

Grammatical Relations in Hiligaynon

Marianne Mithun

University of California, Santa Barbara
mithun@linguistics.ucsb.edu

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The Austronesian languages of the Philippines show particularly dynamic argument structures, but their systems of grammatical relations have been assigned to a variety of types. Bloomfield (1917) cast his analysis of Tagalog in traditional terms of subjects and objects, like many other authors before and since. McKaughan (1958, 1962), describing Maranao, observed that their structure differs significantly from those of familiar nominative/accusative systems and suggested the term ‘topic’ for Bloomfield’s ‘subject’ category. McKaughan’s ‘topic’ terminology became widespread among Philippinists (though he renounced the term in 1973), and Philippine systems of grammatical relations are often classified as a distinct type. Other works have described various Philippine systems as ergative/absolutive, identifying Bloomfield’s subjects and McKaughan’s topics as absolutes (Payne 1982 on Tagalog, De Guzmán 1988, Gerds 1988 on Ilocano, Brainard 1994 on Karao, Mithun 1994 on Kapampangan, and others). The systems have also been classified as proximate/obviative, with the subject/topic/absolute identified as proximate (Bickel 2011). Philippine languages differ among themselves, but many share basic clause structures. They thus offer fertile ground for discussions of the nature of grammatical relations. They provide rich opportunities for moving beyond simple listing of types to investigating in finer detail just what the types share and where they differ. They also raise questions about the interplay between type definitions and typological generalizations. When should categories be defined by their behavior with respect to such generalizations as accessibility hierarchies, quantifier float, or differential argument marking, for example, and when should the generalizations be refined to account for a wider variety of systems?

In part because work on Philippine languages has such a long history, much description has been based on isolated sentences translated from a contact language, a useful method for many purposes. But reasons behind speaker choices about argument structure often involve information packaging over larger stretches of speech. Here it will be shown that at least one Philippine language exhibits relatively straightforward ergative/absolutive coding, with common patterns of differential argument marking, and a robust absolutive behavioral category constraining many, but not all, syntactic constructions. Hiligaynon (hil), also called Ilonggo, is a member of the Visayan group of Philippine languages, most closely related to Tagalog and Cebuano, with around seven million first-language speakers living primarily in the provinces of Iloilo and Negros Occidental, and several million second-language speakers. Major works on Hiligaynon include two dictionaries (Kaufmann 1934, Motus 1971a), a pedagogical grammar (Motus 1971b), a reference grammar (Wolfenden 1971), and a sketch of basic syntax (Wolfenden 1975).¹

The discussion here is organized as follows. Section 1 describes basic clause structure, particularly the coding of grammatical relations on arguments, adjuncts, and predicates. Section 2 describes argument structure alternations, with detransitivizing and transitivizing constructions, especially applicatives, causatives, reflexives, and reciprocals. Section 3 examines grammatical relations in use and the effects of referent properties (animacy, identifiability, specificity) and information flow through discourse (topicality, topic shifts, focus). Section 4 describes syntactic constructions observed to be constrained by particular grammatical relations crosslinguistically:

imperatives, quantifier float, conjunction reduction, nominalization, content questions, relativization, secondary predication, and complementation. It will be seen that when constructions are examined individually, in use, Hiligaynon patterns of grammatical relations are actually more similar to those of other, unrelated languages than has sometimes been thought, and in line with hierarchies predicting the distribution of alignment types over various parts of the grammar.

1. Clause structure

Basic constituent order in Hiligaynon is predicate-initial. Argument structure is marked on both arguments and predicates.

1.1. Arguments

Grammatical relations are distinguished on arguments by the shapes of pronominal clitics and determiners. Both show ergative/absolutive patterning. The sentences below were elicited for purposes of comparison.²

(1) Pronominal clitics

- a. *Nag=lúmpat akó.*
INTR.PFV=jump 1SG.ABS
'I jumped.'
- b. *Nag=lúmpat syá.*
INTR.PFV=jump 3SG.ABS
'He/she jumped.'
- c. *Gin=dalá' ko syá.*
TR.PFV=transport 1SG.ERG 3SG.ABS
'I brought him/her.'
- d. *Gin=dalá' akó nyá.*
TR.PFV=transport 1SG.ABS 3SG.ERG
'He/she brought me.'

(2) Determiners

- a. *Nag=lúmpat ang báta'.*
INTR.PFV=jump ABS child
'The child jumped.'
- b. *Gin=dalá' ko ang báta'.*
TR.PFV=transport 1SG.ERG ABS child
'I brought the child.'
- c. *Gin=dalá' sang báta'.*
TR.PFV=transport ERG child
'The child brought it.'

- d. *Gin=dalá' nya sa baláy ni Nánay.*
 TR.PFV=transport 3SG.ERG LOC house POSS.PR Mother
 'He/she brought it **to** Mother's house.'

The arguments identified here as absolutes correspond to Bloomfield's 'subjects', McKaughan's 'topics', and Bickel's 'proximatives'.

The pronominal clitics generally alternate with lexical determiner phrases and follow the first word of the predicate. There is no standardized orthography, but the clitics are written as separate words by speakers.

	ABSOLUTIVE	ERGATIVE	OBLIQUE
1SG	<i>akó</i>	<i>ko</i>	<i>ákon</i>
2SG	<i>ka, ikáw</i>	<i>mo</i>	<i>ímo</i>
3SG	<i>síya, syá</i>	<i>níya, nyá</i>	<i>íya, yá</i>
1PL.INCL	<i>kitá</i>	<i>náton</i>	<i>áton</i>
1PL.EXCL	<i>kamí</i>	<i>námon</i>	<i>ámon</i>
2PL	<i>kamó</i>	<i>nyo</i>	<i>ínyo</i>
3PL	<i>silá</i>	<i>nilá</i>	<i>íla</i>

Table 1: Pronominal Clitics

The determiners distinguish personal nouns from common nouns. Personal nouns are primarily proper names of people or personified animals. Associative personal forms designate persons and their associates: their family, their circle of friends, their group, etc.

	ABSOLUTIVE	ERGATIVE	GEN. OBLIQUE	LOCATIVE
PERSONAL SG.	<i>si</i>	<i>ni</i>	<i>kay</i>	<i>(sa)kay</i>
PERSONAL ASSOC	<i>sánday</i>	<i>nánday</i>	<i>kánday</i>	<i>(sa) kánday</i>
COMMON	<i>ang</i>	<i>sang</i>	<i>sang</i>	<i>sa</i>

Table 2: Determiners

Other expressions treated as proper nouns in many languages, such as names of places, languages, and organizations, are treated grammatically as common nouns in Hiligaynon.

Absolutes occur in both intransitive and transitive clauses. Neither semantic role nor aspect affects their status. The absolutes in (3a), (3b), and (3c) represent semantic agents of events, those in (3d) semantic patients of events, and those in (3e) semantic patients of states.

- (3) Intransitive absolutes
- | | | |
|----|---|--|
| a. | <i>Naglúmpat akó.</i>
<i>Naglúmpat ka.</i> | ‘I jumped.’
‘You jumped.’ |
| b. | <i>Naglúmpat si Nánay.</i>
<i>Naglúmpat sánday Pedro.</i> | ‘Mother jumped.’
‘Pedro and his gang jumped.’ |
| c. | <i>Naglúmpat ang nánay ko.</i>
<i>Naglúmpat ang báta’.</i> | ‘My mother jumped.’
‘The child jumped.’ |
| d. | <i>Nagbansúli’ akó.</i>
<i>Nagbansúli’ ka.</i> | ‘I fell headlong.’
‘You fell headlong.’ |
| e. | <i>Masákit akó.</i>
<i>Masákit ka.</i> | ‘I am sick’
‘You are sick’ |
- (4) Transitive absolutes
- | | | |
|----|---|--|
| a. | <i>Gindalá akó.</i>
<i>Gindalá ka.</i> | ‘(He/she) brought me.’
‘(He/she) brought you.’ |
| b. | <i>Kwa’ón ko si Nánay.</i>
<i>Gindalá ko sánday Pedro.</i> | ‘I’m going to get Mom.’
‘I brought Pedro and his gang.’ |
| c. | <i>Gindalá ang nánay ko.</i>
<i>Gindalá ang báta’.</i> | ‘He/she brought my mother.’
‘He/she brought the child.’ |

Ergative forms occur only in transitives.

- (5) Ergatives
- | | | |
|----|---|--|
| a. | <i>Gindalá ko.</i>
<i>Gindalá mo.</i> | ‘I brought (it).’
‘You brought (it).’ |
| b. | <i>Gindalá ni Nánay.</i>
<i>Gindalá nánday Pedro.</i> | ‘Mother brought (it).’
‘Pedro and his family brought (it).’ |
| c. | <i>Gindalá sang nánay ko.</i>
<i>Gindalá sang báta’.</i> | ‘My mother brought (it).’
‘The child brought (it).’ |

Example (6) shows a placename patterning as a common noun.

- (6) *Kag ang ínyo nag=tupá’ sa Lopez Jaena.*
 and ABS 2PL.OBL TR.PRF=fall LOC PLACENAME
 ‘And yours were given to Lopez Jaena (a district in Iloilo).’

hil083a.06.43MM

A special pronoun *ta* is used as a first person inclusive and as a first person ergative acting on a second person.

- (7) Inclusives
- a. *Ká'on ta.* 'Let's eat.'
Gindalá ta sya. 'We (INCLUSIVE) brought him/her.'
- b. *Gindalá ta ka.* 'I brought you.'
Gindalá ta kamó. 'I brought you all.'

If two pronominal arguments co-occur in a clause, the ergative usually appears before the absolutive. In combinations with a third person acting on a first or second person, however, the first or second person absolutive can precede the third person ergative.

- (8) *Gindalá akó nyá.* 'He/she brought me.' 1SG < 3SG
Gindalá ka nyá. 'He/she brought you.' 2SG < 3SG
Gindalá ka nilá. 'They brought you.' 2SG < 3PL

As in most languages, clauses with multiple lexical arguments are relatively rare in spontaneous speech, especially within a single intonation unit. When they do occur, the ergative generally precedes the absolutive.

- (9) *Kag binutang sang báta',*
and placed ERG child
'And **the kid** (ERG) put
- ang íya bisiklíta sa dúta.*
ABS 3SG.POSS bicycle LOC ground
his bicycle (ABS) on the ground.'

hil168.00.52.MM

There is occasional homophony between the first person singular ergative *ko* and absolutive (*a*)*ko* in fast and informal speech, particularly after vowels, but the two are distinct for speakers. There is also syncretism between the common ergative and genitive determiners, both *sang*. These, too, are robustly distinct for speakers, who can quickly substitute an appropriate pronoun or personal nominal which distinguishes those cases.

Ergative pronouns and determiners match genitives in form. The two are certainly connected historically, but synchronically they are distinct. As possessives, genitive pronouns appear post-nominally: *ang túdlo' ko* 'my finger' (the finger **my**). Possession can also be indicated by oblique pronouns before the noun: *ang ákon túdlo'* 'my finger' (the **my** finger).

1.2. Adjuncts

Additional participants may be represented in the clause as general obliques or locatives. Obliques serve a range of functions. They can be used for semantic instruments.

- (10) *Gin=tinlo'án ko sang da'án nga sílhig.*
TR.PFV=clean.LOC.TR 1SG.ERG OBL old LK broom
'I cleaned it **with the old broom.**'

- (11) ‘(They are required)

mag=húgas *sang* *íla* *kamót*,
IRR.INTR.COND=wash OBL 3PL.OBL hand
to wash their hands

sang *gin=pa-bukal-án* *nga* *dáhon* *sang* *kabúgaw*.
OBL TR.PFV=CAUS-boil-LOC.TR LK leaf GEN pomelo
with boiled pomelo leaves.’

hil036.02.43.HS

They are used with participants in a range of other semantic roles as well.

- (12) *Te’* *sang* *úna* *talyér*, *ma* *lang* *na’* *dá’*.
well OBL previous autoshop you.know just that there
‘Well **before**, that was just an auto shop you know.’

hil087b.01.34.MM

- (13) *Naga=kwan* *sila* *sang* *politika*, . . .
INTR.IPFV=do 3PL.ABS OBL politics
‘They’re engaging **in politics** [instead of concentrating on the economy].’

hil086.01.02.EH

- (14) *Kon* *indí’* *ka* *ya*
if IRR.NEG 2ABS CONF
‘If you don’t

mag=hátag *da’* *sang* *kwárta* *kag* *tapát* *ka*.
IRR.INTR.COND=give that OBL money and resolve 2SG.ABS
give them **some money**, you’re dead meat.’

hil087b.03.50.MM

Locative adjuncts are marked with the determiner *sa* before oblique pronouns and common nouns. Personal oblique determiners may or may not be preceded by *sa*. Locative adjuncts can have relatively concrete spatial referents, indicating locations, or they may be somewhat more abstract.

- (15) *Dirá’* *ka* *na* *lang* *sa* *ínyo*.
there 2SG.ABS already just LOC 2PL.OBL
‘Just stay there **in your place**.’

hil087b.05.35.MM

- (16) *Sísig* *man* *na’* *mo* *sa* *walá*.
pig.face also that you.know LOC left
‘That’s sisig **on the left** too, you know.’ (looking into the refrigerator)

hil065.01.50.All

- (17) *Hambál* *ka* *ya* *Yuz* *sa* *Ilónggo* *balá* *máski* *anó*.
talk 2SG.ABS EMPH NAME LOC NAME only though whatever
‘You say something **in Ilonggo**, Julius, whatever.’

hil065.03.42.All

- (18) *Disiséys* *kamí* *sa* *pamílya*.
sixteen 1EXCL.ABS LOC family
‘There were sixteen of us **in the family**.’

hil004.02.40.All

Locatives are also used for the sources and goals of verbs of motion, transfer, and communication, and for recipients and beneficiaries.

