

**AN UNUSUAL SENTENCE TYPE:  
COMPLEMENTS OF VERBS OF COMPLETION  
IN SOME POLYNESIAN LANGUAGES**

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In the first four sections of this paper I discuss the grammar of the Maori verbs *pau* 'be consumed, be used up', *oti* 'be completed', and *mutu* 'be finished, cease'. In the remaining sections the discussion is extended to analogous constructions in other Polynesian languages.

*Pau*, *oti*, and *mutu* are members of a class of verbs which have been variously called verbal adjectives, participles, neuter verbs, and more recently, stative verbs. I shall refer to them as neuter verbs.<sup>1</sup> A feature of the class is that although passive in meaning, these verbs do not take the passive suffix, and may not be accompanied by an agent phrase of the form *e NP*. If there is an agent phrase, it must be introduced by *i*, a preposition which includes among its various functions the marking of source, cause, location, and in some languages, instrument. An example of the characteristic sentence structure is given here:<sup>2</sup>

- (1) *He nui ngaa mahi nunui kua oti i aua*  
a great the work great T/A completed by these

*komiti-a-iwi*

tribal committees

'A large amount of important work has been completed by these tribal committees' (SRM 123:30-31)

1. The problem

Sentences of the following kind are common in MAO:

- (2) *Kua pau ngaa moounu te kai e te wheke*  
 T/A consumed the bait the eat ag. the octopus  
 'The bait was used up from being eaten by the octopus'
- (3) *Kua oti te whare i a Rewi te hanga*  
 T/A completed the house by p.a. R. the build  
 'The building of the house by Rewi was completed'
- (4) *Ka mutu te tangata te tangi*  
 T/A cease the man the weep  
 'The man stopped weeping'

They are of interest because of the unusual feature that they contain two NPs without case-marking, in contrast to the canonical PN verbal sentence type, which contains only one unmarked NP. In the sentences quoted above, the subject is the first NP following the verb. This can be shown by a number of syntactic tests, such as focussing, and the ability to raise to a negative:<sup>3</sup>

- (5)a. *Ko te tangata i mutu te tangi*  
 'It was the man who stopped weeping'
- b.\**Ko te tangi i mutu te tangata*  
 ('It was weeping the man stopped')
- (6)a. *Kaahore te whare kia oti i a Rewi te hanga*  
 neg. T/A  
 'The building of the house by Rewi was not completed'
- b.\**Kaahore te hanga kia oti te whare i a Rewi*

The second unmarked NP is a verbal noun which amplifies the meaning of the main verb. It consists of the simple verb stem preceded by the singular definite article *te*, and it cannot be replaced by a derived noun formed with the nominalizing suffix *-Canga*. Nor can the verbal noun carry the passive suffix.<sup>4</sup>

Sentences of this kind (hereafter referred to as C-comp sentences) occur quite frequently with *pau* and *oti*, less frequently with *mutu*, and occasionally with other verbs such as *mau* 'caught', *hohoro* 'swift', or *kapi* 'covered over'. Characteristically, a C-comp expresses the completion, finality or totality of the action referred to by the nominalization, although examples occasionally occur with other main verbs, such as *tiimata* 'begin', which lack the idea of completion.

In sections 2-4, I examine the use of *pau*, *oti* and *mutu* in a corpus of 300 pages of Maori text.<sup>5</sup> In all, 112 occurrences of *mutu*, 56 occurrences of *oti*, and 41 occurrences of *pau* were retrieved by computer search, and form the basis of the

observations set out below. C-comp sentences governed by Tokelau *uma* and Tongan 'osi, both meaning 'finished, used up, cease', are examined in sections 5 and 6.

## 2. Some background information

I shall propose for the C-comp sentences an underlying structure consisting of a main verb (the verb of completion) and a sentential complement. First it must be pointed out that although very similar in meaning, *pau*, *oti* and *mutu* are not interchangeable.

For *pau*, the gloss 'consumed, used up' is appropriate in 35 out of the 41 occurrences in the corpus. However, in two cases it means 'used up' in the sense of a 'container' being filled up:

- (7) *Ka pau te tui te whakaeke ki te ngohi*  
T/A consumed the line the string-on with the fish  
'The line was used up in the stringing-on of fish'  
(Grey 1928 151:8)

and in three cases, all in *Te Rangatahi 2*, it means 'all arrived' or 'all gone':

- (8) *Kua pau katoa ngaa taangata ki roto i ngaa*  
T/A consumed all the men to inside at the  
*wharekai*  
house-eat  
'All the men had gone into the dining halls' (RT2 150:1)

The common element is of the exhaustive effect of an action upon some entity.

*Mutu* means 'truncated, lopped off, terminating at a point' (of things), or 'cease, come to a stop' (of activities). The first meaning is shared by cognates of *mutu* in other PN languages, whereas the second appears to be peculiar to Maori. Out of the 112 examples in the corpus, all but nine refer to the cessation of an activity. A very common pattern has the following form:

- (9) *Ka mutu te kai ka poroaki iho ki a Hou*  
T/A cease the eat T/A take-leave p.p. to p.a. H.  
'After they had eaten, they bade Hou farewell' (SRM 40:22)

In cases where *mutu* refers to the end of a 'thing', some notion of an activity is often present:

- (10) *Ka mutu teena raarangi ...*  
 T/A cease that line  
 'When that line (of the song) is finished ...' (MTA 248 1:1)

There were only three sentences in the corpus in which *mutu* had a concrete noun as subject. The following example is representative and has the same connotation of something being terminated or cut off, without any necessary implication of completion, which is characteristic of *mutu* when it refers to the cessation of activity:

- (11) *Ka mutu teenei raarangi tumu a teenei rangatira*  
 T/A cease this line post of this chief  
 '(Here) ended this line of posts belonging to this chief'  
 (SRM 65:33-34)

The corpus contains no case of an *i*-marked agent with *mutu*.

