

On Multiple Foci Constructions in Tagalog

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1 Introduction

Many researchers have identified a clear contrast between DP-focus and non-DP-focus in Tagalog (Schachter and Otnes 1972; Richards 1998; Aldridge 2002; Mercado 2004; Hsieh 2020), and they have argued that DP-focus and non-DP-focus feature different syntactic structures. The DP-focus structure is derived from pseudoclefts, in which a focused DP appears in the predicate position, and the remainder of the clause is a headless relative clause. By contrast, a non-DP-focus structure is created via Focus Fronting (Hsieh 2020), in which a focused non-DP overtly moves to the initial position in a sentence.

The paper provides an argument in support of the contention that DP-focus and non-DP-focus in Tagalog have different structures and shows that the oblique movement approach (Takano 2002) can straightforwardly account for the data of multiple foci.

To provide a clear development of my argument, I begin with some basic information on the syntax of Tagalog. Tagalog is a member of Austronesian languages and is the dominant spoken in Manila, the capital of the Philippines. Tagalog is a predicate-initial language, where arguments are signaled for case. Content DPs that function as arguments contain the case particles *ang* or *ng* (*si* and *ni* for [+proper, +animate] DPs). Here, voice agreement of verbs appears, where the form of a verb reflects the thematic role of the argument marked *ang*, as shown in (1).

- (1) a. Nag-luto si Tom ng sisig
 AV-Pfv-cook Nom Tom Gen sisig
 ‘Tom cooked sisig.’ (Agent Voice (AV))
 b. Ni-luto ni Tom ang sisig.
 PV.Pfv-cook Gen Tom Nom sisig
 ‘Tom cooked sisig.’ (Patient Voice (PV))

Because the agent is *ang*-marked in (1a), the verb has the actor voice. In (1b), the *ang*-marking element functions as the patient of the sentence, and the verb is inflected with the patient voice.

The organization of this paper is as follows. In section 2, I provide some background on the focus constructions in Tagalog. Earlier studies of Tagalog argue that DP-foci and Non-DP-foci have distinct syntactic structures. In section 3, I provide novel data on Tagalog focus constructions. I show that multiple foci are only possible only in non-DP-foci, illustrating that the multiple foci form a single constituent. In section 4, I propose that multiple non-DP-foci are derived from oblique movement to explain the data on the foci. Section 5 concludes the paper.

2 Basic background on Tagalog focus constructions

Some researchers argue for a sharp contrast between DP-foci and non-DP-foci in Tagalog in terms of syntactic structures (Aldridge 2002; Mercado 2004; Hsieh 2020). Let us consider the relevant data, as shown in (1) and (2).¹

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¹ The abbreviations in this paper are Acc = Accusative; Adj = Adjective; AV = Active Voice; CV = Circumstantial Voice; Dat = Dative; Gen = Genitive; Impf = Imperfective; Lk = Linker; LV = Locative Voice; Nom = Nominative; Obl = Oblique; Pfv = Perfective; PV = Patient Voice; sg = Singular.

- (1) Ni-luto ni Tom ang sisig sa kusina noong Linggo.
 PV.Perf-cook Gen Tom Nom sisig Obl kitchen last Sunday
 'Tom cooked sisig in the kitchen last Sunday.' (Baseline)
- (2) a. [**Ang sisig**] [*(ang) ni-luto ni Tom sa kusina noong Linggo].
 Nom sisig Nom PV.Pfv-cook Gen Tom Obl kitchen last Sunday
 Lit: 'What Tom cooked in the kitchen last Sunday was sisig.' (DP-focus)
- b. **Sa kusina** (*ang) ni-luto ni Tom ang sisig noong Linggo.
 Obl kitchen Nom PV.Pfv-cook Gen Tom Nom sisig last Sunday
 'It was in the kitchen that Tom cooked sisig last Sunday.' (Non-DP-focus)

