LOCATIVES, IMPERSONALS AND EXPLETIVES IN SESOTHO

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1 INTRODUCTION*

The syntactic role of inverted locatives has been the topic of some controversy, with recent proposals by Bresnan & Kanerva (1989) and Bresnan (1990) arguing that inverted locatives may function as subjects in languages as typologically diverse as English and Chicheŵa. Bresnan (1990) claims these striking grammatical similarities can be accounted for at the syntactic function level, while the few grammatical differences can be captured at the categorial level, i.e. English locatives are PPs, while Chicheŵa locatives are NPs. This paper extends the partial structural correspondences framework (an extended form of LFG) to account for somewhat different locative phenomena in Sesotho, a southern Bantu language where impersonal or expletive constructions show many of the same grammatical characteristics reported for English and Chicheŵa inverted locative constructions, but where a difference in the categorial status of locatives leads to some important syntactic differences between Sesotho on the one hand, and English and Chicheŵa on the other.

Bresnan & Kanerva (1989) argue that Chicheŵa does not have expletive constructions, but rather has locative inversion constructions where locative phrases pattern as subjects. This contrasts with reports for the southern Bantu languages Sepedi (Louwrens 1981, Prinsloo 1984) and Sesotho (du Plessis 1981) where locatives are assumed to be adverbials, and the 'locative' subject marker *ho-* an existential or expletive. Apparent support for this claim comes from the the lack of any semantic locative interpretation in expletive constructions.

This paper reviews some of the critical evidence regarding both the syntactic functions of Sesotho inverted locatives and impersonal *ho-* constructions, and their categorial status. In section 2 I show that Sesotho inverted locatives can not function syntactically as subjects, while in section 3 I show, however, that the class of verbs that co-occur with the impersonal *ho-* is more extensive than that reported to occur with English and Chichewa inverted locatives. In section 4 I discuss the grammatical function of the inverted subject in the object position of impersonal *ho-* constructions, and in section 5 I pursue further the issue of the grammatical and categorial status of *ho-* itself. Finally I address the categorial nature of Sesotho locatives in section 6 and discuss the subsequent theoretical implications in section 7.

2 SUBJECTS AND INVERTED LOCATIVES

Sesotho subjects are marked by grammatical agreement between the lexical subject and the subject marker; both show class 2 agreement in (1a) below.

(1)   a.   **Ba-shányáná bá**-pálám-é   li-pére.[1]
              2-boys   2SM-ride-PRF/M 10-horse[2]
              'The boys are riding horses.'

As in other pro-drop languages, grammatical agreement still holds between the lexical subject and the verb when the lexical subject is inverted, as in (1b).

(1)   b.   **Bá**-pálám-é   li-pére   **ba-shányána.**
              2SM-ride-PRF/M 10-horse **2-boys**
              'They are riding horses, the boys.'

Most Bantu languages are typified by an extensive noun class and agreement system with several singular/plural pairs, including an infinitival class and three locative classes corresponding to the Proto-

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1   Lesotho orthography is used throughout with the exception of the glides (o=w, e=y) and second person singular subject marker u, rendered here as o (phonetically identical to third person singular subject marker, except that third person has High tone). Present tense -a appears only when the verb is final in the verb phrase. High tone is marked as (´), a lowered high (phonetically mid) tone is marked as (+), and low tone is left unmarked.

2   Gloss abbreviations are as follows: APL=applicative/benefactive, CAUS=causative, COMP=complementizer, CONJ=conjunction, COP=copula, DEM=demonstrative pronoun, ho=expletive/impersonal subject marker (class 17), LOC=locative suffix, M=mood, OBJ=object clitic, PASS=passive, PN=independent pronoun, PREP=preposition, PRF=perfect, REL=relative marker, RL=verbal relative suffix, SM=subject marker, 8=noun class 8.

Bantu *pa, *ku, and *mu (classes 16, 17, and 18). In Sesotho these locative noun class prefixes have been lost; only lexicalized remnants of them are found on locative adverbials such as *fatse* 'on the ground, down', *holimo* 'above', *mane* 'over there' (Doke & Mofokeng 1957). Rather than creating locatives through the use of a noun class prefix, Sesotho uses the preposition *ka* or the locative suffix -ng.