- (19) *Amó ná' ang pitó, ka mga magúlang kó,*
 that that ABS seven LK PL siblings 1SG.POSS
 'That's the seven of my brothers and sisters

sa úna nga nánay.
 LOC first LK mother
 from the first mother.'

hi1020.00.35.MM

- (20) *Mag=bálik ka sa Iloílo,*
 IRR.INTR.COND=return 2SG.ABS LOC PLACENAME
 'When you go back to Iloilo,

lá'in ang túno nilá subóng mo.
 different ABS intonation 3PL.POSS now you.know
 their intonation is different now, you know.'

hi1087a.03.50.MM

- (21) *Silá dá' ka mígo ko naga=bató sa íla.*
 3PL.ABS there LK friend 1SG.POSS INTR.IPFV=stone LOC 3PL.OBL
 'It was my friends who were throwing stones at them.'

hi1087b.01.28.MM

- (22) *Daw, gina=baligyá' nya sa ákon [. . .]*
 like TR.IPFV=sell 3SG.ERG LOC 1SG.OBL
 'He's like, selling it to me [for five thousand pesos].'

hi1087b.01.42.MM

- (23) *Maka=búlig sa ímo, bál'an mo.*
 IRR.ABIL=help LOC 2SG.OBL know 2SG.ERG
 'That can help you, you know.'

hi1087a.05.20.MM

Locatives are also used for the sources of emotions.

- (24) *Na-'ákig akó sa íla.*
 PRF-angry 1SG.ABS LOC 3PL.OBL
 'I'm angry at them.'

hi1023.ML

- (25) *Naga=ka-baláka akó sa íla.*
 INTR.IPFV=INTNS-worry 1SG.ABS LOC 3PL.OBL
 'I'm worried about them.'

hi1023.ML

- (26) *Na-hádlok akó sa damáng.*
 PRF-fear 1SG.ABS LOC spider
 'I'm afraid of spiders.'

hi1023.ML

1.3. Predicates

Argument structure is also often specified in the predicate. Clauses may have no arguments (zero transitives), one (intransitives) or two (transitives). There are no ditransitives.

1.3.1. Zero transitives

Zero transitive clauses have no core arguments. They may or may not contain adjuncts.

- (27) *Naga= 'ulán.*
INTR.IPFV=rain
'(It)'s raining.'

- (28) *Naga= 'ulán sa Iloilo.*
INTR.IPFV=rain LOC PLACENAME
'(It)'s raining in Iloilo.'

1.3.2. Intransitives

Intransitive clauses contain just one argument, an absolutive.

- (29) *Tínlo' ang kwárto.*
clean ABS room
'The room **is clean.**'

- (30) *Te' kádlaw man silá.*
so laugh also 3PL.ABS
'Then they **laugh**, too.'

hil087a.00.26.MM

- (31) *Naga= lalá'in na dá' ang tag'íya.*
INTR.IPFV=RDP.degenerate already there ABS owner
'The owner **was freaking out.**'

hil087a.06.52.MM

In Hiligaynon, as in related languages, conversion is highly productive. Determiner phrases, absolutive pronouns, possessive pronouns, numerals, and demonstratives, may all serve as predicates. Hiligaynon, unlike some related languages, does not require a copula.

- (32) *Ang tag'íya si Guillen.*
ABS owner ABS.PR NAME
'Guillen **is the owner.**'

hil087b.01.07.MM

- (33) *Syá ang nag=pa-báta'.*
3SG.ABS ABS INTR.PFV=CAUS-give.birth
'The one who helped deliver the baby **was her.**'
= 'She's the one who helped deliver the baby.'

- (34) *Ákon ná'.*
1SG.OBL that
'That's **mine.**'

- (35) *Duhá ámon nánay.*
 two 1PL.EXCL.POSS mother
 ‘Our mothers **were two**’ = ‘We had two mothers.’ hil020.00.33.MM
- (36) *Ará’ syá.*
 there 3SG.ABS
 ‘She **is there**.’ = ‘There she is.’
- (37) *Ató syá sa laba-hán.*
 there 3SG.ABS LOC laundry-LOC
 ‘He’s **in the laundry room**.’

1.3.3. Transitives

Transitive clauses contain ergative and absolutive arguments, with or without adjuncts.

- (38) *Gina= dul’udul’óng ko na’ syá.*
 TR.IPFV=RD. transport 1SG.ERG that 3SG.ABS
 ‘I was always bringing **him**.’ hil083c.01.34.All
- (39) *Hinayhínay ko lang ánay ang kwan.*
 slow.RDP 1SG.ERG just first ABS thing
 ‘I’m just lowering **the thing** (flame on stove) a bit first.’ hil065.04.13.All

There are no grammatical ditransitives. Three-participant events are expressed with no more than two core arguments. Additional participants can be coded as adjuncts, like ‘me’ below.

- (40) *Gin=hambál nya sa akon ang balíta.*
 TR.PFV=tell 3SG.ERG LOC 1SG ABS news
 ‘He told me the news.’

Transitivity is further specified in many mood/aspect markers.

2. Argument structure alternations

Philippine languages are well known for their pervasive alternations in argument structure, usually signalled morphologically.

2.1. Intransitivizers

While there are no affixes whose sole function is to detransitivize, a number of mood/aspect affixes occur only with intransitives, such as the irrealis conditional *mag=*, irrealis abilitative *maka=*, realis perfective *nag=* and realis imperfective *naga=* illustrated below.

- (41) *Indí’ sya mag=páti.*
 IRR.NEG ABS IRR.INTR.COND=believe
 ‘He couldn’t believe it.’

- (42) *Maka=hámpang akó.*
 IRR.INTR.ABIL=play 1SG.ABS
 ‘I can play.’
- (43) *Nag=lakát ka?*
 INTR.PFV=go 2SG.ABS
 ‘Did you go?’
- (44) *Naga=’istár akó sa isá ka boarding house sa Manila.*
 INTR.IPFV-live 1SG.ABS LOC one LK boarding house LOC PLACENAME
 ‘I was living in a boarding house in Manila.’
 hil035.00.39.EH

2.2. Transitivity

There are aspect/modality markers that occur only with transitives, such as the realis perfective *gin=* and the realis imperfective *gina=* seen in earlier examples. But there are also markers which function as applicatives to add a core argument, an absolutive. The semantic role of the added argument is indicated to some extent by the affix, though this can vary somewhat from verb to verb. The affixes show different shapes in irrealis, realis, and imperative constructions.

	IRREALIS	REALIS	IMPERATIVE
BASIC TRANSITIVIZER	-(h)on	---	-(h)a
INSTRUMENTAL TRANSITIVIZER	i-	---	---
LOCATIVE TRANSITIVIZER	-(h)an	-(h)an	-(h)i

Table 3: Transitivity Affixes

Forms with *h* occur after vowels. The basic transitivity markers are also termed ‘goal focus’ markers in the literature, instrumental transitivity markers have been termed ‘accessory focus’ markers, locative transitivity markers ‘referent focus markers’, and imperatives ‘obligatory’ markers. Irrealis forms are often used for requests in place of imperatives. There is no overt marker for those categories indicated with --- in Table 3.

2.2.1. Basic transitivity

The basic transitivity marker has the form *-on* in irrealis clauses, zero in realis clauses, and *-a* in imperatives. As noted, transitivity is also distinguished by some aspect markers.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>(45) Irrealis intransitive
 <i>Ma-’óbra silá.</i>
 IRR.INTR=work 3PL.ABS
 ‘They’ll work.’</p> | <p>Irrealis transitive
 <i>Obra-hón nilá.</i>
 work-IRR.TR 3PL.ERG
 ‘They’ll work on it.’</p> |
|--|--|

- (46) Realis intransitive
Nag=’óbra silá.
 INTR.IPFV=work 3PL.ABS
 ‘They worked.’
- Realis transitive
Na-’óbra nílá.
 PRF-work. 3PL.ERG
 ‘They’ve **worked on** it.’
- (47) Intransitive imperative
Óbra kamó!
 work 2PL.ABS
 ‘Get to work!’
- Transitive imperative
Obra-há!
 work-TR.IMP
 ‘**Work on** this!’

The precise semantic role of the added argument varies somewhat from one lexical item to the next. With *hámbal* ‘speak’ the added argument can be either the message or the listener.

- (48) a. Realis intransitive
Nag=hámbal syá.
 INTR.PFV=talk 3SG.ABS
 ‘He spoke.’
- b. Realis transitive
Gín=hámbal nyá ang balíta kay H.
 TR.PFV=talk 3SG.ERG ABS news LOC.PR NAME
 ‘He revealed **the news** to H.’
- (49) a. Irrealis intransitive
Ma=hámbal akó.
 IRR.INTR=talk 1SG.ABS
 ‘I’ll speak.’
- b. Irrealis transitive
Hambal-ón ko syá.
 talk-IRR.TR 1SG.ERG 3SG.ABS
 ‘I’ll tell **him**.’

2.2.2. Instrumental transitivizers

Instrumental transitivizers derive transitive verbs whose absolutive argument could otherwise be expressed as an oblique. The added argument can be a semantic instrument.

- (50) a. Basic transitive imperative
Bakál-a ang ímo kinahanglán-on.
 buy-TR.IMP ABS 2SG.POSS need-TR
 ‘Buy what you need.’
- b. Irrealis instrumental transitive
Ari kwárta. I-bakál to sang ímo kinahanglán-on.
 here.is money IRR.INS.TR-buy there OBL 2SG.POSS need-TR
 ‘Here’s some money. Go **buy (with)** it whatever you need.’

- (51) Irrealis Instrumental transitive

Ári ang pányo'. I-páhid sa ímo guyá.
 here.is ABS handkerchief **IRR.INS.TR**-wipe LOC 2SG.POSS face
 'Here's the handkerchief. **Wipe** your face **with** it.'

The added argument can also range over other semantic roles otherwise expressed by obliques. They may be significantly-affected themes, beneficiaries, and more.

- (52) *I-lúto' ang manók!*
IRR.INS.TR-cook ABS chicken
 'Cook the chicken!'

- (53) *I-lakót ko ang isdá' sa ákon ginisá.*
IRR.INS.TR-mix 1SG.ERG ABS fish LOC 1SG.POSS sauté
 'I **add** the fish to my sauté.'

- (54) *I-bakál mo akó.*
IRR.INS.TR-buy 2SG.ERG 1SG.ABS
 'Buy some **for** me.'

2.2.3. Locative transitivizers

Locative transitivizers function as locative applicatives to derive transitive verbs whose absolutive is a location.

- (55) a. Realis intransitive
Tínlo' ang kwárta.
 clean ABS room
 'The room is clean.'
- b. Realis transitive
Gin=tínlo'-án ko ang kwárto.
 TR.PFV=clean-LOC.TR 1SG.ERG ABS room
 'I **cleaned** the room.'
- c. Transitive imperative
Tínlo'-í ang kwárto.
 clean-LOC.IMP ABS room
 'Clean the room!'

The room is a place, but it is an argument. The same suffixes are also used with semantic sources, goals, and, more abstractly, recipients, beneficiaries and other affected persons.

- (56) *Panít-an ang lubi.*
 skin-LOC.TR ABS coconut
 'They **skin** the coconut.' ('They **take skin from** the coconut.')

hil054.00.37.HS

- (57) *Gina=butang-án sang óling ang íla nga mga gúya.*
 TR.IPFV=put-LOC.TR OBL charcoal ABS 3PL.OBL LK PL face
 ‘They **put** charcoal **on** their faces.’ = ‘They charcoaled their faces.’ hi1036.08.12.HS
- (58) *Ara’ gin=taga’-án (a)ko níla sang anó hu.*
 there TR.PFV=give-LOC.TR 1SG.ABS 3PL.ERG OBL what EMPH
 ‘There, they **gave (to)** me that.’ hi1065.03.21.All
- (59) *Ma-budlay-án gid kamó sa Ilónggo.*
 IRR-hard-LOC.TR indeed 2PL.ABS LOC NAME
 ‘It will be **hard for** you in Ilonggo.’ hi1087a.00.51.MM
- (60) *Hú’o kay nanami’-án man silá.*
 yes because be.nice-LOC.TR also 3PL.ABS
 ‘Yes, because they like it.’ (it is **good to** them) hi1087a.02.39.MM
- (61) *Tápos na-bakl-án man (a)ko ni Pitáw.*
 then PRF-buy-LOC.TR also 1SG.ABS ERG NAME
 ‘Then Pitaw also **bought (for)** me some.’ hi1087a.03.24.MM

2.2.4. Causatives

The causative prefix *pa-* is highly productive. As in other languages, it usually adds an agent to the clause, a primary causer. It is used for all degrees of coercion, from ‘force’ to ‘allow’. It is added to both intransitives and transitives.

