

Afrikanistik-Aegyptologie-Online

Monotransitive Constructions in Seereer

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1. Introduction

<1> Seereer is one of the main languages of Senegal; spoken by about 1.8 million people. It belongs to the Niger-Congo phylum and is classified in the northern branch of the West Atlantic family. It consists of six varieties (*Ool*, *Poofoofi*, *Singandum*, *Peefey*, *Kirena*, *Kemb*). For my study I use the variety of *Ool* spoken in the region of Diourbel (western part of Senegal) by about 8,000 [1] people. Seereer is a language very rich in verbal derivational morphemes. The verbal structure is rather complex; it includes derivational morphemes and many inflectional suffixes marking tense, aspect and mood but also subject and object indexation and focus (this has been studied by S. Faye 1980, and Mous & Faye 2006). There are no prefixes; all morphemes which operate in verbs are suffixed.

As far as transitivity is concerned, Seereer verbs can be divided into three major types (with several subtypes for each): Strictly intransitive, strictly transitive and ambitransitive or labile verbs. This paper will focus on one class of strictly transitive verbs namely monotransitive verbs including no voice mechanism. In section 2 I describe the syntactic diagnosis of transitivity, in section 3 the coding properties of arguments, in section 4 I discuss the different groups within the monotransitive class, then I finally will analyse non-coded alternations in section 5.

2. Syntactic diagnosis of transitivity

<2> There are no specific markers in Seereer that can help to identify the transitivity value of a construction and word order of the constituents that come after the verb (object and obliques) is sometimes flexible. I have used devices such as:

- passivization ;
- pronominalization;
- reflexivization;
- and the questioning of *xaa ta fiaa e?* "What is he doing" and *xaa fiu e?* "what has he done" so as to determine which constituents cannot be left out (to obtain grammatical clauses) and the different types of constructions that a given verb can integrate.

In this paper I have chosen to deal with passivization and pronominalization.

2.1. Passivization

<3> It is always possible to passivize a verb in an active transitive construction by adding to its root the passive morpheme [2]: *-e ~ -ee/ ~ -el*. In Seereer passive constructions (1b and 2 b), the object of the active construction (1a and 2a) is promoted to subject-patient function (if the promoted constituent is in plural it agrees in number as in 1b) and the subject-agent of the basic clause is completely deleted from the core structure, but understood because of the passive marker which indicates an involvement of an initiator of the action. I agree with Dixon & Aikhenvald (2000:7) who define this phenomenon as an agentless passive: "Some languages have a derivation in which the underlying A must be omitted (although it is understood that there was an underlying A argument, i.e. there was some agent who

affected the patient)".

- (1) a. *maad* *oxe* *yaqas-a-y* \emptyset *qoxoox* *we* *n-a*
king DEF.sg eliminate-PFV-EXP CL farmer DEF.pl PREP-CL
jeetay *fane*
conversation DEF.sg

The king eliminated the farmers from the conversation

- (1) b. \emptyset *qooxoox* *we* *yaqas-e-y-o* *n-a* *jeetay* *fane*
CL farmer DEF.pl eliminate-PSS-EXP-AGR.s.pl PREP-CL conversation DEF.sg

The farmers were eliminated from the conversation.

- (2) a. *o* *yaal* *mbind* *ne* *yoog-a-y* *a* *cek* *ake*
CL owner house DEF.sg shelter-PFV-EXP CL chicken DEF.pl

The householder has sheltered the chicken.

- (2) b. *a* *cek* *ake* *Yoog-e-y-o*
CL chicken DEF.pl Shelter-PSS-EXP-AGR.s.pl

The chickens have been sheltered.

<4> The passive morpheme is not productive with intransitive verbs (3). It can be applied to some set of verbs within the intransitive verbs with an extended locative argument (4).

- (3) a. *o* *koor* *oxe* *faan* *n-a* *ndok* *ale*
CL man DEF.sg sleep PREP-CL room DEF.sg

The man slept in the room.

- (3) b. * *a* *ndok* *ale* *faan-el*
CL room DEF.sg sleep-PSS.

*The room was slept in.

(4) a. \emptyset Gooram oxe gen-a nu \emptyset mbind nene

CL Gooram s3sgPRS live-IPFV PREP CL house this

Gooram lives in this house.

(4) b. \emptyset mbind nene gen-e-y

CL house this live-PSS-EXP

The house is occupied.

