



3-23-2009

## Analyzing Ilokano Pseudoclefts

Jeremy Rafal

*The Graduate Center, City University of New York*

---

# Analyzing Ilokano Pseudoclefts

## **Abstract**

Several researchers have proposed that cleft constructions in many Austronesian languages are in fact concealed pseudoclefts (Chung, 1998 for Chamorro; Paul, 2001, 2008 for Malagasy; Georgopolous, 1991 for Palauan, among others). What this paper examines is the syntactic structure of pseudoclefts in Ilokano, a VSO Austronesian language spoken in the Northern Philippines. I argue that the language employs two types of pseudoclefts, both of which are biclausal. The first type (ti-type or null copula-type pseudocleft) utilizes a null copula between a focused constituent XP and a headless relative introduced by the determiner *ti*. Thus, we get a construction of the type XP < copula= $\emptyset$  < *ti* + wh-clause. Despite the lack of an overt wh-phrase, material after the determiner *ti* contains an operator-variable chain signaled by the 'trigger' morphology, creating a headless relative much like in English and other languages. Many Austronesian languages including Ilokano exhibit the famous 'trigger-only' restriction to A-bar movement (Keenan and Comrie, 1977; Aldridge, 2004), and thus the trigger morphology found on the verb in a headless relative marks the 'role' of the variable. The second type (ket-type pseudocleft) employs the topic particle *ket* with the word order *ti* + wh-clause < *ket* < XP. This time, the headless relative sits in a topicalization position and the constituent after the topic particle *ket* introduces the focused constituent XP. I argue that the ket-type of pseudocleft is in fact a TOPIC < COMMENT construction where the focus is a full IP subject to optional ellipsis, similar to a type of specificational pseudocleft found in English (cf. den Dikken et al., 2000).

# Analyzing Ilokano Pseudoclefts

Jeremy Rafal\*

## 1 Introduction

In the wake of the rich literature on English pseudoclefts (Akmajian, 1970; Higgins, 1979; Bošković, 1997; den Dikken, 2006b, among others), pseudocleft constructions in Austronesian languages have also started to receive considerable attention from several researchers (Aldridge, 2004; Chung, 1998; Georgopoulos, 1991; Paul, 2008, among others). Austronesian languages often employ no copula, no overt expletives, and an alternation between overt and non-overt complementizers, which in turn, results in several interesting consequences to certain types of syntactic structures, particularly clefts. When one takes away these familiar elements as in (1), the surface result may look very much like a classic case of A-bar movement.

- (1) a. who ~~is-it~~ (that) John kissed  
b. ~~It-is~~ Mary (that) John kissed

This paper aims to go beyond what is on the surface and provide a deeper analysis of two particular types of sentences in Ilokano, an Austronesian language spoken in the Northern Philippines. I present arguments for an analysis that treats these sentences as types of pseudoclefts. One type, which I call the *ti*-type or null copula-type pseudocleft, involves a bi-clausal structure analogous to an English pseudocleft with a FOCUS < *be* < *wh*-clause order (*rice is what I ate*). The second type of pseudocleft, called the *ket*-type pseudocleft, is also a bi-clausal structure, but this time the *wh*-clause is in a topicalization position and the focused XP is the emergent constituent of an optional ellipsis. The outline of the paper is as follows: section 2 explores some basic facts and relevant structures in the language including copular sentences, topicalization strategies, and relatives; section 3 provides a discussion of the typology of pseudoclefts in Ilokano; section 4 briefly compares Ilokano pseudoclefts with their English counterparts; and section 5 concludes the paper.

## 2 Basic Facts and Relevant Structures in Ilokano

Ilokano is an Austronesian language spoken in the Northern Philippines with approximately 8 million speakers. It has a default VSO word order, but material can precede the verb in topicalization or focalization constructions such as in pseudoclefts. An ergative analysis of the language (Gerds, 1988; Rubino, 1997, among others) will be adopted, but will not play a direct role in the present discussion. The following sections will survey some of the significant structures in the language that are essential in our discussions of pseudoclefts.

### 2.1 Voice or Trigger Morphology, and the Restriction on A-bar Movement

As a typical Philippine-type language, unmarked Ilokano sentences select one core argument as the “trigger” argument whose grammatical role determines the voice morphology of the verb. The verb in example (2) is in its “actor-trigger” form, where the trigger (the pronominal clitic 1.SG.ABS *-ak*) is the external argument of the clause. In (3), the “patient-trigger” form of the verb indicates that the internal argument *ti ayayam* ‘the toy’ has the trigger status. Other verb forms such as “theme-,” “locative-,” “benefactive-trigger” forms, among others, also exist, but are not illustrated here since they do not play a role in the present discussion.

