

‘Having’ and ‘Being’ ma-: Athematic Licensing and the Balinese Middle Voice

1. Overview While the Austronesian voice system in Balinese has been extensively studied with respect to Actor and Object Voice (Legate 2014; Levin 2014; Erlewine et al. 2017), the apparent ‘Middle Voice’ in *ma-* remains largely unaddressed. One puzzle is the diverse functions of *ma-* as a marker of intransitivity, possession, stativity, reciprocity, and reflexivity, rendering a cohesive structural account elusive. In particular, *ma-* produces an **inalienable possession** reading when attached to nominal stems (1a), but a **mediopassive** reading when attached to verbal stems (1b):

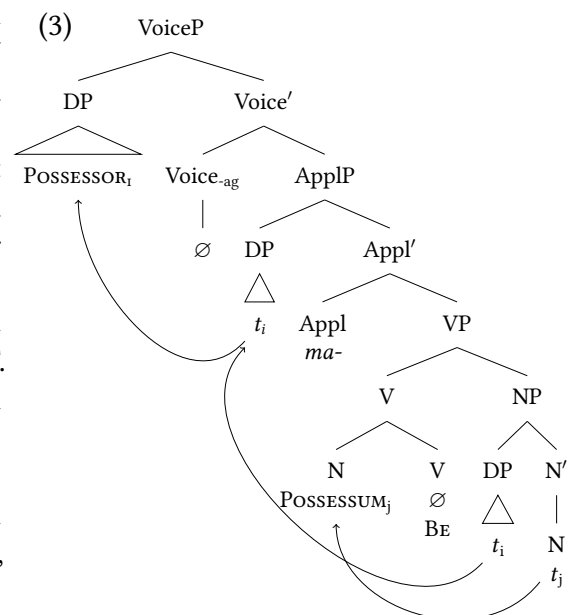
- (1) a. Siap-é ma-batis (barak) dua. b. Jukut ma-adép.
 chicken-DEF MA-leg (red) two vegetables MA-sell
 ‘The chicken has two (red) legs.’ ‘Vegetables (were) sold.’

This work unifies these two functions by arguing that *ma-* heads an athematic raising applicative (Georgala 2012) beneath a non-agentive VoiceP. Constructions (1a)-(b) differ based on i) whether the applicativised verb is a null copula or overt lexical verb, and ii) whether the DP that raises into Spec, ApplP for licensing bears a POSSESSOR or THEME θ -role. In this way, Balinese provides novel support for a raising analysis of external possession in which θ -role assignment is distinct from argument licensing (Deal 2013, Nie 2019). In addition, by taking voice morphology as extraction marking, this paper derives a typology of Balinese Voices along two parameters: i) movement across the Voice head and ii) the first-merge of an AGENT in Spec, VoiceP.

2. Ma- + N The nouns which can undergo *ma-* prefixation are those in a part-whole or inalienable relation, e.g. body parts, clothing, and kinship terms. These are modifiable by numerals (1a), adjectives (2a), and hyponyms (2b), but cannot take possessors or definite/demonstrative marking (2c). Crucially, obligatory strict adjacency between *ma-* and the noun displaces canonically pre-N modifiers like numerals (2d). These restrictions follow from an external possession analysis (3).

- (2) a. Umah tiang-e ma-bataran batu. c. I Made ma-dasi (*ento/*bapa-ne).
 house 1SG-DEF MA-floor stone ART Made MA-tie (DEM/father-DEF)
 ‘My house has stone floors.’ ‘Made wears a/(that/father’s) tie.’
 b. I Wayan ma-capil kupluk. d. *Siap ma-dua batis.
 ART Wayan MA-hat beanie chicken MA-two leg
 ‘Wayan is wearing a beanie.’

As proposed for predicative BE-APPL possession in Quechua (Myler, 2016), I argue that *ma-* + N produces HAVE from applicativisation of a null copula BE. Noun Incorporation (NI) of the possessum into the copula results in modifier stranding and strict adjacency (2d). As inalienable NPs lack both a PossP and DP layer capable of licensing the possessor argument (Alexiadou 2003, Ritter & Rosen 2011), the possessor must raise to Spec, ApplP for licensing and then to pivot position to Agree with ϕ -features on T. Having already first-merged a Possessor, additional possession is blocked (2c). The pivot does not receive additional θ -roles from the Spec of the non-agentive VoiceP or athematic ApplP, as in Nez Perce and Tagalog external possession (Deal 2013, Nie 2019), accounting for the lack of an animacy/affectedness requirement on the possessor (2a).