- (62) *Ká’on! Pa-kán’-a silá.*
 eat CAUS-eat-TR.IMP 3PL.ABS
 ‘Eat!’ ‘Feed them!’
- (63) a. *Na-kíta’ ni Julius ang kwárta.*
 PRF-see ERG.PR NAME ABS money
 ‘Julius has seen the money.’
- b. *Na-pa-kíta’ ko ang kwárta kay Julius.*
 PRF-CAUS-see 1SG.ERG ABS money OBL.PR NAME
 ‘I have shown the money to Julius.’

The causer can be cast as ergative and the causee as absolutive, as expected.

- (64) *Ang ákon asáwa, gin=pa-póngko’ nyá (a)kó.*
 ABS 1SG.POSS spouse TR.PFV-CAUS-sit 3SG.ERG 1SG.ABS
 ‘My wife, she **had** me sit down.’ hi1035.00.13.EH

But causatives appear in the full range of voices. The examples below show a basic transitive, an instrumental transitive, and a locative transitive.

- (65) *Pa-gwa'-á na' nga da'an ang anóm ka botíliang anó.*
 CAUS-be.out-TR.IMP that LK may ABS six LK bottle GEN that
 'Please take out six bottles of that [from the refrigerator].'
 hil065.03.21.All
- (66) *I-pa-gwá' ang idó'.*
 IRR.INS.TR-CAUS-go.out ABS dog
 'Let the dog out!'
- (67) *Tápos pa-libút-an sang kaláyo ang báta' nga kawáyan.*
 then CAUS-go.around-LOC.TR OBL fire ABS young LK bamboo
 'Then put fire all around the green bamboo.'
 hil032.00.01.MM

Lexicalized causatives may be causativized again.

- (68) a. *Nag=pa-lágyo syá.*
 INTR.PFV=CAUS-flee 3SG.ABS
 'He fled.'
- b. *Gin=pa-pa-lágyo sya sang mga pamulúgso'.*
 TR.PFV=CAUS-CAUS-flee 3SG.ABS ERG PL angry
 'The angry crowd chased him away.'
 hil029.00.47.DW
- (69) a. *Naga=pa-húay na silá.*
 INTR.IPFV=CAUS-easy already 3PL.ABS
 'They're resting.'
- b. *Kag gin=pa-pa-húay nilá akó.*
 and TR.PFV=CAUS-CAUS-rest 3PL.ERG 1SG.ABS
 'And they let me rest.'
 hil035.04.03.EH

2.3. Reflexives and reciprocals

Grammatical reflexives are rare in our corpus. For the most part, meanings conveyed by reflexives in other languages, in which a grammatical agent and patient are coreferential arguments, are expressed in intransitives, sometimes intransitive causatives.

- (70) *Nag-súnog sya.*
 INTR.PFV-burn 3SG.ABS
 'He burned himself.'
- (71) *Ató nag=pa-lígo'.*
 there INTR.PFV=CAUS-bathe
 'He's in there taking a shower.'
- (72) *Nag=pa-kíta' syá sa táytay.*
 INTR.PFV=CAUS-see 3SG.ABS LOC bridge
 'He lets himself be seen on the bridge.'
 hil041.00.30.DW

No special forms are used for coreferential obliques.

- (73) *Gin=bakál ko ni pára sa ákon.*
 TR.PFV=buy 1SG.ERG this for LOC 1SG.OBL
 ‘I bought this **for myself**.’

Evidence that reflexivation defines a specific grammatical relation is marginal at best. Under elicitation, one speaker produced some reflexives with the noun *láwas* ‘body’, a strategy seen in other languages. The controllers are subjects, and the controlees an argument or adjunct.

- (74) *Gin=promisá-han ko ang láwas ko*
 TR.PFV=promise-LOC.TR 1SG.ERG ABS body 1SG.POSS
 ‘I promised **myself**
- nga indí’ mag=ká’on túdo.*
 LK IRR.NEG IRR.INTR.COND=eat so.much
 ‘I wouldn’t eat so much.’

- (75) *Ga=kádlaw syá sa láwas nya.*
 INTR.PROG-laugh 3SG.ABS LOC body 3SG.POSS
 ‘He was laughing **at himself**.’

In the extensive 1934 dictionary by Kaufmann, the only gloss given for *láwas* is ‘body, matter, existence, reality’. All sentences translated with English reflexives are intransitive.

Reciprocals are formed with the suffix *-ay*, added to a transitive to form an intransitive.

- | | | | |
|------|---|--|---|
| (76) | Basic intransitive
<i>Tawág ka!</i>
call 2SG.ABS
‘Call!’ | Basic transitive
<i>Tawg-an mo silá!</i>
call-LOC.TR 2SG.ERG 3PL.ABS
‘Call them!’ | Reciprocal intransitive
<i>Nag=tawg-án-ay silá.</i>
INTR.PFV=call-LOC.TR-RECIP 3PL.ABS
‘They called each other .’ |
|------|---|--|---|
- (77) *Naga=lags-an-áy silá.*
 INTR.IPFV=chase-LOC.TR-RECIP 3PL.ABS
 ‘They were chasing **each other**.’
- (78) *Naga=hambal-án-ay silá.*
 INTR.IPFV=talk-LOC.TR-RECIP 3PL.ABS
 ‘They are conversing.’

2.4. The status of voice morphology

The Hiligaynon voice affixes function much like applicatives and causatives in other languages. They are pervasive, but not all possible combinations of roots and voice markers exist. Some roots have no transitive forms. Some have just one, but it could be any one. Some have two or three. The precise semantic effects of the individual transitivizers vary from one stem to the next. Ruiz (1968) classified 1580 Hiligaynon roots according to their possible argument structures. Wolfenden (1975) built on this work, arriving at the classification below. Two of his classes, D2 and D3, lack intransitive forms.

(79) Declarative clause types: Wolfenden 1974

D1	Intransitive	ABS = Experiencer <i>dá'an</i> 'old/aged', <i>kánay</i> 'lessen/subside', <i>báw'as</i> 'barren', <i>baság</i> 'dull/hollow sound', <i>lúspad</i> 'pale/wan', <i>kusúg</i> 'strong', <i>dyútay</i> 'few', <i>dámo</i> 'many', <i>dakó</i> 'big', <i>búg'at</i> 'heavy'
D2	Loc Tr	ABS = Location <i>akíg</i> 'anger', <i>púngko</i> 'sit', <i>halín</i> 'depart', <i>ága</i> 'morning', <i>ílig</i> 'flow', <i>túlog</i> 'sleep', <i>dulóm</i> 'dark', <i>alagád</i> 'serve'
D3	Zero Tr Loc Tr	No core argument ABS = Location <i>ulán</i> 'rain', <i>dagú'ob</i> 'thunder', <i>kilát</i> 'lightning', <i>tún'og</i> 'dew', <i>línog</i> 'quake', <i>bágyo</i> 'storm', <i>alipú'ok</i> 'fog', <i>talíthi</i> 'mist', <i>hángin</i> 'wind'
D4	Intransitive Basic Tr	ABS = Agent ABS = Theme <i>báton</i> 'accept/receive', <i>hangóp</i> 'understand', <i>dayáw</i> 'praise/honor', <i>hálab</i> 'graze', <i>tapók</i> 'deteriorate', <i>hágad</i> 'participate', <i>tusík</i> 'peck', <i>mág'an</i> 'light weight', <i>pílit</i> 'force, urge', <i>apurá</i> 'hasten'
D5	Intransitive Basic Tr Loc Tr	ABS = Agent ABS = Theme ABS = Location <i>bútong</i> 'pull', <i>abút</i> 'reach', <i>sulúd</i> 'enter', <i>sá'ot</i> 'dance', <i>húlog</i> 'fall/drop', <i>dúlot</i> 'offer', <i>hámبال</i> 'speak', <i>halín</i> 'transfer', <i>linó</i> 'shake', <i>ká'on</i> 'eat'
D6	Intransitive Basic Tr Ins Tr	ABS = Agent ABS = Location, Goal ABS = Theme <i>tabók</i> 'cross over', <i>túktok</i> 'knock', <i>habóy</i> 'throw', <i>púkpok</i> 'pound', <i>súk'ay</i> 'dig earth', <i>patík</i> 'drum'
D7	Intransitive Basic Tr Ins Tr	ABS = Agent ABS = Theme ABS = Instrument <i>kibón</i> 'surround', <i>kibót</i> 'surprise', <i>tomár</i> 'take medicine', <i>gamáy</i> 'decrease, make small'

D8	Intransitive	ABS = Agent
	Ins Tr	ABS = Instrument or Theme
	Loc Tr	ABS = Location, Goal <i>hátag</i> ‘give’, <i>háwan</i> ‘clear away’, <i>dán’ok</i> ‘throw’, <i>símba</i> ‘worship’, <i>báyad</i> ‘pay’, <i>píli</i> ‘select’, <i>hánas</i> ‘practice’, <i>tányag</i> ‘offer’, <i>sínggit</i> ‘shout’, <i>butáng</i> ‘put’
D9	Intransitive	ABS = Agent
	Ins Tr	ABS = Instrument
	Loc Tr	ABS = Theme <i>páhid</i> ‘wipe’, <i>táklob</i> ‘cover’, <i>lámpos</i> ‘strike at’, <i>húgas</i> ‘wash utensils’, <i>ílis</i> ‘change’, <i>butíg</i> ‘lie, fib’, <i>takóp</i> ‘cover, close’, <i>bántay</i> ‘watch over’, <i>hámbal</i> ‘talk’, <i>sirádo</i> ‘close’
D10	Intransitive	ABS = Agent
	Basic Tr	ABS = Theme
	Ins Tr	ABS = Instrument or Beneficiary
	Loc Tr	ABS = Location, Source, Goal or Beneficiary <i>dalá</i> ‘carry’, <i>lígas</i> ‘bathe’, <i>bakál</i> ‘buy’, <i>kíhad</i> ‘slice’, <i>gubá</i> ‘destroy’, <i>kímpit</i> ‘pinch, pluck’, <i>kúha</i> ‘take, get’, <i>áni</i> ‘harvest’, <i>bángkaw</i> ‘spear’ <i>lúbid</i> ‘twine’
D11	Intransitive	ABS = Agent
	Basic Tr	ABS = Theme
	Ins Tr	ABS = Instrument
	Loc Tr	ABS = Location or Theme <i>hakús</i> ‘embrace’, <i>kálot</i> ‘scratch’, <i>tándog</i> ‘touch’, <i>táklad</i> ‘climb’, <i>isdóg</i> ‘drag’, <i>sunód</i> ‘follow’, <i>pulpóg</i> ‘pound’, <i>labó</i> ‘slash’, <i>sáka</i> ‘ascend’, <i>tápak</i> ‘trample’

The classes are not represented by equal numbers of members. Wolfenden’s class D1 contains just 1% of the roots listed by Ruiz, and his class D3 just 3%, but his class D2 contains 23%, and his class D5 43%.

Causatives are also highly productive, but not all possible prefix-root combinations exist. In some cases, the original root from which a causative stem was formed is no longer in use on its own, such as *pa-húay* ‘relax’. There is now no verb *húay*.

The Hiligaynon voice affixes are thus much like the applicatives and causatives of other languages in forming stems with an added argument. They are extremely productive, but lexically idiosyncratic to a certain extent: it is not possible to predict with certainty which combinations of roots and affixes will exist, or precisely what their meanings will be.

3. Grammatical relations in use

Though argument structure is coded pervasively in Hiligaynon, it does not always match that of other languages. A number of factors underlie speakers’ choices among alternatives, some

involving properties of referents, some involving information packaging through discourse, some routinized in particular syntactic constructions.

3.1. Referent properties: Animacy, identifiability, and specificity

Certain referent properties can be seen to trigger differential argument marking in language after language (Bossong 1985, Aissen 2003, de Hoop and de Swart 2008, Malchukov 2008, Iemmolo 2010, Dalrymple and Nikolaeva 2011, Iemmolo and Klumpp 2014, Sinemäki 2014, among others). Similar patterns can be seen in Hiligaynon.

Animacy plays a key role in referential forms, as in many languages. Hiligaynon clitics are used only to refer to animates. Inanimates are identified by lexical determiner phrases, demonstratives, or nothing at all. In the example below, the Thursday market is an argument of both sentences, but it is not overtly mentioned in either. Its argument status in each is clear, however, from the transitive aspect marker *gin=* and ergative form of the agent ‘he’ in the first sentence, and the fact that it is the only argument of an intransitive in the second.

(80) [‘I told him that there’s two markets in Jaro. One is on Thursdays.’]

Gin=google na nya.
TR.PFV=google already 3SG.ERG
‘He googled (**it**). . . .’

Kag lápos tu sa Santo Domingo Extension.
and pierce there LOC PLACENAME
And (**it**) goes through the Santo Domingo Extension.’

hil087a.05.46.MM

By contrast, clitics referring to given animates are pervasive.

(81) *Bal’-án man na’ da’ sang mga pulís tanán.*
know-TR also that there ERG PL police all
‘**The police** know everything there.’

Hú’o e.
‘Yes of course.’

May mga cut man na’ da’ silá.
have PL cut also that there 3PL.ABS
‘**They** have their cut.’

[‘You can’t just do that there. There is also that case now there in Manila.
It’s certain that the police killed them there.’]

Gin=pang-massacre nilá to ang mga táwo tó e.
TR.PFV=DIST-massacre 3PL.ERG there ABS PL person there of.course
‘**They** massacred those people there.’

hil087b.03.16.MM

Identifiability is another major factor in argument structure choice in Hiligaynon. Only those participants the speaker believes the hearer can identify, those coded as definite in many languages, can be core arguments. In the sentence below, the tube is oblique because it was not identifiable at that moment in the discussion, and the sentence is grammatically intransitive.