*Oti* on the other hand does imply completion, usually of an activity, sometimes of a concrete object that is being built or made. Occasionally it seems to be a lexicalized form of perfect tense marker, especially when it occurs in a relative clause:

- (12) ... *e noho ana raatou i roto i te paa kua oti*  
 T/A dwell p.p. they at inside at the paa T/A completed  
*te hanga hei oranga moo raatou*  
 the build as live-nom. for them  
 '... they were staying inside a *paa* which had been built as a place of safety for them' (SRM 155:20-21)

It will also be helpful to list the following regularities in the grammar of these verbs.

#### *pau* and *oti*

(a) If the complement sentence contains a direct object (as seems always to be the case with *pau*) this NP appears as the subject of the higher verb, as in (2) and (3). The complement subject is frequently unspecified in surface structure. If it appears, it can follow the verbal noun and be introduced by *e*, as in (2), or it can precede the verbal noun and be introduced by *i*, as in (3). In effect this means that the case-marking of the agent NP is governed by the verb which precedes it, in the first instance the transitive verb of the nominalization, in the second instance the neuter verb which is the main verb of the C-comp sentence. Note that the agent phrase cannot be possessivized:

- (13) \**Kua oti te whare te hanga a Rewi*  
 T/A completed the house the build of R.  
 ('Rewi's building of the house was finished')



Nor can the complement subject become the surface subject of *pau* or *oti*, leaving the object in the accusative case:

- (14) \**Kua oti te tangata te hanga i te whare*  
T/A completed the man the build acc. the house  
'The man finished building the house'

(b) If there is no complement direct object, as is sometimes the case with *oti*, the nominalized verb of the complement is the subject of the higher verb. The complement subject is possessivized, and may, like any possessive, be preposed to the noun:

- (15) *Ka oti taa raaua whakariterite i te poo,*  
T/A completed the-of they-2 cause-prepare at the night  
*ka haere*  
T/A go  
'They finished making their preparations at night and set off' (SRM 41:23)

*mutu*

(c) The most common surface subject of *mutu* is a verbal noun, as in (9). If the subject of this nominalization is specified, it is usually possessivized:

- (16) *Mutu kau ana taa maaua hunuhunu i te poaka*  
cease p.p. p.p. the-of we-2 scorch acc. the pig  
'(When) we finished scorching the pig' (SRM 30:24)

(d) Occasionally, the lower subject appears as subject of *mutu* and a C-comp sentence results, as in (4).

(e) The lower direct object, if there is one, retains its accusative case marking; it cannot be possessivized:

- (17) *Ka mutu te tangata te patu i te wahine (\*o te wahine)*  
T/A cease the man the hit acc. the woman of  
'The man stopped beating the woman'

Note that no examples of this kind, in which a *mutu* C-comp sentence is derived from a transitive complement, were found in the corpus, although my informant found this sentence acceptable.

It is not acceptable for a complement direct object to become the subject of *mutu*. The following sentence is not intelligible to informants except with the nonsensical gloss 'The pig has finished scorching (something)':

- (18) \**Ka mutu te poaka te hunuhunu*  
T/A cease the pig the scorch

These facts (a)-(e) will be referred to in what follows.

The elements of the process whereby the verb of an embedded sentence becomes a derived noun are well known, and are set out in detail in Chung (1973) and Clark (1981). Here I briefly review the main points. The nominalizing suffix or particle *-(Ca)ŋa* occurs in some languages on some but not all nominalizations. Both suffixed and unsuffixed nominalizations are frequently accompanied by possessive phrases or pronouns referring to the subject or object of the underlying clause. Like any NP, the nominalization may be preceded by a preposition indicating its case-relation to the main verb. Temporal and causal adverbials are particularly common.

As was pointed out earlier, the nominalization in a C-comp sentence does not carry the nominalizing suffix, and it is distinguished by the fact that it also lacks a case-marking preposition. It may however exhibit another optional feature of sentence nominalizations, in that a transitive subject may be marked with the agentive preposition *e*, as in (2). For reference, I give an example of a sentence nominalization of the latter type:

- (19) *I te kainga o te kurii mookai raa e Toi maa ...*  
at the eat-nom. of the dog pet that ag. T. &-co.  
'When Toi and his friends ate the pet dog ...' (SRM 44:8)

In this example, the direct object of *kai* has been marked with the possessive preposition *o*, and the subject with the agentive preposition *e*. An alternative structure, in which the subject is in the possessive case and the direct object retains its accusative preposition *i*, is exemplified below:

- (20) *Ko te kitenga o taua wahine i te upoko ...*  
pred. the see-nom. of that woman acc. the head  
'When the woman saw the head ...' (SRM 36:5)

### 3. The structure of C-comp sentences

Two possible underlying structures of C-comp sentences are diagrammed in Figures 1 and 2.

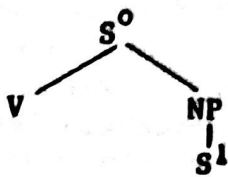


Figure 1

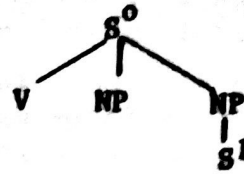


Figure 2

According to Figure 1, all surface elements except the main verb are derived from an underlying sentential subject. According to Figure 2, there is an underlying NP subject and an additional clause, most plausibly some kind of adverbial modifier. Figure 1 suggests that the surface subject of the C-comp sentence achieves its status by means of a raising rule. Figure 2 suggests that a rule of Equi-NP-deletion has removed an NP in the lower clause which is co-referential with the surface subject.

Alternative 1 appears most satisfactory for *oti* and *mutu* because, as we have seen, these verbs usually refer to the completion or cessation of an activity, and the majority of clauses in which they occur have a verbal noun as their surface subject and are not C-comp structures. Moreover, in the case of *mutu* there is convincing semantic evidence that *mutu* C-comp sentences cannot derive from a structure like Figure 2. The derived NP subject of a *mutu* C-comp sentence bears a relation to the verb which is entirely different from that of a concrete NP subject of *mutu* which is not part of a C-comp structure. Examples of these two types are repeated below:

- (4) *Ka mutu te tangata te tangi*  
 'The man stopped weeping'
- (10) *Ka mutu teenei raarangi tumu a teenei rangatira*  
 '(Here) ended this line of posts of this chief'

In (10) the line of posts is 'cut short, cut off, truncated, terminating at a point', consistent with the meaning of *mutu* in PN languages other than MAO. The subject of (4), *tangata* does not have this relation to *mutu*. It is the activity performed by the man which is 'cut off'.