(4) c. \emptyset Wiin we ndet-a-y-o a Njareem xane

CL people DEF go-IPFV-EPT-AGR.sg CL Diourbel today

People have gone to Diourbel today.

(4) d. \emptyset Njaareem a ret-e-y xane

CL Diourbel S3sg go-PSS-EXP today

Diourbel was frequented today (lit.Diourbel was gone today).

2.2. Pronominalization

<5> Transitivity can also be tested by identifying which constituent can be replaced by an object pronoun (an index suffixed to the verb or an independent pronoun which comes just after the verb) (5). Prepositional complements cannot be referred to by an object pronoun (6b), they can however be replaced by appropriate oblique pronouns (locative for example) as in (6c).

(5) a. o njaac' onGe a rax \emptyset - ndiif ne

CL child DEF.sg s3sg chase.away CL bird DEF.sg

The child chased the bird away.

(5) b. o njaac' onGe a rax-in

CL child DEF.sg s3sg chase.away-o3sg

The child chased it away.

(6)	a.	<i>o</i>	<i>tew</i>	<i>oxe</i>	<i>dic-a-y</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>saxal</i>	<i>ale</i>
		CL	woman	DEF.sg	put.down-PFV-EXP	CL	calabash	DEF.sg
		<i>n-o</i>	<i>maax</i>	<i>ole</i>				
		PREP-CL	courtyard	DEF.sg				

The woman has put the calabash down the courtyard.

(6)	b.	<i>*o</i>	<i>tew</i>	<i>oxe</i>	<i>dic-aa-n</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>saxal</i>	<i>ale</i>
		CL	woman	DEF.sg	put.down-PFV-o3sg	CL	calabash	DEF.sg

*The woman has put it the calabash.

(6)	c.	<i>o</i>	<i>tew</i>	<i>oxe</i>	<i>dic-a-y</i>	<i>tee</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>saxal</i>	<i>ale</i>
		CL	woman	DEF.sg	put.down-PFV-EXP	LOC	CL	calabash	DEF.sg

The woman has put down the calabash on it.

3. Coding properties of monotransitive constructions

<6> I analyze here the linear order, flagging [3] and indexing of the constituents in a monotransitive construction.

3.1. Linear order of arguments

<7> In a simple clause, that is to say without topicalization, focalization or relativization, the canonical order of core terms in monotransitive constructions is:

AVP(X)

AVPE (X)

In some cases the subject of first or second person singular is included in the verb or the auxiliary morphology.

(7)	<i>yoog-aa-m-ii</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>cek</i>	<i>ale</i>
	shelter-PFV-s1sg-EXP	CL	chicken	DEF.sg

I have sheltered the chicken

- (8) *naangaa-m* *o* *yoog-aa* *a* *cek* *ale*
- AUX.HAB-s1sg DEPV shelter-IPFV CL chicken DEF.sg
- I usually shelter the chicken.

3.1.1. AVP(X) order

- <8> A represents the subject argument in a transitive clause. The position of the subject before the verb is strict except when it is included in the auxiliary or the verb morphology as mentioned above (cf. examples 7 and 8). The argument which follows the verb and is represented by P is the object of the monotransitive verb.

- (9) \emptyset *Gooram* *a* *ɓaat-a-y* \emptyset *ngaak* *ne*
- CL Gooram s3sg increase-PFV-EXP CL stock of food DEF.sg
- Gooram has increased the stock of food.

- <9> In X are found all non-obligatory peripheral arguments. These latter are not systematically marked. If they are marked they can be introduced by prepositions like *n(u)* (locative, directional, source and partitive meaning), *f(u)* (instrumental, comitative, coordination).

- (10) \emptyset *Daba* *mukt-a-y* *o* *njaac'* *onGe* *fu* \emptyset *saafu*
- CL Daba wash-PFV-EXP CL child DEF.sg PREP CL soap
- Daba has washed the child with soap.

- <10> The linear order of terms that come after the verb, namely P and X, is flexible. One can have AVPX (11a) or AVXP (11b), but the order where the object comes first then followed by the obliques is preferable.

- (11) a. \emptyset *yaaf* *re* *xuuy-a-y* \emptyset *pay* *ne* *faak*
- CL old woman DEF.sg tear-PFV-EXP CL loincloth DEF.sg yesterday
- The old woman has torn the peace of loincloth yesterday.