- (82) *Pa-butáng sang túbo sa kílid ko.*
 CAUS-put OBL tube LOC side 1SG.POSS
 ‘They put **a tube** in my side.’

hil035.06.09.EH

A referent may be identifiable by association with another identifiable referent.

- (83) *May na-patáy, ang bánkay gina=dalá sa baláy.*
 exist PRF-die ABS corpse TR.IPFV=bring LOC house
 ‘If someone dies, **the corpse** will be brought to the house.’

hil036.40.29.HS

It may be identifiable from the extra-linguistic context.

- (84) *Anó ang báho man?*
 what ABS smell look!
 ‘What’s **that smell**?’

hil065.05.25.All

Once a referent is introduced, it can function immediately as an argument.

- (85) *Kon mag=bakál syá sang ígi,*
 when IRR.INTR.COND=buy 3SG.ABS OBL snail
 ‘When she would buy **snails** (OBL),

sa ákon ya gina=hátag ang ígi.
 LOC 1SG.OBL CONF TR.IPFV=give ABS snail
 she would give **the snails** (ABS) to me.’

hil161.00.05.HS

Entities are often first introduced with the existential predicate *may*. At that point they are neither arguments nor adjuncts, and there is no determiner.

- (86) *May adóbo pa hu.*
 exist adobo still EXCL
 ‘There’s still **adobo**.’

hil065.02.13.All

- (87) *May isá da’ ya nga, aa,*
 exist one there CONF LK HES
 ‘There’s **one** ah,

laké mo, gina=góogle ya mo?
 man TAG INTR.IPF CONF TAG
guy, you know, who’s using google you know?’

hil087a.05.30.MM

The same existential *may* is used to predicate possession. The sentence below introduces the bullet for the first time, so it is not an argument and the clause is intransitive.

- (88) *Ang pusíl nya may bála.*
 ABS gun 3SG.POSS exist bullet
 ‘His gun had a **bullet**.’

hil053.05:05.MM

Specificity also plays a role. If an indefinite entity is non-specific, it is not an argument and there is no determiner.

- (87) *Taga'-án ta ka kwárta.*
 give-LOC.TR 1INCL 2SG.ABS money
 ‘I’ll give you **money**.’

- (88) *Kinahanglán mag=kwá'-an ka dugó'.*
 necessary IRR.INTR.COND-take-LOC.TR 2SG.ABS blood
 ‘You need to have **blood** taken.’

Non-specific nouns in negative existential constructions are also not arguments and appear without determiners.

- (89) *Walá' man'óg sa Panáy.*
 NEG snake LOC PLACENAME
 ‘There are no **snakes** on Panay.’

Generics are nonspecific, so they do not qualify as arguments and are unmarked for a grammatical relation. The first sentence below is intransitive, the second zero transitive.

- (90) *Ga=ká'on ka kárne?*
 INTR.IMPV=eat 2SG.ABS meat
 ‘Do you eat **meat**?’

- (91) *Dúro talún sa Iloilo.*
 many forest LOC PLACENAME
 ‘There are lots of **forests** in Iloilo.’

hil053.11.19.MM

3.2. Information flow through discourse: Topicality

In general linguistics, the term ‘topic’ is now commonly used much as defined by Lambrecht: “The topic of a sentence is the thing which the proposition expressed by the sentence IS ABOUT” (1994:118). Speakers tend to select a topic, a point of departure for added information, and maintain it through a certain stretch of discourse, a phenomenon known as ‘topic continuity’. Since arguments comparable to those identified here as absolutes are referred to as ‘topics’ in much of the Philippinist literature, it is useful to compare their use with that of topics in the more widely-understood sense. In intransitive clauses Hiligaynon absolutive arguments are indeed usually topics in the usual sense. A continuing topic, coded as absolutive, can be seen below.

- (92) [‘**This A** bikes from X to Y for charity events. **He**’s at the university.
He’s so big! **He**’s not a baby anymore.’]

Tigúlang na na' sya.
 old already that 3SG.ABS
 'He's already old.'

hil083c.04.44.All

But absolutes are not necessarily more topical than ergatives. The sentence below consists of two clauses, the first with absolutive 'they', the second with absolutive 'the house in Montecito'. It would be difficult to argue that there was an abrupt topic shift in the middle of the sentence from 'they' to 'the house'.

- (93) *Nag=halín silá kay gin=baligyá' ang baláy sa Montecito.*
 INTR.PFVdepart 3PL.ABS because TR.PFV=sell ABS house LOC PLACENAME
 'They (ABS) left because they sold the house in Montecito (ABS).'

hil085.02.06.All

Topic continuity can be seen through an account of the Pear Film. When a child first appears on the scene, he is introduced with an existential *may* construction and no determiner. His bicycle is introduced in a locative adjunct. From that point on the child, clearly the continuing topic through this passage, is coded alternately as absolutive and ergative, depending on whether the clause is intransitive or transitive. The transitivity depends not on the status of the child but on the presence of another identifiable, topicworthy referent, here the bicycle or a previously mentioned basket of pears. The tree had also been mentioned before, but it was not considered a significant element of the account, so it was cast as an adjunct.

- (94) *May nag=ági nga báta'*
 exist INTR.PFV=pass LK child
 'A child (NO DETERMINER) passed by

hil168.00.37.MM

nga naga=sákay sa bisiklíta.
 LK INTR.IPFV=ride LOC bicycle
 riding along on a bicycle (ADJUNCT).

Nag=púndo ang báta'
 INTR.PFV=stop ABS child
 The kid (ABS) stopped

sa idálom ka káhoy.
 LOC beneath LK tree
 under the tree (ADJUNCT) [where the man was harvesting the pears].

Kag binutáng sang báta',
 and TR.place ERG child
 And the kid (ERG) placed

ang íya bisiklíta sa dúta.
 ABS 3SG.OBL bicycle LOC ground
 the bicycle (ABS) on the ground.

Gin=pa-hígda' *nyá*
 TR.PFV=CAUS-lie.down 3SG.ERG
 He (ERG) lay down

ang íya bisiklíta
 ABS 3SG.OBL bicycle
 his bicycle (ABS)

kag gin=kúha' ang isá ka baskét
 and TR.PFV=take ABS one LK basket
 and took one basket (ABS)

nga punó' sang péras.
 LK filled OBL pears
 filled with pears (ADJUNCT).

Sang mag=lakát na ang báta',
 OBL IRR.INTR.COND=walk already ABS child
 As the kid (ABS) was walking away, . . .

hil168.01.05.MM

Topicality in the generally-understood sense is thus not reflected in absolutive status, but rather in core argument status. Topicality does play a significant role in the pervasive alternations in argument structure observable in Hiligaynon speech, functioning to ensure that topical referents are always core arguments, but these can be **either** ergatives or absolutives.³

Examples of voice alternations used to keep more topical referents in the core can be seen in a description of how to prepare a chicken dish, *binakól nga manók*. The two verbs *ibutáng* and *butangán* are based on the same root *butáng* 'put, place'. Both are transitive, the first with an instrumental transitivity marker *i-*, the second with a locative transitivity marker *-an*. Each brings a different kind of argument into the core. In the first sentence with *i-butáng*, the ingredients, the lemon grass, onions, and garlic, were cast as arguments. In the second sentence, with *butang-án*, the dish itself was cast as an argument, while the salt and pepper, less central, were adjuncts. The dish continued as an argument of the following clause 'cover **it** well' though it was not mentioned overtly in either clause since it was inanimate.

- (95) *I-butáng ang tánglad, ang-- sibúyas ang-- áhos, . . .*
 IRR.INS.TR-put ABS lemon.grass ABS onion ABS garlic
 'Add the lemon grass (ABS), onions (ABS), garlic (ABS), . . .

Butang-án lang sang asín kag pamínta,
 put.in-LOC.TR just OBL salt and pepper
 Just put in (to **it** ABS) some salt and pepper

kag isilyu-hán sang ma'áyo.
 and cover-LOC.TR OBL good
 cover (**it** ABS) well.'

hil032.00.40.MM

The passage below was part of a discussion about the material being recorded for our corpus. The conversations were cast as a core argument in the first clause with the basic transitive

applicative *obra-hón* ‘work on’ and in the second by the instrumental applicative *i-butáng* ‘put in’.

- (96) *Obra-hón nilá tanán nga conversation námon;*
 work-TR 3PL.ERG all LK conversation 1EXCL.POSS
 ‘They’ll work on all of our conversations;
i-butáng nilá sa archives mo.
 IRR.INS.TR-put 3PL.ERG LOC archives TAG
 they’ll save them in the archive, you know.’

hil087a.00.08.MM

In languages with a subject category, subject choice is usually based primarily on topicality. Subjects are frequently semantic agents, but if a patient/theme is more topical, a passive construction can often be used to cast it as a subject. In Hiligaynon, grammatically transitive clauses are used whether the semantic agent or semantic patient/theme is more topical. The last clause ‘the family feeds them’ below is grammatically transitive, as is clear from the transitive aspect marker *gina*= on the predicate and the ergative determiner *sang* on ‘family’, though the speaker later used a passive in his English translation.

- (97) ‘Those who attended the burial will go back to the house of the deceased and wash their hands with stewed pomelo leaves.’

Pag-ka-tápos nilá, mang-húgas
 NMLZ-DIST-finish 3PL.ERG NMLZ-wash
 ‘When they have finished washing [the body of the deceased]
gina=pa-ká’on silá sang pamílya.
 TR.IPFV=CAUS-eat 3PL.ABS ERG family
 they are fed by the family.’

hil036.04.34.HS

Though the greater topicality of the diners here does not affect argument structure, their status as given information, which often goes along with topicality, is reflected in the fact that they are referred to with just the pronoun *silá* ‘they’, while the family is referred to with the full lexical determiner phrase *sang pamílya*. Since pronouns are second-position clitics, given arguments systematically precede others.

Arranging the table for dinner, a speaker announced skewers of chicken. The skewers were the primary topic of both clauses, and the absolutive of both (though not overtly expressed in the second, since they are inanimate). In his later translation, the speaker used an English passive for this second clause, in keeping with the topicality of the skewers. But the original Hiligaynon is grammatically transitive, as is clear from the unambiguously ergative form of the agent Julius.

- (98) *Arí ang, inasál kunó ni mo;*
 here ABS skewer they.say this you.know
 ‘Here are the skewers as they say;
walá’ na-’asál ni Julius.
 NEG PFV-skewer ERG NAME
 they were not skewered by Julius.’

hil065.08.06.All

Ergative arguments are not always specified overtly, however. Unimportant or vague referents need not be mentioned.

- (99) *Gin=hambal-án* *sya* *nga* *butáng-an asín.*
 TR.PFV=say-LOC.TR 3SG.ABS LK put-LOC.TR salt
 ‘He was told to salt it.’

There is thus no prototypical de-transitivizing passive construction in Hiligaynon, though omission of overt reference to unimportant or vague agents can achieve part of the demotional effect of passives in other languages.

Even when referents are animate, identifiable, and specific, they are not necessarily cast as syntactic arguments if they are not central to the discussion. Though ‘us’ in the sentence below is identifiable from the speech context, it is an adjunct, not sufficiently topical to be an argument. The clause is causative but grammatically intransitive.

- (100) *Ma-pa-ká'on* *silá* *sa ámon* *sa party.*
 IRR.INTR-CAUS-eat 3PL.ABS LOC 1PL.EXC.OBL LOC party
 ‘They will **serve food** to us at the party.’

Further evidence of the importance of topicality for core argument status can be seen in constructions similar to what has sometimes been termed ‘possessor ascension’ in analyses of other languages. The sentence below was later rendered in English by the speaker as ‘My knee hurts’, but he framed his original Hiligaynon statement as primarily about himself, the single core argument: ‘I knee-hurt’.

- (101) *Sakít* *akó=ng* *túhud.*
 hurt 1SG.ABS=LK knee
 ‘I knee-hurt’ = ‘My knee hurts.’

There is no evidence that this is basically a possessive construction or that any ascension is involved: the sentence is simply about the speaker and his pain, with detail added by the adjunct.

3.3. Information flow: Topic shifts

Though Hiligaynon constituent structure is basically predicate-initial, topicalization constructions are common. Speakers signal a shift in topic by identifying the new topic initially, before the nuclear clause. This referent is often not brand new: it is often one that was mentioned earlier or is somehow associated with a previously-mentioned referent.

One man had been describing his family. After discussing his brothers and sisters, he shifted to his parents and then continued talking about them.

- (102) ‘We were sixteen children. I am the fifteenth. And almost all of us finished school.’

Ang ákon ginikanán walá' na.
 ABS 1SG.POSS parents NEG already
 ‘My **parents** are gone now.

Na-patáy na silá
 PRF-die already 3PL.ABS
 They have already died.'

hil004.01.48.MM

Two ladies had been talking about a mutual friend. They then shifted their attention to her son.

- (103) *Te' ang báta' nyá, dakó' na?*
 so ABS child 3SG.POSS big already
 'So **her child**, is he big now?'

hil083c.00.49.All

[‘Oh yes. He’s in college now. He is so big he can already cover my hands with his.’]

The initial topic phrase has the form of an absolutive, even if that referent functions as an ergative in the nuclear clause. It may or may not be mentioned overtly in the nuclear clause. In the first example below it is, and in the second it is not.

