The Morphosyntax of Applicative Construction in Dawan Language

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Abstract*

This paper is aimed at analyzing the applicative construction in Dawan Language. Applicative construction used in this paper refers to the process of advancement or promoting the peripheral argument to become a core argument. This process resulted in the valence raising of the verbs, such as an intransitive becoming transitive and a transitive becoming ditransitive. It is found that there are five types of applicative construction in Dawan language, namely benefactive, locative, recipient, instrumental, and source. Based on the analysis, it is found that there is no applicative affix in Dawan language that functions to raise or indicate a newly added argument. So, the process of raising is done through the advancement or promoting a peripheral argument to the core argument. This process of advancement then changes the role of the argument, where the oblique becomes undergoer and the undergoer argument moves to an oblique position, but not as an adjunct but as a core oblique.

1. Introduction

Dawan Language is a Central Malayo Polynesian, a sub-group of Austronesian language, spoken by about 700.000 speakers based on the statistics of 2009. The speakers of the language are spread throughout part of Oecusse-Ambeno district (Timor Leste) and west Timor, including part of Belu regency, North Central Timor regency, South Cental Timor regency, and Kupang regency (SIL International, 2014). It consists of ten dialects, namely Molo, Amanatun, Amanuban, Amarasi, Amfoang, Biboki, Miomafo, Manlea, Kupang, and Manulai (Tarno et al, 1992:1).

The characteristics of Dawan language can be observed from the phonological, morphological, and syntactic aspects. Phonologically, it possessed the process of metathesis, deletion and addition of sounds, and contraction (Benu et al, 2022; Benu et al, 2023). Morphologically, it is an agglutinative language, vocalic and open syllabic, and cliticization (Tarno et al., 1992:102; Reteg, 2002; Benu, 2019; 2022.). Syntactically, it is a nominative-accusative language, with a verbal and nonverbal predicate. Its verbal predicate clauses have the order of Subject Verb Object (SVO) or Agent Verb Patient (AVP) (Arka, 2000; Budiarta, 2009; Benu, 2022).

The characteristics of Dawan language stated above proved that there have been many studies done relating to the linguistic aspects of Dawan language, either published or unpublished in the form of a book, theses, and articles. However, some aspects need to be elaborated deeply to explore the phenomenon of the language, especially its syntactic structure. One of the phenomena is related to the clause structure, that all languages including Dawan language are having a means for structuring clauses that allow a peripheral argument or adjunct as a core-object argument. This phenomenon is called applicative construction.

Applicative constructions is part of the typological study related to morphosyntactic phenomena of language (Lityaningrum, 2022). Payne (1997:187) described the applicative construction as a strategy of increasing the valence that brings a peripheral participant to be a direct object. In this case, the structure of the application is advancing or promoting an argument to a core or direct object. The core or direct object is also called the base object by Peterson (2007) for the object of the verb in its base form and the "applicative object" for the NP that becomes an object by way of the applicative.

Applicative construction is typically described as a process of transitive, based on the prototypical of applicative construction by Dixon (2010:169), since if they involve an intransitive base verb, they result in a verb that has a direct object. In other words, an applicative construction can be regarded as a process of changing intransitive to become a transitive verb or mono-transitive to become a ditransitive verb. As also has been pointed out by Dixon and Aikhenvald (2000:13) that in general, an applicative object shows the characteristic of a direct object of a ditransitive verb. Another prototypical of the applicative construction proposed by Dixon is the process of adding a non-subject argument to the argument structure of the verb. This process is done through the affixation of an applicative affix as stated by Artawa (2004:67), Peterson (2007:1), and Booij (2007:196).