---

\*My heartfelt thanks to Marcel den Dikken for his guidance and insightful suggestions. I also would like to thank Dan Kaufman, the participants of the CUNY Structure of Austronesian Languages Seminar, and the audiences of the NYU Syntax Brown Bag and PLC 32 for their helpful comments. Thanks also to my mother Juanita and sister Chrisele Rafal for being good sports and sitting through some of my excruciating data-extraction sessions, and to Jared Simard for his helpful technical suggestions about this paper.

- (2) The “actor” trigger<sup>1</sup>  
 {-imm-}gatang-ak (> gimmatangak) iti ayayam idiy Vigan.  
 PRF.AT-buy-1.SG.ABS OBL toy DEM Vigan  
 ‘I bought a toy in Vigan.’
- (3) The “patient” trigger  
 {-in-}gatang-ko (> ginatangko) ti ayayam idiy Vigan.  
 PRF.PT-buy-1.SG.ERG OBL toy DEM Vigan  
 ‘I bought a toy in Vigan.’

Ilokano also exhibits the famous “trigger-only” (or “subject-only”) restriction to A-bar movement as discussed in Keenan and Comrie (1977). This means that Ilokano is part of a group of languages where only the subject (the trigger or the absolutive argument) can go through A-bar movement such as in relativization and *wh*-questions. Consequently, voice morphology on the verb must reflect the grammatical role of the extracted argument. In example (4), the extracted argument is the external argument, as indicated by the “actor-trigger” form of the verb. Likewise, the “patient-trigger” form of the verb correctly signals the extracted internal argument in (5). A mismatch between the extracted argument and voice morphology on the verb would lead to ungrammaticality, as in (6) and (7).

- (4) Sino<sub>i</sub> ti g-imm-atang *ec*<sub>i</sub> iti ayayam idiy Vigan?  
 who DET PRF.AT-buy OBL toy DEM Vigan  
 ‘Who bought the toy in Vigan?’
- (5) Ania<sub>j</sub> ti g-in-atang-mo *ec*<sub>j</sub> idiy Vigan?  
 what DET PRF.PT-buy-2.SG.ERG DEM Vigan  
 ‘What did you buy in Vigan?’
- (6) \*Sino<sub>i</sub> ti g-in-atang *ec*<sub>i</sub> ti ayayam idiy Vigan?  
 what DET PRF.PT-buy DET toy DEM Vigan  
 ‘Who bought the toy in Vigan?’
- (7) \*Ania<sub>j</sub> ti g-imm-atang-ka *ec*<sub>j</sub> idiy Vigan?  
 what DET PRF.AT-buy-2.SG.ABS DEM Vigan  
 ‘Who bought the toy in Vigan?’

## 2.2 Copular Sentences

No discussion of pseudoclefts is complete without touching upon copular sentences. Pseudoclefts in English and many other languages seem to be derived from a predication relationship between two DPs manifested in a copular sentence construction. Ilokano does in fact use this construction to build one of the two types of pseudoclefts, making it a vital topic of discussion.

### 2.2.1 Predicate-initiality and Definiteness

Ilokano copular sentences are primarily *predicate-initial* and do not employ an overt copula. Copular sentences with non-verbal predicates are illustrated in (8) with an adjective and in (9) with a “bare” NP. Note that the predicate NP in the initial position in (9) is indefinite, and it must be so for reasons to be discussed shortly.

- (8) Nalabbaga ti kotse.  
 red DET car  
 ‘The car is red.’
- (9) Ubing nga nasirib ti maestra.  
 child LIG smart DET teacher  
 ‘The teacher is a smart child.’

<sup>1</sup>ABS=absolutive case; AT=actor trigger; COMP=complementizer; DET=determiner; DEM=demonstrative; ERG=ergative case; IMPRF=imperfective; LIG=ligature; OBL=oblique; PSN=person marker; PRF=perfective aspect; PT=patient trigger; SG=singular; TOP=topic particle

While bare predicates freely occupy the initial position of copular sentences, predicate nominals, which play an important role in Ilokano pseudoclefts, are much more restricted in this position. To nominalize any predicate, one can simply add the determiner *ti*. Adding *ti* to the adjective *nalabbaga* ‘red’ in (10a) creates a predicate nominal [<sub>DP</sub> *ti nalabbaga*] with the interpretation ‘the red (one).’ In (10b), the determiner also unsurprisingly makes a noun definite in the process of forming a predicate nominal. More interestingly, verbal predicates can also be easily nominalized with *ti*, as shown in (10c).

- (10) a. *ti nalabbaga*  
 DET red  
 ‘the red (one)’  
 b. *ti ubing nga nasirib*  
 DET child LIG smart  
 ‘the smart child’  
 c. *ti mangi-sursuro (nga ubing)*  
 DET IMPRF.AT-teach LIG child  
 ‘the teaching (child)’

Once predicates are nominalized, they are no longer permitted to occupy the initial position, as shown in examples (11) and (12).

