

# The chabacano language

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to ascertain how new information takes core argument positions in the succeeding clauses and how these participants are tracked throughout the discourse. This study will show that in Chabacano-Caviteño, (a) lexicalization is the most prominent reference tracking device employed to track a given information, (b) pronominalization is used to disambiguate the referents in instances where there are more than one participant, and (c) zero anaphora is utilized for situations where there are no competing information to be tracked. I will also argue that Chabacano-Caviteño indicates an ergative discourse pattern while bearing an accusative pattern in its grammatical relations.

## I Introduction

### 1.1 Background

The Chabacano language, technically known to other linguists as Philippine Creole Spanish (Lipski 2003), while garnering growth on its number of speakers in southern Philippines, regrettably loses influence in Cavite City. Although there have been efforts from the speakers themselves to revive the use of this language, it is hoped that this research will somehow contribute to the encouragement of the speakers to continue using it, and of other researchers in analyzing this language.

Reference tracking is one of the most vital functions of language, and languages exhibit amazing features in employing this function (Foley and Van Valin 1984). The goal of this study is to elucidate how Chabacano speakers track a specific participant in a discourse. By determining how a language track references, a system of its discourse structure may be observed. In Du Bois (1987), the ergative pattern of the grammatical relations in the Mayan languages was paralleled with its discourse pattern which also exhibits an ergative pattern. In Chabacano, however, grammatical relations are in the nominative-accusative pattern, so it is a considerable task to determine if its discourse pattern would also exhibit an accusative pattern or not.

This paper is subdivided into six parts. Section I comprises this introduction, Section II gives the previous works on Chabacano languages in general, and the Chabacano-Caviteño in particular, Section III probes the nominative-accusative pattern of grammatical relations in Chabacano; section IV deals with the reference tracking devices of Chabacano; section V gives evidence to the ergativity of its discourse pattern, and the last section, Section VI, shall conclude this study.

### 1.2 Methodology

The data used in this study are (a) five retellings of the Pear film (Chafe 1983), and (b) two personal stories (See Appendix). In getting the pear story data, informants were shown the film and then asked to narrate what they have seen and these were audio-recorded. The

recorded narration was then replayed with every intonation units, and the narrators themselves translated every word in their narration into Tagalog, of which the researcher transcribed into a written text. The two personal stories are also transcribed in the same manner as mentioned above; the data were gathered on several trips to Cavite City.

## 1.3 Scope and Delimitations

It is not the intention of the researcher to present a complete analysis of the discourse structure of CAV but only to provide an explication of one aspect of the language. Even in this aspect, which is, reference tracking and discourse pattern, many features of the language may have been overlooked that would have yielded different results. Admittedly, this may be due to the small quantity of analyzed texts.

This study is mostly an application of the researches done by Du Bois (1987) and Nagaya (2006). Analysis of the discourse pattern is limited to basic clause constructions and its relationships to each other because it contains the fundamental features of a language's discourse structure. In 4.2 however, where I will theorize beyond basic clause constructions, we will see that basic clauses are naturally grouped together to form a single coherent strings of actions or state that for the purposes of this study I will simply label as "discourse event."

CAV has no standard orthography used by everyone. Some people prefer to spell in the Spanish way, while others spell following the Tagalog spelling system. For example, the word glossed as D:D (Demonstrative Distal) is spelled as either "aquel" or "akel" depending on one's preference. In this paper, the Tagalog way of spelling is generally employed, but there are some words that are still spelled in the Spanish manner.

## 1.2 Terms and Abbreviations

CAV—Chabacano-Caviteño language

basic construction—refers to a clause where there is only one predicate, and can either be transitive or intransitive, and where there is/are core argument(s) either morphologically realized or not.

morphologically realized arguments—arguments in a given construction that are lexically present; as contrasted to zero-arguments or lexically not present arguments

Reference tracking device—the way with which information are tracked after the first mention through the discourse

P—(predicate) usually a verb occupies this position but in many instances this may also be occupied by predicate nominals such as NPs or adjectives.