The applicative affixes function to change the valence of the verb. For example, an instrumental or locative NP can be changed to the status of O by adding an applicative affix to the verb (Booij, 2007:196). It means that an affix can change an argument as the core object of the sentence such as in Indonesian language (Shiohara, 2012; Sitorus & Mulyadi, 2022) and Belitong language (Darmawan & Kaldina, 2022). The promotion of oblique in applicative construction is not always done through the applicative morpheme as in Dyrbal (Van Valin & La Polla, 1997:337) or in Rote (Balukh, 2008), and mostly in Australian languages (Aikhenvald, 2011:95). Based on the example in Dyrbal and Rote, to anticipate the lack of affixes (Benu, 2022), the writer follows the prototypical of applicative construction by Tallerman (2011:226) that changes may occur in the morphology of the verb to signal the applicative construction which is mean that applicative construction is not necessarily done through affixation. It seems that applicative structures always increase valency but according to Amos (2020), this is not exactly true because it depends on the base it connects to. The applicative structure may affect verb valency by either adding or suppressing an object.

There are important things that readers need to know, namely related to phonological and morphosyntactic characteristics because they are very productive. These characteristics can interfere with understanding due to changes in phonetic structure, words, phrases, or clauses. Phonetically, the process of metathesis, sound deletion, or contraction is a productive feature. Morphosyntactically, it can be observed from the existence of clitic in the verb structure (Benu, 2019; 2022).

This study is aimed at describing the linguistic phenomenon in the Dawan language especially those that are interested in applicative construction. This is a field study to reveal and

explain the data based on language reality. The data were natural and were directly obtained from the native speakers of the Dawan language.

2. Research Methods

The data in this study came from field research focused on the Amanuban dialect in the Kolbano sub-district, South Central Timor district, East Nusa Tenggara. All data used in this study is verbal data in the form of sentences, not in the form of numbers, and the analysis of the selected data is carried out using descriptive-argumentative and qualitative analysis techniques. In this case, the qualitative methodological conception is used to refer to the phenomenological epistemological conception which states that the object of science is not only limited to sensual or empirical data, but includes phenomena in the form of perceptions, wills, and beliefs of the subject about something outside the subject.

This study uses qualitative methods because the type of data used is qualitative. The data is in the form of sentences or clauses. There are two data sources used, namely primary data sources and secondary data sources. Primary data is obtained directly from the field, where the researcher is directly involved with the speakers of Dawan language to collect sentences or clauses. Data were obtained from conversations, both formal and informal, between researchers and data sources and between data sources. The data was also obtained from three informants to test the level of acceptability of the clause obtained from field data. The way to obtain informants is done through a key person, on the grounds that the researcher already understands the initial information about the object of research. The purposive sampling technique is used to determine the informants that are selected based on the consideration of the research objectives. Secondary data were obtained from other data sources namely from reading sources in Dawan language, such as the Bible, and folk stories.

The research data were taken from native speakers of the Dawan language by applying the participatory observation method. This method is equipped with a note-taking technique. The next method is the interview method which is used to test the acceptability and non-acceptance of sentence constructions or clauses. To obtain the desired data, in-depth interviews used elicitation techniques (provoking). With this technique, the researcher directs the informant to reveal sentences, clauses, or phrases. In addition, elicitation techniques were also used to check the level of acceptance of variations in sentence structures or clauses. The data analysis technique used is descriptive-analytic, and the approach used is deductive-inductive.

3. Result and Discussion

Theoretically, an applicative verb needs another core argument when compared to its basic verb. Semantic roles of core arguments are actor and patient, for example, a transitive verb that originally had a patient noun phrase (NP) as an object needs another NP as a new object, and the original patient NP becomes oblique. It is important to note briefly the characteristics of Dawan language verbs. The verbs always agree with the subject of the clause which is marked by clitics as pronominal affixes. An example of the clitics in the verb is shown below.