- (11) \**Ti nalabbaga ti kotse.*  
 DET red DET car  
 ‘The car is the red (one).’  
 (12) a. *Ni Maria ti ubing.*  
 PSN Maria DET child  
 ‘Maria is the child.’  
 b. \**Ti ubing ni Maria.*  
 DET child PSN Maria  
 ‘Maria is the child.’  
 c. \**Ti mangi-sursuro (nga ubing) ni Maria.*  
 DET IMPRF.AT-teach LIG child PSN Maria  
 ‘Maria is the teaching (child).’

A similar case of restricting definite DPs in the initial position is also observed in Malagasy, another Austronesian language, spoken in Madagascar. Paul (2008) points out that Malagasy disallows definite DPs as predicates to occupy the initial position of copular sentences. This “definiteness constraint,” as Paul argues, is a formal restriction rather than a semantic one because NPs in the initial position are syntactically indefinite, but are not necessarily interpreted as indefinites.

In light of the Malagasy examples, Ilokano behaves in a similar manner where NPs in this initial position are not always necessarily interpreted as indefinite. Take the example in (13). The initial constituent may be marked with a demonstrative and a possessor making it semantically definite. While the language seems to bar two *ti*-marked DPs in a copular construction, the presence of both the demonstrative and the possessor does not obstruct the grammaticality of this sentence.

- (13) *Idiay/\*ti kotse-k ti nalabbaga.*  
 DEM/DET car-1.SG.GEN DET red  
 ‘That car of mine is the red (one).’

This data also reminds one of the facts in Scottish Gaelic, another VSO language. Adger and Ramchand (2003) suggest that two DPs in the language pose problems in a “substantive auxiliary construction” (the default copular construction) since full-fledged DPs are simply ineligible as predicates. Instead, the language reverts to a strategy that employs what is called the “defective copula” and with the help of a “pronominal augment” that agrees in number with the subject.

As in Ilokano, the Malagasy and Scottish Gaelic data suggest that there is a correlation between definiteness and what qualifies as predicates. The following section examines some consequences due to this observation, particularly in regards to predicate-initiality and word order in Ilokano.

### 2.2.2 Subject-first in a Predicate-initial Language

As mentioned above, Ilokano copular sentences have a default predicate-initial word order. Our discussions about predicate nominals and the “definiteness constraint,” however, open the possibility that copular sentences can in fact have a SUBJ < PRED word order. This is especially true when a predicate is nominalized and cannot occupy the initial position. We also see this word order effect in action in copular sentences featuring a universal QP as one of its major constituents. It is well known that there is a formal ban on the universal quantifier functioning as a predicate as shown in (14).

- (14) a. Every man is Juan.  
 b. \*Juan is every man.

The data in (14) illustrates that the universal quantifier happily functions as the subject, but not as a predicate. In Ilokano, the universal quantifier (*amin amin nga tao* ‘every person’) can be in the initial position typically reserved for predicates. Yet it must be interpreted as the subject and it is impossible to interpret it as the predicate.

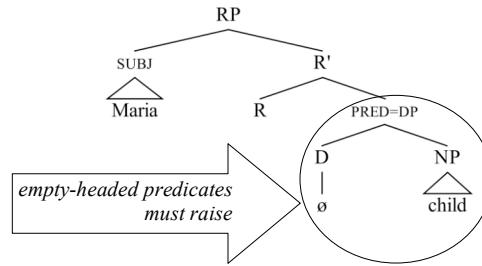
- (15) Amin amin            nga    tao    ni    Juan.  
       every                LIG    person    PSN    Juan  
       ‘Every person is Juan.’/ \*‘Juan is every person.’

In a previous account of predicate-initiality in Austronesian languages, Massam (2000) derives the word order in languages such as Niuean by positing an EPP [PRED] feature in I<sup>0</sup> attracting eligible predicates into Spec,IP. This approach seems to predict a robust PRED < SUBJ word order since the “Predicative EPP” feature must be checked by moving a predicate to Spec,IP. This approach does not seem to accommodate the possibility of having a SUBJ < PRED word order in an otherwise predicate-initial language like Ilokano.