S—the only argument of an intransitive construction. This is the source the action and the most affected entity.

A—the source of the action in a transitive construction.

O—the most affected entity in a transitive construction.

Obl—(oblique) any constituent that is not S, A, nor O. This is usually the setting or time of the action or event.

NOM—nominative case

ACC—accusative case

ERG—ergative case

ABS—absolute case

POSS—possessive

LK—linker

NEG—negator

EXIST—existential morpheme

PAST—past tense

PRE—present tense

FUT—future tense.

PL—pluralizer

EncPA—enclitic particle

1sg—first person singular

3sg—third person singular

1pl—first person plural

3pl—third person plural

det—determiner

## II Previous Studies in Chabacano

The following are few of the studies done on Chabacano language. These selected studies show what have been written about the comparative and contrastive features of Chabacano and Philippine languages (particularly Tagalog), which will provide a purview of the issue of determining whether Chabacano is more Filipino or more Spanish.

Batausa (1969) studied the reduplication patterns of Chabacano and Tagalog. The results are that: (1); full reduplication of the root is present in both languages (2); some reduplicated words are minimal free forms in both languages; (3) the reduplicated words can occur in all positions: initial, medial, final; and (4) both full and partial reduplication occurs in Tagalog; only full reduplication occurs in Chabacano.

Frake (1971) stated that Chabacano of Zamboanga (and the Chabacano in general) is not a Philippine-type language with borrowings from Spanish, nor can it be considered a variety of Spanish with copious lexical influences from Philippine languages. Rather, he claimed that Chabacano is a different language by itself. Four years later, in 1975 Quilis described that it's a kind of Spanish with borrowed lexical items from Tagalog and Cebuano.

In a paper presented at the 9th Philippine Linguistics Congress, Arwin Vibar and Toribio Navarro, Jr. (2006) expressed that Chabacano (Ternateño) is (1) not an agglutinative language and does not feature inflections or affixations in its verbal constituent that may express focus and aspect. (2) The use of 'el' and 'kel' as markers for verbal complements

(e.g., actor and goal) may be analyzed to correspond to the Tagalog equivalent; (3) A good number of the common lexicons of Ternateño and Tagalog were derived from Spanish, including some of the particles (such as, para, di, kung, etc.), and some morphemes that have become homophones as they were adapted into Ternateño.

To the ergativity of Philippine languages, CAV poses a challenge, being a creole whose grammatical structure is of Philippine type and whose lexicon is mainly that of Spanish. Nolasco (2005) summed up his answer to this challenge with the following,

“Chabacano inherited its accusative phenotype from its Iberian father and its pragmatic and semantic genotype from its Philippine mother language(s).”

That is, Chabacano is a fusion of two typologically different languages, with grammatical features that of Spanish and pragmatic characteristics akin to that of Philippine-type languages, such as Tagalog. This study will demonstrate these pragmatic features that makes-up CAV.

### III Structure of the Basic Clause Construction

Before I proceed with the analysis of CAV's discourse structure, it is necessary to stipulate the basic structure of its morphosyntax. As mentioned above, one of the reasons why CAV has been chosen for this particular study is its being a fusion between a nominative-accusative language and an ergative-absolutive language, Spanish and Tagalog respectively. This section will provide the basis of the a priori assumption used in this study, that is, CAV's morphosyntax exhibits a nominative-accusative pattern. This is very important in highlighting the significance of its discourse pattern.

In his doctoral thesis, Nolasco (2003) has shown the ergativity patterns of Philippine languages. He also suggested a grammatical and semantic analysis through transitivity and presented his revised transitivity parameters for Philippine languages. This was followed by another paper where he explicated the S, A, and the O in Philippine languages—its core argumentative properties and its semantic participation in a given construction (Nolasco 2006). This paper probes how these core arguments that is also the discourse participants are tracked by interlocutors in a discourse.