(1) presents a baseline declarative. It is widely known that in Tagalog, the focused phrase is placed at the sentential initial position. If *ang sisig*, which is assumed to be a DP, is targeted for focus, it appears in the first position of the sentence, as in (2a), while if *Sa kusina*, which is assumed to be a PP, is focused, the targeted non-DP also occupies at the initial position, as in (2b). Although we may wonder whether these kinds of focus constructions utilize the same syntactic structures, some Tagalog syntacticians have argued that they should be distinguished (Aldridge 2002; Mercado 2004; Hsieh 2020). One of the clearest contrasts here is that the focus constructions show differences in the presence or absence of *ang*. It is assumed that the intermediary *ang* in (2a) is the determiner *ang* that signals DPs in Tagalog. It is reasonable to adopt this assumption for the intermediary *ang*. The *ang*-marked clause in DP-foci is identical to the form of a headless relative clause, as shown in (3).

- (3) a. Ma-bait [_{RC} ang nali-ligo sa ilog].
 Adj-kind Nom AV.Impf-bathe Obl river
 '[The one that is bathing in the river] is gentle/docile.' (Headless relative clause)
- b. [_{Pred} Ang kalabaw] [_{RC} ang nali-ligo sa ilog]
 Nom water.buffalo Nom AV.Impf-bathe Obl river
 'What is bathing in the river is the water buffalo.' (DP-focus) (Hsieh 2020: 89)

In (3a), the underlined clause is a headless relative clause. We can see that the syntactic structure of DP-focus in (3b) is parallel with the headless relative clause. Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that DP-focus constructions in Tagalog are derived from pseudoclefts, where a focused DP is in the predicate position, and the remainder of the clause forms a headless relative clause. On the other hand, we cannot regard non-DP-focus constructions of this language as pseudoclefts because the determiner *ang* cannot intervene between a focus element and the remainder of the clause, as illustrated in (2b). To consider the syntactic derivation of non-DP foci, we must seek another strategy. Hsieh (2020) argues that non-DP-focus constructions are created via Focus Fronting, where a focused non-DP overtly moves to a sentence-initial position. Although there is some evidence to show that a non-DP-focus element does undergo overt movement to the first position of this sentence, I introduce the example of weak crossover effects here.

Investigating such effects in Tagalog is useful for showing the overt movement of non-DP-focus phrases. According to Richards (1991) and Hsieh (2020), these effects can be seen in non-DP-foci but not in DP-foci. Let us consider the following examples.

- (4) a. I-b<in>igay kay Gina1 ng kanya1/2=ng ama ang pera.
 CV-<Pfv>give Obl Gina Gen 3sg.Obl=Lk father Nom money
 'The money was given to Gina1 by her1/2 father.'
- b. B<in>igy-an si Gina1 ng kanya1/2=ng ama ng pera.
 <Pfv>give-LV Nom Gina Gen 3sg.Obl=Lk father Gen money
 'Gina1 was given money by her1/2 father.' (ibid: 98)
- (5) DP-focus / Non-DP focus
- a. Sinol ang b<in>igy-an ng kanya1/2=ng ama ng pera?
 who Nom <Pfv>give-LV Gen 3sg.Obl=Lk father Gen money
 'Who1 did theirsg {1/2} father give the money to?' (DP-focus)
- b. Kaninol i-b<in>igay ng kanya*1/2=ng ama ang pera?
 who CV-<Pfv>give Gen 3sg.Obl=Lk father Nom money
 'Who1 did theirsg {*1/2} father give the money to?' (Non-DP-focus)

(4a) and (4b) show that *kanya* can refer to *Gina* even if the word order is reversed. In (5), both wh-phrases

appear to cross over a co-indexed pronominal possessor. However, we observe that crossover violation is seen only in (5b), which is created via focus fronting. The presence of crossover effects implies that non-DP-focus constructions involve overt movement.

To sum up, Tagalog focus constructions are divided into two types: pseudoclefts and focus fronting. One reason that these constructions should be distinguished syntactically is that the determiner *ang* in DP-foci obligatorily appears between a focused phrase and a headless relative clause, while this determiner cannot occur in non-DP-foci. Another reason is that weak crossover effects can only be observed in non-DP-foci. In the next section, I demonstrate that multiple foci constructions are possible only in non-DP-foci in Tagalog and claim that they must be a single constituent.