- (11) b. \emptyset *yaaf* *re* *xuuy-a-y* *faak* \emptyset *pay* *ne*
- CL old woman DEF.sg tear-PFV-EXP yesterday CL loincloth DEF.sg
- The old woman has torn the peace of loincloth yesterday.

3.1.2. AVPE (X)

<11> This order represents the argument structure of obligatorily extended monotransitive verbs. In addition to subject and object arguments, there is a third core term that comes after the object. The argument that E represents is either a locative (that can be encoded or not by a preposition) (12a), an adverb (12b), or a verbal complement (12c).

(12) a. *soḃ-aa-m-ii* *∅* *Gooram* *n-a* *ndok* *ale*

 find-PFV-s1sg-EXP CL Gooram PREP-CL room DEF.sg

 I have found Gooram in the room.

(12) b. *soḃ-aa-m-ii* *∅* *Gooram* *tafil*

 find-PFV-s1sg-EXP CL Gooram outside

 I have found Gooram outside.

(12) c. *soḃ-aa-m-ii* *∅* *Gooram* *ta* *ñaam-aa*

 find-PFV-s1sg-EXP CL Gooram s3sg eat-IPFV

 I have found Gooram eating.

<12> In this structure the position of P just after the verb becomes strict. The position of constituents that come after P is flexible with the following possibilities: AVPE(X) or AVP(X)E as in (13).

(13) a. *soḃ-aa-m-ii* *∅* *Gooram* *n-a* *ndok* *ale* *faak*

 find-PFV-s1sg-EXP CL Gooram PREP-CL room DEF.sg yesterday

 I have found Gooram in the room yesterday.

(13) b. *soḃ-aa-m-ii* *∅* *Goram* *faak* *n-a* *ndok* *ale*

 find-PFV-s1sg-EXP CL Gooram yesterday PREP-CL room DEF.sg

 I have found Gooram yesterday in the room.

3.2. Flagging

<13> Seereer does not have markers that systematically allow identifying core arguments in a transitive clause (14).

(14) *o* *maad* *oxe* *xooy-nu-a-y* *a* *jaraaf* *fane*

CL king DEF.sg call-BEN.CAUS-PFV- EXP CL chief of the district DEF.sg

The king has sent for the chief of the district.

The morpheme *a* which comes before the object *jaraaf* (14) has been described as an object marker by W. Faye (1979:175-176) and (1993:203) but I analyse it as a class marker because it no longer precedes the noun when it changes a class the one of plural for example as in (15). A detailed analysis about this morpheme is given in Ngom forthcoming.

(15) o maad oxe xooy-nu-a-y ø caraaf ke
CL king DEF.sg call-BEN.CAUS-PFV-EXP CL chief of the district DEF.pl

The king has sent for the chief of the district.

3.3. Indexing

<14> Indexing occurs when nominal or pronominal core arguments are represented by indexes in the clause. The index can co-occur with the constituent it refers to or appear only when the constituent does not occur.

3.3.1. Indexing of A

<15> Seereer indexes the subject of a transitive construction the same way as the subject of an intransitive construction. In plural the subject agrees in number (in all persons) with the verb. This agreement is marked by the index *-o* (it can be sometimes omitted when there is no difficulty to distinguish the person in subject function) in final position of the verbal structure. Agreement in number is specific to subject, object and oblique arguments do not have this property.

(16) i suf-a-y-o a sareet ale bo cut
s1pl load-PFV-EXP-AGR.s.pl CL cart DEF.sg until finish

We have finished loading the cart.

3.3.2. Indexing of P

<16> Object indexation (in a simple clause, that is to say without topicalization, focalization) in Seereer is a replacement rather than an agreement because object indexes do not co-occur with the constituents they refer to. That is to say, they appear only when the object constituents they refer to are not attested in the sentence. In the indexation of P in singular, the language makes use of object suffixes whose basic forms are: (the vowels of the suffixes may undergo morphophonological changes): *-aam* (first person), *-ong* (second person) and *-in*, *-an*, *-uu* (third person) (17). If P is in plural it is independent pronouns that are used. Those pronouns [4] are: *in* (first person), *nuun* (second person), *den* (third person) (18). The difference between the object suffixes and the independent object pronouns is in terms of position, the former are suffixed to the verb and the latter come just after the verb.

(17) a. buu Gooram a fax-na ø coow re um and

if	Gooram	s3sg	solve-na	CL	quarrel	DEF.sg	s1sg	know
ee	tee	waag-u	mee					
CONJ	s3sg	can-FOC	here					

If Gooram solves the quarrel, I will know that he is the best.

