

Analysing discontinuous DPs in Tunen: Contiguity violations not driven by IS?

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Discontinuous DPs and the Contiguity Principle

- Contiguity Principle (cf Behagel 1932's First Law, Principle of Iconic Distance) proposed to hold crosslinguistically:

(1) **Contiguity principle**

“material that is contiguous at one step in the derivation (that is, e.g., merged as a single phrase) should remain contiguous unless other principles force a violation of contiguity.” (Fanselow & Cavar 2001, cited in ?)

- Interesting (apparent) violations of this principle are discontinuous noun phrases, where a nominal modifier (e.g. numeral, adjective) is split from the head noun by other material (such as a verb)

Discontinuous DPs and the Contiguity Principle

(2) Context: 'Did three boys hit you?'

Ma! **X-ch'úuppal-o'ob** jats'-ik-en **óox-túul=i'**.
 NEG F-girl-PL hit-INCMPL-B.1SG three-CLAN=LOC
 'No! Three GIRLS hit me.'

(Yucatec Maya, Skopoteas et al. 2020:628)

- ⇒ Modifier 'three' is split syntactically from the noun 'girls'
- ⇒ Contiguity Principle explanation: Split in structure is due to split in information structural (IS) interpretation

Discontinuous DPs crosslinguistically

- Discontinuous DPs are reported to be a low-frequency strategy in the world's languages (e.g. 1-5% of noun phrases in Louagie and Verstraete 2016:51's overview of 3 Australian languages), restricted to a particular information structure (IS) context of contrastive focus
- Van de Velde (2022:909): Discontinuous DPs appear to be “very rare” in Bantu, with only 3 languages known to have examples: Chichewa, Ganda, and Tunen

Discontinuous DPs in Bantu

- Today: Study and formal analysis of Tunen discontinuous DPs, which I propose are violations of the Contiguity Principle not explained by IS

Background

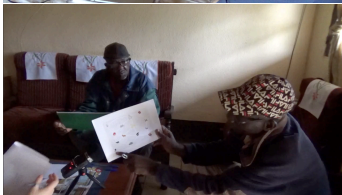
Tunen

- Tunen (aka Nen) = Narrow Bantu A44 language, ISO 639-3 code tvu, spoken predominantly in Mbam region of Cameroon by somewhere over 35000 speakers
- At borderlands between Narrow Bantu and non-Bantu Bantoid, close to Bantu homeland as one of the first branch of Bantu (consistent across classifications)
- Bantu noun class system, OV word order, ATR harmony, reduction of final vowels and utterance-final tone lowering



Methodology

- 2 x in-situ fieldwork stays in Yaoundé/Ndikiniméki, Cameroon (delayed by COVID-19)
- BaSIS project methodology: elicitation using controlled discourse context + natural speech
- + secondary data from Dugast (1975) texts
- + extra elicitation using CHAOS/C08 draft questionnaire



Outline

Outline

- §1 Introduction
- §2 Background to study
- §3 Empirical investigation
- §4 Formal analysis
- §5 Discussion
- §6 Conclusion

Empirical investigation

Discontinuous DPs

- Tunen allows a nominal modifier to be split from the noun it modifies (S-TAM-O-V-Mod)
- Previous work: Discontinuous nominal expressions used for contrast on modifier (Mous 1997, 2003)

(3) m̀è-ná ìm̀it̀è ỳè m̀^ẁəǹífí índí m̀è-ḡ́én̄
 1SG-HOD.PAST 9:calabash 9:of 6:water give:H 9-big
 ò h̀èl̀óbát̀ò
 LOC 19:child

'I gave the BIG water calabash to the child.'

(Mous 1997:133; Mous 2003:305)

Discontinuous DPs

- But Isaac (2007) shows that the construction is also found in Dugast (1975) texts to introduce new discourse referents
- And these constructions showed up unexpectedly in my 2019 fieldwork:

(4) Context: ‘How many birds do you see?’ (focus = modifier)

Context: ‘What do you see?’ (focus = whole DP)

mé ndo **túnoni** sinə **tólál**.