(2) a. Ba-eti   bá-il-é   ká-ntlé.
       2-travelers 2SM-go-M   PREP-outside
       'The visitors went outside.'
    b. Ba-eti   bá-tl-il-é   mo-tsé-ng.
       2-travelers 2SM-come-PRF-M   3-village-LOC
       'The visitors came to the village.'

When a locative is fronted or topicalized, no grammatical agreement results between the topicalized locative and the verb, *ba-eti* 'visitors' still functioning as the subject (2c). Such constructions are somewhat stilted, speakers preferring the locative in final (2b) as opposed to initial (2c) position.

(2) c. ?Mo-tsé-ng   ba-eti   bá-tl-il-e.
        3-village-LOC   2-travelers 2SM-come-PRF-M
        'To the village the visitors came.'

No presentational focus results in (2c). Presentational focus occurs only when a locative is fronted with the (historically locative) impersonal subject marker *ho-* (labeled here as class 17). Again, speakers prefer the locative in (3a,b) to be in final position.

(3) a. Mo-tsé-ng   hó-na-lé   se-fáte.
       3-village-LOC   17SM-COP-CONJ   7-tree
       'In the village there is a tree.'
    b. Mo-tsé-ng   hó-tl-il-é   ba-eti.
       3-village-LOC   17SM-come-PRF-M   2-travelers
       'To the village came the travelers.'

An attempt to introduce grammatical agreement between the locative and the verb results in the ungrammatical examples in (4).

(4) a. *Mo-tse-ng   o-na-le   se-fate.
        3-village-LOC   3SM-COP-CONJ   7-tree
        'In the village there is a tree.'
    b. *Mo-tse-ng   o-tl-il-e   ba-eti.
        3-village-LOC   3SM-come-PRF-M   2-travelers
        'To the village came the travelers.'

In Bantu languages like Chicheŵa, where locative noun class morphology is productive, locatives are marked with a locative noun class prefix. However, this is also ungrammatical in Sesotho, as shown by the unacceptability of the examples in (5).

(5)   a. *Ho-mo-tse-ng   ho-na-le   se-fate.
             17-3-village-LOC   17SM-COP-CONJ 7-tree
             'In the village there is a tree.'
        b. *Ho-mo-tse-ng   ho-tl-il-e   ba-eti.
             17-3-village-LOC   17SM-come-PRF-M 2-travelers
             'To the village came the travelers.'

Sesotho lexical subjects must show grammatical agreement with the verb, yet Sesotho locatives do not pass this test.

Sesotho inverted locatives also fail to pass the test for subject extraction from a relative clause. Sesotho relative clauses are characterized by a subject gap in Subject relatives, and a resumptive pronoun in Object and Oblique relatives (Doke & Mofokeng 1957, Demuth 1990). For locatives, the invariant locative relative marker *moo* is used, and the 'resumptive' locative adverb *teng* is required in the embedded clause. This is illustrated in (6a). Any attempt to extract the locative from subject position, leaving a gap in place of the 'subject marker' *ho-*, results in ungrammaticality, as shown in (6b).

(6)   a. Móo$_i$ hó-il-é-ng   ba-eti   teng$_i$.
             REL   17SM-go-PRF-M-RL 2-travelers there
             'Where there went the travelers (there).'
        b. *Moo$_i$ [e$_i$] il-e-ng   ba-eti   (teng$_i$).
             REL   17SM-go-PRF-M-RL 2-travelers there
             'Where there went the travelers (there).'

Thus, Sesotho locatives fail to pass both the grammatical agreement and extraction tests for subjecthood. Further tests on subjecthood, such as subject extraction from other types of embedded clauses, or the questioning of subjects in situ (this is ungrammatical in Sesotho – see Demuth 1989a) appear to be confounded by the fact that the use of *ho-* requires presentational focus. However, the lack of grammatical agreement, the relative clause extraction facts, plus speakers' preference for placing the locative in final, rather than initial position, indicate that the grammatical function of Sesotho inverted locatives is not that of a subject, but rather of an oblique, and suggest that locatives in Sesotho do not function as arguments.