(17) b.

<i>Buu</i>	<i>Gooram</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>fax-uu-na</i>	<i>um</i>	<i>and</i>	<i>ee</i>	<i>tee</i>	<i>wag-u</i>	<i>mee</i>
if	Gooram	s3sg	solve-o3sg-na	s1sg	know	CONJ	s3sg	can-FOC	here

If Gooram solves it, I will know that he is the best.

(18) a.

\emptyset	<i>Biram</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>riñ-a-y</i>	<i>fu</i>	<i>njaac'</i>	<i>ne</i>
CL	Biram	s3sg	push-PFV-EXP	CL	child	DEF.pl

Biram has pushed the children.

(18) b.

<i>Biram</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>riñ-a-y</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>den</i>
Biram	s3sg	push-PFV-EXP	CL	o3pl

Biram has pushed them.

4. Types of plain monotransitive verbs

<17>

Strictly monotransitive verbs require in their constructions a subject argument and at least one object argument. In Seereer those verbs cannot be used intransitively unless they undergo morphological valency reducing operations. Strictly monotransitive verbs can be divided into three groups of verbs: simple or ordinary plain monotransitive; plain monotransitive verbs with a third obligatorily extended argument; plain monotransitive verbs with a third optionally extended argument. Plain monotransitive verbs are not very numerous; they represent 8.47 % of my corpus.

4.1. Simple plain monotransitive verbs

<18>

Those verbs are necessarily constructed with only two core arguments: a subject whose semantic role is similar to agent and a patient-like object. With these verbs it is not possible to add a second object without morphological process. The argument structure is presented as following: APV (X) [5].

(19) \emptyset *Gooram* *a* *tag* *fa* *ñafaf* *aqe*

CL Gooram s3sg hang up CL shoes DEF.

Gooram hung up the shoes.

(20) *o* *fex-ang-a* *a* *ba* *of* *f-a* *ya* *of*

s2sg esteem-COND-a CL father POSS3sg CON-CL mother POSS3sg

xan *o* *xuuf* *o* *ñis*

FUT s2sg last CL nose

If you esteem your parents you will have long living.

<19> I have found one plain monotransitive verb *foof* or *soof* ‘to miss, to feel nostalgia for’ which deviates a bit from the canonical behavior of transitive verbs as far as passivization is concerned. In its active construction, the subject has the semantic role of stimulus and the object that of experiencer (21a). When the passive morpheme is added to its root, the object (experiencer) of the active clause becomes subject (with the same semantic role) and the former subject becomes an object argument (with the same semantic role) that cannot be deleted (21b). The verb in its active and passive construction remains strictly transitive this exemplified an alternation without a modification of the transitivity.

(21) a. *fu* *njaac'* *ne* *soof-a-y-o* *a* *Gooram*

CL children DEF.pl miss-PFV-EPT-AGR.s.pl CL Gooram

Gooram misses the children.

(21) b. *Gooram* *a* *soof-e-y* *fu* *njaac'* *ne*

Gooram s3sg feel nostalgia for-PSS.PFV-EXP CL children DEF.pl

Gooram feels nostalgia for the children.

(21) c. $\ast\emptyset$ *Gooram* *a* *soof-e-y*

CL Gooram s3sg feel nostalgia for-PSS-EXP

Gooram feels nostalgia.

Table 1 : Some other ordinary plain monotransitive verbs

<u>Verbs</u>	<u>Basic structure</u>	<u>Glosses</u>
<i>yoog</i>	<i>A yoog P</i>	to shelter
<i>rax</i>	<i>A rax P</i>	to chase
<i>sut</i>	<i>A sut P</i>	to take out
<i>fax</i>	<i>A fax P</i>	to solve
<i>paang</i>	<i>A paang P</i>	to complete
<i>yirif</i>	<i>A yirif P</i>	to shake off
<i>jel</i>	<i>A jel P</i>	to pass over

4.2. Plain Monotransitive with an obligatory extended argument

<20> Verbs in this class require three arguments: a subject constituent with a semantic characteristic of agent, an object whose semantic property is similar to the patient of a monotransitive verb and a third argument that is either a circumstantial complement (encoded or not by a preposition) (22) or a verbal complement (23). Construction as in (24) is ungrammatical.