/mɛ ^Hndo **t-^Hnoni** sinə **t-^Hlál**/

SM.1SG PRES 13-bird see 13-three

‘Je vois [trois oiseaux]_{FOC}.’

‘I see [three birds]_{FOC}.’

[EO, 397]

Discontinuous DPs for other IS

- By controlling discourse context, we can confirm that S-O-V-Mod discontinuity is actually compatible with multiple IS contexts, not just contrastive focus on the modifier

Predicated-centred focus

(5) báne ó ndo **endómbá** sinə hóyé **éláló**?

/bane ɔ ndo **ɛ-ndɔmba** sinə hóye **ɛ-lalɔ**/
is_it SM.2SG PRS 7-sheep see there 7-three

‘Est-ce que tu vois trois moutons-là?’

‘Do you see three sheep over there?’

[PM 916]

(6) Context: “Do you see two birds?”

éε, mé ndo **tunoní** sinə **tófandε**.

/εε mε ^Hndo tɔ-noní sinə tɔ-^Hfandε/
yes SM.1SG PRS 13-bird see 13-two

‘Oui, je vois deux oiseaux.’

‘Yes, I see two birds.’

[EO 1408]

Discontinuous DPs for other IS

(7) Context: PM instructs EO in the QUIS map task.

(ɔ) ενόμε ρυέα γέ ndɔ ákána endendéle **miɔkó** γέ le **élál**.

/ɔ ε-νόμε ρυέα γε ^Hndɔ ákána endendéle
PREP 7-road REL.7 SM.7 PRS leave straight_on

mi-ɔkó γέ léá **ε-^Hlaló**/

9.chicken SM.9 be 9-three

‘Sur la route qui va tout droit il y a trois poules.’

‘The road that goes straight on has three chickens.’ [PM 686]

Discontinuous DPs for other IS

(8) Context: PM instructs EO in the QUIS map task (cont.).

- a. ϔ ná **miκó** bόηό **έλάς?**
 /ϔ na **mi-κó** bόηό **ε-lalς/**
 SM.2SG PST2 9-chicken find 9-three

‘Tu as trouvé les trois poules?’

‘Have you found the three chickens?’

[PM, 687]

- b. με ná **miκó** bόηό **ί - ί - ίnisə**
 /με ná **mi-κó** bόηό **ε-nisə/**
 SM.1SG PST2 9-chicken find 9-four

‘J’ai trouvé qu- qu- quatre poules’

‘I’ve found f- f- four chickens.’

[EO 688]

Discontinuous DPs: Which IS contexts?

IS context	Discon. allowed?
Focus on modifier only	Y
Focus on whole DP (N+Mod)	Y
Predicate-centred focus	Y
Thetics/new discourse referents	Y

⇒ *contra* expectations from Mous (1997, 2003) and crosslinguistic work on discontinuous DPs as reflecting split in IS status (Contiguity Principle)

Discontinuous DPs: Form

- Tunen discontinuous DPs differ from those found in other languages formed via IS-driven movement to the left periphery (e.g. Chichewa; Mchombo 2004 *et seq.*)
- How are discontinuous DPs formed in Tunen? What can be split?

Quantifiers

- (9) Context: You are a farmer who has lost all of your animals,
but by a stroke of luck, you find them all again.

με ná Húélé hóli é⁺σέα μένά **biá⁺mía behóse** βηηϑ **bikim**.

/με ná Húélé hóliə ε-σέα μέ-νά

SM.1SG PST2 God thank 7-say SM.1SG.COND-PAST2

biámía βε-ήσε βήηό βε-^Hkimə/

POSS.PRON.1SG.8 8-horse find 8-all

'Je remercie Dieu comme j'ai retrouvé tous mes chevaux.'

'I thank the Lord that I've found all my horses.' [EE+EB 1827]

Quantifiers

- (10) The governor visits the school and is so excited he gives out a lot of different things to the students.

Context 1: “Did he give out a lot of things to the students?” (truth focus)

Context 2: “What did he give to the students?” (term focus on object)

- a. aná baná **bekʷa** índiákín **biənyɪ**.

