
Imperfective marking in Sisaali and Gurene as signs of vP-phases

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We investigate the distribution of the imperfective allomorphs in the two Mabilia languages Gurene and Sisaali. In both languages, the imperfective marker takes on a special form if material inside the VP (objects, (1c) or adverbials, (1d)) undergoes A-bar movement (wh- or focus movement) to the sentence-initial position. If there is no A-bar movement (1a) or if the subject undergoes A-bar movement (1b), the default imperfective marker is chosen. Additionally, in the Tumulung dialect of Sisaali, the form depends on the linearly preceding element.

(1) *Gurene*

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| a. Adam kōrege- ri nua. | b. Ani n tun- ni ? |
| Adam slaughter-IPFV fowl | who FOC work-IPFV |
| ‘Adam is slaughtering fowl.’ | ‘Who is working?’ |
| c. Beni ti Adam kōrege- ra ? | |
| what FOC Adam slaughter-IPFV | |
| ‘What is Adam slaughtering?’ | |
| d. Bēsa ti Adam daa mē- ta yire | |
| where FOC Adam PST build-IPFV house | |
| ‘Where was Adam building a house?’ | |

We claim that the imperfective marking in (1c,d) can be derived as a reflex of successive-cyclic movement through the vP phase edge. We discuss the data with respect to two formal theories of successive-cyclic movement, Lahne (2009) & Georgi (2014), and conclude that Lahne (2009) provides a more straightforward analysis of the data. We further discuss whether the notion of a vP phase is necessary for the analysis and what an alternative account in terms of DP-intervention (Keine & Zeijlstra to appear) would have to assume. The theories are further tested against additional data involving the interaction of the imperfective construction with serial verb constructions and with negation.

References: Georgi, D. (2014). *Opaque Interactions of Merge and Agree: On the Nature and Order of Elementary Operations*. Ph.D. thesis, Universität Leipzig, Leipzig. • Georgi, D. (2017). Patterns of movement reflexes as the result of the order of Merge and Agree. *Linguistic Inquiry* 48, 585–626. • Keine, S. & H. Zeijlstra (to appear). Clause-internal successive cyclicity: phasality or DP intervention? *Natural Language and Linguistic Inquiry*. • Lahne, A. (2009). *Where There is Fire There is Smoke: Local Modelling of Successive-Cyclic Movement*. Ph.D. thesis, Leipzig University, Leipzig.