There are two reasons for considering the alternative of Figure 2. Firstly, irrespective of whether it governs a C-comp sentence or not, *pau* always has a concrete NP subject, denoting the entity which has been consumed or otherwise affected by the action. The point made above in connection with *mutu* is not applicable to *pau*. Secondly, sentences occasionally occur with

other main verbs which are difficult to account for by a sentential-subject analysis, for example:

- (21) ... *me te kootimana e ruia nei, kapi katoa*  
like the Scotchman T/A sow-pass. p.p. covered complete  
*i a ia te whenua te noho*  
by p.a. it the land the stay  
'... like the scotch-thistle, which when sown takes  
over all the land' (lit. 'covered completely by it  
the land the staying' (SRM 77:1-2)

However, Figure 2 is implausible because it proposes a deep structure configuration with two unmarked NPs which is unprecedented in the grammar of MAO or any other PN language. If we supply a deep structure case for the second NP, we are still left with the problem of explaining the absence of case marking in the surface form. The derivation which I shall propose, based on the structure of Figure 1, will provide a motivation for this lack of case-marking.

Since we can accommodate *pau* to the sentential-subject analysis if we attribute to it a basic meaning like 'totally affected or effected', I shall for the moment assume a sentential subject underlying structure for all C-comp sentences, returning in section 8 to the problems posed by *pau* and a number of other verbs.

#### 4. The derivation of C-comp sentences

The lack of case-marking on the verbal noun of a C-comp suggests that at some stage of the derivation it has been the subject of the higher verb. The most straightforward proposal, then, is that sentence nominalizations like those of (19) and (20) form the first step in the derivation.

We have seen (section 2) that a great many sentence nominalizations in MAO and other PN languages contain possessive phrases; we have also seen that in *oti* and *mutu* sentences which have verbal nouns as their surface subjects, these nominalizations may be possessed by their deep subjects (see (15) and (16) above). A surprising feature of C-comp sentences which emerges from the facts set out in (a)-(e), is that *no such possessive NP appears in them*. If the complement direct object becomes subject of *pau* or *oti* the complement subject cannot be possessivized; and if the complement subject becomes derived

subject of *mutu*, a lower direct object cannot appear in the possessive. A possible inference is that the possessive 'slot' has previously been occupied by another NP.

In this section I shall show that an analysis which derives C-comp sentences from a nominalization of a sentential subject (as in Figure 1) can account for the perplexing features of the construction, including the lack of possessive marking, but only if the rules which derive the nominalization itself are carefully formulated.

Consider that if the nominalization rules apply freely, alternative intermediate structures of the following form would be generated for sentences like (3):

- (22)a. ?*Kua oti te hanga a Rewi i te whare*  
 T/A completed the build of R. acc. the house
- b. ?*Kua oti tana hanga i te whare*  
 T/A completed his build acc. the house
- c. *Kua oti te hanga o te whare e Rewi*  
 T/A completed the build of the house ag. R.

However, the strict limitations on the form of the C-comp sentence make the formulation of a raising rule to operate on such structures impossible complicated. Note that no surface structures of type (a) or (b) were found in the sample texts, and only two of type (c), minus the agent phrase (i.e. of the type *Kua oti te hanga o te whare*). This suggests that in traditional MAO the C-comp structure was strongly preferred to forms like (22.a-c). (The question of the synchronic acceptability of such forms is discussed below, in section 8).

It is apparent that the form taken by the nominalization must be constrained by the higher verb. *Pau* and *oti* require a nominalization in which the lower direct object is possessivized, *mutu* requires one in which the lower subject is possessivized. The rules for deriving C-comp sentences could then be informally represented as follows:

Rule 1: Nominalization of sentential subject

a. *pau* or *oti* + transitive complement →

$\left. \begin{array}{l} pau \\ oti \end{array} \right\}$	$\left. \begin{array}{l} te \\ \end{array} \right\}$	$\left. \begin{array}{l} V \\ \end{array} \right\}$	$\left. \begin{array}{l} o \\ \end{array} \right\}$	$\left. \begin{array}{l} NP \\ [DO] \end{array} \right\}$	$\left. \begin{array}{l} e \\ \end{array} \right\}$	$\left. \begin{array}{l} NP \\ [Su] \end{array} \right\}$
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b. *mutu* + transitive or intransitive complement →

$\left. \begin{array}{l} mutu \\ \end{array} \right\}$	$\left. \begin{array}{l} te \\ \end{array} \right\}$	$\left. \begin{array}{l} V \\ \end{array} \right\}$	$\left. \begin{array}{l} a \\ \end{array} \right\}$	$\left. \begin{array}{l} NP \\ [Su] \end{array} \right\}$	$\left. \begin{array}{l} (i \\ \end{array} \right\}$	$\left. \begin{array}{l} NP \\ [DO] \end{array} \right\}$
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Rule 2: C-comp formation: raise possessivized NP to subject of higher verb, and demote *te V* to *chômeur*.<sup>6</sup>

Rule 3: (optional) Move agentive NP to the left of the nominalization and mark it with *i*.<sup>7</sup>

Rule 2 has a pleasing simplicity, and accounts satisfactorily for the fact that no possessive NP occurs in the surface structure of a C-comp sentence. The fact that Rule 1 must be formulated for *mutu* differently from its formulation for the other verbs is a drawback, but we shall see in our examination of C-comp sentences in two non-Eastern PN languages, that historically this may not always have been the case.