/a-ná ba-ná **bɛ-kʷa** índiákíné **bɛ-ənyɪ**/
SM.1-PAST2 2-child 8-thing give.APPL 8-many

‘Il a donné beaucoup de choses aux enfants.’

‘He gave out a lot of things to the children.’ [JO 2326/9]

- b. ?aná baná **bekʷa biəny** índiákín. [JO 2325]

- c. aná baná índiákín **bekʷa biənyɪ**. [JO 2327/30]

Numerals

- (11) o ná **miɔkó** bɔŋɔ **élálɔ́**?
 /ɔ na **mi-ɔkɔ** bɔŋɔ **ɛ-lalɔ/**
 SM.2SG PST2 9-chicken find 9-three
 ‘Tu as trouvé les trois poules?’
 ‘Have you found the three chickens?’ [PM, 687]
- (12) a ná-kā **hikumukumu** nibè **hímòti** o-bés’
 3S:SM PST-ALL old.person:19 meet one:19 INF-bathe
 ò nuiy.
 LOC river
 ‘He met an old woman bathing in the river.’ (OR161, cited
 in Isaac 2007:61)

Can't split associative

(13) Context: “Which member of Marie’s family did the teacher meet at the school?”

a. ***yé Malía** múlélíə aka **inyə** nyánána (u isukul).

/**yé** **Malía** mɔ-léliə a-ka inyə
ASSOC.9 1.Maria 1-teacher SM.1-PAST3 9.mother
nyánáná ɔ ɛ-sukúlu/
meet.RECIP PREP 7-school

Intd.: ‘Le maître a rencontré [la mère]_{FOC} de Marie à l’école.’

Intd.: ‘The teacher met Maria’s [mother]_{FOC} at the school.’ [JO 2652]

b. *múlélíə aka **inyə** nyánána **yé Malía**. [JO 2655]

c. *múlélíə aka **yé Malía** nyánána **inyə**. [JO 2654]

What can be split?

Obj modifier type	Discon. allowed?
Quantifiers	Y
Numerals	Y
Adjectives	Y
'how many'	N
Associatives (genitive)	N
Relative clauses	Y

Formal analysis

Discontinuous DPs: Analysis

- 2 types of formal analyses for discontinuous DPs crosslinguistically:
 - Base-generated as XPs (e.g. with Mod as VP adverb)
 - Movement analysis (subextraction/Copy+deletion)

- ! Analysing Tunen discontinuous DPs has implications for analysing Tunen's OV syntax

Adverbial analysis of discontinuity

- Recap: Tunen discontinuous DPs appear to violate the Contiguity Principle in having a modifier split from a noun for no clear interpretational motivation
- Possible analysis: the two elements are base-generated in separate XPs (meaning discontinuity is only apparent); modifier as a VP adjunct
- Possibility for quantifiers to modify subjects argues in favour of this, but 3 arguments against such an approach:

Against an adverbial analysis

- Argument 1 against the adverbial analysis: OVMod modifiers take noun class agreement, but adverbials do not

(14) Context: '(He's a) Munen! I'm not lying to you.'

a ka nyɔɔka háaha ɔ uwəsú **mɔŋɛŋ**.

/a ka nyɔ-aka háaha ɔ uwəsú **mɔŋɛŋa/**

SM.1 PST3 work-DUR here PREP PRON.1PL.POSS much

'Il a beaucoup travaillé ici chez nous.'

'He worked a lot here in our region.'

[EO 1043]

(15) Context: 'When did the dog bark a lot?'

emóá yé ná bómókó **mɔŋɛŋa** nóbúlú.

/ε-móá yé ná bómó-aka **mɔŋɛŋa** ne-búlú/

7-dog SM.7 PST2 bark much 5-night

'Le chien a beaucoup aboyé pendant la nuit.'

'The dog barked a lot at night.'

