ate

The case markers are all enclitics to the Noun Phrase, as shown by the Agent marker (-uba'i) in the example above.

P.S. Rule 7. $VP \longrightarrow (Mod)\ (V)^{n}\ MV^{5}$

This rule states that in its minimal form, VP can be comprised of the main verb alone. $(V)^{n}$ indicates that another verb stem (or more than one verb stem) can occur as a close knit sequence with MV as a form of compounding. (10) The total meaning is to be conceived of as a single composite action, not as a sequence of two actions. This can contrasted with instances of where two actions (i.e two sentences) are sequential and "sentence medial" forms of the verb are used rather than compounding as described

here. Examples:

Nom	Acc	V	MV
kai	gimi	li	nimibo
you	bow	take-give	me

Nom	Acc	VP	Loc	VP	VP
kai	gimi	lito	nonuga	tito	molobo
you	bow	take -and	house -in	go -an	put (it)

Additionally, verb modifiers can occur at the beginning of the verb phrase. For example:

Nom	Mod	MV
nani	mele'isi	nalube
I	quickly	will eat

As further evidence of the close-knit nature of $(v)^n$ MV mentioned above there is an optional pro-clitic (a-) which attaches to the first V, thus functioning as an onset of the compound. For example:

V	MV	
ali	molobo	
take	put	"Put it down"

V	V	MV	
ai	fi to	keto'ohube	"I have covered it for you"
do	cover	for you I have	

(a- semantically adds the idea of actualness to the sentence).

P.S. Rule 8. MV $\longrightarrow$ (Affix) $\left\{ \begin{matrix} (\text{Affix})\ V \\ V\ (\text{Affix})\ BV \end{matrix} \right\}$ Affix

This rule implies that the verb obligatorily inflects for tense and for the Subject-person-number-mood comlex suffix.

This complex morpheme will be accounted for in the section on Redundancy Rules.

Optional affix within braces, occurring as one of a set of 9 prefixial morphemes, represents the Accusative or Dative cases. (But note that there is a constraint in which Accusative occurring with Dative allows only Dative to be marked in the verb).(11) Such prefixes are found with those transitive verbs which obligatorily inflect(12) for Accusative or Dative and are in contrast with those transitive verbs which do not take bound prefixes. The following is a list of prefixes:

Acc	Dat	
na-	na-	"me "
ka-	ka-	"you"
∅	e-	"him"
le'a-		"us two"
leta-		"you two"
eta-		"them two"
la-		"us"
lena-	le(p)-	"you" (all)
ena-	e(p)-	"them"

(The p in brackets is a morphological variant of the verb stem of certain verbs in the Dative).

Examples:

Nom	Acc	Dative in Verb
bona'uba	nama	nelepi'ehibe
the man	bird	showed me

The first optional Affix is the morpheme no-, meaning "in operation" or "customary" (which has the

variant form ne- depending on the person-number of the verb to which it is attached). Examples:

V

nominobe "I stay"

nonabe "He eats"

V	BV	
nomolo put	ketabe for you	"He puts (it) for you"

Examples of suffixation:

	Stem	Tense	Subj-Mood
bilube	bi-	-l	-ube

"I will go"

	Acc	Stem	Tense	Subj-Mood
nahalane	na-	ha-	-l	-ane

"you'll hit me"

For V^BV

This part of the formula indicates that the Verb in pre-position must occur with the Benefactive (which is a special verb, having the intrinsic function of Benefaction). To have included this under P.S. Rules 7 would have meant the loss of explanatory power since:

1. the verb in pre-position is obligatory for Benefactive, but not so in P.S. 7

2. the verb in pre-position takes the operative prefix no- in the Benefactive compound. (Other than Benefactive this does not attach to the pre-positional verb - i.e. in P.S. 7). All other MV affixes attach to the Benefactive verb.(13)

RANKING OF CASE.

It should be noted that Locative and Instrument cases (which are overtly marked) are not found as part of the verb or its morphological structure. This division of case suggests a kind of ranking phenomena. That is, certain of the cases appear to have primacy because they are coded in the verb, whereas others (Loc. and Inst.) are not.

I am suggesting that the case relationship is closer in those exhibiting a concordance relationship to the verb than those which do not exhibit concordance. Note also that these concordant cases (Nom., Acc. and Dat) all appear to be captivating more than one case, which also suggests a rank of case.