Surface structures of the kind produced by Rule 1a. are very uncommon in the corpus, suggesting that Rule 2 may be virtually obligatory when *pau* or *oti* has a transitive sentential subject. On the other hand, surface structures of the form produced by Rule 1b. are quite common, indicating that for *mutu* the formation of a C-comp is optional:

- (23) *Ka mutu te tangi-tuu a te wahine*  
T/A cease the weep-stand of the woman  
'The woman stopped her standing and crying' (SRM 151:2)

This discussion has clarified a difference between the semantic structure of *mutu* and other neuter verbs. The curious situation that the lower subject, not the direct object, is attracted to *mutu* is the result of the fact that *mutu* is not passive in meaning; it is, to borrow Churchward's phrase, 'simply intransitive' (1953:73). Although Hohepa (1969:9) cites the example *i mutu te whare i te tangata*, no example of an *i NP* agent with *mutu* was found in my corpus, and very few examples (less than 5%) in which a concrete noun was subject.

The claim that the raised possessive NP is the syntactic subject of a C-comp sentence receives additional support from an example cited by Maunsell (1894:102):

- (24) *Kaatae te hohoro o taa taatou kai te pau*  
how-great the swift of our food the consumed  
'With what great speed our food has been consumed'

Maunsell's suggestion that the phrase *te pau* is added as an afterthought, by 'epanorthosis', can be rejected. Note that the phrase *hohoro te pau*, like *mau te here* (see section 8), is a common collocation that sometimes gives rise to a C-comp structure. The sentence can be derived straightforwardly, by the nominalization and C-comp formation processes described above, from a structure with two embedded sentences, as



represented informally in (25). In the final step, *taa taatou kai*, the derived subject of *hohoro*, acquires possessive marking according to the usual rule for nominalization of intransitive verbs:

- (25)  $S_0$  [Kaatae  $S_1$  [ka hohoro  $S_2$  [ka pau taa taatou kai]  $S_2$ ]  $S_1$ ]  $S_0$
1. Nominalization of  $S_2$ :  
 $S_0$  [Kaatae  $S_1$  [ka hohoro te pau o taa taatou kai]  $S_1$ ]  $S_0$
  2. Formation of C-comp:  
 $S_0$  [Kaatae  $S_1$  [ka hohoro taa taatou kai te pau]  $S_1$ ]  $S_0$
  3. Nominalization of  $S_1$ :  
 $S_0$  [Kaatae te hohoro o taa taatou kai te pau]  $S_0$

## 5. Tokelau

The various shades of meaning to do with completion which in MAO are distributed among the three verbs *pau*, *oti*, and *mutu*, are in most non-Eastern PN languages expressed by one verb, a reflex of PPN \*'oti. In SAM and TOK however, \*'oti has developed the specialized meaning 'dead (of humans)', and the range of meanings to do with completion has been transferred to the lexical innovation *uma*. The precise significance of *uma* is determined by context and the nature of the subject NP.

First I give some examples of TOK simple sentences. For this language, and also for TON, which forms the subject of the next section, it is important to note the basic syntactic distinction between *intransitive* verbs, which take a single nuclear NP argument in the unmarked absolutive case (the semantic role of this NP varies according to the sub-type of intransitive verb), and *ergative* or *transitive* verbs, which take a patient NP in the absolutive case and an agent NP introduced by the preposition *e*. Note also that many TOK intransitive verbs agree in number with their subjects, either through partial reduplication, or, in a few cases, by means of suppletive forms such as *fano* 'go, singular' and *olo* 'go, plural'. *Kai* 'eat' is used in a number of examples because it can function either as an ergative verb or as an active intransitive one. In the latter case it agrees with a plural subject.

- (26) *Na fano te fafine*  
 T/A go the woman  
 'The woman went'
- (27) *Na olo nā fafine*  
 T/a go-pl. the-pl. woman  
 'The women went'
- (28) *Na kai te fafine i te povi*  
 T/A eat the woman at the beef  
 'The woman ate (some of) the beef'
- (29) *Na kakai nā fafine i te povi*  
 T/A eat-pl. the-pl. woman at the beef  
 'The women ate (some of) the beef'
- (30) *Na kai e nā fafine te povi (\*kakai)*  
 T/A eat ag. the-pl. woman the beef eat-pl.  
 'The women ate the beef'
- (31) *Kua uma te povi i nā fafine*  
 T/A finished the beef by the-pl. woman  
 'The beef was finished up by the women'

*Uma* occurs in simple sentences like (31) with the meaning 'used up, consumed or completed' (of things), or 'be finished, cease' (of activities). When it governs a C-comp, its derived subject is the patient NP of an ergative (i.e. transitive) embedded sentence, or the subject NP of an intransitive embedded sentence. In the former case its semantic kinship is with *pau* or *oti*, in the latter case with *mutu*.

- (32) *Kua uma te fafine te kai i te povi*  
 T/A finished the woman the eat at the beef  
 'The woman has stopped (or finished) eating the beef'
- (33) *Kua uma nā fafine te kakai (\*kai)*  
 T/A finished the-pl. woman the eat-pl.  
 'The women have finished eating'
- (34) *Kua uma te povi te kai e nā fafine (\*kakai)*  
 T/A finished the beef the eat ag. the-pl. woman  
 'The beef is used up from being eaten by the women'
- (35) *Kua uma te povi i nā fafine te kai (\*kakai)*  
 T/a finished the beef by the-pl. woman the eat  
 'The beef is used up from being eaten by the women'
- (36) *Kua uma nā fafine te olo.*  
 T/a finished the-pl. woman the go-pl.  
 'The women have all gone'

Note that in (33) and (36) the facts of verb agreement provide good evidence for the bi-sentential origin of the C-comp sentences. In each case, the surface subject of *uma* has triggered verb agreement on the nominalization, arguing that in underlying structure it is the subject of the nominalized verb.

*Uma* cannot have a lower clause ergative NP (equivalent to a MAO transitive subject) as its derived subject. As (33) and (34) indicate, *Kua uma nā fafine te kai* could only have the meaning 'The women have finished being eaten'. This restriction on TOK C-comps, that only an absolutive NP of an embedded sentence can become the derived subject of *uma*, is of interest as an example of syntactic ergativity.<sup>8</sup> Remember that in MAO it may be acceptable for *mutu* to take as its surface subject an embedded transitive subject; example (17) was considered acceptable by MAO informants. No such examples occurred in the texts however.