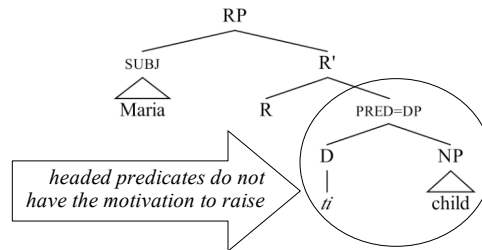
Instead, I adopt an approach proposed by den Dikken (2006a) on licensing empty-headed predicates. Drawing from several facts like Celtic copular sentences and predicate inversion in English, an empty-headed predicate “is not licensed to stay in the predicate position of the small clause: it must raise to Spec,TP in order to be properly licensed” (den Dikken 2006a:93). Empty-headed predicates in Ilokano constitute eligible predicates such as bare NPs and must front. Headed predicates, particularly predicate nominals headed by the D-head *ti*, have no motivation to front. Hence, we predict that although the initial position in Ilokano is typically occupied by a predicate as in (16a), a SUBJ < PRED word order is in fact possible as in (16b). A structure is provided in (17) and (18), where the RELATOR is a functional head that establishes a predication relationship between a subject and a predicate (see den Dikken 2006a).

- (16) a. (\*Ti) ubing ni Maria.            PRED < SUBJ  
       DET child PSN Maria  
       ‘Maria is a child.’  
       b. Ni Maria ti ubing.            SUBJ < PRED  
       PSN Maria DET child  
       ‘Maria is the child’

- (17) An empty-headed predicate must raise, resulting in a PRED < SUBJ word order (RP=Relator Phrase, cf. den Dikken 2006a).



- (18) A headed predicate (headed by determiner *ti*) does not have the motivation to raise, resulting in a SUBJ < PRED word order.



Deriving subject-first word order in a predicate-initial language such as Ilokano is subject to further investigations beyond the scope of this paper. Whatever the best account of subject-first word order is, it is important to recognize that this word order is in fact possible in Ilokano.

### 2.3 Topicalization with *ket*

The Ilokano *ket*-construction is a multi-purpose TOPIC < COMMENT topicalization construction. It can host any possible topics and constituents as big as full clauses as COMMENT XPs. I analyze the particle *ket* as a topic particle in between the two parts of a bi-clausal structure: a topicalized constituent in a high position or the “pre-*ket*” position and the COMMENT XP in the “post-*ket*” position. The examples below are *ket*-constructions with topics co-referenced with arguments in the lower clause in (19a) and (19b), and with locative and temporal adjuncts as topics in (19c) and (19d).

- (19) a. [Ti ayayam]<sub>i</sub>            *ket*            ginatang-ko                    *pro*<sub>i</sub>    idi kalman.  
 DET    toy                    TOP        PRF.PT-buy-2.SG.ERG            3.SG.ABSPST yesterday  
 ‘(As for) the toy, I bought (it) yesterday.’
- b. [Siak]<sub>i</sub>                    *ket*            gimatang-ak<sub>i</sub>                    iti            ayayam.  
 I.SG.ABS                    TOP        PRF.AT-buy-1.SG.ABS            OBL        toy  
 ‘(As for) me, I bought the toy in Vigan.’
- c. [Idiay Vigan]            *ket*            gimatang-ak                    iti            ayayam.  
 DEM    Vigan                    TOP        PRF.AT-buy-1.SG.ABS            OBL        toy  
 ‘In Vigan, I bought the toy.’
- d. [Idi kalman]            *ket*            gimatang-ak                    iti            ayayam.  
 PST    yesterday                    TOP        PRF.AT-buy-1.SG.ABS            OBL        toy  
 ‘Yesterday, I bought the toy.’

Note that examples (19a) and (19b) contain co-referential DPs in the “pre-*ket*” and “post-*ket*” positions (the 3.SG.ABS [-HUMAN] pronoun in Ilokano is null). This suggests that the *ket*-topicalization involves base generation rather than movement. While the “pre-*ket*” position can host any base-generated eligible topics, the constituent in the “post-*ket*” position can be a full-fledged IP with no sign of extraction. The example in (20) illustrates the fact that the *ket*-construction involves no movement, and hence does not exhibit island violations.

- (20) a. [Ti ayayam]<sub>i</sub> ket [saan-ko ammo [no apay nga  
 DET toy TOP NEG-1.SG.ERG know COMP why LIG  
 ginatang-na pro<sub>i</sub> idiy Vigan]].  
 PT.PRF-buy-2.SG.ERG 3.SG.ABS DEM Vigan  
 ‘The toy, I don’t know why he bought (it) in Vigan.’  
 b. [<sub>XP</sub> TOPIC<sub>i</sub>] ket [<sub>NEG</sub> ... [<sub>CP</sub> ... pro<sub>i</sub> ...]

## 2.4 Headed and Headless Relatives in Ilokano

Another crucial topic in our discussion of pseudoclefts is the structure of headed and headless relatives in the language. In English, headed relatives are DPs with an overt “head” noun of a relative clause as in [<sub>DP</sub> *the horse* [<sub>CP</sub> *that I saw*]]. Headless relatives, as the name suggests, do not have an overt head noun. Instead, as some would suggest, there is a null head noun, and a *wh*-word (instead of *that*) introduces the relative clause (Collins, 1991; Grosu, 1996, among others). Headless relatives in English and other languages are essential in forming pseudocleft constructions, as in *the horse is [what I saw]*.