Pronoun		Example of Verbs					
		hit	sleep	sing	bring	come	eat
1Sg	Au	*ʔbiso*	*ʔtup*	*ʔsi*	*eki*	*om*	*uah*
1Pl.i	Hit	*tbiso*	*ttup*	*tsi*	*teki*	*tem*	*tah*
1Pl.e	Hai	*mbiso*	*mtup*	*msi*	*meki*	*em*	*miah*
2 Sg	Ho	*mbiso*	*mtup*	*msi*	*meki*	*om*	*muah*
2Pl	Hi	*mbiso*	*mtup*	*msi*	*meki*	*em*	*miah*
3 Sg	In	*nbiso*	*ntup*	*nsi*	*neki*	*nem*	*nah*
3Pl	Sin	*nbison*	*ntupan*	*nsin*	*nekin*	*neman*	*nahan*

The pronominal affixes consist of two types, namely asyllabic which is only one sound and counted as part of the main verb, and syllabic which can stand as one syllable. Another thing to be considered is that verbs in Dawan will sometimes change their form, either metathesis and sound deletion or addition with certain sounds due to phonological needs. Among those, metathesis is the one that is very productive in Dawan language which is not only caused by phonology but also its morphosyntax, semantics, and discourse. Metathesis is not only in verbs but also in nouns and adjective. The following are the examples of metathesis in Dawan language.

a. The root *biso* → *bios*
    ho mbios kau
    2Sg 2Sg.hit 1Sg.OBJ
    "you hit me"

b. The root *eki* → *eik*

    bapa neik hau
    Father 3Sg.bring wood
    "father brings the wood"

The data (a-b) clearly shows the change of the verb. The first position of the sounds is changed and the attachment of the pronominal affixes. This explanation is important when reading and comprehending the Dawanese clauses.

In Dawan language, the process of taking the oblique argument to become patient is done through promotion or advancement because of the lack of applicative affixes. Therefore, applicative construction in this writing is an advancement or promotion of a non-core argument to a core argument. In Role and Reference Grammar (Foley and Van Valin 1984; Van Valin Jr. and LaPolla 1999:29), core arguments are arguments required by a nucleus, namely actor (A), undergoer (U), and arguments which would be classified as an oblique. The labels G and T are also used for the generalized Goal and Theme roles of a tri-valent verb. There are five types of applicative construction found in the Dawan language, they are benefactive, locative, instrumental, source, and recipient. Those types are discussed below.

a. Benefactive

Benefactive in applicative construction is the participant who gets benefit from an action performed. Benefactive verbs have three specific benefactive roles, namely beneficiary, recipient, and goal. Benefactive verbs are divided into two types of clauses, namely the double object

construction (DOC) with and without a preposition. The structure is following the pattern of S + P/V + IO + DO and S + P/V + O + PREP + OP.

All verbs that can take benefactive also appear as simple transitive verbs with an object that indicates the patient. There are two objects in the benefactive construction, namely, the primary object is one that immediately follows the verb and identifies the beneficiary. The second is the secondary object that functions to identify the patient.

Benefactive construction in Dawan language as in the following.

1) a. *Bapa   n-eik   kokis*
   Father 3Sg-bring cake
   "Father brings cake"

   b. *Bapa   n-eik   kokis neu   kau*
   Father 3Sg-bring cake PREP 1Sg.ACC
   "Father brought cake for me"

   c. *Bapa   n-eik   kau   kokis*
   Father 3Sg-bring 1Sg.ACC cake
   "Father brought me cake"

   d. *Bapa   n-eki-n   kokis*
   Father 3Sg-bring-3Sg cake
   "Father bring him cake"

The verb *n-eik* "3T-bring" in (a) above is a transitive verb with two arguments, namely *bapa* "father" as the (A)ctor and *kokis* "cake" as (U)ndergoer. In (b), there is an addition of beneficiary argument *kau* "I" in the peripheral position, which is marked by the preposition *neu*. The applicative clause is shown in (c), that it is by promoting the peripheral argument to become a core argument. It is clear from the data that there are no affixes that indicate the applicative. The order of the (c) sentence shows that the beneficiary argument *kau* "I" is placed after the predicate and followed by the patient. It is also clear that there is no applicative marker on the verb. The prefix *n-* in the verb *n-eik* is a subject pronominal prefix of the third singular. It will always agree with the subject. The verb *nekin (n-eki-n)* "he brings him (something)" shows that the beneficiary argument is indicated by the suffix *–n*, which is an enclitic of the third person singular.