[JO 1105]

Against an adverbial analysis

- (16) báení bəndɔ báení bándɔ ɛŋganda bíínə **tɔfa embát.**
 /báeníə ba-ndɔ báeníə ba'ndɔ ɛ-ŋganda bíínə **tɔfá**
 DEM.DIST.2 2-person DEM.DIST.2 SM.2-PRES 7-enganda dance quickly
embáta/
 too.much
 Les gens-là dansent l'enganda trop rapidement.'
 'Those people over there dance the enganda too quickly.' [EE+EB 1836]
- (17) Malía aná belama óndɔ **tɔfá.**
 /Malía a-ná bɛ-lama óndɔ **tɔfá/**
 1.Maria SM.1-PST2 8-vegetable buy quickly
 'Maria a acheté des légumes viteement.'
 'Maria bought the vegetables quickly.' [JO 2480]

Against an adverbial analysis

- Argument 2 against the adverbial analysis: Discontinuous DPs in Tunen found for adjectives, not just quantifiers

(18) m̀è-ná ìm̀ìt̀è ỳè m̀^ẁ̀ǹíí índí m̀è-ḡéḡ
1SG-HOD.PAST 9:calabash 9:of 6:water give:H 9-big
ò h̀èl̀óbát̀è
LOC 19:child

'I gave the BIG water calabash to the child.' (Mous 1997:133; Mous 2003:305)

Against an adverbial analysis

- Argument 3 against the adverbial analysis: No semantic evidence for event reading of the modifier

(19) Context: After concluding the explanation.

mhm. ó^hhá **bɛndɔ** bá ndɔ wééya sinə **balal**.

/mhm ɔhá **bɛ-ndɔ** ba ^Hndɔ wééya

mhm for.that 2-person SM.2-PRES PRON.1 see

sinə **ba-^Hlálɔ**/

2-three

‘Mhm. C’est pour ça que trois gens le regardent.’

‘Mhm. That’s why three people are looking at him.’ [PM 597]

Against an adverbial analysis

- ⇒ Arguments to reject an analysis of (apparent) S-O-V-Mod discontinuous DPs in Tunen as derived from the modifier as a VP adjunct

- Remaining analyses: movement via subextraction / movement via Copy+Deletion

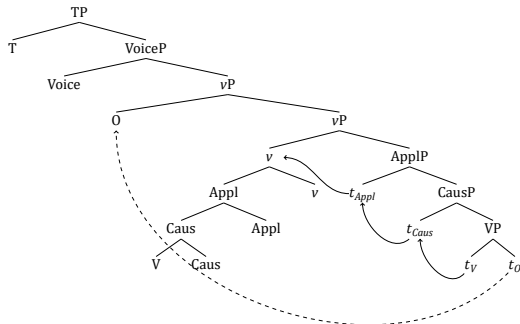
Formal analysis: How to get OV?

- Syntactic diagnostics show that, aside from the VP, Tunen is consistently head-initial; disharmonic Aux-O-V word order
- 3 types of formal analysis of Aux-O-V word order considered:
 - Roll-up movement (driven by [+V[^]]) (Sheehan et al. 2017)
 - Head movement (Julien 2002; Zeller 2013; van der Wal 2022, i.a.) modified by addition of object shift
 - Base-generation of OV (Haider 2010, 2013; Sande et al. 2019)

Formal analysis: How to get OV?

- Syntactic diagnostics¹ motivate analysis with V-to-*v* head movement + formally-driven object shift to Spec*v*P to derive

(20) OV order

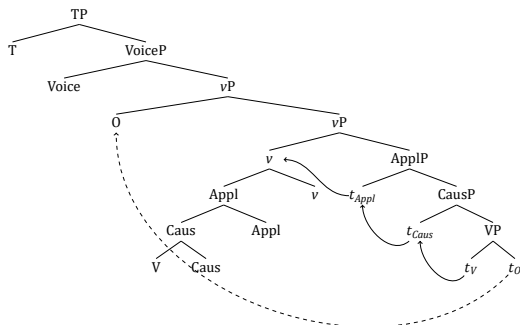


¹Bantu verbal morphology (derivational extensions), headedness diagnostics, negation test, adverb placement test, O-V-X, voice prefix *bé-*, in-situ subjects, lack of aspectual distinctions in FV.