3 Core data

In this section, I would like to discuss multiple foci in Tagalog. I observe that multiple foci are possible only in non-DP-foci, as shown in (8).

- (7) Ni-luto ni Tom ang sisig sa kusina noong Linggo.
 PV.Pfv-cook Gen Tom Nom sisig Obl kitchen last Sunday
 'Tom cooked sisig in the kitchen last Sunday. (Baseline)
- (8) a. ***[Ang sisig ni Tom₂]** [_{RC} ang ni-luto t₂ sa kusina noong Linggo].
 Nom sisig Gen Tom Nom PV.Pfv-cook Obl kitchen last Sunday
 Lit: 'What cooked in the kitchen last Sunday was Tom sisig.' (DP-focus)
- b. **[Noong Linggo₂ sa kusina₁]** ni-luto ni Tom ang sisig t₁ t₂.
 last Sunday Obl kitchen PV.Pfv-cook Gen Tom Nom sisig
- b' **[Sa kusina₁ noong Linggo₂]** ni-luto ni Tom ang sisig t₁ t₂.
 Obl kitchen last Sunday PV.Pfv-cook Gen Tom Nom. sisig
 Lit: 'It was in the kitchen₁ last Sunday₂ that Tom cooked sisig t₁ t₂. (Non-DP-focus)

(7) is a baseline sentence for multiple focus constructions. (8a), an example of multiple DP-foci, is illicit because *ni Tom* is extracted from the headless relative clause, a movement that violates so-called island effects. In (8b), on the other hand, the two PPs (*noong Linggo* and *sa kusina*) can move to the initial position. Note that it is possible to reverse the word order of the two PPs, as illustrated in (8b) and (8b'). According to Mercado (2004), the focused phrases in the initial position must be non-DP elements, as in (9).²

- (9) a. ***[Kay Pedro₁ ang pera₂]** in-iwan ni Maria t₂ t₁.
 Obl Pedro Nom money PV.Pfv-leave Gen Maria
 Lit: 'It was with Pedro₁ money₂ that Maria left t₂ t₁.'
- b. ***[Kay Pedro₁ ng ale₂]** in-iwan t₂ ang pera t₁.
 Obl Pedro Gen woman PV.Pfv-leave Nom money
 Lit: 'It was with Pedro₁ the woman₂ that t₂ left the money t₁.'

Both sentences in (9) are ungrammatical. It should be noted that the focused phrases in (9a) and (9b) are PP (*kay Pedro*) and DP (*ang pera / ng ale*). Relative to (8b) and (8b'), the badness of (9) may simply be due to the fact that both of the focused elements are not non-DPs.

We have noted that multiple foci are only grammatical in non-DP-focused constructions. One may wonder how the construction of multiple foci are derived. Assuming that non-DP-focused phrases move overtly to a sentence-initial position, I conjecture that there are at least two possible analyses of the constructions. One

² It is not always the case that multiple phrases in the sentential initial position must be non-DP elements. According to Mercado (2004), Tagalog has a special construction which is called "bodyguard", as shown in (i).

- (i) **Sa Boracay** [si Juan] i [pumunta ti.].
 Obl Boracay Nom Juan go.AV.Pfv.
 'It was to Boracay that Juan went.' (Mercado 2004: 104)

It appears that both the PP (*sa Boracay*) and DP (*si Juan*) are focused in this sentence. However, the bodyguard (*si Juan*) does not have focus interpretation. In this paper, I leave the bodyguard constructions in Tagalog for future research. See Paul (2003) and Mercado (2004) for relevant discussion on Malagasy and Tagalog.

approach would be for each of the focused phrases to move to the initial position. For example, in (8b) and (8b'), *noong Linggo* and *sa kusina* undergo overt movement from their original positions, respectively. In another approach, the focused elements are actually a single constituent, and the single constituent comprised of multiple non-DP elements moves to the focus position. In this paper, I adopt the latter approach, including strong evidence in favor of taking multiple foci in Tagalog as a single constituent.