In his analysis, Nolasco (2005) presented two evidences of marking S and A in the same manner and a distinct marking of O, thus it can be concluded that CAV is indeed an accusative language. The marker for nominative case is  $\emptyset$  (zero) and con for its accusative case. The examples below show its basic construction:

(1) Ya come  $\{\emptyset\}$  el gato con el piscao.

PAST eat NOM det cat ACC det fish

‘The cat ate the fish.’

(2) Ya come  $\{\emptyset\}$  el gato enantes.

PAST eat NOM det cat a.while.ago

‘The cat ate a while ago.’

Note that el is used for nouns regardless of its grammatical relation, and is referred to as “det” in this paper. While (1) shows a transitive construction where the A, gato ‘cat’ is marked by  $\emptyset$ , and the O, piscao ‘fish’ is marked by con, (2) provides the

intransitive counterpart where S is also marked by  $\emptyset$ . The second marker for its accusative pattern is in its word order, where A follows the predicate in a basic transitive construction and the O always follows the A. This marking system is utilized especially in constructions where one or two of the core arguments are pronominals. Example (3) shows this word-order marking where the A is a third person pronoun and the O is not marked by con. In this transitive construction *akel* is a pronominal referred to in this paper as “Demonstrative Distal” (glossed as D:D) and functions as determiner like *el*. The illustration below is from Personal Stories F.

11. Quiereng- quiere yo (S) *el* pandesal.

Want 1sg det bread

‘I want the bread so much.’

13. *ta* busca pa rin {A} *aquel* pandesal (O).

PRE look.for still D:D bread

‘I am still looking for that bread.’

Where both *el* and *aquel* functions as a determiner of ‘pandesal.’

Word-order in unmarked basic constructions is strictly followed in this language. That is, the A comes first before the O. Thus, (4) would be ungrammatical.

(3) [B-7] *Ya* llena ya *ele* *aquel* un canastro..

PAST fill already 3sg D:D one basket

‘He already filled (that) one basket.’

(4) \**Ya* llena ya *aquel* un canastro *ele*.

PAST fill already D:D one basket 3sg

‘He already filled (that) one basket.’

The oblique is always at sentence final position, while the predicate is always at sentence-initial position. Consider example (2) above where the enantes ‘a while ago’ occurs after S and where the sentence-initial position of the predicate *Ya* come ‘ate’ is demonstrated.

Below is a summary of the word order of CAV applying the notions given above:

(a) P + S + (Obl) for intransitive, and

(b) P + A + O + (Obl) for transitive constructions.

and these word orders are followed strictly except for pragmatically marked constructions.

## IV Reference Tracking in Chabacano-Caviteño

As the previous section probed CAV’s basic clause construction, i.e. case markings, word order, etc., this section will dig into its discourse structure by examining how CAV “reference-track” participants in a discourse. The reference tracking system of CAV would constitute the framework of its basic discourse pattern, and would give evidence for or against CAV’s discourse ergativity.

In a given discourse, it is amazing how the interlocutors track the participants from one clause to the following clauses. These participants often occupy the core argument positions. These core arguments or participants are commonly introduced as new information in its first mention as full NP and are usually encoded in the oblique case. After this technique of introducing the new information, it becomes available for both the interlocutors and will be treated as given information, ready to be referred to in the succeeding clauses. These references are called anaphora. In his definition of anaphora, Cormish (1999) stated the following:

...an anaphor points to an element of the discourse context—though not necessarily to a feature of a co-text as is often believed—in order to enable the interlocutors to identify the referent intended. Anaphoric reference presupposes that the addressee's attention is already focused on the intended referent, or at least that the latter is in some way associated with the current focus of attention, and that its existence can easily be inferred: thus, the occurrence of an anaphorically used indexical constitutes an instructions on the speaker's part to maintain the high level of focus already accorded by the speaker and addressee to a given discourse entity.

The tracking of the core arguments, then, is through the appropriate use of anaphora by the speaker, and a correct understanding of these by the hearer. Nagaya (2006) demonstrated the two devices of reference tracking employed in Tagalog; one is thru pronominalization and the other is thru zero anaphora. He qualified these further by saying that, "a topical referent tends to be encoded by a pronoun, but an accessible yet non-topical one is likely to be referred to by zero anaphora."

