

# Restructuring and Agent Focus in Kaqchikel

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The verb *ajo* ‘want’ in Kaqchikel (Mayan; Guatemala) can take a propositional complement (1) or a predicative complement (2):

- (1) Yin n-∅-w-ajo [CP chin rat n-∅-a-tz’ib’aj ri karta].  
I INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>1sg</sub>-want that you INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>2sg</sub>-write the letter  
‘I want you to write the letter.’
- (2) Rje n-∅-k-ajo [★ n-∅-ki-tz’ib’aj ri karta].  
they INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>3pl</sub>-want INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>3pl</sub>-write the letter  
‘They want to write the letter.’

Predicative complements of *ajo* as in (2) pass diagnostics for **restructuring infinitives** (Wurmbrand, 2001, *et seq*), but cannot be straightforwardly accounted for as Wurmbrand’s (2014b) voice- or size-restructuring.

- ☞ Predicative complements of *ajo* are IP control clauses. The lack of a CP layer contributes to their structural impoverishment.

Transitive verbs in Kaqchikel use an **Agent Focus (AF)** form when its subject is  $\bar{A}$ -extracted (see Aissen, 1999; Stiebels, 2006, a.o.).

When the subject of a restructuring *ajo* 'want' is  $\bar{A}$ -extracted, **both *ajo* and the embedded verb exhibit AF**:

- (3) Achike n- $\emptyset$ -ajo-**wan**    [ $\star$  n- $\emptyset$ -tz'ib'a-**n**    ri karta]?  
who    INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-want-**AF**    INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-write-**AF** the letter  
'Who wants to write the letter?'

- ☞ This behavior and additional details regarding AF morphology in restructuring clauses shows that **the relationship between the syntactic trigger and morphological realization of AF must be more indirect than previously thought.**

Contributes to a broader cross-linguistic discussion of the realization of extraction marking in restructuring clauses (see e.g. Chung 2004 on Chamorro, Chang 2014 on Tsou, and discussion in Wurmbrand 2014a).

# ***Predicative complements of 'want'***

## Two ways to ‘want’

The verb *ajo* ‘want’ can take a **propositional complement** (1) or a **predicative complement** (2).

(1) **“Want” *ajo* with a propositional complement (CP):**

Yin n-∅-w-ajo [CP chin rat n-∅-a-tz’ib’aj ri karta].  
I INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>1sg</sub>-want that you INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>2sg</sub>-write the letter

‘I want you to write the letter.’

(2) **“Want” *ajo* with a predicative complement (★): (=2)**

Rje n-∅-k-ajo [★ n-∅-ki-tz’ib’aj ri karta].  
they INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>3pl</sub>-want INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>3pl</sub>-write the letter

‘They want to write the letter.’

# Ajo with a predicative complement

## (4) Both verbs agree with the matrix subject:

Rje n-∅-k-ajo      [★ n-∅-ki-tz'ib'aj    ri    karta].  
they INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>3pl</sub>-want      INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>3pl</sub>-write the letter

‘They want to write the letter.’

The interpreted subject of predicative complements must be the matrix subject:

## (5) Obligatory control with a predicative complement:

\* Rje n-∅-k-ajo      [★ (rat) n-∅-a-tz'ib'aj      ri    karta (rat)].  
they INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>3pl</sub>-want      you INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>2sg</sub>-write the letter you

Intended: ‘They want you to write the letter.’

# Predicative complements are small

☞  $\bar{A}$ -movements cannot target the edge of a predicative complement.

The existential quantifier *k'o* 'some one/thing' must move to preverbal positional:

(6) ***K'o/majun* must be in preverbal focus position:**

- a. ✓ (Yin) *k'o* (pastel) *x-∅-in-těj*.  
I    ∃ cake    COM-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>1sg</sub>-eat  
'I ate some (cake).'
- b. \* (Yin) *x-∅-in-těj*                    *k'o* (pastel).  
I    COM-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>1sg</sub>-eat ∃ cake

These existential operators  $\bar{A}$ -move from argument positions and can trigger Agent Focus (Erlewine, to appear).