Note that the resemblance of TOK C-comp sentences to the MAO examples extends to the alternative possibilities for case-marking of the agent NP. It may follow the ergative verb of the nominalization and be marked by *e*, or it may follow the neuter verb *uma* and be marked by *i*.<sup>9</sup>

TOK does not tolerate the extension of the C-comp pattern to other verbs. The following sentences are not acceptable:

(37) \**Kua mate te puaka te tā e te tino*  
T/A die the pig the beat ag. the man  
( 'The pig is dead from being beaten by the man' )

(cf. (60) in section 8 below.)

(38) \**E vave te tino te vili*  
T/A quick the man the run  
( 'The man is quick in running' )

(cf. (54) below.)

## 6. Tongan

TON C-comp sentences are governed by the verb '*osi* 'to be finished, spent, all used up' or 'to be completed, ended, past, over' (Churchward 1959:566). They differ in several respects from the C-comp sentences of MAO and TOK.

Examples (39) and (40) below show the case-marking of TON intransitive and ergative sentences respectively:

(39)a. *'Oku nofo 'a e talavou 'i he fale lahi*  
 T/A live abs. the young-man in the house big  
 'The young man lives in the big house'

b. *'Oku ne nofo 'i he fale lahi*  
 T/A he live in the house big  
 'He lives in the big house'

(40)a. *Na'e tāmāte'i 'e Tēvita 'a Kōlaiate*  
 T/A kill ag. T. abs. K.  
 'David killed Goliath'

b. *Na'a ne tāmāte'i 'a Kōlaiate*  
 T/A he kill abs. K.  
 'He killed Goliath'

Note that whereas absolutive NPs in TOK are unmarked, in TON they are marked by the preposition 'a. Pronominal intransitive subjects and ergative agents are preposed or cliticized to the verb, and in this position they lose their case-marking prepositions. The definite article has the allomorphs *e*, *he*. The form *he* is used after the prepositions 'e, 'i, ki, and mei. The form *e* occurs in other environments, including after the absolutive marker 'a.

The preposition 'i is frequently omitted before the article, possessive pronoun or demonstrative pronoun. The following examples show the suppression of 'i in several kinds of oblique noun phrase:

(41) *Na'e va'iva'inga pē 'a e ongo tamaiki he matāfanga*  
 T/A play just abs. the two child the beach  
 'The two children were playing on the beach' (PF 78)

(42) *Kuo nau 'i Nu'u Sila he taimi ni*  
 T/A they in N.Z. the time this  
 'They are in New Zealand now' (Churchward 1953:41)

(43) *... pea langalanganoa 'ene 'ofa he fefine*  
 and increase his love the woman  
 '... and his love for the woman increased' (PF 74)

(44) *Na'e lavea 'a e tangata he hā?*  
 T/A wounded abs. the man the what  
 'How was the man injured?'

Note particularly the suppression of 'i before the causal argument of the neuter verb *lavea* in (44).

We can now examine some TON C-comp sentences:

- (45) *Kuo 'osi 'a e finemātu'a he ɔ*  
 T/A finished abs. the women the go-pl.  
 'The women have all gone'
- (46)a. *Kuo nau 'osi he 'alu<sup>10</sup>*  
 T/A they finished the go  
 'They have all gone' (Churchward 1959:566)
- b.\**Kuo nau 'osi 'a e 'alu*  
 T/A they finished abs. the go
- (47) *Kuo 'osi 'a e puaka he kai*  
 T/A finished abs. the pig the eat  
 'The pig has finished eating'
- (48) *Kuo 'osi 'a e talo hono kai 'e he finemātu'a*  
 T/A finished abs. the taro its eat ag. the women  
 'The taro is used up from being eaten by the women'
- (49) *Kuo 'osi 'a e fale hono langa*  
 T/A finished abs. the house its build  
 'The building of the house is completed'

Two points call for comment. Firstly, owing to the fact that TON has an overt absolutive marker, TON C-comp sentences do not contain two apparently absolutive NPs. The derived subject of *'osi* is in the absolutive case and can thus be clearly identified as the subject of the sentence. Note that the absolutive marker cannot precede the nominalization of *'alu* in (46).

Secondly, the tendency for *'i* to be suppressed before *he* and *hono* might suggest that these are not C-comps at all; that the nominalizations are simply oblique noun phrases that are unmarked for case because of a superficial, optional deletion rule.

However, this turns out not to be the case. All informants agreed that in sentences (41)-(44), *'i* is understood and could optionally be included. The C-comp sentences were not acceptable with *'i* case-marking on the nominalization:

- (50)a.\**Kuo 'osi 'a e finemātu'a 'i he kai* (cf. (47))  
 b.\**Kuo 'osi 'a e talo 'i hono kai* (cf. (48))  
 c.\**Kuo nau 'osi 'i he'alu* (cf. (46))

So in TON C-comp sentences the nominalization is unmarked for any case and has the characteristics of a *chômeur par excellence*.

TON C-comp sentences have another interesting feature. When an ergative sentential subject is nominalized, in what we might call the *pau/oti* type of C-comp, as in (48) and (49), the nominalized verb is subordinately possessed by the raised NP, its semantic patient. Thus for TON, Rule 2, the raising rule, must be phrased in such a way that when a transitive patient is raised to 'osi, a trace remains within the nominalization in the shape of the possessive pronoun. This means that C-comp sentences in which a transitive patient has been raised to 'osi can be clearly distinguished from those in which an intransitive subject has been raised (what we may call the *mutu* type), in which there is no pronominal trace. This also has the function of preventing ambiguity in certain surface forms. For example, the TOK sentence:

- (51) *Kua uma te puaka te kai*  
 T/A finished the pig the eat  
 'The pig has stopped eating'/'The pig is all eaten up'

is ambiguous between the two glosses given. As is evident from (47) and (48), this cannot occur in TON. (47) could never mean 'The pig is all eaten up.'