Ilokano headed relatives must involve the ligature *nga* between the “head” and its relative clause as in (21). Leaving the ligature out would deliver an ungrammatical result. Note that the verb in the relative clause must also have the appropriate voice morphology that matches the grammatical role of the head noun. The “actor-trigger” verb form in (21a) matches the role of the head noun *ti tao* ‘the person,’ and likewise in (22a) where the “patient-trigger” form corresponds with the head noun *ti ayayam* ‘the toy.’ Note that the verb must again reflect the grammatical role of the extracted argument, and a mismatch would lead to ungrammaticality, as shown in examples (21b) and (22b).

- (21) a. [ti tao]<sub>i</sub> \*(nga) [<sub>Op<sub>i</sub></sub> gimatang ec<sub>i</sub> iti ayayam idiy Vigan]  
 DET person LIG PRF.AT-buy OBL toy DEM Vigan  
 ‘the person who bought a toy in Vigan’  
 b. \*[ti tao]<sub>i</sub> nga [<sub>Op<sub>i</sub></sub> ginatang ec<sub>i</sub> iti ayayam idiy Vigan]  
 DET person LIG PRF.PT-buy OBL toy DEM Vigan  
 ‘the person who bought a toy in Vigan’  
 (22) a. [ti ayayam]<sub>j</sub> \*(nga) [<sub>Op<sub>j</sub></sub> ginatang-ko ec<sub>j</sub> idiy Vigan]  
 DET toy LIG PRF.PT-buy-1.SG.ERG DEM Vigan  
 ‘the toy that I bought a toy in Vigan’  
 b. \*[ti ayayam]<sub>j</sub> nga [<sub>Op<sub>j</sub></sub> gimatang-ak ec<sub>j</sub> idiy Vigan]  
 DET toy LIG PRF.AT-buy-1.SG.ABS DEM Vigan  
 ‘the toy that I bought a toy in Vigan’

The relative clause itself involves movement of a null operator, which is subject to the “trigger-only” restriction to A-bar movement as discussed in section 2.1. Evidence of movement is shown in example (22c), where a *wh*-island violation is observed.

- c. \*ti ayayam nga [saan-ko ammo [no apay nga ginatang-ko t<sub>i</sub> ... ]]  
 DET toy LIG NEG-1.SG.ERG know COMP why LIG PT.PRF-buy-1.SG.ERG  
 ‘the toy that I don’t know if I bought’  
 d. \* [<sub>DP</sub> HEAD NOUN ] nga [<sub>CP</sub> Op<sub>i</sub> [<sub>NEG</sub> P ... [<sub>CP</sub> ... t<sub>i</sub> ... ]]

Headless relatives in Ilokano, as in English, constitute a relative clause with a null head noun. This time, the determiner *ti* introduces the headless relative rather than a *wh*-word or a complementizer. The formation of predicate nominals discussed in section 2.2 should come to mind, where one can simply add the determiner *ti* to nominalize predicates.

The relative clauses in headless relatives are formed once again in an operator movement as discussed above. In (23a), the verb must be in its “actor-trigger” form to match the extracted external argument; any other verb forms as in (23b) would lead to ungrammaticality. Similarly, the verb must be in its “patient-trigger” form when the extracted argument is the internal argument as in (24). The same island effects are again observed in headless relatives as shown in (24c).

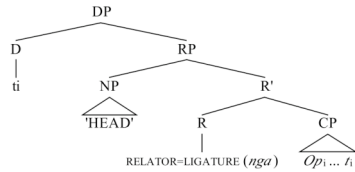


- (23) a. ti  $\emptyset$  [ $Op_i$  gimmatang  $ec_i$  iti ayam idiy Vigan]  
 DET PRF.AT-buy OBL toy DEM Vigan  
 ‘(the one) who bought the toy in Vigan’  
 b. \*ti  $\emptyset$  [ $Op_i$  ginatang  $ec_i$  iti ayam idiy Vigan]  
 DET PRF.PT-buy OBL toy DEM Vigan  
 ‘(the one) who bought the toy in Vigan’  
 (24) a. ti  $\emptyset$  [ $Op_j$  ginatang-ko  $ec_j$  idiy Vigan]  
 DET PRF.PT-buy-1.SG.ERG DEM Vigan  
 ‘what I bought in Vigan’  
 b. \*ti  $\emptyset$  [ $Op_j$  gimmatang-ak  $ec_j$  idiy Vigan]  
 DET PRF.AT-buy-1.SG.ABS DEM Vigan  
 ‘what I bought in Vigan’  
 c. \*ti  $\emptyset$  [saan-ko ammo [no apay nga ginatang-ko  $t_i$  ... ]]  
 DET NEG-1.SG.ERG know COMP why LIG PT.PRF-buy-1.SG.ERG  
 ‘what I don’t know if why I bought (it)’  
 d. \*[<sub>DP</sub> D=ti  $\emptyset$  [<sub>CP</sub>  $Op_i$  [<sub>NegP</sub> ... [<sub>CP</sub> ...  $t_i$  ... ]]]]