(7) *K'o* cannot target the edge of the predicative complement:

- a. ✓ Ri a Juan k'o n-∅-r-ajo [ n-∅-u-tz'ib'aj].  
the CL Juan ∃ INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>3sg</sub>-want INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>3sg</sub>-write  
'Juan wants to write something.'
- b. \* Ri a Juan n-∅-r-ajo [ k'o n-∅-u-tz'ib'aj].  
the CL Juan INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>3sg</sub>-want ∃ INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>3sg</sub>-write

In addition, predicative complements disallow the complementizer *chin*.

**Predicative complements lack a CP layer.**



# Predicative complements as restructuring

- ☞ Predicative complements of *ajo* ‘want’ pass diagnostics for **restructuring** in the sense of Wurmbrand (2001, *et seq.*).

A hallmark of Wurmbrand’s restructuring embeddings is that they are *functionally impoverished*:

(8) **Predicative complements disallow negation:**

\* Rje n-∅-k-ajo [★ ma n-∅-ki-tz’ib’aj ta ri karta].  
they INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>3pl</sub>-want NEG INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>3pl</sub>-write IRR the letter

Intended: ‘They want to not write the letter.’

(9) **Predicative complements disallow independent aspect:**

\* Rje n-∅-k-ajo [★ x-∅-ki-tz’ib’aj ri karta].  
they INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>3pl</sub>-want COM-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>3pl</sub>-write the letter

Intended: ‘They want to have written the letter.’

No such restriction holds of propositional (CP) complements of *ajo*:

- (10) ✓ Y'in n-∅-w-ajo [CP chin rat ma n-∅-a-tz'ib'aj ta ri karta].  
I INC-B<sub>3s</sub>-A<sub>1s</sub>-want that you NEG INC-B<sub>3s</sub>-A<sub>2s</sub>-write NEG the letter  
'I want you to not write the letter.'
- (11) ✓ Y'in n-∅-w-ajo [CP chin rat x-∅-a-tz'ib'aj ri karta].  
I INC-B<sub>3s</sub>-A<sub>1s</sub>-want that you COM-B<sub>3s</sub>-A<sub>2s</sub>-write the letter  
≈ 'I want you to have written the letter.'

# But predicative complements are not that small

For Wurmbrand (2001, 2004), restructuring embeddings disallow independent tense/aspect, negation, and external arguments, **because they are structurally small, VP embeddings.** (vP in Wurmbrand (2014a))

But there are two problems for adopting this analysis for Kaqchikel:

- 1 The verb in the restructuring embedding *does* exhibit aspect and agreement morphology, although their values are parasitic on the matrix verb.

(12) **Obligatory aspect concord and subject agreement concord:**



# But predicative complements are not that small

2 Kaqchikel *does* have even smaller “aspectless complements”:

(13) **‘Start’ embeds a smaller complement:**

a. X-∅-u-chäp [wa’-in].

COM-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>3sg</sub>-start eat-NMZ

‘She started to eat.’

b. X-∅-u-chäp [ru-tz’et-ik]

COM-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>3sg</sub>-start A<sub>3sg</sub>-see-NMZ

‘She started to see it.’ (Imanishi and Mateo Pedro, 2013)

Imanishi and Mateo Pedro (2013); Imanishi (2014) argue that such embeddings are nominalizations. Regardless, the point stands that there are embeddings with *less* functional material than ★.

# ***Proposal***

The restructuring embedding (★) is an IP control clause.

- 1 The restructuring embedding completely lacks the CP layer.
- 2 Aspect is realized in Infl (Aissen, 1992, a.o.).
  - The restructuring Infl is defective, lacking its own aspect valuation.
  - The defective Infl will probe upwards for an aspect specification and will find the higher Infl head (Baker and Willie, 2010, see also Wiklund 2007).
- 3 Negation in Kaqchikel is in the CP domain (above Infl) and therefore disallowed.
- 4 The embedded PRO carries the  $\phi$ -features of its controller, explaining the subject agreement on both verbs.