Interestingly, we see in the next section that the distribution of Sesotho *ho-* with certain classes of verbs is much more flexible than that reported for both English and Chicheŵa.

3 VERBS, ARGUMENT STRUCTURE AND *HO-*

Bresnan & Kanerva (1989) report that Chicheŵa locative inversion is found only with intransitive, primarily unaccusative verbs, or with passivized transitives. Object drop verbs such as 'eat' or 'cook' cannot be used with inverted locatives, nor can intransitive verbs be passivized.

Verbs that occur with Sesotho *ho-* constructions are not nearly as restricted. In addition to occurring with unaccusatives, i.e. intransitive verbs of motion, posture, and existence (7),

(7)   a. Hó-qhóm-a   ba-ná.
             17SM-jump-M   2-children
             'There are children jumping.'
       b. Hó-ém-é   pére.
             17SM-stand-PRF/M 9horse
             'There is standing a/the horse.'
       c. Hó-tswal-á   li-póli.
             17SM-birth-M 10-goats
             'There are goats giving birth.'

Sesotho impersonal *ho-* constructions are also allowed with unergative verbs, as in (8).

(8)   a. Hó-bin-á   ba-sáli+.
             17SM-sing-M 2-women
             'There are women singing.'
       b. Hó-sés-a   ba-ná.
             17SM-urinate-M 2-children
             'There are children urinating.'
       c. Hó-lóh-a   bo-nkhóno.
              17SM-weave-M 2b-grandmother
             'There are grandmothers weaving.'

Sesotho *ho-* constructions are also found with passivized transitives, where *by*-phrases and applicatives are both permitted.

(9)   a. (Nokáné-ng) hó-fúmán-w-é   li-pólí   ké molísána
             (9river-LOC) 17SM-find-PASS-PRF/M 10-goats by 1-herder
             '(At/in the river) there were found goats by the herder.'
       b. (Ma-símó-ng) hó-lelék-is-w-a   li-nonyana ké
             (6-fields-LOC) 17SM-follow-CAUS-PASS-M 10-birds by
             ba-lemi.
             2-farmers
             '(In the fields) there are birds being ch... ... by the farmers.'

c.   Hó-rom-él-éts-w-é   ba-sálí nama ké
     17SM-send-APL-PRF-PASS-M   2-women 9meat
     mo-rena.
     by 1-chief
     'There was sent some meat to the women by the chief.'
d.   (Peísó-ng) hó-math-éts-w-é   mo-rena.
     9race-LOC 17SM-run-APL/PRF-PASS-M 1-chief
     '(In the race) there has been run for the chief.'

In addition, Sesotho permits the use of *ho-* constructions with object drop verbs in the passive intransitive.

(10)   Hó-a-j-éw-a+.
       17SM-PRES-PASS-eat-M
       'There is being eaten.'

(11)   (Ká   pítsa) hó-á-phe-uw-a.
       PREP   9pot 17SM-PRES-cook-PASS-M
       '(With the pot) there is cooking.'

Finally, Sesotho also allows for the passivization of both unergative verbs (12a-c) and unaccusative verbs (13a-c) with *ho-* constructions.

(12)   a.   Hó-a-bín-w-a+.
            17SM-PRES-sing-PASS-M
            'There is singing.'
       b.   Hó-á-ll-uw-a.
            17SM-PRES-cry-PASS-M
            'There is crying.'
       c.   Hó-a-kén-w-a+.
            17SM-PRES-enter-PASS-M
            'There is entering.'

(13)   a.   Hó-a-qhong-w-a.
            17SM-PRES-jump-PASS-M
            'There is jumping.'
       b.   Hó-a-éng-w-a+.
            17SM-stand-PASS-M.
            'There is standing.'
       c.   Hó-a-tswál-w-a+.
            17SM-birth-PASS-M.
            'There is birthing.'

What is not fou... in Sesotho, however, is impersonal *ho-* occurring with both postposed subjects and accusative objects simultaneously. Thus, while *ho-* has greater flexibility in the classes of verbs with which

it occurs, that class is not unbounded. I suggest that this restriction may have little to do with the syntactic behavior of the locative itself, but may rather be a result of the presentational focus of these constructions, combined with the status of *ho-* as a dummy subject. This will be discussed further in section 5.