Note that in TON as in TOK the C-comp formation rule refers to absolutive NPs and is thus an example of syntactic ergativity. If the ability of MAO *mutu* to raise transitive subjects is a modern development, as the evidence seems to indicate (see section 2), then C-comp sentences in traditional MAO also exhibited syntactic ergativity, in that the raising rule affected only transitive objects and intransitive subjects.<sup>11</sup>

## 7. C-comp sentences in PPN

On the basis of the data from MAO, TOK and TON considered above, we can tentatively reconstruct for PPN a C-comp sentence type of the form:

- (52) PPN \**Kua 'oti te NP<sub>1</sub> te NP<sub>2</sub>*  
 (NP<sub>2</sub> = an unsuffixed nominalization)

This sentence is derived from the underlying structure of Figure 1 by rules resembling Rules 1-3 above. Note that if we assume PPN transitive sentences to be of the ergative type, Rule 1 can be simplified to treat all kinds of complement sentence equally. Figure 3 is an expanded version of Figure 1, representing the proposed underlying form of the PPN C-comp sentence,



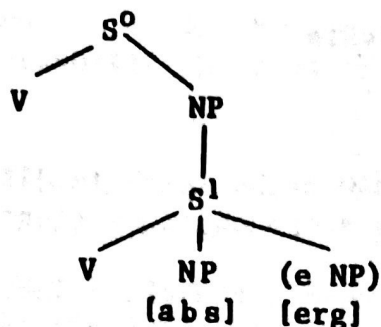


Figure 3

The rules by which the surface structure (52) is derived are given below:

- Rule 1': Nominalization of sentential subject: substitute definite article *te* for T/A marker of verb, and possessivize the absolutive NP.
- Rule 2': C-comp formation: raise possessivized NP to subject of higher verb, and demote *te* *V* to *chômeur*.
- Rule 3': (optional) Move an ergative NP to left of nominalized verb and mark with *i*. (cf. Note 7.)

The clue to the origin of the C-comp sentence type probably lies with the very common sentences in all languages in which the verb of completion has a single concrete NP subject, for example MAO *kua pau ngaa moounu* 'the bait is consumed' or *kua oti te whare* 'the house is finished'. Pairs of sentences like the following MAO pair presumably occurred in PPN or its immediate precursor:

- (53)a. *Kua oti te whare*  
 b. *Kua oti te hanga (o te whare)*

The C-comp sentence was an amalgamation of these two types, no doubt the result of speakers trying to express both ideas at once. The naturalness of this process makes it possible that C-comps arose independently in a number of different languages, and hence the reconstruction proposed above remains essentially speculative. However the details of the construction are sufficiently odd, and sufficiently consistent across the languages studied, to make the theory of shared retention quite plausible. Another piece of evidence in its favour is the suggestion of syntactic ergativity in the MAO construction.

## 8. Two kinds of reanalysis

There are a number of MAO verbs which in different ways fail to conform to the analysis proposed in sections 2-7.

Firstly, there are some verbs which lack any connotation of completion, *tiimata* 'begin', *tata* 'be nearly', *rite* 'be alike', *hohoro* and *wawe* 'be quick', *poorori* 'be slow', and no doubt others of similar meaning, which sometimes govern C-comp sentences:

- (54) *Kia hohoro taaua te haere*  
T/A quick we-2 the go  
'Let us travel quickly' (Williams 1950:49)
- (55) *Ka tiimata teenaa whenua te tua*  
T/A begin that land the fell  
'The felling of that land began' (Maunsell 1894:156)
- (56) *Kia rite koutou te haere*  
T/A alike you-pl. the go  
'Go you all in like manner' (Williams 1957:343)

However, these verbs share with the completion verbs a characteristic of referring to a phase or quality of the action, and this is no doubt the reason for the extension of the C-comp pattern to them. Note that the sentential-subject analysis is perfectly appropriate to them.

Secondly, there is the case of *mau* 'fixed, firm, caught', as seen in the following examples:

- (57) *Kua mau koe i a au te here*  
T/A caught you by p.a. I the bind  
'You are held fast by me' (Biggs 1969:125)
- (58) ... *ngaa rahurahu e mau naa i te aka te here*  
the ferns T/A caught there by the vine the bind  
'... the ferns which were fastened by being bound by the vines' (SRM 67:10)

*Mau* C-comp sentences occur only with *here* as the lower verb. I originally considered them a problem for the sentential-subject analysis, assuming *koe* in (57) and *rahurahu* in (58) to be 'caught' in an obvious and physical sense. Example (59) shows that the matter is more complicated:

- (59) ... *kia mau tonu te here o nga whenua kei taka*  
 T/A continually the bind of the lands lest turn  
*ki te hoko*  
 to the sell  
 '... that restraint on the lands be upheld to prevent  
 their being forfeited by sale' (SRM 108:17-18)

The problem stems from the polysemy of *mau*. *Mau te here o NP* is a fixed expression, in which *mau* has the abstract sense 'continuing, lasting, established' (Williams 1957:196), and the phrase can be glossed 'the binding of NP is firmly established or enduring'. *Mau* in its concrete senses of 'caught, overtaken, captured' is, like *pau* and *oti*, a neuter verb which takes a patient subject and may take an agent NP marked with *i*. In (57) and (58) there is an ambiguity of *mau* between these two senses, which gives rise to a sense of confusion as to which NP is the underlying subject of *mau*. (59) indicates that the sentential-subject analysis is appropriate for the *mau* C-comp sentences; note that *mau te here o nga whenua* has the structure of a non-raised output of Rule 1a. Yet in (57) and (58) the force of the concrete sense of *mau* as physically 'caught' is strong enough to make the proposed analysis seem semantically anomalous.