Substitution case could be thought of as an expansion of the Goal, that is as having a relationship to the Goal rather than to the verb (since its occurrence depends on the prior occurrence of Goal), and therefore may rank even lower than Locative or Instrument.

REDUNDANCY RULES

(I am only giving those Redundancy Rules which seem to be highly pertinent to the Grammar of this paper)

Verbs:

$$MV \longrightarrow \begin{bmatrix} \pm \text{ past} \\ \pm \text{ 3rd pers} \\ \pm \text{ sg} \\ \pm \text{ indic} \end{bmatrix}$$

(16)
$$\begin{bmatrix} + \text{ V} \end{bmatrix} \longrightarrow \begin{bmatrix} \pm \text{ monofocal} \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} + \text{ V} \\ - \text{ monofocal} \end{bmatrix} \rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} + \text{polyfocal} \end{bmatrix}$$ (17)

(15)
(Note: BV equals V)

(12)
$$\begin{bmatrix} + \text{ MV} \\ - \text{ past} \end{bmatrix} \rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} \pm \text{pres} \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} - \text{ pres} \end{bmatrix} \rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} + \text{ fut} \end{bmatrix}$$ (13)

$$\begin{bmatrix} + \text{ MV} \\ - \text{ 3rd p} \end{bmatrix} \rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} \pm \text{ 2nd p} \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} - \text{ 2nd p} \end{bmatrix} \rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} \text{1st p} \end{bmatrix}$$ (4)

$$\begin{bmatrix} + \text{ MV} \\ - \text{ sg} \end{bmatrix} \rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} \pm \text{pl} \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} - \text{ pl} \end{bmatrix} \rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} + \text{ dl} \end{bmatrix}$$ (14)

$$\begin{bmatrix} + \text{ MV} \\ - \text{ indic} \end{bmatrix} \rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} \pm \text{ interrog} \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} - \text{ interrog} \end{bmatrix} \rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} + \text{imper.} \end{bmatrix}$$ (14)

Lexical Entries (Tentative)

Verbs

no- 'eat'

[+ V
+ ____Nom(Acc)(Inst)(Loc)
+ animate]

ko- 'sleep'

[+ V
+ ___Nom (Loc)(Acc)
+ animate] → 'She sleeps the child'
+ Acc
+ anim.
+ ben. V

ho- 'hit'

[+ V
+ ___Nom Acc (Inst)(Ref)(Loc)
+ motion]

lepi- 'show'

[+ V
+ ___Nom Acc (Inst)(Loc)
+ animate]

bu- 'go'

[+ V
+ ___Nom (Loc)(Ref)
+ motion]

etc.

Footnotes

1 Such a view of sentence is the more traditional one, i.e. a sentence is composed of clauses and conjunctives, wheres by the gen. and Fillmorean concept, a clause is a sentence.

2 Wurm, S.A. 1960a 'The Linguistic Situation in the Highlands of Papua and New Guinea', Aust. Territories 1(2)

3 Apostrophe has been used to represent glottal stop

4 With morphological variants:

-pale'i
-pagi

There are certain instances in which -ba'i is not needed, eg. 'the boy ate sweet potato' where it is obvious from the sense which is Ag.

5 There is a unique verb, the stative (verb 'to be'), which is the base for sentences exhibiting inanimate subjects, eg. yafa ni'ibe 'the tree is'. This feature of S has been omitted from this paper since it has no direct bearing on case; but the syntactic ordering of components is the same but the verb will not allow modifiers.

6 As an accidental omission, the 3rd order (from stem) prefix me- negative, would constitute another optional Affix to the formula of the P3 rules.

DISCUSSION

1. On the Universal nature of Subject.

Fillmore asserts that Subject is a rather empty term (or that the Subject-Predicate relationship is an artificial one) because it designates syntactic position in which all cases can occur. That is, Nominative case is a kind of neutralization of all other cases when other Noun Phrases occur in Subject position.

A clearer understanding of Subject will not be discoverable through English, or other analytic type languages, I believe, because it is based on only syntactic positioning. Synthetic languages have the added advantage of indicating Subject in two ways - syntactically and morphologically. A study of the correlation between syntactic Subject and the bound verbal Subject over a wide number of synthetic languages should help to clarify which cases are obligatorily contained in subject and which are peripheral, thus leading to an understanding of the universal nature of subject.(And thus it should be able to sift out those phenomena of Subject which are language particular.)