Formal analysis: How to get OV?

- Syntactic diagnostics motivate analysis with V-to-v head movement + formally-driven object shift to SpecvP to derive OV order

(21)



⇒ Extension to discontinuous DPs: Need to look into structure of DP

The structure of the Tunen DP

Tunen contiguous DPs have strict order (compatible with work on derivable Universal 20 orders):

(22) D/Dem N Adj Num/Q (Kerr 2020)

(23) τῶεγε τῶbanána τῶfítitiə τῶτέ↓τέ τῶfandε
 /τῶ-εγε τῶ-banana τῶ-fititiə τῶ-τετε **τῶ-fandε**/
 13-DEM 13-banana 13-black 13-small 13-two
 ‘ces deux petites bananes noires’
 ‘these two small black bananas’ [JO, 844]

The structure of the Tunen DP

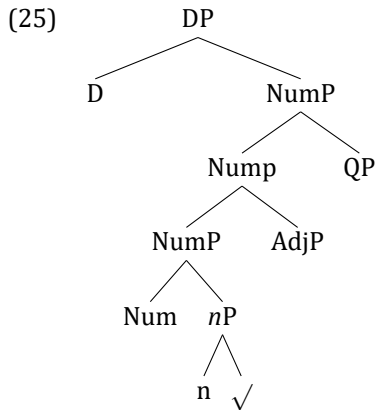
Tunen contiguous DPs have strict order (compatible with predictions from work on derivable Universal 20 orders):

(24) D/Dem N Adj Num/Q (Kerr 2020)

Only pull splits are allowed (preserving order of contiguous DP); only material after the noun can be split

The structure of the Tunen DP

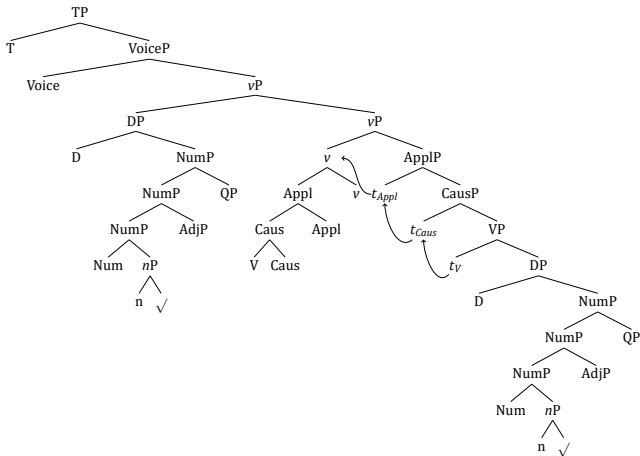
Proposed structure:



Alternative analyses of Dem-N-Adj-Num: roll-up analysis, N-to-D head movement approach (Carstens 2017)

Formal analysis of Tunen OVMod discontinuity

(26)



Discussion

Discussion: The validity of subextraction

- Subextraction account criticised in other work on discontinuous DPs due to A' -movement diagnostics, but Tunen discontinuous DPs argued not to be derived through IS-driven A' -movement
- Subextraction account makes testable predictions re: possible and impossible splits (to be tested in further empirical research)
- Issues with Copy+Deletion alternative: spell-out of lower DP material (Adj/Numeral/Quantifier) is of a non-consistent (linearly defined?)

Discussion: Discontinuity vs contiguity

- While discontinuous DPs are found across IS contexts and generally given as the first answer in elicitation, contiguous orders are also accepted - but variably
- Variation across and within speakers as to whether SOModV or SVOMod is preferred
 - For grammars with SOModV: predicted possibility to take larger NumP projections
 - For grammars with SVOMod: Implications for analysis of OV wrt licensing-driven movement
- Parallel to extraposition and analysis of relative clauses - is the postverbal position (always) the in-situ position?