- (104) *Ang isá ya hámbal na nyá,*
 ABS one CONF TR.say already 3SG.ERG
 'The other one she said, . . .

“Untat-ón mo mag=’inom beer.”
 stop-TR 2SG.ERG IRR.INTR.COND=drink beer
 “You should stop drinking beer.”’

hil087a.05.19.MM

- (105) ‘When we crossed into Tijuana,

ang isá námon ka upód nag=drive ang iya salákyan
 ABS one 1EXCL.POSS LK companion TR.PFV=drive ABS 3SG.POSS car
 one of our companions drove his car.’

hil087b.05.56.MM

Adjuncts can be topicalized, but they retain their oblique marking.

- (106) ‘Now there is San Roque and Lopez Jaena, they’re two different wards.
 They were divided. We’re in Lopez Jaena.’

A. *Tápos sa píhak to ya sa norte,*
 then LOC other there CONF LOC north
 ‘Then **on the other side in the north**,’

B. *Te’ hú’o.*
 ‘Oh yeah.’

A. *lá’ín-- la’ín namán na’.*
 INTR.different INTR.different again that
 ‘it’s different again.’

hil087a.06.46.MM

3.4. Information flow: Focus

General discussions of information structure usually also include what is called ‘focus’, but definitions of this term vary. For some, the focus is whatever is new in a sentence, what is not presupposed; most often this is the predicate. For others, focus involves some contrast with expectation. For still others, it necessarily involves contrast among a clear range of possibilities. (All of these are distinct from the labeling of predicates by some Philippinists according to the semantics of their absolutive argument: ‘Actor focus’ for intransitives like ‘go’, ‘Goal focus’ for basic transitives like ‘see’, etc.)

In Hiligaynon, focus in the broadest sense generally corresponds to the predicate, which, is basically clause-initial. Often cited as prototypical examples of focus constructions are questions and their answers, since the questioned element represents what is not presupposed. Question words occur initially in Hiligaynon.

- (107) A. *Anó tawág siná’?*
 what call that.OBL
 ‘What do you call that?’

- B. *Butang-án balá sang anó . . . sang báso.*
 put-LOC.TR INTER OBL what OBL glass
 ‘Coasters maybe.’ (‘Where you put glasses’)

hil065.05.06.All

In somewhat more common usage, a focus construction implies a certain contrast with expectation. Such focus is expressed again in Hiligaynon with the focused element at the beginning of the sentence, perhaps extra high pitch and intensity, but no following pause and pitch reset like that often found in topic shifts.

- (108) (‘Now they’re separated, his dad and mom.’)

- Te’ akó naga= . . . súgat sa íya sa eskwelá-han.*
 so 1SG.ABS INTR=IPV= go.meet LOC 3SG.OBL LOC school-LOC.TR
 ‘So I’m the one picking him up at school.’

hil085.01.40.All

Stronger contrastive focus is expressed with the same construction.

- (109) (‘When you go back home, their intonation is different, you know . . .
 It’s different now, the way they speak.’)

- Kon kitá ga=hámbal bati’-án nilá.*
 when 1INCL.ABS INTR.IPV=speak hear-LOC.TR 3PL.ERG
 ‘When **we**’re talking they (modern teenagers) will hear it.’

hil087a.04.20.MM

In focus constructions, the focused referent is absolutive in form in both the focus position and the nuclear clause, likely a nominalization: ‘the one picking him’, ‘the ones talking’. If the sentence translated ‘I’m the one picking him up’ were not a focus construction, but simply the basic sentence ‘I’m picking him up’, the child, the central topic of conversation at this point, would have been an absolutive argument of the nuclear clause, the agent ‘me’ ergative, and the

clause transitive. But in this focus construction, the nominalized clause is intransitive, as can be seen in the aspect marker *naga=*, and the child an adjunct *sa íya* ‘him’. The nominalized clause may also be transitive, but the focused element still functions as its absolutive.

- (110) *Akó ang na-luyág-an nya.*
 1SG.ABS ABS PRF-love-LOC.TR 3SG.ERG
 ‘I’m the one he loves.’

Here the fact that ‘he loves (me)’/‘he has fallen in love with me’ is grammatically transitive is clear from the locative transitivizer *-an* on the verb and the ergative form of the agent ‘he’, though since the clause is nominalized, *nya* could be genitive: the two forms are the same.

4. Syntactic Constructions

Some syntactic constructions that require particular configurations of grammatical relations in other languages show no such requirements in Hiligaynon. Others show robust constraints, usually involving absolutives, sometimes just absolutives of intransitives.

4.1. Imperatives

For some languages, imperative constructions provide evidence of a subject category. Like most languages, Hiligaynon contains multiple request constructions. Basic imperatives are addressed to second persons, but the second person pronouns need not be overt.

- (111) a. Intransitive
Táwag!
 call
 ‘Call!’
- b. Basic transitive
Táwg-a ang pusonégro!
 call-TR.IMP ABS plumber
 ‘Call the plumber!’
- c. Locative transitive
Táwg-i si M!
 call-LOC.TR.IMP ABS.PR NAME
 ‘Call M!’
- (112) a. Intransitive
Hambal ánay!
 talk first
 ‘Speak! Say something!’

b. Basic transitive

Hambal-á!

talk-TR.IMP

‘Talk to him/her!’

c. Locative transitive

Hambal-í syá!

talk-LOC.TR.IMP 3SG.ABS

‘Tell him/her’

It might at first appear that the omission of second person addressees from both intransitive and transitive commands would constitute evidence of a subject category. In fact, as in many other languages, the omitted arguments are not subjects but rather volitional agents, listeners capable of carrying out the command. In English, grammatical commands can be formed from non-volitional, non-agentive subjects: ‘Be good!’, ‘Have a good time!’, ‘Sleep well!’, ‘Have a great trip!’, ‘Be happy!’, ‘Get well soon!’. Speakers report that idiomatic counterparts in Hiligaynon do not take the form of basic imperatives. Instead of ‘Have a good trip!’, one might say *Kabáy pa nga ma’áyo ang ímo byáhe* ‘May your trip be good’. In place of ‘Get well soon!’, one might say *Kabáy pa nga magma’áyo kaw*. ‘Would that you could be good’. Instead of ‘Be safe!’ one might say something like *Hálong lang!* ‘Just be careful!’.

4.2. Quantifiers

It has been observed that in some languages, universal quantifiers ‘all’, ‘each’, and ‘both’ may be separated from the determiner phrase they modify: *All of the men left, The men all left* (Kayne 1969, 1975 and others). The pattern has come to be known as ‘Quantifier Float’. In English and French, only those quantifiers modifying subjects can float (Postal 1974, Maling 1976). Schachter reported a similar pattern in Tagalog, but with *ang* phrases (his ‘topics’).

The quantifier *lahat* ‘all’ usually occurs within a noun phrase, but some speakers also use a construction in which *lahat* follows the sentence-initial verb. In the latter case, *lahat* is always understood as referring to the sentence topic. (Schachter 1976:501)

Kroeger (1993:22) took this observation as evidence that Tagalog *ang* arguments are subjects.

(113) Tagalog quantifiers: Schachter 1976:501, also cited in Kroeger 1993:22

- a. *Sumusulat* *lahat* *ang=mga=bata* *ng=mga=liham*
 ACTOR.VOICE.IMPV-write all NOM=PL=child GEN=PL=letter
 ‘All the children are writing letters.’

Not: *‘The children are writing all the letters.’

- b. *Sinusulat* *lahat* *ng=mga=bata* *ang=mga=liham.*
 IMPV.write.OBJECT.VOICE all GEN=PL=child NOM=PL=letter
 ‘The/some children write all the letters.’

Not: *‘All the children are writing letters.’

(The forms glossed NOM by Kroeger correspond to those labeled ABSOLUTE here for Hiligaynon; those glossed GEN correspond to those labeled here ERGATIVE.)

In Hiligaynon, quantifiers normally occur within the determiner phrase they modify. By far the most common is *tanán* ‘all’. Of 197 instances of *tanán* in our corpus of connected speech, none appears outside of the determiner phrase. The quantifier appears i) on its own, ii) with a pronoun, or iii) as part of a larger determiner phrase. It can be seen alone below.

- (114) *Kon tanán tulóg, ...*
 when all sleep
 ‘When **everyone** is asleep ...’

hil036.06.06.HS

When *tanán* occurs with a pronoun in our contemporary recordings, the quantifier sometimes immediately precedes the pronoun and sometimes follows.

- (115) *Kag hálos tanán kamí naka=tápos eskwéla.*
 and almost all 1PL.EXCL.ABS ABIL=finish school
 ‘And almost **all of us** managed to finish school.’

hil004.01.42.MM

- (116) *Ma-sadyá-hon nga Páskwa sa ínyo tanán.*
 ST-cheer-TR LK Christmas LOC 2PL.OBL all
 ‘Merry Christmas to **you all**.’

In earlier material from Kaufmann 1934, *tanán* regularly follows the pronoun, linked with *nga*.

- (117) *Pinpin-á silá nga tanán.*
 gather-IMP.TR 3PL.ABS LK all
 ‘Gather **them all** together.’

Kaufmann 1934:407

Of the 197 occurrences of *tanán* ‘all’, 122 are part of larger determiner phrases.

- (118) *Hálos tanán nga pamílya, naga=bisíta sa patáy sa patyó.*
 almost all LK family INTR.IPV=visit LOC dead LOC cemetery
 ‘**Almost all families** visit the dead in the cemetery.’

hil036.10.10.HS

Tanán constructions consist maximally of the following elements:

(DET) QUANTIFIER (POSSESSOR) LK (PL) NOUN

Counterparts to the Tagalog floated quantifiers described by Schachter never occurred spontaneously in the Hiligaynon data. Two Hiligaynon speakers, representing different dialects, were presented (separately) with the Tagalog sentences containing floated quantifiers cited above, and asked to provide close translations in Hiligaynon. (Both know Tagalog as a second language.) The first speaker provided the translations below.

- (119) Hiligaynon translation I
 a. *Naga=sulát tanán nga mga báta’ sang mga súlat.*
 INTR.IPV=write all LK PL child OBL PL letter
 ‘**All the children** are writing letters.’

- b. *Gina=sulát sang mga báta' ang mga sulát.*
 INTR.IPV=write OBL PL child ABS PL letter
 'The children are writing all **the letters.**'

Significantly, he moved the quantifier in the first to a position next to the phrase it quantifies. He simply omitted the quantifier from the second. The second speaker commented: "Both sentences are not good to me only because I'm confused as to what they mean and I can only make sense as to what they are trying to say." Looking at (a), she said, "I believe this is trying to say that all the children learned how to write their letters". For (b), she suggested: "This is maybe like a follow-up comment to confirm that all the children now know how to write their letters." She volunteered the Hiligaynon below. Again significantly, she restored the quantifier in each to a position adjacent to the noun it quantifies.

(120) Hiligaynon translation II

- a. *Nag=tu'ón mag=sulát sang íla létra ang tanán na kabata'án.*
 INTR.PFV=learn IRR.INTR.COND=write OBL 3PL.POSS letter ABS all LK children
- b. *Ang tanán na kabata'án naga=sulát na sang íla létra.*
 ABS all LK children INTR.IMPFV=write now OBL 3PL.POSS letter

Though Hiligaynon shows no obvious evidence of Quantifier Float, the possibility raises an interesting issue. If such a construction is observed to be restricted to *subjects* in languages like English and French, and it is restricted to a particular category in some other language, should that be taken as evidence that that category in the other language is a subject? An alternative approach would be to refine the generalization to account for a wider range of systems of grammatical relations.

4.3. Conjunction reduction

It has been reported that in some languages, clauses may be conjoined only if they share an argument. In Hiligaynon, any clauses that are pertinent to each other may be conjoined. There are no coreferential arguments in the conjoined clauses below.

- (121) *Gin=pa-póngko akó kag-*
 TR.PFV=CAUS-sit 1SG.ABS and
 'She had me sit down and--

kag walá', nag=hálin,
 and R.NEG INTR.PFV= leave
 and nothing came out,

kag ang sákit walá' ma-dúla'.
 and ABS pain R.NEG ST-lose
 and the pain was still there.'

hil035.00.13.EH

In some languages, the second of two coreferential arguments in a coordinate construction need not be overt. In some of these languages, both the controller and controllee must be

subjects, and in some, both must be absolutes. In the Hiligaynon sentence below, the coreferential argument is omitted from the second clause. Since both clauses are intransitive, both the controller and controllee could be viewed as either subjects or absolutes (S).

- (122) *Kon di' mag=kadtó na lang (a)ko dá'*
 if here IRR.INTR.COND=go now just 1SG.ABS there
 'Well, **I ABS** could just go there
- kag mag='inóm.*
 and IRR.INTR.COND=drink
 and (I ABS) drink.'
- hil087b.01.48.MM

The second of two ergatives (A) can also be omitted, suggesting that the crucial grammatical relation might be subjecthood.

- (123) *Gin=pa-hígda' nyá ang íya bisiklíta*
 TR.PFV=CAUS-lie.down 3SG.ERG ABS 3SG.OBL bicycle
 'He **ERG** lay down his bicycle
- kag gin=kúha' ang isá ka basket . . .*
 and TR.PFV=take ABS one LK basket
 and (he **ERG**) took one basket . . .'
- hil168.00.56.MM

In fact subject status is not criterial either. In the sentence below, 'the doctor' is absolutive in form because it is topicalized, but it functions as an ergative (A) in both conjuncts, omitted each time. But in the second conjunct, the absolutive 'me' is also omitted, here from a transitive complement clause (P).