Anaphoras are necessarily given information. Reference tracking means tracking anaphora along the lines of discourse that points to the information that has necessarily been introduced as new information first. CAV has two techniques in encoding new information. The first is by the use of existential morphemes. i.e. *tiene* as shown in (i), where the S of that intransitive clause is the new information, the second is thru the use of indefinitizers such as *un* 'a' or numerals like *una* 'one' or *tres* 'three' as shown in (ii).

(i) [E-1] *Tiene UN VIEJO(S) ta ranca UNA CLASE DE PRUTAS* *na pono*

EXIST one old.man PRE harvest one class of fruit OBL tree

'There is an old man who harvests one kind of fruit in the tree'

(ii) [E-5] *ya saka ele(S) UN BASKET DE PRUTAS,*

PAST get 3sg one basket of fruit

'He got one basket of fruits.'

## 4.1 The Chabacano–Caviteño Corpus

The narratives were subdivided into its basic Intonation Units (IU). Every IU is encoded in a single line based on Tanangkingsing's (2006) definition of IU,

...a prosodic unit in natural discourse consisting of a speech segment that falls into a single coherent intonation contour...The Intonation Unit reflects language-in-use through which a more realistic account of the grammatical units in a spoken language can be provided.

The study opted to employ these natural partitions of constructions. We can observe in almost all instances, only one predicate composed an IU with up to two arguments and optional obliques. This implies that the basic clause construction postulated above is naturally produced in this language.

## 4.2 Pronominalization as a Reference Tracking Device

Let us now examine how the references that are usually introduced first as a new information are tracked along the discourse. The following is an excerpt from the first Pear Story account. It is the first part of the narrative where the old man harvests the pears and placed them into baskets (note that the speaker here recognized the fruit not as pears but as bayabas or guavas).

[Pear Story A-1]

(1) Ya subi AKEL VIEHO(S) na ponu

PAST climb D:D old.man OBL tree

‘That old man climbed a tree’

(2) Ya rangka ele(A) akel bayabas(O)

PAST harvest 3sg D:D bayabas

‘He harvested the guavas’

(3) Bago ya baha ele(S)

then PAST climb.down 3sg

‘Then he climbed down’

(4) Ya puni ele(A)akel mga bayabas(O) na UN KANASTRU(OBL)

PAST put 3sg D:D PL guava OBL one basket

‘He put those guavas in a basket’

(5) Ya asi harera {A} el akel tres kanastru(O)

PAST to.do line.up det D:D tatlo kaing

‘{He} lined up the three baskets’

(6) Kabandu ya rebolbi ele(S) na ponu

afterwards PAST return 3sg OBL puno

‘Afterwards, he returned to the tree’

(7) Ya subi ele(S) otrobes na ponu

PAST climb 3sg again OBL puno

‘He climbed up again in the tree’

This section of the narrative where a series of related actions has been undertaken by one participant, before another different action takes place, is called “discourse event” in this paper. Discourse events are paradigmatic to IUs in that while IUs refer to a string of

words spoken in a single intonation contour of which a predicate ambits the immediate constituents, discourse events are a string of IUs of which a scene, deduced from the series of related actions regardless of the number of participants, ambits every single constituent, i.e., predicates, arguments, obliques, etc.

In the above discourse event, the new information that we will track is VIEHO ‘old man.’ We could easily notice that an NP is used to introduce this information for the first time. In clauses (2) to (7) third person pronoun *ele* is used to refer to VIEHO, except in (5) where a zero anaphoric A is used to refer to VIEHO. It will appear here that what has been found out in Tagalog by Nagaya (2006) regarding the use of pronominalization as a device for reference tracking is also true here. In his analysis, one new information encoded in the first mention as an NP can be readily referred to by pronouns or zeroes in the succeeding clauses. He argued that

...once a participant is introduced into the discourse as a lexical noun phrase, it is in turn referred to by a non-lexical form in the following clauses for the sake of speakers’ economy. Namely a participant recoverable from contexts tends to be pronominalized or zero-realized. (2006:6)

The zero-realization device for anaphoras will be dealt in the next section. Meanwhile, let us continue tracking in this narrative and proceed to the next discourse event where newer information is introduced. Follow closely the technique of the speaker in referring to two given informations (the information in the first discourse event and the new information in the form of a participant in this section).