The class of verbs permitted to co-occur with Sesotho *ho-* constructions is therefore larger than that allowed in both Chicheŵa and Chishona locative inversion constructions (Bresnan & Kanerva 1989, Harford 1990). These differences are sketched below in Table 1.

Table 1.
Distribution of Verb Classes Permitted with
Locative Inversion/Impersonal Constructions.

	Active			Passive		
	Chicheŵa	*Chishona*	*Sesotho*	*Chicheŵa*	*Chishona*	*Sesotho*
Unergative			x		x	x
Unaccusative	x	x	x		x	x
Transitive				x	x	x

We can capture the parametric differences in allowable argument structures presented in Table 1 by appealing to thematic roles. Following Bresnan & Kanerva (1989) and Bresnan (1990), each of the three verb types can be attributed the following thematic characteristics, where agent is higher on the Thematic Hierarchy than Theme, and the parentheses indicate a suppressed thematic role in the passive:

Verb	Active	Passive
Unergative	< ag loc >	< (ag) loc >
Unaccusative	< th loc >	< (th) loc >
Transitive	< ag th loc >	< (ag) th loc >

For Chicheŵa, those verbs that can undergo locative inversion include only those where the Theme is the highest expressed thematic role. Thus, Chicheŵa allows for locative inversion with unaccusatives in the active and transitives in the passive (where the Agent role has been suppressed). Harford (1990) reports that Chishona differs from Chicheŵa in permitting locative inversion with verbs were the highest non-suppressed thematic role is not an Agent.

Sesotho is similar to Chishona in allowing for suppressed agents of passives to be expressed as obliques. Sesotho differs from Chishona and Chicheŵa, however, in disallowing only those verbs where both Agent and Theme roles are overtly expressed, i.e. the case of active transitives. As will be discussed in section 5, we will argue that the ruling out of active transitives may be a universal restriction on presentational constructions. We turn now to a discussion of the inverted subject.

4 THE SYNTACTIC FUNCTION OF THE INVERTED SUBJECT

The syntactic function of the inverted subject that appears in the object position of *ho-* constructions is somewhat ambiguous: in some respects it behaves like an object, while in other respects it does not. As shown in (14c) below, Sesotho does not allow the verb to be separated from its object.

(14) a. **Li-péré** **lí-j-á** jwañg.
    10-horses 10SM-eat-M 14grass
    'The horses are eating grass.'
  b. **Lí-j-á** jwañg **li-pére.**
    10SM-eat-M 14grass 10-horses
    'They are eating grass, the horses.'
  c. *Li-ja **li-pere** jwang.
    10SM-eat-M 10-horses 14grass

Similarly, the inverted subject of *ho-* constructions cannot be separated from the verb.

(15) a. Hó-fihl-íl-é   **li-pére.**
    17SM-arrive-PRF-M 10-horses
    'There arrived horses.'
  b. Hó-fihl-íl-é   **li-péré** bo-síu.
    17SM-arrive-PRF-M 10-horses 14-night
    'There arrived horses at night.'
  c. *Ho-fihl-il-e   bo-siu **li-pere.**
    17SM-arrive-PRF-M 14-night 10-horses

The patterning of the inverted subject of *ho-* constructions as internal to the verb phrase is supported by three other phrase level phenomena:

1. phrase penultimate lengthening (:).
2. tonal lowering on the final syllable of the verb when it is final in the VP (+)
3. the appearance of the present tense marker *-a-* when the verb is final in the VP.

Anything outside of the VP, including a normally inverted subject, readily becomes apparent, as as shown by the penultimate lengthening on *pere* 'horse' in (16c) and the presence of the present tense marker *-a-*, penultimate lengthening and tonal lowering in (16d).