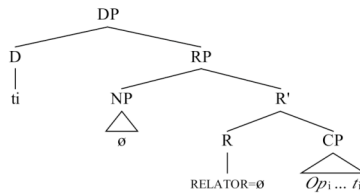
Based on the facts discussed above, we conclude that there is a correlation between “headedness” of Ilokano relatives and the distribution of the ligature *nga*. Whenever the relative clause is overtly headed, the ligature is obligatorily present as in (25). This suggests a typical relative clause construction where the ligature *nga* introduces the relative clause after the overt head. When it is “headless,” the ligature is obligatorily absent as in (26). This alternation reminds us of a similar alternation in English such as *the one that bought a toy in Vigan* and *who bought the toy in Vigan* (see Collins, 1991 for a more detailed discussion). The structures of headed and headless relatives are provided in (27) and (28).

- (25) a. \*ti nga gimmatang iti ayam idiy Vigan  
 DET LIG PRF.AT-buy OBL toy DEM Vigan  
 ‘(the one) who bought the toy in Vigan’  
 b. \*ti nga ginatang-ko idiy Vigan  
 DET LIG PRF.PT-buy-1.SG.ERG DEM Vigan  
 ‘(the one) who bought the toy in Vigan’  
 (26) a. \*ti tao gimmatang iti ayam idiy Vigan  
 DET person PRF.AT-buy OBL toy DEM Vigan  
 ‘the person who bought the toy in Vigan’  
 b. \*ti ayam ginatang-ko idiy Vigan  
 DET toy PRF.PT-buy-1.SG.ERG DEM Vigan  
 ‘the toy that I bought in Vigan’

(27) Structure of Ilokano headed relatives



(28) Structure of Ilokano headless relatives



### 3 A Typology of Pseudoclefts in Ilokano

It is possible to construct pseudoclefts in Ilokano by utilizing one of the two constructions discussed above. The first type, the *ti*-type (or null copula-type) pseudocleft, is formed with the canonical copular sentence construction connecting a focus XP and a headless relative introduced by the determiner *ti*. The *ket*-type pseudocleft is formed with the *ket*-topicalization construction, with the headless relative in the topic or pre-*ket* position and the focus XP in the post-*ket* position as the emergent constituent of an optional ellipsis of a full-fledged IP.

#### 3.1 The *ti*-type (Null Copula-type) Pseudocleft

In a *ti*-type pseudocleft, we have a bi-clausal structure with the focused XP originating outside the constituent that consists of the determiner *ti* and a headless relative (or the predicate nominal). The result is the following word order:

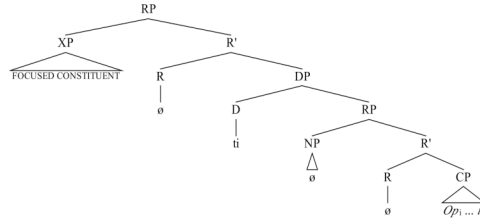
- (29)  $[_{DP} \text{ FOCUSED CONSTITUENT}] < \text{RELATOR (copula)} = \emptyset < [_{DP} \text{ } ti + \textit{wh}\text{-clause}]$

as illustrated in the examples (33a) and (34a).

- (30) a.  $[_{DP} \text{ Siak } ] \quad \emptyset \quad [_{DP} \text{ } ti \quad \textit{gimmatang} \quad \textit{iti} \quad \textit{ayayam}].$   
           1.SG.ABS                   COP           DET   PRF.AT-buy   OBL   toy  
           ‘It was me who bought the toy.’  
   b.  $*[_{DP} \text{ } Ti \quad \textit{gimmatang} \quad \textit{iti} \quad \textit{ayayam}] \quad \emptyset \quad [_{DP} \text{ } \textit{siak} ].$   
           DET   PRF.AT-buy   OBL   toy                   COP   1.SG.ABS
- (31) a.  $[_{DP} \text{ } \textit{Ayayam}] \quad \emptyset \quad [_{DP} \text{ } \textit{ti} \quad \textit{ginatang} \quad \textit{ni} \quad \textit{Juan} \quad \textit{idaiy} \quad \textit{Vigan}].$   
           toy           COP           DET   PRF.PT-buy   PSN   Juan   DEM   Vigan  
           ‘A toy is what Juan bought in Vigan.’  
   b.  $*[_{DP} \text{ } Ti \quad \textit{ginatang} \quad \textit{ni} \quad \textit{Juan} \quad \textit{idaiy} \quad \textit{Vigan}] \quad \emptyset \quad [_{DP} \text{ } \textit{ayayam}].$   
           DET   PRF.PT-buy   PSN   Juan   DEM   Vigan   COP           toy