[Pear Story A-2]

## (8) Pagkatapus, ay, kabandu ya bini akel UN MUCHACHO(S)

afterwards filler afterwards PAST come D:D one boy

‘Afterwards, one boy came’

(9) Ta lleva lleva {S} bisikleta

PRE bring bring bicycle

‘(He) brings a bicycle’

(10) Ahora, ya mira akel mochachu(S)

now PAST look D:D boy

‘This time, the boy looked’

(11) Si akel viejo(S) na ponu ta mira

if D:D old.man OBL puno PRE look

‘If that old man in the tree is looking’

(12) Ahora el que ya asi el mochachu(S) ahora modo no ta mira

now det LK PAST to.do det boy now just.because NEG PRE look

‘This time, what the boy did, now that because (the old man) is not looking’



(13) Modo no akel vieho(S) no ta mira virao el kara por de tras

just.because NEG D:D old.man NEG PRE look back det face to.the.back

‘Just because that old man is not looking, (he) is looking at the back’

(14) Ya saka ele(A) akel un kanastru(0) de bayabas,

PAST get 3sg D:D one basket of guava

‘He got one basket of guavas’

In the above discourse event, a new information or participant UN MUCHACHO is introduced. It can be observed that the speaker did not use the 3sg pronoun *ele* to refer to any of the participants, until it came to the point of proceeding to the next discourse event signalled by the use of complex clauses in (12) and (13). This is also the case in the second narrative of the similar discourse events:

[Pear Story B]

## (1) Por la mañana, EL HOMBRE(S) ya despierta

in the morning, det man PST wake.up

‘In the morning, the woke up’

(2) despues ya anda ele(S) na pono de peras.

after PST go 3sg OBL tree of pear.

‘then he went to the pear tree’

(3) Ya subi ele(S) na escalera.

PST go.up 3sg OBL ladder

‘he climbed in the ladder’

(4) Ya ranca {A} mga peras(0).

PST harvest PL pear.

‘(he) harvests pears’

(5) Ya puni ele(A) mga peras(0) na UN CANASTRO.

PST place 3sg PL pear OBL one basket.

‘he placed the pears in a basket’

(6) Tres su canastro(S) alla.

three 3sg:POSS basket there

‘he has three baskets there’

(7) Despues de cuanto tiempo, ya llena ya ele(A) aquel un canastro(0).

after of few hours, PST fill already 3sg D:D one basket.

‘after a while, he has already filled one basket’

(8) Ya subi ele(S) otra ves na pono para ranca pa el otro mga fruta(S).

PST climb 3sg again OBL tree to harvest EncPA det other PL fruit.

‘he climbed back again to the tree to harvest more fruits’

(B-2)

(9) Mientras ta asi ele(S) aquel,

while PRE to.do 3sg D:D

‘while he was doing it up there’

(10) ya pasa UN HOMBRE(S) ta lleva {S} UN CABRITO.

PST pass one man PRE bring one goat.

‘a man bringing a goat passed by’

(11) Derederecho naman el hombre(S).

continue EncPA det man.

‘the man just proceeded (what he was doing)’

(B-3)

(12) Despues lluego ya llega UN JOVEN(S) na UN BISIKLETA.

after after PST come one boy OBL one bike.

‘after a while, one boy came with a bicycle’

(13) Ya saca el joven(A) el un canastro(O) lleno de peras.

PST get det boy det one basket full of pear.

‘the boy got the basket full of pears’

(14) Ya asi embarka {A} {O} na su bisikleta y ya sali ya {S}.