(16) a. **Ba-sh ányáná bá-fep-á** li-pé:re.
    2-boys   2SM-feed-M 10-horse
    'The boys are feeding horses.'

b. **Ba-shányáná**   bá-á-li-fé:p-a+.
2-boys   2SM-PRES-10OBJ-feed-M
'The boys are feeding them.'

c. **Bá-fep-á**   li-pé:re   **ba-shányána.**
2SM-feed-M 10-horse 2-boys
'They are feeding horses, the boys.'

d. **Bá-á-li-fé:p-a+**   **ba-shányána.**
2SM-PRES-10OBJ-feed-M 2-boys
'They are feeding them, the boys.'

When these diagnostics are used with impersonal *ho-* constructions, the inverted subject is found to be internal to the VP, as seen in (17b).

(17) a. Hó-a-j-é:s-w-a+.
17SM-PRES-eat/CAUS-PASS-M
'There is feeding.'

b. Hó-j-es-w-á   **li-pé:re.**
17SM-eat/CAUS-PASS-M   10-horses
'There is feeding horses.'

These phrase level tests indicate that the inverted subject is internal to the VP and not simply adjoined. It would therefore appear to pattern as an object. However, the inverted subject does not behave syntactically as do typical objects; it does not undergo passivization (18b), nor does it pronominalize (18c).

(18) a. Hó-lis-á   **ba-shányána**   (ma-símó-ng).
17SM-herd-M **2-boys**   6-fields-LOC
'There are boys herding (in the fields).'

b. *__Ba-shanyana__   ba-lis-w-a   (ma-simo-ng).
2-boys   2SM-herd-PASS-M   6-fields-LOC

c. *Ho-ba-lis-a   (ma-simo-ng).
17SM-2OBJ-herd-M   6-fields-LOC

Furthermore, it can not be relativized, as shown by the ungrammaticality of the object relative in (19b).[3]

(19) a. Hó-ful-á   **li-pére**   (ma-símó-ng).
17SM-graze-M   10-horses   6-fields-LOC
'There are horses grazing in the fields.'

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3 Note the resumptive object pronoun that is charact[...] Sesotho object relatives. Again, this example may also be ungrammatical due to th[...] [...]s of presentational focus.

b. *Ke   eng   eo_i   ho-e_i-ful-a-ng   ma-simo-ng?
   COP   what   9REL_i   17SM-9OBJ_i -graze-M-RL   6-fields-LOC
   'What is it that is (it) grazing in the fields?'

We have shown that the inverted subject in *ho-* constructions is phrasally internal to the VP, but that it does not function syntactically like a canonical object. Bresnan & Kanerva (1989) claim that the inverted subject of Chichewa locative inversion constructions is an unaccusative object, and this would appear to hold for Sesotho impersonal *ho-* constructions as well.

We turn now to the syntactic role of the inverted subject.

5 THE GRAMMATICAL AND CATEGORIAL STATUS OF IMPERSONAL *HO-*

We have seen in section 2 that Sesotho subject markers exhibit grammatical agreement with their lexical counterparts, yet impersonal *ho-* does not agree with inverted locatives, as in Chichewa, nor does it agree with the inverted subject in object position, as in English (e.g. "There were/*was people in the street"). What, then, is the grammatical function of Sesotho *ho-*, and what is its categorial status within the grammar?

As in both Chishona and Chichewa, *ho-* is used with weather constructions.

(20)   Hó-a-bát-a+   ká-ntlé.
        17SM-PRES-cold-M   PREP-outside
        'It's cold outside.'

(21)   Hó-a-chés-a+   ká-tlú-ng.
        17SM-PRES-hot-M   PREP-house-LOC
        'It's hot inside the house.'

And like Chishona, *ho-* can occur with complementizers.

(22)   Hó-náhan-w-a   **hore**   malómé   ó-bohlále.
        17SM-believe-PASS-M   **COMP**   1uncle   1COP-wise
        'It is suspected that (my) uncle is wise.'

Unlike either Chichewa or Chishona, however, Sesotho *ho-* never has any locative or other semantic content; it carries no pronominal reference, as shown by the following examples.

(23)   a.   Hó-fil. -c   ntaté.
              17SM-arrive-PRF-M   father
              'There arrived father.'

b. Hó-a-bín-w-a+.
17SM-PRES-sing-PASS-M
'There is singing.'