Further research

- Testing predictions of subextraction versus Copy+Deletion analyses to tease them apart
- Corpus frequency of discontinuous S-O-V-Mod vs contiguous S-O-Mod-V vs contiguous S-V-O-Mod
- Prosodic analysis of *v*P to diagnose in-situ vs ex-situ modifiers
- Extending analysis to account for quantifiers/numerals associating with subjects

Conclusion

Conclusion

- Tunen S-O-V-Mod discontinuous DPs are not restricted to IS context of split in IS status of noun and modifier
 - Contiguity violations not driven by IS?
- Proposal that the splits arise from independently-motivated object shift mechanism to derive Tunen's OV word order

Thank you!



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Glosses/abbreviations

Glosses: 1, 2, 3... = Bantu noun class marker; 1S(G), 1PL = 1st person singular, plural; 2S(G) = 2nd person singular; APPL = applicative; ASSOC = associative (=connective) marker; CAUS = causative; COP = copula; DEF = definite, DEM = demonstrative; DUR = durative; EMPH = emphatic (pronoun); DJ = disjoint verb form; FOC = focus marker; FUT = future tense; FV = final vowel (Bantu); INF = infinitive; LOC = locative; NEG = negation; NOM = nominative; NMLZ = nominaliser; PASS = passive; PAST1 = first-degree past tense (just now); PAST2 = second-degree past tense (hodiernal); PAST3 = third-degree past tense (yesterday); PFV = perfective PM = ?; PRES = present tense; PO = postposition; POSS = possessive; PREP = preposition; PRON = pronoun; PROX = proximal; RED = reduplicant; SM = subject marker; TAM = tense/aspect(/mood) marker

Abbreviations: Aux = auxiliary; C = complementiser node (pragmatic domain); Cop = copula; Comp = complement clause; Compl = complement clause; DO = direct object; DP = determiner phrase (\approx noun phrase); Gen = genitive; IO = indirect object; IS = information structure; MSB = Macro-Sudan Belt; mvt = syntactic movement; NOM = nominalised; O = object; PNC = Proto-Niger Congo; S = subject; T = tense node (inflectional domain); TP = tense phrase (inflectional domain); V = verb; V2 = verb-second, vP = verbal projection above VP and below voice domain, VP = verb phrase; X = obliques (non-S/O arguments and adjuncts)

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Appendix

Appendix

Appendix: Relative clauses

- (27) μενά **wááyé múəndu** siəkin əwánákáná ə **bulí na móto**, tátá wón.

/me-ná **wááyé mɔ-əndu** siəkinə əwá-á-ánákáná ə
SM.1SG-PAST2 DEM.1 1-woman see REL.1-SM.1.REL-leave PREP

bo-lí na móto tátá wóni
14-work with 6.motorcycle not 1.other

'J'ai vu la femme qui est allée au travail avec le moto, pas l'autre.'

'I saw the woman who went to work by motorbike, not the other one.'

[PB 2019]

- (28) μεκα άμε **yáyéá ibəŋuluəkə yí búsió** siəkinə əyéá á¹ná ənd, [...]

/me-ka amɛ **yayea** **ɛ-bəŋuluəkə** yɛ **busiə**
SM.1SG-PAST3 PRON.1SG PRON.POSS.1 7-car ASSOC.7 14.front

siəkinə əyɛa **a-na** **əndə/**
see REL.7 SM.1-PAST3 buy

'Moi j'avais vu la première véhicule qu'il a acheté, [...]

'I myself saw the first vehicle he bought, [...]

[PM 1084]

Appendix: Relative clauses

- (29) (νεοφένε) Μάτινə aná **βελάβόνεά bikimə** {?ɔkɔlɔken} **ɔβέα yamiá inyó**
an'á táléáká naáneɔla {ɔkɔlɔken(a)} (νεοφέν).

/(νεοφένε) Μάτινə a-ná **βε-lábónεά βε-kimə** {ɔkɔlɔkena}
(today) Martin SM.1-PAST2 8-food 8-all {taste}

ɔβέα yamiá inyó a-ná táléá-aka naáneɔla
REL.8 my 1.mother SM.1-PAST2 cook-DUR yesterday

{ɔkɔlɔkena} (νεοφένε)/
{taste} (today)

'Martin a goûté (aujourd'hui) toute la nourriture que ma mère a cuisiné hier.'