PST to.do place OBL 3sg:POSS bicycle and PST go already.

‘(he) placed (the fruits) in his bicycle and (he) went already’

The above section of the narrative contains three discourse events. In the first discourse event, the EL HOMBRE was introduced as new information, and then the succeeding clauses (2) to (8) used the 3sg ele to refer to that information similar to the technique employed in the first narrative. But in the next discourse event starting from (9), a newer information was introduced, UN HOMBRE, but notice that in the next clause (11), neither the newer information nor the previous information was referred to by a pronoun.

The question now is when and how is pronominalization utilized again as a tool in reference tracking? We have already demonstrated that pronominalization fails to be applied in a discourse event where more than one participant is involved in the scene as in example (A-2) and (B-1) above. This discourse event will be referred to in this paper as the “overlapping discourse event” or simply the “overlap,” for it overlaps the discourse

event preceeding it with the discourse event following it. While the overlap puts into background the previous discourse event together with its participant, it subsequently puts into foreground the next discourse event where only the newest information is left for reference tracking. This is what happened in (12) as the beginning of the third discourse event. Notice that the overlap (B-2) successfully diminished or ended the first discourse event (B-1) and triggered the new information who is solely the participant in the next discourse event (B-3).

Example (A-3) below is the continuation of (A-2) shown above. It functions as the overlap of (A-1) and (A-3), as (A-2) contains more than one participant in the scene and neither of them is referred to by a pronoun. In (A-3) however, the new information that is referred to by pronouns is the information first introduced in (A-2) particularly in (8) UN MUCHACHO 'a boy'. But since (A-2) is an overlap, that newer information cannot right away referred to by a pronoun, and not until after (12) signaled the coming of the new discourse event did the speaker used the pronoun *ele* to refer to the boy. So in (A-3), that participant can then be tracked by the pronominal and zeroes.

(A-3)

(15) Kabandu ya asi imbarka {A} {O}na bisikleta

afterwards PAST to.do get.into OBL bicycle

'afterwards, (he) put the (basket) into the bicycle'

(16) Kabandu ya sali ele(S) pronto-pronto. Ya asi kuri{A} akel bisiklita(O)

afterwards PAST go 3sg fast fast PAST to.do run D:D bicycle

'afterwards, he left right away. (He) drove that bicycle'

(17) Ya asi kuri {A} {O} que ya asi kuri {A} {O}

PAST to.do run LK PAST to.do run

'(He) drove and drove (the bicycle)'

## 4.3 Zero Anaphora as a Reference Tracking Device

If we would look at Table 1 again, we can see how statistically non-significant the difference between the lexical anaphoras and the zero anaphoras. What is significant in the statistical sense is the difference between zero S's and zero A's, which is almost 100% more than that of S. Much significant still is the low register of zero O's. This means that more than half of the transitive clauses have a zero A. What does it imply?

First, we could claim that Du Bois's "Given A Constraint" (1987) also applies in this language. New informations are usually encoded in S, O, or OBL positions, but rarely in A position. If we will look at (A-1) and (B-1) above, we will notice that both of the new informations are encoded in S. This is probably due to the fact that new information at first mention cannot yet perform an action to something else other than itself, or cannot perform an action at all. A is the source of the action in a transitive construction where it operates the predicate on O, thereby making it ineligible to become a new information. Thus, A's as stipulated by the constraint above, only carries given information.

Another significant thing to look at is the tendency to avoid zero 0's. Out of the 52 transitive constructions, only 6 of these have a zero 0, and every occurrence of this zero 0, the A is also zero. The following are two examples of these phenomena:

(15) Kabandu ya asi imbarka {A} {0} na bisikleta

afterwards PAST to.do get.into OBL bicycle

'Then {he} put {it} in the bicycle.'

(17) Ya asi kuri {A} {0}

PAST to.do run

'{He} made {it} run.'

