

**ELLIPSIS IN AKLANON (BISAYAN, PHILIPPINES)\***

In this talk, I will present and analyze novel data showing ellipsis in Aklanon, a Bisayan language spoken in the central Philippines, e.g. (1,2).

(1) *ga-kaʔón ʔit ságiṅ si Hwan ʔag ʔit mansánas si Néli.*  
 AV-eat INDF banana NOM J. & INDF apple NOM N.

‘Juan is eating a banana and Nellie, an apple.’

(2) *gin-pútouy galiʔ ni Hwan ro káhuṅ ḡará ʔag ro káhuṅ ḡató ni Néli.*  
 PV-cut PRT OBL J. DEF tree this & DEF tree that OBL N.

‘Juan must have cut down this tree, and Nellie, that tree!’

At first glance, the data in (1,2) is reminiscent of ‘gapping,’ a type of clausal ellipsis which affects conjunctions wherein repetitive material is elided, leaving arguments and/or adjuncts behind without an overt predicate (see Johnson 2017 for an overview). That is, it seems that (1) is equivalent to the following:

(3) [*ga-kaʔón ʔit ságiṅ si Hwan*] ʔag [~~*ga-kaʔón ʔit mansánas si Néli*~~].  
 AV-eat INDF banana NOM J. & AV-eat INDF apple NOM N.

‘Juan is eating a banana and Nellie is eating an apple.’

Consider a parallel example in English:

(4) Emily is painting the wall, and Janet is ~~painting~~ the ceiling.

In (4), it is clear that the predicate from the second conjunct is elided, leaving the arguments behind (though the size of coordinations in English gapping is contested in current literature, with competing accounts proposing either ATB movement or VP ellipsis in vP coordinations; see Johnson 2017). Unlike English, the Aklanon data is confounded by predicate-initial constituent order, which opens up several possible analyses of these structures. This talk aims to address whether such structures constitute a true gapping operation in Aklanon, and if so, to what extent this operation resembles the English one.

For instance, one alternate analysis of (1) is that the four nominal arguments are somehow conjoined and share a single verb *ga-kaʔón*:

(5) *ga-kaʔón [ʔit ságiṅ si Hwan] ʔag [ʔit mansánas si Néli].*  
 AV-eat INDF banana NOM J. & INDF apple NOM N.

‘Juan is eating a banana and Nellie, an apple.’

However, there are three arguments against this analysis. First, neither set of arguments (*ʔit ságiṅ si Hwan* ‘a banana Juan’ or *ʔit mansánas si Néli* ‘an apple Nellie’) forms a constituent. Secondly, the Aklanon conjunction *ʔag* ‘and’ can, in fact, be used to coordinate two CP/TP clauses:

(6) [*ga-kaʔón ʔit ságiṅ si Hwan*] ʔag [*ga-kaʔón ʔit mansánas si Néli*].  
 AV-eat INDF banana NOM J. & AV-eat INDF apple NOM N.

‘Juan is eating a banana and Nellie is eating an apple.’

The availability of clausal coordination in (6), the overt parallel to (1), suggests that clausal coordination should also be available in (1). Finally, the arguments in the first conjunct may be separated by a pseudocleft (see Potsdam 2007 for similar structures in Malagasy), which would require some kind of discontinuous coordination to rescue a proposal like (5).

(7) *ʔísdaʔ uʔaŋ ro gina-kaʔón ni Hwan ʔag tinóuʔah si Néli.*  
 fish only DEF PV-eat OBL J. & vegetables NOM N.

‘It is only fish that Juan eats and Nellie, (only) vegetables.’

The data in (7) introduces a new argument for clausal coordination and ellipsis in Aklanon ‘gapping’: the subject of the second conjunct, *si Néli*, bears the case associated with AGENT VOICE, but the pseudoclefted verb in the first conjunct bears PATIENT VOICE morphology. This suggests that an elided verb in the second conjunct is assigning case, and that such constructions must at least be PredP coordinations with a ‘gapped’ predicate in the second conjunct. Note that such voice mismatches requires further exploration in Aklanon.

This talk will also address problems for a gapping analysis of the Aklanon data. One small issue is that scrambling effects of the core arguments in Aklanon may surface in gapped coordinations, e.g. [[V S O] [& [O S]]]. This stands in contrast a requirement of English gapping to preserve parallelism between the conjuncts, e.g. \**Aidan went to New York on Saturday and on Sunday Dennis to Boston*. By contrast, in Aklanon, strict syntactic identity of the constituents does not seem to be required (also shown by 7). Therefore, it may be that parallelism constraints on gapping are language-specific. More problematic is preliminary data like (8), which suggests that Aklanon ‘gapping’ may violate island constraints. This is distinct from English, which has even stricter island constraints on gapping than *wh*-movement (Neijt 1979; Johnson 2017).

(8) *kutána ni Hwan koŋ sínʔo ro nag-dauʔáh ʔit biko ʔag ni Néli ʔit ʔúbeh.*  
 ask OBL J. COMP who DEF AV-bring INDF biko & OBL N. INDF ubeh  
 ‘Juan asked who brought biko and Nellie ~~asked who brought~~ ubeh.’

The natural conclusion of (8) would be that the Aklanon operation cannot be the result of movement, but additional work must be done to survey the full range of apparent island violations like (8).

Thus, taking into account the facts presented above (along with additional data involving epistemic discourse particles and negation), I tentatively propose that this operation in Aklanon is indicative of a gapping-type ellipsis operation, but with the following open questions remaining: What is the size of the coordination structure (this is an open question for English as well)? What are additional diagnostics of clausal or predicate coordinations in Aklanon? To what extent are voice mismatches possible in Aklanon coordinations?

**ABBREVIATIONS** AV: agent voice; COMP: complementizer; DEF: definite; INDF: indefinite; NOM: nominative; OBL: oblique; PV: patient voice; PRT: discourse particle.

#### REFERENCES

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