Thirdly, there are some verbs which pose a more serious problem:

- (60) *Ka mate teeraa i te kaha te patu*  
 T/A die that by the noose the strike  
 'That one died from the pulling of the noose'  
 (Orbell 1968:64)
- (61) ... *te kootimana e puuhia ana e te hau, aa,*  
 the Scotchman T/A blow-pass. p.p. ag. the wind and  
*kapi katoa i a ia te whenua te taahae ...*  
 covered completely by p.a. it the land the steal  
*kapi katoa i a ia te whenua te noho*  
 covered completely by p.a. it the land the stay  
 '... the scotch-thistle, which is blown about by the  
 wind and covers all the land, stealing it ... the land  
 is completely taken over by it' (SRM 76:11-12, 77:1-2)

Although both *mate* 'die' and *kapi katoa* 'completely covered' have the semantic feature of completion or finality, and are thus semantically related to *oti* etc., the sentential-subject analysis cannot be proposed for these verbs. The surface subject NP, not the entire proposition of the lower clause, must be the underlying subject of the main verb.

A base structure with the interpretation 'the stealing of the land by the scotch-thistle was completely covered' would be nonsensical.

This brings us back to *pau*, which as we have seen always has a concrete NP as surface subject. Once we allow the possibility that some MAO C-comps have deep structure concrete NP subjects, there ceases to be any reason for not extending this possibility to *pau* also. We are now faced with the problem of proposing an underlying structure and derivation for sentences of this type. The Equi derivation discussed in section 3 is an obvious candidate, although I find it unattractive because it fails to account for the lack of case-marking on the verbal noun.

There are, I think, two ways to account for the synchronic grammar of C-comp sentences in MAO, and these are outlined tentatively below.

1. There is a large group of verbs for which the sentential-subject analysis is appropriate, and a much smaller group which must be derived via Equi-NP-deletion. It is not unusual for similar or identical surface structures to be derived from different deep structures (cf. 'the shooting of the hunters', 'eager/easy to please' and so on). The absence of a case-marking preposition on the verbal noun cannot be satisfactorily motivated in the Equi case except as an extension of the pattern of the commoner, and historically more ancient, raised structure to a group of verbs which have a certain semantic similarity to the C-comp verbs. (See Lyons 1968:30-3, for a comment on the way 'false analogies' of this sort introduce 'incorrect' forms into a language.) Note that only in MAO has the C-comp structure been extended to a wide variety of verbs. As we have seen, in TOK only *uma*, and in TON only *'osi*, both meaning 'finished, used up, completed, etc.' can govern C-comp sentences.

2. We could abandon altogether a bi-sentential analysis as part of the synchronic grammar of MAO, and postulate that the C-comp structure is a kind of idiomatic sentence-frame or minor sentence type of which the grammar is opaque to present-day speakers, comparable to English *the more/less/-er ... the more/less/-er*, as in *The more the merrier* or *The sooner he leaves the happier I'll be*. Such frozen forms probably occur in all languages and have caused vexation to generative grammarians (see for example Chafe 1969, Weinreich 1969). This solution receives support from the fact that informants find no fault with (22a.-b), in spite of the fact that such structures fail

to occur in the corpus of texts. They regard the choice between (22a.), (22b.) and (22c.), and the corresponding C-comp form, as dictated by considerations of style and emphasis. This of course argues that the proposed derivation plays no part in the grammar of present-day MAO speakers.

Whichever of these two alternatives one accepts, both assume some kind of covert reanalysis of the underlying structure of MAO C-comps, even though the surface structure has remained unchanged. In other Eastern PN languages the C-comp structure has been revised to fit the usual paradigm for neuter verbs, as indicated by the following examples from TAH and PEN.

- (62) TAH *Oti a'e ra tona va'a i te tarai*  
 completed p.p. p.p. his canoe by the hew  
 'He finished hewing his canoe' (White 1948:4)
- (63) TAH *E oti a'era Iesu i te papetizohia, haere*  
 T/A completed p.p. I. by the baptize-pass. come  
*maira oia*  
 hither he  
 'When the baptism of Jesus was completed, he came here' (Holy Bible in Tahitian, Matthew 3:16)
- (64) TAH *'Ua pau te tiare i te pafa'ihia e*  
 T/A consumed the flower by the pluck-pass ag.  
*te ta'ata*  
 the man  
 'All the flowers have been picked by people' (Coppentrath and Prévost:240)
- (65) TAH *'Ua oti tā'u vahie i te tāpū*  
 T/A completed my wood by the cut  
 'I have finished cutting the wood' (Tyron 1970:35)
- (66) PEN *Kua oti te moenga i a au i te lalanga*  
 T/A completed the mat by p.a. I by the weave  
 'I have finished weaving the mat'
- (67) PEN *Kua pau na punupuaka i te kaihia/kaihangahia*  
 T/A consumed the corned-beef by the eat-pass/eat-nom-pass.  
 'The corned-beef is all eaten up'

Note that the nominalization is in every case introduced by the preposition *i*. Moreover, it may carry the passive suffix, so that in sentences like (64) the anomaly of an active verb accompanied by an *e*-marked NP is avoided. The two irregularities of the MAO C-comp sentence are thus removed. Although this is too small a sample on which to base any firm conclusion as to the rules governing the use of the passive suffix, the following hypothesis is suggested by the above examples: if the

underlying subject of the complement clause is marked with *e*, or is unspecified, the nominalization must carry the passive suffix; if the subject is represented in the main clause, either as an *i* NP argument of the neuter verb, as in (66), or as a possessive pronoun, as in (62) and (65), then the nominalization is not passive.

The basic structure of these TAH and PEN sentences is represented in Figure 4. The surface structure is derived via nominalization of  $S^1$ , sometimes preceded by passivization, and obligatory deletion of all NPs in  $S^1_0$  which are co-referential with NPs or possessive pronouns in  $S^0$ .

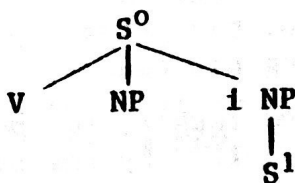


Figure 4

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>I wish to thank Ross Clark and Ray Harlow for their valuable comments, which helped to clarify my thinking on the subject matter and organization of this paper, and also Frank Lichtenberk, who read and commented encouragingly on an early draft. I am grateful to Margaret Mutu-Grigg for making a computer search of over 300 pages of Maori text, and to the following informants who assisted my research: Merimeri Penfold and R. Te Wharetoroa Kerr (MAO); Ropati Simona (TOK); Sesilia Tonga, Mrs Bernadette Motulalo, and Lavinia Motulalo (TON); and Wilkie Rasmussen (PEN).