While NPs can be referred to with a subject marker of the same class (24a) (though not with one of a different class (24b)), locatives cannot be anaphorically referred to, neither by *ho-*, nor by the class of the noun itself (25a,b).

(24) a. **Chélete,** o-nahan-a   hore
       9-money 2sSM-believe-M COMP
       é-ba-tháb-ís-its-e?
       9SM-2OBJ-happy-CAUS/APL-PRF-M
       'Money, do you think that it made them happy?/pleased them?

    b. ***Chelete,** o-nahana   hore
       9-money 2sSM-believe-M COMP
       li-ba-thab-is-its-e?
       10SM-2OBJ-happy-CAUS-APL-PRF-M
       'Money, do you think that it made them happy?/pleased them?

(25) a. ***Ma-simo-ng,** o-nahan-a   hore
       6-fields-LOC 2sSM-believe-M COMP
       ho-il-e   ba-eti   teng?[4]
       17SM-go/PRF-M 2-visitors there
       'To the fields, do you think that the visitors went there?

    b. ***Ma-simo-ng,** o-nahan-a   hore
       6-fields-LOC 2sSM-believe-M COMP
       a-il-e   ba-eti   teng?
       6SM-go/PRF-M 2-visitors there
       'To the fields, do you think that the visitors went there?

Even with weather verbs there is no grammatical agreement between the locative and the verb. In fact, (26a) is somewhat awkward with the preposed locative, but is perfectly acceptable with it postposed as in (26b).

(26) a. ?Ká-ntlé   ó-náhan-a   hore   hó-a bát-a+?
      PREP-outside 1SM-think-M COMP 17SM-PRES-cold-M
      'Outside, do you think that it is cold?'

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4 This example is acceptable for some speakers of South African Sesotho, but it is strongly ruled out by at least two Sesotho speakers from Lesotho.

b. O-nahan-a   hore   hó-a bát-a+   **ká-ntlé?**
1SM-think-M   COMP   17SM-PRES-cold-M   PREP-outside
'Do you think that it is cold outside?'

From these findings we conclude that *ho-* cannot be considered a pronominal with semantic content. Rather, it patterns much as a dummy subject, or expletive. Note, however, that unlike English, where expletive constructions take only indefinite NPs ("there was a man in the room/*there was the man in the room"), there is no definiteness effect in Sesotho: *ho-* can be used with definite NPs as well as with independent pronouns as inverted subjects (27a,b).

(27)   a.   Hó-rob-éts-é   Mphó.
           17SM-sleep-PRF-M   Mpho.
           'There is sleeping Mpho.'
      b.   Hó-kená   **bo-na.**
           17SM-enter-M   2-PN
           'There is entering them.'

Given its lack of referential content, it would appear that *ho-* functions as a dummy subject, somewhat reminiscent of impersonal constructions in Germanic languages (e.g. Perlmutter 1978, see also Platzack 1983), or as an expletive, as proposed by du Plessis (1981). Furthermore, *ho-*, not the locative itself, appears to control the effect of presentational focus, as shown by the lack of presentational effect in the somewhat awkward, but grammatical (2c), repeated here as (28).

(28)   **?Mo-tsé-ng**   ba-eti   **bá-tl-il-e.**
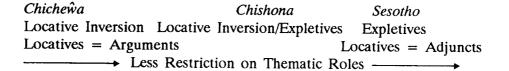   **3-village-LOC**   2-travelers   2SM-come-PRF-M
      'To the village the visitors came.'

We noted in section 3 that locative inversion in Chicheŵa and Sesotho *ho-* constructions are ruled ungrammatical with active transitive verbs, i.e. verbs with both Agent and Theme roles, and that both involve presentational function. While languages may differ in which thematic roles they allow to be highest on the thematic hierarchy, it may be that presentational constructions are inherently inconsistent with the co-occurrence of both Agent and Theme in such constructions. Thus, Sesotho and Chicheŵa might be considered to be at extreme ends of a Presentational Focus Continuum, with Chishona falling in between. At the most restricted end of the continuum we find inverted locatives that occur with a very restricted set of verbs – i.e. those that have Theme as their highest role. At the other end we have expletive constructions exhibiting only the general restri⋯ ⋯ presentational function, i.e. that the simultaneous presence of ⋯ ⋯ Agent and Theme be ruled out. And in the middle we would exp⋯ ⋯ find languages like Chishona,

languages that are somewhat more flexible in the thematic roles that they allow with inverted locatives, but that can have an optional expletive reading when no lexical locative is present.