Another thing that catches attention is the change in the phonological structure of the root verb *eik* becomes *eki*. The verb root is *eik* which sometimes becomes *eki* by the process of metathesis (Benu et.al, 2023). The process of metathesis is not caused by the prefix but by the first sound of the following word. The following example can explain the argument.

e. *bapa n-eik pen-enu neu ume*
   father 3Sg-bring corn-PL PREP home
   " father bring the corns home"

f. *Bapa neki nsaun*
   father 3Sg-bring 3Sg-down
   "Father goes downward"

g. *Bapa neki ʔfaun feuʔ*
   father 3Sg-bring shirt new
   "father brings new shirt"

The verb *neik* in data (e) is the same as data (a, b, c) which the same form. So, by these data, it can be inferred that it becomes *eik* if the initial sound of the following word is */k/* and */p/*. The two data (f-g) above are clear the verb *eik* becomes e*ki* because of the initial sound of the following word. The initial sounds of the following words are nasal (n) and glottal (ʔ). It should be emphasized here that the glottal sound /ʔ/ has the same role as other consonant sounds in Dawan. For example, the word *mone* "husband" and *moneʔ* "outside", can also be present at the beginning of a word like *ʔnaek* "big, and in the middle like *leʔu* "medicine" (Rose 2020). Other examples such as *ume ʔhanaʔ* "house (for) cooking/kitchen and *uem fafi* "house (for) pigs". The two examples above are in the form of noun phrases but they are different because of a metathesis process. *ume* in *ume ʔhanaʔ* doesn't change because what follows it starts with a sound glottal, whereas *ume* in *uem fafi* changes because it is not a glottal sound but a fricative /f/ sound.

b. Locative

Locative here refers to location, which is a place or spatial locus of a state of affairs, as in "the book being *on the table"*, or in "He is eating *in the kitchen"*. The following are examples of locative construction in Dawan language.

2) a. *Bapa n-toko n-bi   hala*
        father 3Sg-sit 3Sg-PREP bed
        "Father sits on the bed"

    b. *Ho m-tup   am-bi   ke'an*
        2Sg 2Sg-sleep 2Sg-PREP room
        "You sleep in the room"

The two data above shows that the locative arguments *hala* "bed" dan *ke'an* "room" are noncore (periphery). The result of the analysis toward the two data in this study shows that locative arguments can be promoted to the core by means of two ways, namely argument fronting and verb serialization. The first way is seen in (3) below.

3) a. *hala bapa es an-toko n-bi-ne*
        bed   father FOK 3Sg-sit 3Sg-PREP-Sg
        "It is the bed that father sits on"

    b. *ke'an ho es   am-tup am-bi-ne*
        room 2Sg FOK 2Sg-sleep 2Sg-PREP-3Sg
        "It is my bed that you sleep on"

The data shows that locative argument *hala* "bed" and *ke'an* "room" are placed in the front or preceded the agent *bapa* "father" and *ho* "you.Sg". While, the preposition of *m-bi* "2Sg-on" received a new marking, that is the clitic *–ne* that refers to the locative argument.

The promotion of locative argument from non-core to the core by means of fronting as shown in the above data is less productive because such clause construction is never found during the process of data collection, both through an interview, observation, and documentation methods. The important point that needs to be investigated deeply is whether all construction in locative construction can apply the same ways of fronting.

The second way found to be more productive in promoting the locative argument to the core is through serial verb construction. Locative serialization is understood as a serial verb construction that has a locative meaning (Benu, 2014).