'Today, Martin has tasted all the food that my mother cooked (yesterday).'
[PM 498]

- (30) bál(ε) utíbiniə **εβόκα ɔyéá mwiti aná fálé.**

/ba-lea ɔ-tibiniə **ε-bɔka ɔyεa mwiti a-na falea/**
SM.2-be INF-observe 7-place REL.7 DEM.1 SM.1-PAST2 tumble

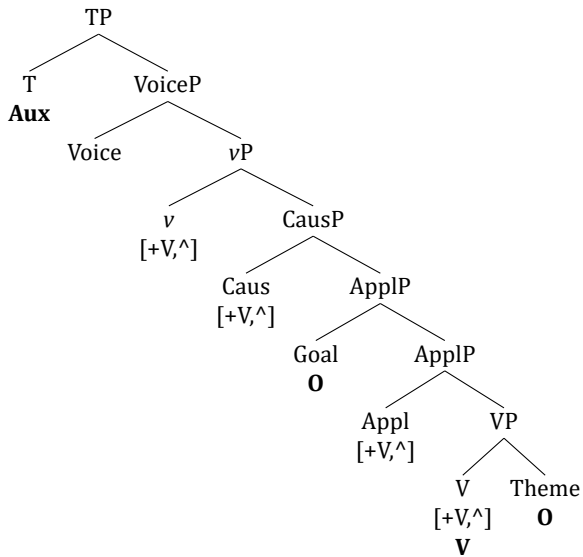
'Ils sont en train d'observer l'endroit du la personne a degradingolé.'

'They're looking at the place the guy fell.'

[PM 582]

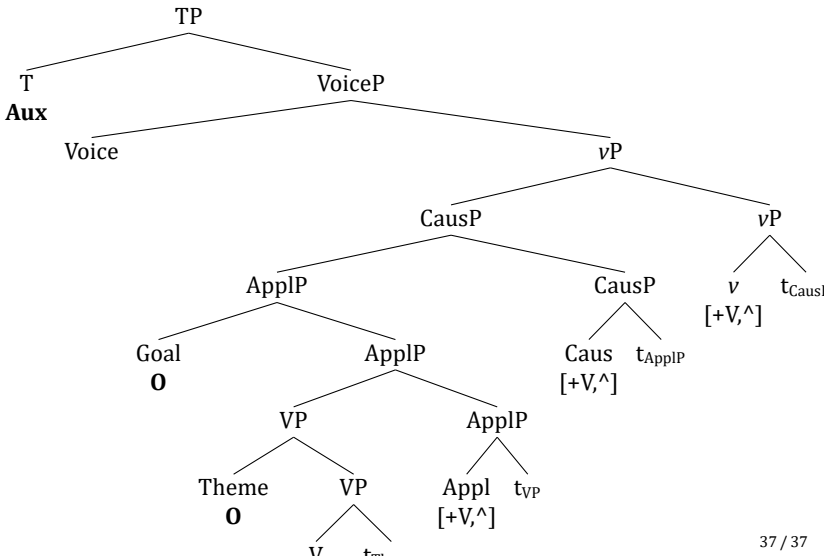
Roll-up account

(31)



Roll-up account

(32)



Ganda

- (33) a. **o-mu-sajja** **o-mu-rungi** agenze
 AUG1-NP1-man AUG1-NP1-good left
 ‘The good man left.’ (restrictive)
- b. **o-mu-sajja** agenze **o-mu-rungi**
 AUG1-NP1-man left AUG1-NP1-man-good
 ‘The man left, the good one.’ (non-restrictive) (Givón
 1974:135, cited in Van de Velde 2022:907)

Chichewa

- (34) **Mbûzi** atsíkáná á mfúmu a-a-gul-á **zákúd-a**.
10goats 2girls 2AssocM 9chief 2S-perf-buy-fv
10SM-black
Lit. 'Goats, the chief's girls have bought black (ones).'
(Chichewa; Mchombo 2006:147)