Note that the reverse word order is impossible as in the b. examples, due to reasons previously discussed: predicate nominals are headed predicates that do not have the motivation to front. The presence of the determiner *ti* “freezes” the predicate in its base position; thus, it cannot front. Crucially, the result is a SUBJ < PRED word order and not a predicate-initial construction. Thus, an analysis of the *ti*-type pseudocleft is provided in the structure below:

- (32) Analysis of the *ti*-type pseudocleft



#### 3.2 The *ket*-type Pseudocleft

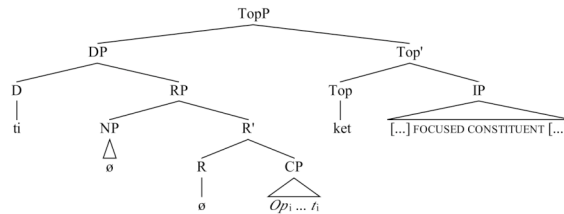
The *ket*-type pseudocleft, as the name suggests, is formed with the aid of the *ket*-topicalization construction. This time, the DP containing the determiner *ti* and headless relative is introduced in the pre-*ket* position, and the focus XP emerges in the post-*ket* position as a result of an optional ellipsis of a full-fledged IP. The result is the following word order:

- (33)  $[_{DP} \text{ } ti + \textit{wh}\text{-clause}] < \text{TOPIC PARTICLE} = \textit{ket} < [_{IP} \dots \text{ FOCUS XP } \dots]$

As discussed in section 2.3, *ket*-topicalization is a construction that results in a TOPIC < COMMENT information structure. All constituents are base-generated rather than through movement,

and can host any possible topics. Since any topics are possible, DPs containing a headless relative (*ti* + *wh*-clause) are certainly eligible candidates. Recall that the post-*ket* position can host full-fledged IPs, which are subject to optional ellipsis. Emerging from this ellipsis is the focused constituent that is co-referential with the topic DP. Example (34a) is a typical example of a *ket*-type pseudocleft, where the headless relative is in the pre-*ket* position and a full IP in the post-*ket* position with ellipsis leaving the trigger argument as the focused constituent. Note that it is impossible for a non-trigger argument to emerge as the focused constituent as in (34b), where *iti ayayam* ‘a toy’ is in its oblique form. In (35), the post-*ket* position can also host copular sentences, in this case, a *ti*-type pseudocleft. Note again that the focused constituent must be the trigger (or absolutive) argument. A structure of the *ket*-type pseudocleft is provided in (36).

- (34) a. [<sub>DP</sub> *Ti ginatang-ko idia y Vigan*] ket [<sub>IP</sub> (~~*ginatang-ko*~~) [<sub>DP</sub> *ti ayayam*]].  
 DET PRF.PT-buy-1.SG.ERG DEM Vigan TOP PRF.PT-buy-1.SG.ERG DET toy  
 ‘What I bought in Vigan is (~~I bought~~) the toy.’
- b. \* [<sub>DP</sub> *Ti ginatang-ko idia y Vigan*] ket [<sub>IP</sub> (~~*gimmatang-ak*~~) [<sub>DP</sub> *iti ayayam*]].  
 DET PRF.PT-buy-1.SG.ERG DEM Vigan TOP PRF.AT-buy-1.SG.ABS OBL toy  
 ‘What I bought in Vigan is (~~I bought~~) the toy.’
- (35) [<sub>DP</sub> *Ti gimmatang iti ayayam*] ket [<sub>IP</sub> *siak*]  
 DET PRF.AT-buy OBL toy TOP 1.SG.ABS  
 (~~*ti gimmatang iti ayayam*~~).  
 DET PRF.AT-buy OBL toy  
 ‘(The one) who bought a toy is me (who bought a toy).’
- (36) Structure of the *ket*-type pseudocleft



#### 4 A Typology of Pseudoclefts in English and Ilokano

From our discussion above emerge two strategies in forming pseudoclefts: one involving a canonical copular sentence and the other topicalization. This approach provides overt evidence on the analysis of specificational pseudoclefts as argued by den Dikken, Meinunger, and Wilder (2000). Their analysis argues for two types of English specificational pseudoclefts: type A pseudoclefts consist of full-IP counterweights subject to ellipsis and type B pseudoclefts do not have an IP-counterweight and no ellipsis is involved. The examples in (37) are type A pseudoclefts and the licensing of the NPI in the post-copular position supports the optional ellipsis analysis.