4) a. *In n-tup an-bi au ke'an*
        3Sg 3Sg-sleep 3Sg-PREP 1Sg room
        "He sleeps in my room"

    b. *In n-tup na-bala au ke'an*
        3Sg 3Sg-sleep 3Sg-stay 1Sg room
        "He sleeps in my room"

5) a. *Ho m-aen m-eu ume*
        2Sg 2Sg-run 2Sg-PREP house
        "You run to the house"

    b. *Ho m-aen m-ani ume*
        2Sg 2Sg-run 2Sg-to house
        "You run to the house"

The locative *au ke'an* "my room" and *ume* "house" as in (4a and 5a) are in periphery position which are marked by the preposition of *nbi* "at" and *meu* "to". These two locatives can be promoted to the core through serial verb constructions as shown in data (4b) and (5b). Besides, the verbs *na-bala* and *m-ani* are two verbs that take two arguments of locative and always take place as V2 in SVC. These two verbs are also can take the position of the nucleus or the predicate of a clause and never in the periphery of the clause.

If it is viewed from the side of the participant's movement, this serialization can also be said as motion serialization (see Durie, 1997:335). The SVC *maen m'ani* "run to" in (5b) implies the direction of the place where the participant *ho* "you run to". The place where the participant runs to is *ume* "house".

c. Instrumental

An instrumental is usually an inanimate thing that is used by an agent in doing something. There are three core arguments in instrumental construction which indicate the actor, patient, and instrument. An NP that refers to the actor is the subject, an NP that refers to the patient is object 1, and an NP that denotes the instrument is object 2. Instrumental construction in Dawan language can be seen in the following data (6).

6) a. *Na Nani n-bios asu na*
        ART NAME 3Sg-hit dog that
        "Nani hits that dog"

    b1. *Na Nani n-bios asu n-eik hau tuka'*
         ART NAME 3Sg-hit dog 3Sg-use wood short
         "Nani hits that dog using a short wood"

    b2. *Na Nani n-bios asu n-eik ue*
         ART NAME 3Sg-hit dog 3Sg-use rattan
         "Nani hits that dog using rattan"

Data (6a) above shows the basic clause construction with the verb *biso* "hit" as its nucleus which takes two arguments, *na Nani* "NAME" and *asu* "dog". Proclitic *n-* in the verb marks the agreement with the subject. Compared to the basic verb construction (6a) and an applicative

construction 6b1-b2), it is clear that there is no marker on the verb to mark the newly added argument instrumental *hau tuka* "short wood" and *ue* "rattan". We notice that object 1 (patient) in the basic clause construction remains in object 1 in 6b1 and b2. The newly added argument of instrument *hau tuka* and *ue* get the position as object 2 following the verb *neik*. I considered this verb as a lexical verb because it can function as a nucleus that takes two arguments, but the meaning depends on the context and object that follows. Here are some examples.

7) a, *Au eik   hau*
    1Sg 1Sg. bring wood
    "I bring wood"

   b. *Au eik   oto*
    1Sg 1Sg.drive car
    "I drive car"

Based on the examples, it is clear that -*eik* is not a proposition, but a lexical verb that means "use" as in 7b1-b2. Since *eik* is a verb, it can be concluded that instrumental construction in Dawan language exists in the form of serial verb construction which is formed by the V1 plus *eik* in the V2 position.

The argument *asu* can be omitted, but not changing the meaning of the whole sentence. The argument *asu* can be omitted if as an object is already known or is already stated before as in the following data (8).

8)   *Na   Nani   n-biso   n-eik   ue*
     ART NAME 3Sg-hit 3Sg-use rattan
     "Nani hits (someone/something) using rattan"

There is another way of structuring the instrumental clauses in Dawan language as in (8), in which its predicate (nucleus) already indicates the instrument used by the actor. The following (9a) shows that it is derived from (6 b1) in which the instrumental argument *hau tuka* is changed to be a verb. This kind of derivation cannot be applied to (6 b2), as shown in (9 b). This derivational process is more likely cultural than morphological.