The proposed Presentational Focus Continuum is given below in Table 2.

Table 2
Presentational Focus Continuum

Chicheŵa	*Chishona*	*Sesotho*
Locative Inversion	Locative Inversion/Expletives	Expletives
Locatives = Arguments		Locatives = Adjuncts

————————➤ Less Restriction on Thematic Roles ——————➤

In this section we have shown that Sesotho *ho-* is used in weather constructions and with complementizers, but that it never has any locative or other semantic reference. We conclude that Sesotho *ho-* is a dummy subject that can function as either an existential (*Hó-na-lé lijó* 'There is food') or an expletive (*Hó-a-báta+* 'It's cold', *Hó-kená bo-na* 'It's them entering'). We also propose that the connections found between locative inversion constructions in languages like Chicheŵa and expletive *ho-* constructions in languages like Sesotho can be captured by the fact that both of these constructions involve presentational focus. The parametric variations found in the argument structure of the verbs with which they occur can be predicted, in part, by where along the Presentational Focus Continuum they fall, and this will depend in part on the categorial status of the locative itself.

We turn now to a consideration of the categorial status of Sesotho locatives.

6 LOCATIVES AND ADVERBS

We have shown so far that *ho-* is a expletive that does not agree with locatives in subject (or any other) position. We have also shown that locatives can not function as subjects, and that they appear to function as adjuncts (section 2). What, then, is the categorial status of locatives in Sesotho? They are apparently not NPs, as locatives are in Chicheŵa. One might assume that the lack of productive locative morphology would indicate that this was the case. However, there are Bantu languages like Kichaga, where locatives continue to function syntactically as NPs even though the locative morphology has been lost (Bresnan & Moshi 1990).

On the other hand, one might presume that Sesotho locatives are prepositional phrases, as in English (see Bresnan 1990 view). Indeed, some of the locatives take a preposition in addi n o the locative suffix -*ng*, e.g. *ka-tlung* 'in the house', or *ha-Thabo* Thabo's

place'. The invariant preposition *ka* signifies the 'insideness' of a location, as with *under the bed, inside a pocket, inside a pot*, while *ha* is restricted to use with persons. The fact that the prepositions *ka* and *ha* are used in the marking of some Sesotho locatives might indicate that there is a move toward the grammaticization of locatives as prepositional phrases, as has been suggested in the literature (Stowell 1981, Baker 1988). A thorough investigation of the syntactic differences between Sesotho instrumental constructions (prefixed by *ka*), and locatives that take *ka*, is still to be conducted. It could be that the loss of morphological productivity of locative prefixes may set the stage for eventual reanalysis of locatives as PPs.

Further research will have to determine the possibility that locatives in Sesotho are PPs. However, du Plessis (1981) assumes that Sesotho locatives are adverbs, as do Louwrens (1981) and Prinsloo (1984) for closely related Sepedi. As shown below, temporal adverbs (the b-examples) and locatives (the c-examples) pattern together phrasally; both are external to the VP. In contrast, adverbs of manner (or quantity) (the d-examples) are internal to the VP. Recall that tonal lowering on the last syllable of the verb (+), plus the presence of the present tense marker -*a*- and penultimate lengthening (:) show that the verb is final in the VP.

(29)   a. Hó-a-bá:t-a+.
        17SM-PRES-cold-M
        'It's cold.'

      b. Hó-a-bá:t-a+   ma-ríha.
        17SM-PRES-cold-M 6-winter
        'It's cold in winter.'

      c. Hó-a-bá:t-a+   toropó-ng.
        17SM-PRES-cold-M 9town-LOC
        'It's cold in town.'

      d. *Ho-a-ba:t-a   haholo.
        17SM-PRES-cold-M lots
        'It's very cold.'