# Restructuring and agreement

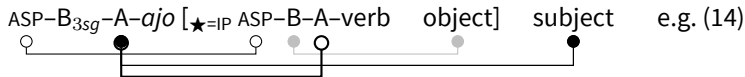
Recall that both ‘want’ *ajo* and the embedded verb agree with the subject:

- (14) Rje x-∅-k-ajo      [<sub>★=IP</sub> x-at-ki-tz’ib’aj    rat].  
they COM-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>3pl</sub>-want      COM-B<sub>2sg</sub>-A<sub>3pl</sub>-write you  
‘They want to write you.’

In (14), the embedded verb is transitive, so both verbs show **Set A (ergative) agreement** with the third-plural subject.

A potential hypothesis is that this too is the result of head-to-head agreement:

- (15) **Head-to-head agreement for both aspect and agreement concord:**



# Restructuring and agreement

When the complement of *ajo* 'want' is intransitive, the intransitive verb agrees with the subject with **Set B (absolutive) agreement**:

- (16) Yin n- $\emptyset$ -w-ajo      [ $\star$ =IP y-i-b'e    Japon].  
I    INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>1sg</sub>-want      INC-B<sub>1sg</sub>-go Japan  
'I want to go to Japan.'

☞ Subject agreement concord is *not* due to agreement between corresponding functional heads, unlike aspect concord.

Agreement occurs independently in the lower verbal complex, targeting the embedded subject PRO.



# ***Agent Focus and restructuring***

# Background: Agent Focus

Transitive verbs appear in an **Agent Focus form** in certain constructions:

- 1 subject *wh*-questions;
- 2 subject focus fronting;
- 3 subject relatives; and
- 4 subject existentials.

(See Erlewine to appear on Kaqchikel; see also Smith-Stark 1978; Aissen 1999, 2011; Stiebels 2006; Norcliffe 2009; Coon et al. to appear)

Intransitive verbs do not participate in the AF alternation.

☞ AF is used when the ergative argument is  $\bar{A}$ -extracted.

AF involves the addition of an AF suffix (in **bold**) and changes to agreement.

# Agent Focus and restructuring

**Q:** How does AF affect a restructuring clause—i.e., when the subject of *ajo* ‘want’ is extracted?

**A:** Both *ajo* ‘want’ and the embedded transitive verb show AF.

- (17) a. Achike n-∅-ajo-**wan** [<sub>★=IP</sub> n-∅-tz’ib’a-**n** ri karta]?  
who INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-want-**AF** INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-write-**AF** the letter  
‘Who wants to write the letter?’ (=3)
- b. \* Achike n-∅-r-jo [<sub>★=IP</sub> n-∅-tz’ib’a-**n** ri karta]?  
who INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>3sg</sub>-want INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-write-**AF** the letter
- c. \* Achike n-∅-ajo-**wan** [<sub>★=IP</sub> n-∅-u-tz’ib’aj ri karta]?  
who INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-want-**AF** INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>3sg</sub>-write the letter

# Agent Focus and restructuring

**Note:** This is not the general behavior of AF.

For example, when *ajo* ‘want’ takes a propositional (CP) complement, extracting the matrix subject does not affect the embedded verb:

- (18) a. Achike n-∅-ajo-**wan** [<sub>CP</sub> chin n-∅-u-tz’ib’aj ri karta]?  
who INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-want-**AF** that INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-A<sub>3sg</sub>-write the letter  
‘Who<sub>i</sub> wants him/her<sub>j</sub> to write the letter?’
- b. \* Achike n-∅-ajo-**wan** [<sub>CP</sub> chin n-∅-tz’ib’a-n ri karta]?  
who INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-want-**AF** that INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-write-**AF** the letter

☞ A transitive verb is in AF if *that verb’s subject* is  $\bar{A}$ -extracted.

# Agent Focus and restructuring

In the restructuring embeddings, the subject is base-generated high as an argument of 'want' and controls the embedded subject:

(19) *subject<sub>i</sub>* want [ $\star_{=IP}$  PRO<sub>*i*</sub> verb ...]