For example, in Bena-bena Agent and Actor show concord with syntax and verbal morphology; whereas Instrument, which can occur in Subject position in English (like "the key opened the door') cannot in Bena-bena. It is therefore very probable that Agent and Actor are universal aspects of Subject, but that Instrument is not. On the other hand, the inanimate

Agent, that Bena-bena demonstrates, might not be a universal. (However the Instrument-in-Subject in English could be looked at as an inanimate Agent.)(22)

2. On the Centrality of Syntax.

In the Gen. grammar model, syntax is central or primary in the formulation of base rules beginning with, for example, S --> NP,VP. And the notions of Subject, Predicate, Main verb and Object being relational, are already represented in the P-marker rules. For a language like English, there is a relation which holds between NP of a sentence of the form NP,Aux,VP and the whole sentence. The symbols themselves suggest these relations as being fundamental to the re-write rules of the grammar. In analytical languages, as in English, the constituents of a sentence are viewed on a syntactic level and are clearly defined in relation to the verb. But there are a vast number of languages (in N.G. for instance) which are not typologically analytic in sentence structure(23) and which do not primarily fall within the scope of accepted syntax. That is not to say that these languages are without syntactic order at the sentence level; but rather, the VP obligatorily being marked for Subj. shows that it is basic to the sentence. And that for these languages morphology is at least equivalent in rank(24) to syntax.

Thus I feel that the ranking(25) distinction between syntax and morphology is an artificial one. That is not

to say there is no distinction between syntax and morphology (syntax being arrangements of words- distributional structure- and morphology being the form of words- formal structure). But my claim is that the distinction "central" as applied to syntax versus "peripheral" as applied to morphology (or, "deep" versus "surface") is a somewhat artificial one.(24)

Fillmore says 'the sentence is its basic structure consists of the verb and one or more NP, each associated with the verb in a particular case relationship' and again, 'it is important to realize that the explanatory value of a universal system of deep structure cases is of a syntactic and not (merely) a morphological nature.' It would appear that in Fillmore's view of languages which mark Subj., Obj., in the verb (ie. by morphology) and in which the NP's for these cases are optional, is that the NP's are the more basic to the sentence and the verbal morphology is purely concord. I feel that this is a wrong assumption and unnecessary to the theory of case.(26) It is suggestive of the fact that his case grammar theory is an adaption of a generative model, as well as suggesting that he is explaining the nature of synthetic type languages through the grid of an analytic language such as English.

It does not seem necessary, to me, to regard one such aspect of grammar as more basic than the other in order to describe relationships between case elements. That "concord" exists at all, seems to me to indicate that case is not inherently contained in the NP. A better view would be to regard cases as relationships between abstract

nominal type entities and verbal type entities. (Longacre's-1964, p.1- concept of predication as PLOT and other elements of the clause (Sentence) as DRAMATIS PERSONAE (actor, goal, ind. obj.), PROPS, SCENERY, LOCAL COLOR (loc, inst, manner, time) would fit very neatly such an abstract view of case entities; and being based on Pike's model of morphology and syntax as together making up the grammar, there is no conflict between "central" syntax and "peripheral" morphology.)

My view, in terms of Bena-bena, is that case exists but that it is not inextricably bound to syntax in every instance.(27) I regard the morphological marking of Subj. Obj. and I.Obj. in the verb as being the basic(28) expression of these cases in Bena-bena. This is based on the fact that these NP's are not obligatory elements of the sentence and that it is far more characteristic to omit them, the VP's having much greater frequency in any discourse (the language being a verb chaining one). I hold this reason as valid in spite of Fillmore's dismissal of it.(29) In Bena-bena it is not merely an anaphoric process because it is not an omission of Subj. (when we have sequences of clauses, sentences) for every verb marks Subject. (See Fillmore p. 56) I am using this point not to reject the "universality of Subj. Pred. division" but to reject the universality of the centrality(24) of syntax.

Also, except where emphasis is intented in the Subj. (which is usually an appositional feature) the free form pronouns are excluded from the Subj. NP. They are obligatoriy excluded from Obj. or I.Obj. NP, because they are contained in the verb affixation. So it is my belief that

the marking of these cases in the verb morphology is not simply concord but something more basic.

In any event, it would be advantageous to the theory of case to review and re-evaluate the notion of the centrality of syntax. And also case analysies of synthetic type languages should be fruitful in gaining a better understanding of case universals provided they are not distorted from a bias toward analytic languages.

References

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