9)   a.   *Na   Nani   n-hau   tuk   asu na*
              ART NAME 3Sg-wood short dog that
              "Nani hits the dog using short wood"

    b.   **   *Na   Nani   na-ue   asu na*
              ART NAME 3Sg-rattan dog that
              "Nani hits the dog using rattan"

Based on the analysis above, it can be concluded that there are two ways of structuring the instrumental construction, namely adding the instrumental argument by verb serialization and deriving the instrumental argument becomes the verb or ne nucleus of the clause. There are also two reasons that applicative instrumental does not undergo promotion is that the two arguments (patient and instrument) are both the core arguments. The second reason is that Dawan language has some verb that indicates the kind of instrument used in carrying out the action. For example, *heli* and *ote* mean "cut" but *heli* collocates with a knife and *ote* collocates with a machete or sword.

d. Recipient

The recipient is someone who gets something (it is always animate or some kind of quasi-animate entity, such as an organization). There is no morphological marker for recipient construction. The following data is clearly describing it.

10) a. *Na   Leno   n-fe   sulat neu bi   Lia*
    ART NAME 3Sg-send letter PREP ART NAME
    "Leno sends letter to Lia"

   b. *Na   Leno n-fe-n   bi   Lia   sulat*
    ART NAME 3Sg-give-3Sg ART NAME letter
    "Leno gives Lia a letter"

11) a. *Ho mu-ton   foto   neu   kau*
    2Sg 2Sg-show photo PREP 1Sg
    "You showed the photo to me"

   b. *Ho mu-ton   kau foto*
    2Sg 2Sg-show 1Sg photo
    "You showed me the photo"

The recipient argument *bi Lia* "Name" in (10a) is in the periphery (*noncore*) which is marked by the preposition *neu* "to". This recipient argument can be promoted to the core argument of the clause as shown in (10b). It can be seen that the verb *n-fe* becomes *n-fe-n*, that is the addition of *–n*. This marker, either as a prefix or suffix, both are not affixes but clitics.

Since these markers are clitics, then, *n-* is proclitic refers to the argument *tata* "brother/sister", while *–n* as enclitic refers to the recipient argument, that is *bi Lia* "Name". This enclitic will be omitted if the recipient argument is not 3Sg as seen in (11) and (12) in the following.

12) a. *Atoni na n-fe   in   an   feto neu kau*
    Man   that 3Sg-give 3Sg child female PREP 1Sg
    "That man gave his daughter to me"

   b. *Atoni na   n-fe kau in   an   feto*
    Man that 3Sg 1Sg 3Sg.POSS child female
    "That man gave me his daughter"

The above constructions show the recipient argument is 1Sg, so, if this argument is raised to become a core argument, it is only done by promotion. It means that there is no applicative marker, especially in recipient construction.

e. Source

The source is the point of origin of a state of affairs. It is used in a variety of cases, which can conflate the ambiguity between the recipient and the goal. Check the details of this type of construction below.

13) a. *Bi   Ona   n-toit loit   naʔko kau*
    ART NAMA 3Sg-ask money PREP 1Sg
    "Ona asked for money from me"

   b. *Bi   Ona   n-toit   kau loit*
    ART NAME 3Sg-ask 1Sg money
    "Ona asked for money from me"

Construction (13a) above shows that argument source *kau* is in the periphery position which is indicated by the preposition *naʔko* "from". The advancement can be done to the argument to the core status as shown in (13b). Again, as other constructions previously discussed, there is no applicative affix on the verb. Therefore, it can be concluded that this construction is done by advancing the oblique argument to the core status.

5. Conclusion

Based on the discussion of the data, it can be concluded that applicative construction in Dawan language is a process of raising the valence, where an intransitive to a transitive, a transitive becomes a ditransitive, etc. It is done through the advancement of peripheral argument to the core. The process of applicative construction is automatically changing the role of the argument, where undergoer becomes oblique and the oblique becomes undergoer. The process of advancement does not change the verb form because there is no applicative affixes in Dawan language.

ABBREVIATION

A   : Actor
U   : Undergoer
ACC   : Accusative
APPL : Applicative
Sg   : Singular
ART   : Article
Pl   : Plural
POSS : Possessive
PREP : Preposition
SVC   : Serial Verb Construction

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