- (124) *Ang doktor,*
 ABS doctor
 'The doctor,
- gin=eksplikár sa ákon,*
 TR.PFV=explain LOC 1SG.OBL
 (he **ERG**) explained it to me,
- kag a:, hambal-án akó nga opera-hán . . .*
 and HES say-LOC.TR 1SG.ABS LK operate-LOC.TR
 and (he **ERG**) said to me that (they **ERG**) would operate on (me **ABS**) . . .'
- hil035.00.15.EH

Below, the first conjunct is a zero-transitive ('There was a boy'), so the boy is not a syntactic argument, but he serves as the controller for omission of the two coreferential absolutes which follow, one in the transitive clause 'a car hit him' (P), the other in the intransitive 'he died' (S).

- (125) *May isá ka soltéro*
 exist one LK young.boy
 'There was **a young boy**

na-bonggu'-án sang salákyan,
 PRF-hit-TR ERG car
 (he ABS) was hit by a car

kag na-patáy mismó sa lugar sang aksidénte.
 and PRF-die there LOC place GEN accident.
 and (he ABS) died there at the place of the accident.'

hil041.00.34.DW

It is in the end not grammatical relations which control argument omission, but discourse topicality. As seen earlier, animate topics may be mentioned in every clause. But they are sometimes omitted even across sentence boundaries. The divisions into sentences below are based on prosody and speaker comments.

- (126) *Ang nánay ko taga='Iloilo.*
 abs mother 1SG.POSS come.from=placename
 'My mother was from Iloilo.

Ilóngga.
 (She) was Ilonggo.

Asáwa lang gid siyá.
 spouse just indeed 3SG.ABS
 She was just a plain housewife.

Kag isá sa mga disiplináryan.
 and one LOC PL disciplinarian
 And (she) was one of those great disciplinarians.

Pírme lang sya naga=pitík dulúnggan mo,
 always just 3SG.ABS INTR.IPFV=flick ear 2SG.POSS
 She would always flick your ear

kon mag=salá' ka.
 if IRR.INTR.COND=mistake 2SG.ABS
 if you made a mistake.'

hil020.00.11.MM

It should be noted that the conjunction *kag* is not limited to conjoining clauses within single sentences. It occurs perhaps even more often linking related but separate sentences in discourse.⁴

4.4. Nominalization

Argument structure choices have become routinized in some syntactic constructions so that speakers no longer have choices. Several of these are based on nominalizations which refer to the absolutive argument of the nominalized verb or clause. There are a number of nominalization constructions, but perhaps the most pervasive is simple conversion.

- (127) Intransitive Transitive
ang nag=patáy *ang gin=patáy*
 ABS INTR.PFV=kill ABS TR.PFV=kill
 ‘the killer’ ‘the one killed’
- (128) Intransitive Transitive
ang nag simu’simó’ *ang gin=simu’simó’*
 ABS INTR.PFV RDP.put.down ABS TR.PFV=RDP.put.down
 ‘bully’ ‘the one bullied’
- (129) *Pitó [ang na-patáy sa ámon];*
 seven ABS PRF-die LOC 1EXCL.OBL
 ‘Seven of us have died;
syám kamí subóng [ang buhí’ pá].
 nine 1EXCL.ABS now ABS alive still
 nine of us are still alive.’

hil020.09.56.MM

(‘[Those who have died among us] are seven; we are now nine, [those still alive].’)

- (130) [*Ang na-dumduman ko lang*], *ang sugá’ sa ákon, úlo.*
 ABS PRF-remember 1SG.POSS only ABS light LOC 1SG.POSS head
 ‘[The only thing I remember] is the light on my head.’

hil035.00.17.EH

Diathesis affixes are pervasive in nominalizations, providing a tool for casting the referent of the nominalization as absolutive. In the invitation below, the nominalization ‘the ones you want to drink’ has been transitivized so that the drinks are the referent rather than the drinker.

- (131) *Abre-hé na da’ ya [ang kwán gústo mo imn-ón] hu.*
 open-LOC.TR already there DISC ABS stuff want 2SG.ERG drink-TR EMPH
 ‘Open the [ones you want to drink].’

hil065.06.35.All

The locative transitivizer *-an* appears in terms for locations.

- (132) [*Ang ákon gina=’obrah-án subóng*] *amó ang simbá-han.*
 ABS 1SG.POSS TR.IPV=work-LOC.TR now that ABS worship-LOC.TR
 ‘[The place I am working now] is the church.’

hil022.00.58.MM

Locative transitivizers also appear in terms for those affected by situations, such as *nalínúg-an* ‘earthquake victim’ and *nabaha’-án* ‘flood victim’.

Additional participants in clausal nominalizations may be cast as possessors or obliques, like ‘your cooked thing’, ‘my father’s tale’, and ‘their experiences’ below.

- (133) *Dalí’ na lánng ma-lúto’ [ang ímo gína=lúto’].*
 hurry already just IRR.STATIVE-cook ABS 2SG.POSS TR.IPFV=cook
 ‘[What you’re cooking] is about to be done.’

hil054.02.43.HS

- (132) [*Ang gina=istóriya sa ákon sang tátay ko*],
 ABS TR.IPFV=recount LOC 1SG.OBL ERG father 1SG.POSS
 ‘[What my father was telling me]

[*ang naga=ka-tábo’, sa íla, sang tiempo gera*].
 ABS INTR.IPFV=PL-arrive LOC 3PL.OBL OBL time war
 is [what happened to them during the war].’

hil034.ML

The determiner indicates the role of that referent in the matrix clause.

- (133) *Kwa’-ón nilá sa Inquirer*,
 do-TR 3PL.ERG LOC NAME
 ‘They will have it in the Inquirer,

mga ma-tínlo’ records [sang pinang-patáy to].
 PL STATIVE-clean GEN PL.killed there
 the clean records [of the ones killed there].’

hil087b.04.13.MM

4.5. Content questions

Some content questions are framed as equational constructions with a nominalized clause. The absolutive of the clause is also the referent of the question word, whether that clause is intransitive or transitive. No copula is necessary.

- (134) *Anó [ang silíng nýa]?*
 what ABS say 3SG.POSS
 ‘What = [his said thing]’ = ‘What does he say?’

- (135) *Sin’ó [ang nag=langóy]?*
 who ABS INTR.IPFV=swim
 ‘Who = [the one swimming]’ = ‘Who is swimming?’

- (136) *Kánday sin’ó [ang mag=kadtó]?*
 PL.PR who ABS IRR.INTR.COND=go
 ‘Who all = [the ones coming]’ = ‘Who all might be coming?’

4.6. Relativization

In Hiligaynon, as in related languages, constituents of a phrase may be connected with what is termed a linker or ligature, abbreviated here LK. The basic form of the linker is *nga*, but it is reduced after a vowel or *n* to yield *ng* [ŋ]. The form *ka* occurs before numerals and certain other nouns. The marker links nouns and modifiers, in either order.

- (137) *ang binakól nga manók*
 ABS stewed LK chicken
 ‘the stewed chicken’

hil032.00.04.MM

- (138) *ang lipák nga gamáy*
 ABS stick LK small
 ‘the small stick’

hil043.01.31.MM

Relative clauses are formed in the same way, a combination of a noun with a modifying clause, the two linked by *nga*. The modifying clause may precede the head or follow it.

- (139) *Kwa’-ón ang [kinudkor-an nga] lubí kag puga’-ón, . . .*
 get-TR ABS scrape-LOC.TR LK coconut and squeeze-TR
 ‘You get the [scraped] coconut and squeeze it,

kag i-sayló ang [gin=kuso’-án nga] lubí.
 and IRR.INS.TR-shift.to ABS TR.PFV=squeeze-LOC.TR LK coconut
 and then transfer the [squeezed] coconut.’

hil054.01.35.HS

- (140) *Ang íya [nga na-pang-asáwa] Sarabia.*
 ABS 3SG.ABS LK TR.PRF-marry
 ‘The one [he married] was a Sarabia.’

hil087b.02.49.MM

The same structure is used for non-restrictive relatives.

- (141) *Ang upód ko subóng si Július [nga ákon hináblos].*
 ABS companion 1SG.GEN now ABS.PR NAME LK 1SG.OBL nephew
 ‘Julius, [who is my nephew], is my companion.’

hil065.00.16.All

The relative clause may bear any grammatical relation to the matrix, but within the relative clause, the shared referent is always absolutive. If this referent is the agent of a semantically transitive event, an intransitive form of the verb must be used so that the agent is absolutive. In a simple sentence, the friends in the example below might be cast as ergative (‘**they** call me’) but because this is a relative clause, the verb is intransitive and ‘me’ is an adjunct.

- (142) *May mga amígo na’ syá*
 exist PL friend that 3SG.ABS
 ‘He has some friends

[nga tawág sa ákon “Boss”].
 LK call LOC 1SG.OBL boss
 [who call me “boss”].’

hil083c.01.06.All

In a sentence ‘he stole the basket filled with pears’, the agent ‘he’ would usually be ergative, but in the relative clause, the verb is intransitive and the basket, though identifiable, oblique.

- (143) *Taga’-án sya tátlo ka péras, sang báta’*
 give-LOC.APPL 3SG.ABS three LK pears ERG child
 ‘He was given three pears by the child

[*nga nag=káwat sang isá ka basket nga punó' sang péras*].
 LK INTR.PFV=steal OBL one LK basket LK full OBL pears
 [who (ABS) had stolen the basket filled with pears]'. hil168.02.23.MM

If the shared referent is a semantic location in the relative clause, a locative transitivizer can give it absolutive status.

- (144) *May dakó' ni sya nga kalán*
 exist big this 3SG.ABS LK cauldron
 He has this big cauldron

[*nga gina gisa-hán nya*].
 LK TR.IMPFV sauté-LOC.TR 3SG.ERG
 [in which he sautés her]'. hil029.00.25.DW

The relative clause can be either intransitive or transitive, but the coreferential argument must function as an absolutive (S or P) within it. This strict requirement of absolutive status raises a larger issue. In well-known work, Keenan and Comrie (1977) argued that languages vary with respect to which NP positions can be relativized, and that accessibility to relativization can be expressed in a universal hierarchy of grammatical relations.

Subjects > Direct Objects > Indirect Objects > Obliques > Genitives > Object of Comparison

According to the hierarchy, if in a language the shared referent can bear only one grammatical relation within the relative clause, this will be the subject: *The girl [who likes John]*; if it can bear two, this will be the subject and direct object: *The girl [who John likes]*, etc. Describing Tagalog, Kroeger (1993:23) notes that only *ang* phrases can be relativized, the same pattern found in Hiligaynon. He takes the Accessibility Hierarchy as evidence that Tagalog *ang* phrases are subjects. An alternative approach would be to refine generalizations like the Accessibility Hierarchy to cover a wider variety of systems of grammatical relations.

4.7. Secondary-predicate constructions

Cross-linguistically, other constructions sometimes subject to constraints on grammatical relations are secondary-predicates, in which a second predicate describes the state of an argument of the first. In Hiligaynon counterparts, the second predicate is preceded by either a pause or the linker *nga*, with little difference in meaning. The matrix may be intransitive.

- (145) *Nag=púli' silá, [hubóg]*.
 INTR.PFV=go.home 3PL.ABS drunk
 'They ABS came home [(__ ABS) drunk].'

- (146) *Nag=túlog akó [nga gutóm]*.
 INTR.PFV=sleep 1SG.ABS LK hungry
 'I ABS went to bed [(__ ABS) hungry].'

- (147) *Nag=halín sa tililípon [nga naga=pang-’ákig].*
 INTR.PFV=leave LOC gathering LK INTR.IPFV=DIST-angry
 ‘He ABS left the party [(__ ABS) angry].’

The matrix may also be transitive.

- (148) *Na-kíta’ námon syá [tulóg].*
 PRF-find 1EXCL.PL.ERG 3SG.ABS sleep
 ‘We found him ABS [(__ ABS) asleep].’

- (149) *Gina=bálík nya ang sulúdlan [nga walá’ sulód].*
 TR.IPFV=return 3SG.ERG ABS container LK NEG inside
 For: ‘She brought the dish back [(__ ABS) empty].’

In all of these cases, the secondary predication is intransitive. If it is transitive, there is no argument omission. The sentence below, like those above, were all elicited.

- (150) *Dakp-án akó, [nga gin=káwat ko ang salákyan].*
 catch-LOC.TR 1SG.ABS LK TR.PFV=steal 1SG.ERG ABS car
 ‘I was caught [stealing the car].’

In sum, an absolutive controllee (S) is omitted under coreference with an absolutive matrix controller (S,A). Secondary predicates are much like relative clauses, in which the modifying clause has been nominalized with the coreferential argument absolutive.

4.8. Complement constructions

Like many languages, Hiligaynon contains a variety of complement constructions, with different arrays of grammatical relations. In some the complement clause is an argument of the matrix, in others it is an adjunct, and in still others, it is simply linked with *nga* or juxtaposed. In some, an argument in the complement is omitted if it is coreferential with some argument in the matrix (a pattern sometimes called EQUI, Equivalent Noun Phrase Deletion or Equivalent Deletion). Some of these require that the matrix controller be absolutive, and others that it be a subject. Some require that the complement controllee be absolutive, and others that it be a subject.