- (37) a. What John bought was [~~he bought~~ some wine].  
 b. What John didn't buy was [~~he didn't buy~~ any wine].  
 c. \**Any wine* was [what John didn't buy].

Type A pseudoclefts follow straightforwardly from the analysis of Ilokano *ket*-type pseudoclefts. Both involve topicalization and optional ellipsis in the counterweight or the post-*ket* position. The following examples in (38) exhibit Type B pseudoclefts where the counterweight is not an IP and thus no ellipsis is involved. We should also expect there to be no NPI connectivity effects in this type, and word order to be interchangeable. The Ilokano *ti*-type pseudocleft parallels this structure, but it does not enjoy the same freedom of word order around the null copula due to a “definiteness constraint” in the language.

- (38) a. Rice is [what many people eat].  
 b. [What many people eat] is rice.

## 5 Concluding Remarks

My primary aim in this paper has been to provide a syntactic analysis of pseudoclefts in Ilokano, hoping to contribute to the overall discussion of pseudoclefts, especially in Austronesian languages. I have argued that there are two strategies in constructing pseudoclefts in Ilokano: one is manifested in a copular construction and the other is a topicalization construction. I also presented facts about the information structure in these pseudoclefts, where the *ti*-type pseudoclefts are interpreted with a SUBJ < PRED word order and the *ket*-type pseudocleft as a TOPIC < COMMENT structure.

## References

- Adger, David, and Gillian Ramchand. 2003. Predication and equation. *Linguistic Inquiry* 34:325–259.
- Akmajian, Adrian. 1970. On deriving cleft sentences from pseudo-cleft sentences. *Linguistic Inquiry* 1:149–68.
- Aldridge, Edith. 2004. Ergativity and Word Order in Austronesian Languages. Doctoral Dissertation, Cornell University.
- Bošković, Željko. 1997. Pseudoclefts. *Studia Linguistica* 51:235–277.
- Chung, Sandra. 1998. *The Design of Agreement: Evidence from Chamorro*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Collins, Peter. 1991. *Cleft and Pseudo-cleft Constructions in English*. London: Routledge.
- den Dikken, Marcel. 2006a. *Relators and Linkers. The Syntax of Predication, Predicate Inversion and Copulas*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
- den Dikken, Marcel. 2006b. Specificational copular sentences and pseudoclefts. In *The Blackwell Companion to Syntax*, ed. M. Everaert and H. van Riemsdijk, 292–409. Oxford: Blackwell.
- den Dikken, Marcel, Andre Meinunger, and Chris Wilder. 2000. Pseudoclefts and ellipsis. *Studia Linguistica* 54:41–89.
- Georgopoulos, Carol. 1991. *Syntactic Variables: Resumptive Pronouns and A' Binding in Palauan*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- Gerdts, Donna. 1988. Antipassives and causatives in Ilokano: Evidence for an ergative analysis. In *Studies in Austronesian Linguistics*, ed. R. McGinn, 295–321. Monographs in International Studies, Southeast Asia Series, No. 76. Athens: Ohio University.
- Grosu, Alexander. 1996. On the proper analysis of “missing P” free relative constructions. *Linguistic Inquiry* 27:41–58.
- Higgins, Francis Roger. 1979. *The Pseudocleft Construction in English*. New York: Garland.
- Keenan, Edward and Bernard Comrie. 1977. Noun Phrase Accessibility and universal grammar. *Linguistic Inquiry* 8:63–99.
- Massam, Dianne. 2000. VSO is VOS: Aspects of Niuean Word Order. In *The Syntax of Verb Initial Languages*, ed. A. Carnie and E. Guilfoyle, 97–112. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mercado, Raphael. 2004. Focus constructions and *wh*-questions in Tagalog: A unified analysis. *Toronto Working Papers in Linguistics* 23(1): 95–118.
- Paul, Ileana. 2001. Concealed pseudo-clefts. *Lingua* 111:707–727.
- Paul, Ileana. 2008. On topic of pseudoclefts. *Syntax* 11(1):91–124.
- Potsdam, Eric. 2006. The cleft structure of Malagasy *wh*-questions. In *Clause Structure and Adjuncts in Austronesian Languages*, ed. H. Gärtner, P. Law, and J. Sabel, 195–232. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Rubino, Carl. 1997. A Reference Grammar of Ilokano. Doctoral Dissertation, University of California, Santa Barbara.
- Rubino, Carl. 2000. *Ilokano Dictionary and Grammar*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Travis, Lisa. 2008. Malagasy *no* constructions and new observations. Paper presented at the Austronesian Formal Linguistics Association Annual Conference XV, Sydney, Australia.

Graduate Program in Linguistics  
 CUNY – The Graduate Center  
 365 Fifth Ave., 7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
 New York, NY 10016  
 jeremyrafal@yahoo.com