Investigating the data on clitic placement in Tagalog is useful for following the single-constituent approach. These clitics show the unique property of being unable to appear after a clause-initial single-constituent (second position clitics) (Kroeger 1993). These clitics include personal pronouns. Let us consider the relevant data, as represented in (4).

- (10) a. Ni-luto **ko** sa kusina noong Linggo ang sisig.
 PV.Pfv-cook 1sg.Gen Obl kitchen last Sunday Nom sisig
 'I cooked sisig in the kitchen last Sunday.'
 b. *Ni-luto sa kusina noong Linggo **ko** ang sisig.
 PV.Pfv-cook Obl kitchen last Sunday 1sg.Gen Nom sisig
 'I cooked sisig in the kitchen last Sunday.'

(10a) shows that *ko*, which functions as a first-person pronoun, appears after the first constituent (*niluto*) in an embedded clause. On the other hand, (10b) is ungrammatical because *ko* follows the time adverb *noong Linggo*. The examples in (11) indicate that this kind of clitic must occur after the first single constituent in a clause.

Keeping this in mind, we consider an example of clitic placement in multiple non-DP-foci, as represented in (11).

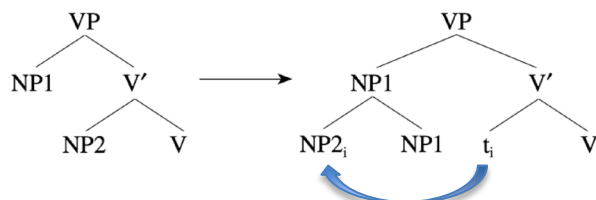
- (11) a. [Sa kusina₁ noong Linggo₂] **ko** ni-luto t1 t2 ang sisig.
 [Obl kitchen last Sunday] 1sg.Gen PV.Pfv-cook Nom sisig
 Lit: 'It was [in the kitchen₁ last Sunday₂] that I cooked sisig.'
 b. [Noong Linggo₂ sa kusina₁] **ko** ni-luto t1 t2 ang sisig.
 [last Sunday Obl kitchen] 1sg.Gen PV.Pfv-cook Nom sisig
 Lit: 'It was [in the kitchen₁ last Sunday₂] that I cooked sisig t₁ t₂.'

(11a) and (11b) show that the second position clitic *ko* follows the two focused PPs, illustrating that reversing the word order of the two PPs does not affect the grammaticality of these sentences, even when *ko* is positioned after the PPs. Assuming that the phrases that are located before *ko* must be a single constituent, I claim that multiple non-DP-foci form a single constituent.

4 Analysis of non-DP multiple foci

4.1 *Oblique movement (Takano 2002)* We have seen that non-DP multiple foci actually comprise a single constituent. In this section, I provide a concrete analysis of non-DP multiple focus constructions. To provide examples of these constructions, I propose that the non-DP multiple foci are derived from oblique movement (Takano 2002). According to Takano (2002), oblique movement is defined as scrambling an element to a position where it does not c-command its original position, thus forming a new constituent. The tree diagram in (12) shows the derivational process of this.

(12)



(Takano 2002: 257)

Following Kayne (1994), Takano (2002) assumes that only leftward adjunction is possible here. Based on this assumption, NP2 undergoes oblique movement, moving to the left-hand side of NP1. As a result, NP2 adjoins to NP1, forming a new constituent.

Takano (2002) claims that multiple clefts in Japanese are derived from oblique movement. It is well-known that more than two elements can appear in a focused position in Japanese. Let us consider the examples in (13) and (14).

- (13) [Taro-ga Hanako-ni choko-o ageta no]-wa kinou gakko-de da.
 Taro-Nom Hanako-Dat chocolate-Acc gave-Pst C -Top yesterday school-in Cop
 Lit: 'It is yesterday in the school that Taro gave chocolate to Hanako.'