This means that a zero 0 is avoided in CAV because in an intransitive construction, if an oblique is not present, any instance of new information will fall into the 0 position and will not fall on A because of the "Given A Constraint."

Why then are S and A allowed to be zeroed? In reference tracking in this language, the information flows on the arguments which are the sources of action, in S or in A. If such is case, it is just but practical to zero that argument when there is no competitor for reference tracking. In a discourse event where there is only one participant, any source of the action in the succeeding clauses will be treated as that of the single participant's. Let us consider the following:

(A-3)

(15) Kabandu ya asi imbarka {A} {0}na bisikleta

afterwards PAST to.do get.into OBL bicycle

'afterwards, (he) put the (basket) into the bicycle'

(16) Kabandu ya sali ele(S) pronto-pronto. Ya asi kuri {A} akel bisiklita(0)

afterwards PAST go 3sg fast fast PAST to.do run D:D bicycle

'afterwards, he left right away. (He) drove that bicycle'

(17) Ya asi kuri {A} {0} que ya asi kuri {A} {0}

PAST to.do run LK PAST to.do run

'(He) drove and drove (the bicycle)'

In this part of the narrative, after introducing the participant in (A-2), there is no other participant left to compete with the UN MUCHACHO for reference tracking. This means that there is no strong need to track UN MUCHACHO with morphologically realized arguments because that information is so given that any action will be attributed to it. This is also the case in (B-3) illustrated above. Since in this language majority of the discourse events are those which has only one participant involved in the scene, it will not be a surprised to find the prominence of zero anaphoras, more particularly A's and S's, because there is not a strong factor to realize them morphologically, especially the A, because when something is acted upon, i.e, an 0, we can be precise to track that the instigator A refers to the only only new information in that discourse event.

## 4.4 Lexicalization as a Reference Tracking Device

Finally, we come to the last and the most commonly used device in reference tracking in CAV. Looking at Table 1 again will show us that lexicalized NPs are the most prevalent argument encoding. It comprises the 51.5% of the total number of arguments. Why then, we might ask, does CAV preferred to employ lexical NP's over pronouns? Contrary to what Nagaya (2006) found in Tagalog where pronominalization is the prominent device in reference-tracking. One of the most probable answers to this question may be due to the fact that in CAV the inventory of personal pronominals is not as rich as that of Tagalog or other Philippine languages. *Ele* for instance, is used regardless of its grammatical relation in the clause. This means that in a discourse event where two participants should both be tracked, CAV only has this pronoun, if they use this to refer to both referents, it will become very ambiguous for both the interlocutors. So to compensate this personal pronominal scarcity, CAV utilizes lexicalization as the most prominent device for reference tracking in this language as it will disambiguate the references more efficiently.

## V The Challenge of Discourse to Syntax

Section III dealt essentially with syntax. It was shown there that CAV's basic clause construction, i.e. its case markers and word order, is clearly an evidence of its being a nominative-accusative language. The previous section explicated the reference tracking systems in CAV. These reference tracking devices are diametrically different to Tagalog's as shown by Nagaya (2006) . This section will show how this grammatical pattern is "challenged" by the discourse pattern as it exhibits an ergative-absolutive model.

In this study, the reference-tracking devices and the discourse flow pattern of CAV will be analyzed based on the corpus that was gathered in Cavite City. These are five retellings of the short film Pear Story and two personal stories. Here are the statistics of the occurrence of the core-arguments in the said corpus:

	Lexical		PronominalZero		Total	
	N	%	n	%	n	%
S	72	56.7	37	29.1	1914	2
A	8	15.7	1325	5	31	58.8
O	39	73.6	9	17	6	9.4
					54	23
TOTAL	119	51.5%	59	25.5%	51	22%
					234	

Table 1: Total number of the occurrences of the core arguments

In the given table above, we can clearly see the prominence of S which composed 55% of the total number of arguments, which is more than half of the combined A and O. Because of the prominence of intransitive constructions, we may assume that speakers prefer to use constructions with only one lexically manifested argument. See the construction below:

[E-12] ...ya dale {A} tig-u-uno prutas con tres muchachos (O).

