

Supplement for ‘Māori subject extraction’

1 Existential possessive constructions

Existential possessive (E-POSS) constructions are used for non-specific ownership (Bauer 1993: 198). They resemble classifying *he* (CLS-*he*) constructions in that the predicate phrase is introduced by *he* (glossed here as CLS following Bauer 1997). The subject is made up of a determiner (matching in number with the predicate phrase), the possessive preposition *ō*, and a noun or pronoun. In the singular, the determiner is *t(e)*, as in (1), whilst in the plural it is null, as in (2). As in the main paper, the subject is in brackets whilst the predicate phrase is in bold.

(1) Bauer (1997: 33, ex (217))

He hōiho [t.ō.na].

CLS horse the.of.3SG

‘He has a horse.’

(2) Bauer (1997: 33, ex (218))

He hū [ō Tohe].

CLS shoe of Tohe

‘Tohe has some shoes.’

The subject of E-POSS constructions can be questioned, as in (3), and the predicate phrase may be questioned directly, as in (4). I do not have data concerning subject topicalisation in E-POSS constructions.

(3) Bauer (1997: 433, ex (2847c))

[Ko t.ā wai] **he kurī?**

KO the.of Q a dog

‘Which one has a dog?’

(4) Winifred Bauer (p.c.)

He aha [tōna]?¹

CLS Q the.of.3SG

‘What does he have?’

The availability of subject questioning means that E-POSS constructions differ from CLS-*he* constructions despite surface similarities. Furthermore, whilst CLS-*he* constructions are negated using *ēhara*, E-POSS constructions cannot be negated in this way (Bauer 1997: 466). These facts suggest that E-POSS constructions are not nominal predicate constructions. I thus tentatively conclude that the predicate phrase of the E-POSS construction is verbal, comprising a null verb and an overt nominal (the *he*-phrase). This is schematically illustrated in (5).

¹ Such an example could only occur in a context where, for example, it was being discussed what things various people owned that they could contribute to some project (Winifred Bauer p.c.).

- (9) Bauer (1997: 654, ex (4201))
 [Ngā wāhine a Wairangi] **toko.rua**,
 the.PL women PERS Wairangi PNUM.two
 ko Pare-whete, ko Pūroku.
 EQ Pare-whete EQ Puroku
 ‘Wairangi had two wives, Pare-whete and Puroku.

Waite (1990: 403) equates the *e* in NUM constructions with the Tense-Aspect-Mood (TAM) marker *e*. Consistent with this idea is the fact that NUM constructions are negated with *kāhore* rather than *ēhara* (Bauer 1997: 466). However, whilst Bauer (1997: 94) suggests that this analysis may be appropriate for historical stages of the language, she argues that modern Māori has reanalysed this TAM marker as a numeral particle. Supporting evidence comes from Pearce’s (2005) analysis of DP-internal structure. Pearce notes that Māori phrases generally have to contain at least three morae in total. This is important for DP-internal NumPs. As Pearce points out, the numbers between 2 and 9 inclusive consist of only two morae each and must therefore be preceded by *e* (or *toko* with human referents). In contrast, the number 10 is *tekau*, which contains three morae, and so neither *e* nor *toko* is required. The fact that *e* appears with numbers in DP-internal NumPs, as in (10), thus suggests that *e* and the number form a constituent (in square brackets).

- (10) Pearce (2005: 7, ex (16))
 ngā whakaahua tino ātaahua [e toru] nei o tē.rā
 the.PL picture very beautiful NUM three PROX1 of the.DIST
 maunga
 mountain
 ‘these three very beautiful pictures of that mountain’

Therefore, in examples like (6) where the number is (or modifies) the head of the predicate phrase, *e* is plausibly a numeral particle in the extended nominal projection, and hence the predicate phrase of NUM constructions is plausibly nominal. This would be independently consistent with the fact that subject questioning is prohibited in NUM constructions.

Abbreviations

CLS = classifier, DIST = distal, EQ = equational *ko*, KO = interrogative/focus *ko*, NUM = numeral particle, PERS = personal particle, PL = plural, PNUM = numeral particle for persons, PROX1 = proximal (near speaker), Q = question word, 3SG = third person singular

Competing interests

The author has no competing interests to declare.

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