(14) [[yesterday₁ [school-in₂]] Taro-Nom t₁ t₂ Hanako-Dat chocolate-Acc gave C]-Top [yesterday [school-in]] Cop

(13) is an example of a multiple-cleft construction in Japanese, where *kinou* and *gakko-de*, falling between the topic marker *wa* and the copula *da*, are focus elements. To derive this type of cleft, as seen in (13), Takano (2002) assumes that *kinou* or *gakko-de* undergoes oblique movement, creating a newly single constituent. The single constituent then undergoes movement within the embedded clause, being deleted at PF within syntactic identity with the focused phrases, as shown in (14).

Takano (2002) indicates that the possibility of scrambling in some language can lead to the availability of oblique movement in the language. This is because oblique movement is a type of scrambling. The prediction is plausible, especially in Japanese and English. It is well-known that word order in Japanese is relatively free (Saito 1985), while this is not so in English, as demonstrated in (15) and (16), respectively.

- (15) a. Taro-wa Hanako-ni choko-o ageta.
 Taro-Top Hanako-Dat chocolate-Acc gave
 'Taro gave Hanako chocolate.'
 b. Hanako-ni₁ choko-o₂ Taro-wa t₁ t₂ ageta.
 Hanako-Dat choko-Acc Taro-Top gave
 'Taro gave Hanako chocolate.'

- (16) a. Taro gave Hanako chocolate.
 b. *Hanako₁ chocolate₂ Taro gave t₁ t₂.

(15a) and (15b) are grammatical, and they have the same meaning regardless of the change of in word order. On the other hand, (16b) is ungrammatical when Hanako and chocolate move over to the subject and verb.³ These data show that the flexibility of word order signals the presence of scrambling.

Returning to Tagalog, it is assumed that the post-verbal word order of Tagalog in (11) is as relatively free as Japanese.

- (17) a. Nag-bigay ng libro sa babae ang lalaki.
 AV.Pfv-give Gen book Obl woman Nom man
 'The man gave the woman a book.'
 b. Nag-bigay ng libro ang lalaki sa babae.
 c. Nag-bigay ang lalaki ng libro sa babae (Rackowshki 2002: 23)

In (11), the position of *ang lalaki* is changed at each appearance. For example, it is located in the final position in (17a), and it then moves to the position where it immediately follows *ng libro* in (17b). In (17c), it appears between the predicate (*nagbigay*) and the direct object (*ng libro*). It is important to note that changing the position of *ang lalaki* does not affect the meaning of any of these sentences. Thus, the three sentences of (17) share an interpretation. Based on this, some researchers have claim that Tagalog has the syntactic operation of scrambling like Japanese (Kroeger 1993; Richards 1993; Rackowshki 2002).

4.2 Analysis Assuming that Tagalog also has scrambling, I propose that oblique movement is also possible in Tagalog. we straightforwardly expect that the availability of oblique movement enables distinct constituents to form a new single constituent. My proposal can explain, for instance, the fact that the Tagalog clitic *ko* attaches to the multiple non-DP-foci. The relevant data are repeated in (18).

³ Since topicalization is possible in English, (16b) might be possible when these NPs are focused. Here, Hanako and chocolate in (16b) are not stressed.

- (18) a. [Sa kusina₁ noong Linggo₂] ko ni-luto t₁ t₂ ang sisig.
 [Obl kitchen last Sunday] 1sg.Gen PV.Pfv-cook Nom sisig
 Lit: 'It was [in the kitchen₁ last Sunday₂] that I cooked sisig.'
- b. [Noong Linggo₂ sa kusina₁] ko ni-luto t₁ t₂ ang sisig.
 [last Sunday Obl kitchen] 1sg.Gen PV.Pfv-cook Nom sisig
 Lit: 'It was [in the kitchen₁ last Sunday₂] that I cooked sisig t₁ t₂.'

It seems necessary to explain how multiple non-DP foci can be derived under oblique movement analysis. First, let us consider the derivation of (19).