The restructuring embedding ( $\star=IP$ ) under 'want' should be the same, regardless of whether the matrix subject is  $\bar{A}$ -extracted or not.

**The information which determines the use of AF is not local to the embedded verb.**

Similar interactions are observed in some Austronesian languages, such as Chamorro (Chung, 2004) and Tsou (Chang, 2014).

(20) **Chamorro *wh*-agreement baseline (Chung, 2004):**

- a. Ha-istotba häm.  
3SG-bother us  
'It bothers us.'
- b. Hafa **um**-istotba si Juan?  
what **WH[NOM]**-bother Juan  
'What bothers Juan?'
- c. Hafa pära **u**-fa'tinas si Juan?  
what FUT **WH[OBJ]**-make Juan  
'What is Juan going to make?'

(Chung, 1994)

(21) Chamorro *wh*-agreement and restructuring (Chung, 2004):

- a. Ma-tutuhun ma-ayudan maisa siha i ma'estru.  
3PL-begin 3PL-help self them the teacher  
'The teachers began to help themselves.'
- b. Hayi siha na famagu'un t<um>utuhun um-istotba  
who PL L children WH[NOM].begin WH[NOM]-bother  
si Miguel?  
Miguel  
'Which children began to bother Miguel?'

**Idea:** Suppose that AF is akin to *wh*-agreement in Chamorro.

- 1 Assume an underlying ergative/absolute pattern of Case, not realized on the nominals but reflected in agreement alignment.
- 2  $\bar{A}$ -operators are moved to a designated Focus projection (Aissen, 1992, a.o.), although this Focus head is unpronounced.
- 3 The Focus head *agrees in Case features* with what it has fronted, as in analyses of Austronesian “voice” as extraction marking (Chung, 1994; Rackowski, 2002; Pearson, 2005).
- 4 **AF = Focus[Case:ERG].**  
Among existing analyses, this is most similar to Stiebels (2006).
- 5 AF is realized on lower verbs via head-to-head agreement with the higher Focus head.  
Similar to Chung’s proposal for Chamorro, based on Bhatt’s (2005) proposal for Hindi restructuring with long-distance agreement.



# No AF concord with intransitive verbs

Recall that intransitive verbs do not participate in the AF alternation.

When *ajo* ‘want’ embeds an intransitive predicative complement and the subject is  $\bar{A}$ -extracted, *ajo* shows AF but the intransitive verb is unaffected:

- (22) ✓ Achike n- $\emptyset$ -ajo-**wan** [ $\star_{=IP}$  n- $\emptyset$ -b’e Japon]?  
who INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-want-**AF** INC-B<sub>3sg</sub>-go Japan  
‘Who wants to go to Japan?’

Either intransitive verbs do not agree with the Focus head in AF or agree but do not morphologically realize AF. It is *not* that intransitive verbs never find themselves in an AF configuration.

- 👉 **A possible new view of AF’s “syntactic ergative” distribution:**  
What if AF marked subject extraction (e.g. AF = Focus[Case:NOM]), but only transitive verbs are able to morphologically realize the AF alternation?

# ***Conclusion***

- I analyze the restructuring embedding of Kaqchikel ‘want’ *ajo* as a functionally impoverished, IP embedding.
- Aspect concord—but not agreement concord—is due to upward head-to-head agreement (Baker, 2008).
- The interaction of Agent Focus with restructuring teaches us that **the relationship between the syntactic trigger of AF and its morphological realization must be more indirect than previously thought.**
- I sketch a novel analysis of AF as Case-agreement as in analyses of extraction marking in Austronesian languages.
- AF concord is explained as head-to-head agreement of extraction marking features, which is independently attested cross-linguistically (Chung, 2004; Chang, 2014; Wurmbrand, 2014a, a.o.).

## *Matyöx!* Questions?

An earlier version of this work is available as a paper at <http://ling.auf.net/lingbuzz/001685/> . Handout and slides at <http://mitcho.com> .

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