This analysis is supported by independent evidence for the existence of possessor extraction in Balinese (4a). Further, the possessum must be syntactically active prior to NI given its ability to launch float of canonically post-N quantifiers (4b) and head relative clauses of various voices (4c). Crucially, these RCs obey the same extraction restrictions as non-incorporated nouns (4d).

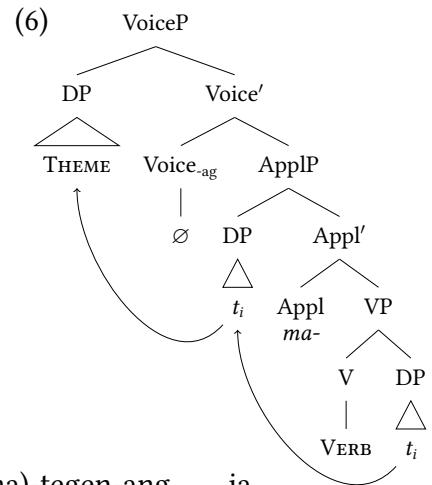
- (4) a. Nyen sane panak-n-e nepukin tiang?
 who REL child-POSS-DEF AV.see 1SG
 ‘Who is it whose child saw me?’
 b. Umah-ne liu ma-kabang.
 house-DEF many MA-spiderweb
 ‘The house has many spiderwebs’
 c. Tiang ma-baju_i [sane *t_i* jahit tiang.]
 1SG MA-shirt REL OV.sew 1SG
 ‘I wear a shirt that I sewed’
 d. *Tiang ma-baju_i [sane nyahit tiang *t_i*.]
 1SG MA-shirt REL AV.sew 1SG

These are not Pseudo-NI constructions; Unlike PNI in languages like Niuean (Massam 2001), Hindi (Dayal 2011), and Danish (Asudeh & Mikkelsen 2000), Balinese allows stranding of finite RCs and doubling (2b), but bans incorporation of conjuncts (**ma-[capil lan baju]* ‘wear a hat and shirt.’)

3. *Ma-* + *V* When *ma-* applicativises overt verbs, it produces constructions with stative/reflexive meaning. These are strictly intransitive and cannot introduce AGENTS, BENEFICIARIES (5a), or reflexive anaphora (5b), even when self-directed. Udayana (2013) shows *ma-* constructions cannot control into purpose clauses or take agent-oriented adverbs, attesting to the absence of even an implicit/existentially bound AGENT. Thus, the sole argument is always a THEME/PATIENT.

- (5) a. Baju ento ma-adep (*teken Wayan). b. Ayu ma-payas (*awak-n-e).
 shirt DEM MA-sell (by Wayan) Ayu MA-adorn (*self-POSS-DEF)
 ‘The shirt was sold (*by/for Wayan).’ ‘Ayu dressed (*herself).’

I argue that these involve unaccusative-like structures (6). In the absence of an agentive VoiceP capable of introducing external arguments, the complement of V raises into Spec, ApplP for licensing and then to pivot position to Agree with T, without gaining additional θ -roles. As the semantic contexts for Middle Voice in Balinese and Indo-European (IE) are nearly identical, it follows that (6) parallels Grestenberger’s (2016) analysis of the IE mediopassive in which stative subjects originate in Spec, ApplP/as complements of V. Evidence that *ma-* subject starts off below VoiceP comes from asymmetries with further applicativisation. OV allows raising of either the beneficiary or theme, but *ma-* only allows raising of the beneficiary:



- (7) a. Ia (ma)-tegen-ang padi. b. Padi (*ma)-tegen-ang ia.
 3SG (MA)-/OV.carry-APPL rice rice (MA)-/OV.carry-APPL 3SG
 ‘He was carried rice for.’ ‘Rice was carried for him.’

As per Doron (2003) and Alexiadou & Doron (2012), *ma-* is not semantically null; it modifies the root V by voiding its requirement for an external argument and the merger of agentive VoiceP.

4. *Voice* Following Legate (2014) and Erlewine et al. (2017) in assuming Actor and Object Voice involve agentive VoicePs which first-merge Agents in their specifier, and Cole & Hermon (2005) in taking the nasal~ \emptyset prefix alternation to reflect extraction marking, a full typology of Balinese Voice obtains; the gap falls out from T needing to locally check its uninterpretable ϕ feature:

(8)

	V _{+agent}	V _{-agent}
Movement across Voice	Object Voice	‘ <i>ma-</i> ’ Voice
No Movement across Voice	Active Voice	NA

5. Selected References

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