- (19) [**Noong Linggo₂ sa kusina₁**] ni-luto ni Tom ang sisig t₁ t₂.
 last Sunday Obl kitchen PV.Pfv-cook Gen Tom Nom sisig
 Lit: 'It was last Sunday₂ in the kitchen₁ that Tom cooked sisig t₁ t₂.'

- (20) Derivation of (19)
 (I) PV.Pfv-cook Gen-Tom Nom-sisig Obl-kitchen last Sunday (Base structure)
 (II) PV.Pfv-cook Gen-Tom Nom-sisig [_{XP} last Sunday₁ Obl-kitchen] t₁ (Oblique Movement)
 (III) [_{XP} last Sunday₁ Obl-kitchen]₂ PV.Pfv-cook Gen-Tom Nom-sisig t₂ t₁ (Focus Movement)
-

I assume that *Obl-kitchen* and *last Sunday* are distinct constituents in the base structure, as in (I). After *last Sunday* undergoes oblique movement and adjoins the left-hand side of the PP (*Obl-kitchen*), the two PPs become a single constituent, as shown in (II). Finally, the two PPs move overtly to the initial position, which is assumed to be the focus position (Hsieh 2020). This derivation expects that *last Sunday* must precede *Obl-kitchen* in the linear order, and this expectation is plausible.

Recall that the multiple foci of the word order are irrelevant, that is, (21) is also possible in Tagalog. I here show the derivation of (21) in (22).

- (21) [**Sa kusina₁ noong Linggo₂**] ni-luto ni Tom ang sisig t₁ t₂.
 Obl kitchen last Sunday PV.Pfv-cook Gen Tom Nom sisig
 Lit: 'It was in the kitchen last Sunday that Tom cooked sisig t₁ t₂.'

- (22) Derivation of (21)
 (I) PV.Pfv-cook Gen-Tom Nom-sisig last Sunday Obl-kitchen (Base structure)
 (II) PV.Pfv-cook Gen-Tom Nom-sisig [_{XP} Obl-kitchen₁ last Sunday] t₁ (Oblique Movement)
 (III) [_{XP} Obl-kitchen₁ last Sunday]₂ PV.Pfv-cook Gen-Tom Nom-sisig t₂ t₁ (Focus Movement)
-

Assuming that *last Sunday* and *Obl-kitchen* are adjuncts in Tagalog, I conjecture that *last Sunday* can precede *Obl-kitchen* in the base structure, as shown in (I). Next, oblique movement applies to *Obl-kitchen* to create a single constituent with *last Sunday*, as illustrated in (II). Finally, (III) shows that the two PPs undergo overt movement to the initial position. When the derivation of (22) is plausible, we can expect that *Obl-kitchen* can appear before *last Sunday*.

4 Concluding remarks

In this paper, I have proposed that multiple non-DP foci constructions in Tagalog are created via oblique movement. The benefit of my proposal is the ability to explain not only the word order of the two PPs but also the presence of second-position clitics after the two focused PPs. My proposal can offer supporting evidence for Takano (2002) and argument that DP-foci and non-DP-foci should be distinguished.

Regarding the remaining issues of this study, a striking contrast appears between Japanese clefts and Tagalog foci. For example, clefts in Japanese allow more than two NPs to appear in a focus position (Fukuya and Hoji 1999; Hiraiwa and Ishihara 2002; Koizumi 2000), while focus constructions in Tagalog do not, as shown in (23).

- (23) a. [tukutta no]-wa [DP [DP Tom-ga] [DP sisig-o]] da.
 cooked C Top Tom-Nom sisig-Acc Cop
 Lit. 'It was that Tom, sisig that cooked.' (Japanese)
- b. *[DP [DP **Ang sisig**] [DP **ni Tom₂**]] [RC ang ni-luto t₂].
 Nom sisig Gen Tom Nom PV.Pfv-cook
 Lit: 'What cooked was Tom sisig.' (Tagalog)

My analysis indicates that since Tagalog permits scrambling, multiple DP-foci would be possible, as in Japanese. At present, I do not have a concrete analysis way to explain this and must leave it open for future research.

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