

Grammars and Lexicons 2007

Homework 3 selected solutions

Here are some selected solutions. I'm only including the questions people had trouble with.

Part I

2)-i suffix

It is an applicative suffix that changes the OBL to an OBJ

4) The form for lexical entries:

duduk < theme location > lexical mapping
 SUBJ OBL

7) We were looking for a series of 3 sentences that were similar to B1-B3 in that they were intransitive and underwent the applicative and then the passive transformations. The possible answers were B4-B6 and B29-B31.

8) If B4 has a subject and an object then B7 is a reasonable attempt to passivize B4. (note that "air" would become an oblique in this case and that the preposition "oleh" can be optional, as we see in B31). The ungrammaticality of B7 suggests that B4 does not have an object, because it is ungrammatical to passivize B4 by moving what would be the object to the subject position. This supports Hypothesis 2, that B4 has a subject and an oblique. Further support for this hypothesis comes from the absence of the applicative -i suffix on the verb and the presence of the preposition after the verb.

9) the suffix is -kan

In addition to causing the removal of the preposition "untuk" and making the noun "adik" an object, it causes "adik" to move between the verb and the original object. This is just like the dative shift in English.

12) Noticing that -kan causes a dative shift is important here because the theme is OBJ2, not OBJ. (You can check Lori's notes on the dative shift)

beli < agent theme beneficiary >
 OBL OBJ2 SUBJ

14) This was a bit confusing to some people because B16 might have been grammatical, with a nonsensical interpretation where father is giving a gift of a younger sibling to some new bicycle. However, the point was that B16 is ungrammatical as a meaning preserving transformation of the surrounding sentences.

If you think of an ungrammatical sentence as a failed hypothesis, there are two ways to explain the ungrammaticality of B16:

A) as an attempt to passivize B13, by mapping OBJ2 to SUBJ

B) as an attempt to do the dative shift on B15, even though B15 is a passive that has become intransitive. B16 makes the OBL "untuk adik" into the OBJ "adik" and moves it to be next to the verb. The problem is that the other argument "oleh Ayah" can't make a nice OBJ2 in B16 because

it was an OBL, not an OBJ in B15.

15) We were looking for four sentences that showed a transitive verb, the dative shift and passivization. Possible answers were:

B23, 24, 25 and 27

B17, 18, 19 and 20

Part II

1) We were looking for B16, B21 and B26 where the OBJ2 moved to SUBJ in an attempted passivization.

2) We were looking for 39b, 41b and 42b in 3.3.2 of Kroeger, where different applicative suffixes were used that are not found in Chichewa.