4.8.1. Syntactic status of the complement

In the first sentence below, the complement clause is an argument of the matrix, preceded by a determiner. In the second, it is not an argument but connected to the matrix clause with the linker *nga*. In the third, it is simply juxtaposed.

- (151) *Kag na=diskobrí-han nya*
 and PRF=discover-LOC.TR 3SG.ERG
 ‘And he discovered
- [ang na-dúla’ ang íya-ng isá ka baskét].
 ABS PRF-steal ABS 3SG.OBL-LK one LK basket
 [that one of his baskets was stolen].’

hil003.01.20.MM

- (152) *Hambal-án ko sya [nga duhá ang tínda sa Járo].*
 tell-LOC.TR 1SG.ERG 3SG.ABS LK two ABS market LOC PLACENAME
 ‘I told him [**that** there’s two markets in Jaro].’ hil087a.05.37.MM
- (153) *Ma-’áyo gúro [plastar-ón lang ánay] Yuz no?*
 ST-good maybe set-TR just first NAME TAG
 ‘Maybe it’s good [to just set it out first] Julius, don’t you think?’ hil065.05.48.All

4.8.2. Controller S = (Controllee S)

In some complement constructions, the single argument of an intransitive complement is omitted when it is coreferential with the single argument of an intransitive matrix.

- (154) *Dali’dáli’ sya [lakát sa balay].*
 hurry.RDP 3SG.ABS go LOC house
 ‘**He** ABS is hurrying [___ to go home].’
- (155) *Ma-’umpisá na namán akó [langóy].*
 IRR.INTR-start now again 1SG.ABS swim
 ‘**I** ABS will start [___ swimming] again.’

4.8.3. Controller P = (Controllee S)

In some, the single argument of an intransitive complement is omitted when it is coreferential with the absolutive of a transitive matrix.

- (156) *Gin=ganyát ko syá [nga ma-’upód sa ákon sa Iloílo].*
 TR.PFV=persuade 1SG.ERG 3SG.ABS LK IRR.INTR-accomp LOC 1SG.OBL LOC PLACE
 ‘I persuaded **her** ABS [___ to go with me to Iloilo].’
- (157) *Ayáw-an pa akó [hulát mga duhá ka óra].*
 sufficient-LOC.TR still 1SG.ABS wait PL two LK hour
 ‘It bored **me** ABS [___ to wait for two hours].’ hil035.00.14.EH

Taken together, these two patterns, S = (S) and P = (S), could be generalized in terms of absolutives. The matrix controller is always absolutive (S or P). The omitted argument in all of these complements would be absolutive in form in simple sentences: ‘**He** is going home’, ‘**I** will swim’, ‘**She** will go to Iloilo’, ‘**I** waited two hours’.

4.8.4. Controller P = (Controllee A)

But controllee would not always be absolutives. With ‘ask’ and ‘allow’ below, the omitted argument would be ergative in a simple sentence: ‘**She** invited J’, ‘**I** used the car’.

- (158) *Gin=hambal-án syá [nga imbitar-ón si J].*
 TR.PFV=say-LOC.TR 3SG.ABS LK invite-LOC.TR ABS.PR NAME
 ‘He asked **her** ABS [___ to invite J].’
- (159) *Gin=túgt-an akó sang ákon ginikánan*
 TR.PFV=permit-LOC.TR 1SG.ABS ERG 1SG.POSS parents
 ‘My parents allowed **me** ABS

[*nga usar-ón ang salákyan*].
 LK use-TR ABS car
 [___ to use the car].’

Discussions of complement constructions often involve passive complements, in order to distinguish omission of agents from subjects. As seen earlier, Hiligaynon lacks a detransitivizing construction comparable to the English passive. But when a speaker was asked to translate ‘They convinced her to be examined the doctor’, he produced the sentence below with no hesitation.

- (160) *Gin=konbinsér nila sya [nga ma-lantáw ka dóktór]*.
 TR.PFV=convince 3PL.ERG 3SG.ABS LK INTR.ST-examine LK doctor
 ‘They convinced **her** ABS [___ to be examined by the doctor].’

It follows the pattern above: P = (S). He did not opt for the grammatically transitive structure typically translated by speakers as passive, with ergative ‘doctor’. He chose an intransitive alternative, more literally ‘be doctor-examined’.

A generalization over these last three patterns, S = (S), P = (S), and P = A), would involve both absolutes and subjects: S,P = (S,A), that is, Absolute controllers = (Subject controllees).

4.8.5. Controller S = (Controllee A)

But there are still more patterns. The controller may be the sole argument of a grammatically intransitive matrix, and the omitted controllee ergative.

- (161) *Naga=pang-ayó’ permiso sa báta’*
 INTR.IPFV-DIST-ask permission LOC child
 ‘**Each** ABS was asking permission from the child

[*nga pa-’agi-hon sya*].
 LK CAUS-pass-TR 3SG.ABS
 [___ to let them pass.]’

hil041.00.46.DW

4.8.6. Controller A = (Controllee S)

In some constructions, the matrix controller can be ergative.

- (162) *Gústo ni James [ma-sulód] mo.*
 want ERG.PR NAME IRR.INTR-enter you.know
 ‘**James** ERG wants [to go in] you know.’

- (163) *Gin=túyo’ nilá*
 TR.PFV=plan 3PL.ERG
 ‘**They** ERG planned

[*nga pa-tindug-án sang mánsyon ang bakánte nga lóte*].
 LK CAUS-stand-LOC.TR OBL mansion ABS vacant LK lot
 [to build a mansion on the vacant lot].’

4.8.7. Controller A = (Controllee A)

Sometimes both the matrix controller and the complement controllee are ergative.

- (164) *Gin=testing-án nilá [nga kontak-ón ang ákon, asáwa].*
 TR.PFV=try-LOC.TR 3PL.ERG LK contact-TR ABS 1SG.POSS spouse
 ‘**They** ERG tried [__ to contact my wife].’ hil035.00.15.EH

- (165) *Indí’ nya gústo [lab’ot-ón ang prútas].*
 IRR.NEG 3SG.ERG want reach=TR ABS fruit
 ‘**He** ERG doesn’t want [__ to reach the fruit].’ hil050.00.29.DW

4.8.8. The complement

Many of these patterns of argument omission are determined by the matrix predicate. But the structure of the complement can have an effect as well. One of the irrealis modality markers, *mag=*, has a variety of functions, but it generally indicates a greater remove from actuality, appearing in deontic statements, conditionals, and counterfactuals. It was seen earlier in examples translated ‘He wouldn’t believe it’, ‘Who might come?’, ‘You should stop drinking beer’, ‘I could just go there and drink’, ‘She would flick your ear if you made a mistake’, ‘If you don’t give them money, you’re dead meat’, ‘I promised myself I would not eat so much’, and ‘They are required to wash their hands with boiled pomelo leaves’. Below the same matrix verb *gústo* occurs with a basic complement clause and a *mag=* clause, with a difference in meaning.

- (166) a. *Gústo mo [táwg-on ang doktor]?*
 want 2SG.ERG call-TR ABS doctor
 ‘Do **you** ERG want [(__ ERG) to call the doctor]?’
 b. *Gústo mo [mag=táwag sang doktor]?*
 want 2SG.ERG IRR.INTR.COND-call OBL doctor
 ‘Would **you** ERG like [(__ ABS) to call a doctor]?’ Motus 1971:133

Mag= complements must be intransitive, whether or not a semantic patient/theme is identifiable and topical. The single argument is omitted. For this reason, *mag=* verbs in complement constructions have sometimes been referred to as infinitives or nominalizers.

The matrix may be intransitive, with absolutive controller: S = (S).

- (167) *Nag=desidér ako, [nga mag=kádto sa emergency].*
 INTR.PFV=decide 1SG.ABS LK IRR.INTR.COND=go LOC emergency.room
 ‘**I** ABS decided [__ to go to the emergency room].’ hil035.00.14.EH

- (168) *Indí’ silá pwéde [mag-íhaw manók].*
 IRR.NEG 3PL.ABS allowed IRR.INTR.COND-slaughter chicken
 ‘**They** ABS cannot [__) slaughter a chicken].’ hil036.08.50HS

The matrix may be transitive, again with absolutive controller: P = (S).

- (169) *Gina=ayamayam-án nya syá*
 TR.IPV=coax.RDP-LOC.TR 3SG.ERG 3SG.ABS
 ‘He coaxed **him** ABS

agúd *mag-sáksi* *sa* *íya.*
in.order.to IRR.INTR.COND-testify LOC 3SG.OBL
[__ to testify on his behalf].’

- (170) *Gina=kulít* *nyá* *(a)kó*
TR.IPFV=bug 3SG.ERG 1SG.ABS
‘He keeps bugging **me** ABS

[*para mag=hátag* *donasyon sa pamilya sang mga na=linúg-an*].
for IRR.INTR.COND=give donation LOC family GEN PL PRF=quake-LOC.TR
[__ to give donations to the family of the earthquake victims].’

But the controller may also be the ergative of a transitive matrix: A = (S).

- (171) *Umpisa-hán* *mo* *na*
start-LOC.TR.IMP 2SG.ERG now
‘**You** ERG should start

[*mag-hímo*’ *sang áton* *balalun-ón*].
IRR.INTR.COND-make OBL 1INCL.POSS take.provisions.NMZL-TR
[__ making our sandwiches to bring along].’

In all of these cases, however, the omitted referent must be the single argument of an intransitive complement (S), even if that clause would normally be transitive in a simple sentence.

- (172) *Bilin-ón* *mo* *akó* [*mag=bakál*].
enjoin-TR 2SG.ERG 1SG.ABS IRR.INTR.COND=buy
‘Remind **me** ABS [__ to buy it].’

The realis counterpart to *mag=* is *pag=*, which forms complements preceded by a determiner. Some *pag=* complements are arguments of the matrix, like those with ‘stop’ and ‘do’ below. Here the controller is the matrix ergative: Controller A = (Controllee S).

- (173) *Untat-í* [*ang pag-súnlog* *sa* *idó*’].
stop-LOC.TR.IMP ABS NMLR-tease LOC dog
‘Stop [__ teasing the dog].’

- (174) *Indí*’ *pag-himú*’=*a*
IRR.NEG NMZL-do=IMP.TR
‘Don’t do

[*ang pag-pa-lápta* *sang mga indí*’ *tú’od nga mga balita*’].
ABS NMZL-CAUS-spread OBL PL IRR.NEG true LK PL news
[__ spreading of news that is not true]’ = ‘Stop the gossip.’

The requirement that the controllee be the single argument of an intransitive complement, rather than just an absolute, is clear from examples like ‘Stop teasing the dog’. A simple sentence

‘You are teasing the dog’ would normally be transitive, with absolutive dog, since the dog is identifiable and topical.

Pag= complements of transitive verbs like ‘force’ and ‘convince’ are adjuncts of the matrix, preceded by the locative determiner *sa*. Here the controller is the the matrix absolutive: P = (S).

- (175) *Gina=pílit akó [sa pag=kádto dídto].*
 TR.IPFV=force 1SG.ABS LOC NMZL=go there
 ‘They forced **me** ABS [__ to go].’

- (176) *Indí’ mo sya ma-dali’dali’*
 NEG.IRR 2SG.ERG 3SG.ABS IRR-RDP.convince
 ‘You can’t easily convince **him** ABS

[*sa pag-pa-hulám sa ímo sang kwárta*].
 LOC NMZL-CAUS-borrow LOC 2SG.OBL OBL money
 [__ to lend you the money].’

4.8.9. Complement constructions: Summary

Nearly all possible arrays of grammatical relations can be found in complement constructions with an omitted argument. The one exception is the P argument of a transitive complement.

Taken together, we have the following patterns in complement constructions.

(180) Omission under coreference	ABS controller	SUBJECT controller	ABS controllee	SUBJECT controllee
a. Controller S = (Controllee S)	x	x	x	x
b. Controller S = (Controllee A)	x	x		x
c. Controller P = (Controllee S)	x		x	x
d. Controller P = (Controllee A)	x			x
e. Controller A = (Controllee S)		x		x
f. Controller A = (Controllee A)		x		x

Generalizing over a, b, c, d, it could be said that the controllers are absolutives. Generalizing over a, b, e, d, the controller could be subjects. It might appear that controllees are simply subjects, but in some constructions, they must be the only argument of an intransitive (S). What this set of constructions actually shows is that grammatical relations are construction-specific.

5. Conclusion

Once they are examined construction by construction, especially in spontaneous speech, grammatical relations in Hiligaynon can be seen to resemble those in many other, unrelated languages, Hiligaynon clauses may have zero, one, or two core arguments: there are no ditransitives. Coding on pronominal clitics and determiner phrases shows clear ergative/absolutive patterning, with differential argument marking depending on the usual referent properties: animacy, identifiability, and specificity. Argument structure is manipulated extensively to ensure that topical referents are cast as core arguments, *either* absolutives or ergatives. Absolutives are no more topical than ergatives, however.