(30)   a. *Ho-bat-a.
        17SM-cold-M
        'It's cold.'

      b. *Ho-bat-a   ma-riha.
        17SM-cold-M 6-winter
        'It's cold in winter.'

      c. *Ho-bat-a   toropo-ng.
        17SM-cold-M 9town-LOC
        'It's cold in town.'

d.   Hó-bat-á   hahólo.
     17SM-cold-M   very
     'It's very cold.'

Since temporal adverbs and locatives are not internal to the VP, they are free to invert (31a,b), while adverbs of manner and quantity can not (31c).

(31)   a.   **Ma-ríha**   hó-a-bát-a+.
            6-winter   17SM-PRES-cold-M
            'In winter it's cold.'
       b.   **Toropó-ng**   hó-a-bát-a+.
            9town-LOC   17SM-PRES-cold-M
            'In town it's cold.'
       c.   *****Haholo**   ho-a-bat-a.
            lots   17SM-PRES-cold-M
            'A lot it's cold.'

When they do invert, locatives and temporal adverbs leave no object agreement behind, showing again that they are not arguments of the verb.

It would appear that Sesotho locatives pattern syntactically as do temporal adverbs. We therefore conclude that some of the grammatical differences found between Chicheŵa locative inversion constructions and Sesotho preposed locatives may be due to the different categorial status of locatives in the two languages: Bresnan & Kanerva (1989) have shown that locatives in Chichewa have the status of NPs, while the evidence presented here argues for the categorial status of Sesotho locatives as Adverbs.
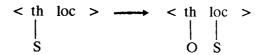
7 THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

In this paper we have argued for the adverbial status of Sesotho locatives and the expletive status of *ho-*. Syntactically, we have shown that locatives function as adjuncts rather than as arguments, and that the expletive *ho-* functions as a dummy subject. Thus, while Sesotho inverted locative constructions share many of the properties of inverted locative constructions in languages like English and Chicheŵa, the Sesotho constructions differ in some fundamental ways.

First, inverted locative constructions generally have a presentational function. However, in Sesotho, presentational focus is not a property of inverting the locative, but rather a property of the expletive *ho-*. Secondly, at least in the more conservative languages like Chicheŵa, inverted locatives occur with the restricted class of active unaccusative and passivized transitive verbs. Sesotho, however, allows the expletive

ho- to occur with passivized applicatives, unergatives and unaccusatives as well as the active unaccusatives AND unergatives. Apparently, the only restriction that Sesotho expletive *ho-* constructions place on argument structure is the ruling out of simultaneously expressed Agent and a Theme roles, i.e active Transitives are ungrammatical.

Within the theory of lexical mapping proposed by Bresnan (e.g. Bresnan 1990), Chicheŵa and English allow for locative inversion when the highest thematic role is the Theme (< th loc >). When the Theme is focussed in a presentational construction it becomes the 'object' of the verb. The locative, which is now the highest thematic role, can now assume the syntactic function of subject:

$$< \text{th} \quad \text{loc} > \longrightarrow < \text{th} \quad \text{loc} >$$
$$\qquad | \qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad | \quad |$$
$$\qquad S \qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad O \quad S$$

In Sesotho, however, the locative, which is an adverb, can never assume the subject function. Rather, the expletive *ho-* assumes the syntactic function of 'subject' and the locative remains an adjunct. It is not yet clear why this should occur, but it may have something to do with the more general restrictions on topicality constraints for Sesotho subjects, i.e. Sesotho subjects must be highly topical, given information, to the extent that question words are disallowed in subject position (see Demuth 1989a, 1989b, Demuth & Johnson 1989). This restriction on the topicality of subjects would appear to be incompatible with adverbs, and perhaps restricted only to NPs.

Sesotho therefore provides an intriguing example of how the re-categorization of the categorial status of locatives from NPs to adverbs has lead to specific syntactic consequences. These grammatical interactions can be accounted for, and indeed more fully understood, within a theory that allows for interactions between the underlying categorial status and surface syntactic functions of lexical classes.

In conclusion, this paper finds that 'locative inversion' in Sesotho consists of an expletive construction with an optionally preposed locative adverb, and that the presentational function of these expletive constructions is independent of locative inversion.

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