PST give Ø one. each fruit ABS three boys

‘{He} gave one fruit each to the three boys.’

It can be observed here that only “con tres muchachos” is lexically present, and the A is a zero.

This assumption will be further supported when we look at the transitive constructions, that is, a construction where we would naturally expect at least two arguments to be present. The above table also shows the total number of transitive constructions amounting to 51 (there are two transitive constructions in the database where there are two O’s). Out of the 51 transitive constructions, only 16 constructions have a morphologically present A and O, while 35 samples have only one morphologically realized argument. If we will count all the constructions with only one morphological argument, that is, combining the intransitive and the one-argument transitive constructions, we will come up with 162 or 70% of the total number of constructions which amounted to 231. Based on these statistical facts, we can hypothesize in this juncture that in CAV, speakers tend to avoid more than one argument per clause.

Du Bois (1987) calls this the “One Lexical Argument Constraint.” This constraint according to him is not a grammatical or semantic rule because it does not restrain the speakers to use more than one argument per clause. He further stipulated,

This tendency exists in discourse, viewed as the aggregate of instances of language use. [It is] simply a statement of an observed pattern, it remains to be seen whether it reflects directly a constraint on speech production, or is rather a consequence of something else.

Going back to the statistical table given earlier, one can also notice the small register lexical A in the data. Out of 51 transitive clauses, there are only 8 instances of a lexical A, as against the lexical registers of O which amounts to 39. This implies that speakers also tend to avoid using lexical A, while there is not constraint as to the lexical S or O. Based on this facts, we can apply Du Bois’ “Non-Lexical A Constraint” of which he meant

...a tendency in discourse to limit the quantity of lexical arguments in a clause to a minimum of one; and that this single argument is not distributed randomly across the grammatically random positions, but systematically disfavors certain roles.

These two constraints can be summed up to determine what he called the PAS (Preferred Argument Structure) of the language. He defined this as

...the (maximal) surface syntactic configuration of arguments which is statistically preferred in clause tokens in discourse...PAS partitions the arguments along the same lines as the grammatical opposition of ergative vs. accusative. From the perspective of the discourse distribution of grammatical types, S and O thus constitute a class which is set off as distinct from A.

CAV implements these constraints of ergativity in discourse flow, thereby constructing its PAS in the ergative model. What is really significant then, is that its PAS suggests an ergative-absolutive pattern, thereby giving a stance against the nominative-accusative pattern of its grammatical relations. CAV’s accusative grammatical relations as demonstrated here is diametrically opposed to its ergative discourse pattern.

## VI Conclusion

There is still a lot to be improved in the analyses given here, and one could say that the results of this study may only be true to the data gathered, and may not stand given a much larger and more diverse discourses in CAV. There are also some factors that might have affected the gathered data, like what Du Bois (1987) referred to as the “unverbalized information that the speaker and hearer share as implicit knowledge of the world.” One example is the use of the demonstrative distal *akel* that one might expect to be used for a given information and not to introduce a new one as in example below:

[A-1] *Ya subi AKEL vieho(S) na ponu*

PAST *akyat D:D matanda sa puno*

‘That old man went up the tree’

This may be due to the fact that the narrator of this story was aware that the researcher has seen the movie and has prior knowledge about it. As quoted above, Cormish (1999) recognized this as an anaphora outside the text. Other data gathering techniques in future studies should be employed to reduce this tendency.

Nonetheless, in this study, we have found out that in CAV a topical referent tracked will be encoded by a lexical element in discourse events where there is another participant, while a zero anaphora and/or pronominalization is employed in discourse events where there is only one participant, to be tracked. We have also argued that CAV indicates an ergative pattern in discourse based on its PAS where the S and the O exhibit similarity in terms of lexicalization while the A differs as it is preferred to be zeroed. To the question of whether CAV is of Philippine type or not, we can say this language has Spanish as its interface, Philippine language(s) as its motherboard, but has developed its own processor.

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