<sup>2</sup>The following abbreviations are used:

Textual sources of examples: MTA - Mahuta 1970, PF - Fanua 1975, RT2 - Waititi 1964, SRM - Biggs, Hohepa and Mead 1967. Page and line numbers are given with examples, except in the case of MTA (tape, page and line numbers) and PF (page numbers). Language names: MAO - Maori, PEN - Penrhyn, PN - Polynesian, PPN - Proto-Polynesian, TAH - Tahitian, TOK - Tokelau, TON - Tongan. Grammatical terms: abs. (absolutive marker), ag. (agentive preposition), DO (direct object), nom. (nominalizing suffix), NP (noun phrase), p.a. (personal article),



p.p. (postposed particle), pass. (passive suffix), pl. (plural), S (sentence), Su (subject), T/A (tense-aspect particle), VP (verb phrase). Maori examples cited from Maunsell 1894 and Williams 1950 have had the orthography corrected to indicate vowel length.

<sup>3</sup>An additional argument is provided at the end of section 4.

<sup>4</sup>Sentences containing such derived nouns do occur as causal complements, but only rarely. They are preceded by the preposition *i* and do not constitute any kind of problem:

*Ka pau noa iho ngaa moni o ngaa whenua i te*  
T/A consumed p.p. p.p. the money of the lands by the

*utunga i ngaa kaitiaki*  
pay-nom. acc. the trustees

'All the land money is used up on paying the trustees'  
(SRM 113:16-17)

<sup>5</sup>The texts forming the corpus are the whole of Biggs, Hohepa and Mead 1967, Mahuta 1970, and Waititi 1964, and pages 1-36, 145-198 from Grey 1928.

<sup>6</sup>The term *chômeur* (French 'unemployed'), used in relational grammar to refer to a NP which has lost its original function, or grammatical relation, because of the operation of a transformational rule, seems particularly appropriate in this case. A *chômeur* is seen as syntactically inert, and unable subsequently to be the target of relation-changing rules such as raising. The classic example is the passive agent.

<sup>7</sup>A less informal statement of Rule 3 would need to take into account the fact that this looks very like another raising rule, and such raising of an agent NP would be highly unusual. However, where *i* NP agents occur, there is no reason why they should not be directly generated in deep structure as arguments of the C-comp verb, as all neuter verbs can take such agents. Figure 5 represents this version of the underlying structure of (3). The deletion of the *e*-marked NP would follow from normal rules of co-reference and anaphora.

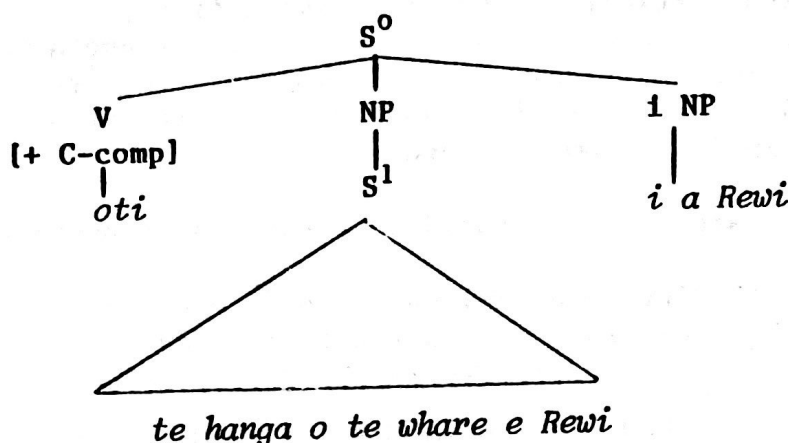


Figure 5

<sup>8</sup>TOK *uma* also functions as a quantifying adjective, 'all'. As such it participates in a movement rule sometimes referred to as Quantifier Float, which takes the quantifier from its position immediately after the noun and moves it to the right of the verb (see Chung 1978:189-96 for a description of TON Quantifier Float). TOK Quantifier Float also seems to operate on an ergative basis. As this topic is peripheral to the study of C-comp sentences, I will not recount the arguments here, but simply point out that in the following example, *uma* can be interpreted only as referring to the absolutive *nā fafine*:

*Na kini uma e nā toeaina nā fafine*  
 T/A beat all ag. the elders the women  
 'All the women were beaten by the elders'  
 (\*'All the elders beat the women')

This is at variance with the findings of Chung for TON and Seiter (1978) for Niuean and other languages.

<sup>9</sup>In the former case, of course, there is nothing anomalous about the morphology of the verb, in contrast to MAO sentences like (2), in which an *e*-marked NP accompanies an active verb. Clark (1976:6) considers the existence of ergative morphology in sentences introduced by the MAO imperative particle *me*, as useful evidence for the reconstruction of ergative case-marking in PPN. The MAO C-comp structure, which closely resembles that of the ergative TOK one, is a comparable piece of evidence.

<sup>10</sup>TON '*alu* 'go' has the optional plural form *ō*, which appears in (45). Its use appears to depend upon stylistic or semantic factors - see Churchward 1953:34, note (a). The use of '*alu* in (46) does not constitute counter-evidence to the proposed analysis, whereas the use of TOK *fano* instead of *olo* in (36) would be ungrammatical.

<sup>11</sup>Tikopia and Rennell, the only Outlier languages I have examined in any detail, show no trace of the C-comp structure. Analogous sentences in those languages have the following forms:

TIK A *ku oti rei ko te fakasikisiki ko a kie*  
and T/A completed then *ko* the cause-border *ko* the waistmat  
'And the bordering of the waistmats had been completed'  
(Firth 1961, 191:3-4)

REN *Namaa 'oti te to'o na abubu ki hage*  
when completed the take the tubers to house  
'When she had taken the tubers to the house'  
(Elbert and Monberg 1965, text 42:7)

Note that in both cases the nominalization directly follows the verb phrase, and that in both languages it is common to have unmarked NPs following nominalizations.

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