Certain syntactic constructions have been observed to define particular grammatical relations behaviorally in many languages. Among those noted for subjects are passives, imperatives, quantifier float, and conjunction reduction. In many languages, passives function to promote highly topical semantic patients/themes of transitives to subject status, and eliminate non-topical agents from the core. Hiligaynon has no counterpart to prototypical passives. Topicality is shared equally among core arguments. When transitive agents (A) are vague or unimportant, they may be unmentioned, but the clause remains grammatically transitive. In some languages, subjects of imperatives are omitted: *___ Leave! ___ Shut the door!* In Hiligaynon, second-person addresses of both intransitive and transitive commands may also be omitted; what characterizes these arguments is not subjecthood, however, but volition and agency. In some languages, quantifiers may be separated from the phrases they modify (quantifier float), but only when these are subjects: ***The men are all in China.*** Hiligaynon shows no evidence of quantifier float: quantifiers occur on their own or with the expression they quantify. In some languages, coreferential arguments may be omitted from conjoined clauses if they are subjects (conjunction reduction): *George grabbed his jacked and ___ left.* Hiligaynon shows omission of coreferential arguments, but the conditions for omission depend on discourse topicality and information packaging rather than a specific grammatical relation.

Other Hiligaynon constructions do provide clear evidence of a behaviorally-defined absolutive category (S,P), however. An important one is participant nominalization by conversion. The nominalization refers to the absolutive argument (S,P) of the nominalized verb or clause: ‘the he.bullies’ for ‘the bully’; ‘the he.bullies.him’ for ‘the one bullied’. Several other constructions, built on such nominalization, show similar patterns. Some content-questions take the form of equational sentences, consisting of a question word plus nominalized clause referring to the participant in question, its absolutive: ‘What.ABS = [the you want ___]?’ for ‘What do you want?’; ‘Who.ABS = [the ___ is.singing]?’ for ‘Who is singing?’. In focus constructions, the argument in focus appears in absolutive form clause-initially, and is then followed by a nominalized clause in which it functions as an absolutive (S,P): ‘I.ABS = [___ left]’ for ‘I am the one who left’, ‘I.ABS = [he loves ___]’ for ‘I am the one he loves’. Relative clauses consist of nominalizations whose absolutive argument (S,P) is coreferential with the head: ‘the man [I saw ___]’ for ‘the man I saw’; ‘the man [___ saw at you]’ for ‘the man who saw you’. In all of these constructions, in situations where the crucial controller or controllee might otherwise be cast as ergative (‘**Who** wants it?’, ‘I am the one **who** loves her’, ‘the man **who** saw you’), the patient/theme is cast as an adjunct and the clause is intransitive. Secondary predicates consist of nominalized intransitive clauses whose omitted S controllees are coreferential with a matrix absolutive controller (S,P): ‘**I.ABS** went to bed [___ hungry]’, ‘I found **him.ABS** [___ asleep].’ If the second clause is transitive, there is no argument omission.

Hiligaynon complement constructions present a more complex picture. Nearly all possible combinations of matrix controller and omitted complement controllee can be found: the controller may function as S, P, or A, and the controllee as S or A. Patterns of omission depend both on the matrix verb and the structure of the complement.

The task of identifying grammatical relations in a language raises useful questions about the optimal balance between the particular and the general, between description that does justice to the genius of an individual language on the one hand, and analyses that provide a foundation for a deeper understanding of language on the other. As more, detailed descriptions of a wider variety of languages have become available, interesting typological generalizations have been emerging. In some cases, the generalizations have been taken in turn as criteria for new analyses

of individual languages. It has been proposed, for example, that in some languages, quantifiers may be separated from the phrases they quantify, but only if those are subjects. Does this mean that if we observe a floating quantifier in another language, the argument it quantifies is a subject? Or should the generalization be re-examined? It has been hypothesized that there is a universal ranking of grammatical relations in terms of their accessibility to relativization: Subjects > Direct Objects > Indirect Objects > Obliques > Genitives > Object of Comparison. If in a language only one kind of argument can participate in relativization, is it therefore a subject? Obviously the best approach will be to work in both directions, refining findings on both sides, the specific and the general, in light of findings on the other, while working to avoid circularity.

Bickel (2011), elaborating on proposals by Kazenin (1994), Croft (2003), and others, has proposed a hierarchy of grammatical constructions aimed at refining our understanding of recurring distributions of alignment patterns across languages. He hypothesizes that ergatively-aligned grammatical relations in lower-ranked constructions on his hierarchy increase the odds in a language for such grammatical relations in higher-ranking constructions in the same language.

- (181) Hierarchy of grammatical constructions: Bickel 2011:36
 case > agreement > relativization/focus/operator.float >
 conjunction reduction > coreference constructions/marking

Bickel's hypothesis, meant only to characterize tendencies, is strikingly borne out by Hiligaynon.

- (182) Hiligaynon patterns of grammatical relations
- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| case on determiners: | ergative/absolutive |
| pronominal clitics: | ergative/absolutive |
| participant nominalization | absolutive |
| relativization | absolutive |
| focus constructions | absolutive |
| secondary predication | absolutive |
| conjunction reduction | discourse topicality |
| coreference (complementation) | S, P, A, and S, A |

In the end, the close examination of argument structure in individual constructions within a language is useful for several reasons. First, of course, it provides a more accurate picture of the structure of the language. Rather than stating simply that "L is a nominative/accusative language", we can talk about specific patterns. Second, it allows us to see more clearly what different alignment types share and where they differ. Rather than isolating a language like Hiligaynon as simply a separate "Philippine topic/focus type language", we can see what it has in common with other languages, such as differential argument marking, and where it departs, as in the requirement of absolutive status for the coreferential argument within a relative clause. Finally, it allows us to refine existing generalizations like the Keenan-Comrie Accessibility Hierarchy, and to build new ones, like Bickel's hierarchy of grammatical relation constructions.

Notes

¹Most of the examples cited here come from a corpus of spoken Hiligaynon assembled by the Hiligaynon Research Group, whose other members are Patrick Hall, Elliott Hoey, Megan Lukaniec, Heather Simpson, and Dibella Wdzenczny. We are especially grateful to Joshua De Leon, who has recorded extensive conversational material in various settings and has tirelessly shared his expertise, working with us in transcribing, translating, and analyzing it. Speakers represented here are Maria Socorro Teresa Garces López Chafe, Joshua De Leon, Starlene Gabio, Tim Gabio, Virginia Ramos, and Julius De Leon Tuvilla. Cory Chafe has also provided much-appreciated help with transcription, translation, and analysis. All speakers are from the Jaro area of Iloilo City in the Philippines except for Cory Chafe, who is from Victorias City, Negros Occidental. We also appreciate the multitude of Hiligaynon Facebook friends, former classmates from the Central Philippines University school in Iloilo, who have contributed their thoughts on usage and shades of meaning. Because there are so many Hiligaynon speakers, there is of course dialect variation. The material here is transcribed as it was spoken.

²There is no official orthography for the language. The spelling used here accords in general with the various practices visible in the grammars and dictionaries, and messages from speakers (as for example, on Facebook). Differences are minor. Where some writers use <gin> and <gina> for realis aspect markers [gin, gina], others use <guin> and <gin>. Glottal stop is distinctive in certain positions but is often not written. It appears automatically in word-initial position before vowels, and internally between vowels. It is distinctive word-internally after a consonant, where it serves as an onset. When it is written in this context, a hyphen is often used: *bal-an* ‘know’. It is also distinctive word-finally, but usually not written. Here an apostrophe is used in all contexts except word-initially: *bal'án*. Stress is not usually marked by speakers, but it is distinctive. Basic lexical stress is marked here with an acute accent, though it is volatile in running speech.

Mood and aspect markers are traditionally written as verbal prefixes in work on Philippine languages. In Hiligaynon, the markers actually range from more tightly-bound prefixes, through loosely-attached prefixes, to separate particles. Evidence for their status comes from intuitions of speakers, their writing, prosodic patterns such as pausing, and phonological processes, particularly the occurrence of glottal stops after the markers before vowel-initial stems, otherwise a word-initial phenomenon. Some speakers tend to write them attached to the following verb, while others are more likely to write them as separate words, though individual speakers vary even with specific markers. Some markers are more often written attached, others separately. Here they are written as clitics *gin=* simply for uniformity.

Examples accompanied by an identifier such as hil036.02.43.HS are drawn from unscripted connected speech. The identifier locates the material in our Hiligaynon archive. The final letters identify the person responsible for transcription and glossing, in collaboration with speakers.

Abbreviations for glosses generally follow the Leipzig Glossing rules: 1 FIRST PERSON, 2 SECOND PERSON, 3 THIRD PERSON, ABIL ABILITATIVE, ABS ABSOLUTIVE, CAUS CAUSATIVE, CONF CONFIRMATION, DIST DISTRIBUTIVE, ERG ERGATIVE, EXCL EXCLUSIVE, GEN GENITIVE, IMP IMPERATIVE, INCL INCLUSIVE, INS INSTRUMENTAL, INTR INTRANSITIVE, IPFV IMPERFECTIVE, IRR IRREALIS, LK LINKER, LOC LOCATIVE, NEG NEGATIVE, NMLZ NOMINALIZER, OBL OBLIQUE, PR PERSONAL, PRF PERFECT, PFV PERFECTIVE, PL PLURAL, POSS POSSESSIVE, RDP REDUPLICATION, SG SINGULAR, ST STATIVE, TR TRANSITIVE.

³As noted, in descriptions of some related languages, arguments corresponding to those labeled absolutes here are analyzed as subjects, and clauses labeled transitives here are analyzed as passives. Under such an analysis, the free translation of this passage would be:

‘A child passed by riding a bicycle. The kid stopped under the tree where the pears were being harvested by the man. And the bicycle was laid by the child on the ground. The bicycle was laid down and one basket filled with pears was taken. As the kid was walking away . . .’

This is quite different from the free translation offered by the speaker:

‘A child passed by riding a bicycle. The kid stopped under the tree where the man was harvesting the pears. And the kid placed the bicycle on the ground. He lay down his bicycle and took one basket filled with pears. As the kid was walking away . . .’

The subject/passive analysis would require substantial re-examination of our understanding of degrees of transitivity and major functions usually attributed to passives.

⁴Describing Tagalog, Kroeger (1993:35) cites evidence for a subject category in Conjunction Reduction, which operates on the first of two coreferential subjects in conjoined sentences like those below. He distinguishes this from ‘pro drop’, which applies only when the null pronoun follows its antecedent.

Tagalog Conjunction Reduction: Kroeger 1993:35

i *Pumunta sa tindahan*
 PFV.AV.go DAT store
 went to the store

at bumili ang kapatid ko ng bigas.
 and PFV.AV.buy NOM sibling my GEN rice
 and my brother bought some rice

‘My brother went to the store and bought some rice.’

ii *Tinukso ng mga kaibigan*
 PFV.tease.OV GEN PL friend
 was teased by friends

at kinagalitan si Juan ng kaniya=ng guro.
 and PFV.anger.DV NOM Juan GEN 3SG.DAT=LK teacher
 and Juan was scolded by his teacher

‘Juan was teased by his friends and scolded by his teacher.’

Two Hiligaynon speakers, representing different dialects, were each asked to come up with Hiligaynon equivalents. (Both know Tagalog as a second language.) Significantly, both rearranged the sentences so that the antecedents appeared in the initial clauses.

Hiligaynon elicited translations i

- ia. *Nag=kádto sa tiánnge ang ákon utód*
 INTR.PFV=go LOC store ABS 1SG.POSS sibling
 my brother went to the store

kag nag=bakál búgas.
 and INTR.PFV=buy rice
 and bought rice

‘My brother went to the store and bought rice.’

- ib. *Nag=kádto sa tindáhan ang utód ko*
 INTR.PFV=go LOC store ABS sibling 1SG.POSS
 my brother went to the store

kag nag=bakál sang búgas.
 and INTR.PFV=buy OBL rice
 and bought some rice

‘My friend went to the store and bought rice.’

Hiligaynon elicited translations of ii

- ia. *Gin=súnlog sang íya mga amígo si Juan*
 TR.PFV=tease ERG 3PL. PL friend ABS NAME
 his friends teased Juan

kag gin=akíg-an sya sang íya maéstra.
 and TR.PFV=angry-LOC.TR 3SG.ABS ERG 3SG.POSS teacher
 and his teacher scolded him

‘Juan was teased by his friends and scolded by his teacher.’

- ii. *Gin=súnlog si Juan sang íya mga upód*
 TR.PFV=tease ABS NAME ERG 3POSS PL friend
 his friends teased Juan

kay gin=akíg-an sya sang íya maéstra.
 because TR.PFV=angry-LOC.TR 3SG.ABS ERG 3SG.POSS teacher
 because his teacher scolded him

‘Juan was teased by his friends because he got scolded by his teacher.’

The second speaker corrected the Tagalog, moving the antecedent in the first clause.

- ic. *Pumunta sa tindahan ang kapatid ko at bumili ng bigas.*
 went to the store my brother and bought rice

- ii. *Tinukso si Juan ng kanyang mga kaibigan dahil pinagalitan siya ng kanilang guro.*
 Juan was teased by his friends because he was scolded by his teacher.

A comparison of the translations by these two speakers illustrates two other subtleties pertinent to the description of the language. It was noted in section 3 that unidentifiable (indefinite) referents are not cast as core arguments. If they are specific, they may be adjuncts, preceded by a general oblique or locative determiner; if non-specific there will be no determiner at all. The first speaker translated ‘My brother went to the store and bought rice’ with no determiner before ‘rice’, expressing it as generic. The second translated this sentence with the oblique determiner *sang*. Their translations also show how close the two possessive constructions are in meaning. For ‘my brother’, the first gave *ang ákon utód* (the my.OBL sibling) and the second *ang utód ko* (the sibling my.GEN).

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