The basic argument structure is: AVPE (cf. linear order in 3.1.2)

(22) \emptyset *Ajma* *soɓ-a-y* \emptyset *rew* *we* *a* *Njaareem*

CL *Ajma* find-PFV-EXP CL woman DEF.pl CL Diourbel

Ajma has found the women in Diourbel.

(23) *um* *ret* *nu* *saax* *njan* *soɓ* \emptyset *saax* *raa*

s1sg go PREP village foreign find CL village DEF.sg

njeetaay-aa-y-o

converse-PFV-EPT-AGR.s.pl

I went to a foreign village and found villagers conversing.

(24) \emptyset **Ajma* *soɓ-a-y* \emptyset *rew* *we*

CL *Ajma* find-PFV-EXP CL woman DEF.pl

Ajma has found the women.

In this class only the argument whose semantic role is similar to patient and represented by P which is *ø rew we* (22) and *ø saax raa* (23) has the syntactic characteristic of a prototypical object. This type of verb is not very representative in Seereer ool. I have found one for the time being and it is *soḃ* 'to find'.

4.3. Plain Monotransitive with a third optionally extended constituent.

<21> Those verbs require two arguments in their construction, one in subject function and the other in object function. It is always possible to add a second non-subject constituent without any morphological valency increasing process. Semantically the extended constituent is either an instrumental or a goal. In the syntactic level it is treated like an object or an oblique depending on the feature [±animate] of the two non-subject constituents reason why I have chosen to treat them within the monotransitive class and not within the ditransitive verbs.

4.3.1. The extended constituent is an instrumental

<22> Plain monotransitive verbs that can be optionally extended with an instrumental participant are obligatorily constructed with a subject whose semantic role is similar to the agent and an object with a semantic characteristic that resembles the patient (25a and 26a). Those verbs can extend their terms to a third non subject one and which semantically has the role of instrument.

The basic structure is presented as following: AVP.

The canonical order of the extended structure is: AVP(I).

This additional term is treated like an object (what gives a ditransitive structure) if the obligatory object whose semantic role is similar to the patient has an animate referent and the extended constituent an inanimate referent (25).

(25)	a.	<i>o</i>	<i>tew</i>	<i>oxe</i>	<i>fuum-a-y</i>	<i>o</i>	<i>kulook</i>	<i>oxe</i>
		CL	woman	DEF.sg	smear-PFV-EXP	CL	bridegroom	DEF.sg

The woman has smeared the bridegroom.

(25)	b.	<i>o</i>	<i>tew</i>	<i>oxe</i>	<i>fuum-a-y</i>	<i>o</i>	<i>kulook</i>	<i>oxe</i>
		CL	woman	DEF.sg	smear-PFV-EXP	CL	bridegroom	CL
		<i>ø</i>	<i>fonGam</i>	<i>fane</i>				
		CL	cream	DEF.sg				

The woman has smeared the bridegroom with the cream.

(25)	c.	<i>ø</i>	<i>fonGam</i>	<i>fane</i>	<i>fuum-e-y</i>	<i>o</i>	<i>kulook</i>	<i>oxe</i>
		CL	cream	DEF	smear-PSS-EXP	CL	bridegroom	DEF.sg

The cream has been smeared to the bridegroom.

- (25) d. *o tew oxe fuum-aa-n-ii o kulook oxe*
- CL woman DEF.sg smear-PFV-o3Ss-EXP CL bridegroom DEF.sg

The woman has smeared the bridegroom with it.

In (25), the additional constituent which is here *ø fonGam fane* (25b) has all object properties; it can be promoted to subject function in passive (25c) and be replaced by a pronoun suffixed to the verb (25d).

<23> The extended term is treated as an oblique if the two non subject constituents have inanimate referents (26). In such a construction although the additional term I is not introduced by a preposition, it has any object properties. It can have access to object criteria via non-coded alternation object/ locative that I treat in 5.1

- (26) a. *ø Xemes a fuum-a-y ø kawdiir ne*
- CL Xemes s3sg smear-PFV-EXP CL pot DEF.sg

Xemes has smeared the pot

- (26) b. *ø Xemes a fuum-a-y ø kawdiir*
- CL Xemes s3sg smear-PFV-EXP CL pot
- ne ø ndaw*
- DEF.sg CL ash

Xemes has smeared the pot with ashes.

- (26) c. *ø kawdiir ne fuum-e-y ø ndaw*
- CL pot DEF.sg smear-PSS-EXP CL ash

The pot has been smeared with ashes.

- (26) d. *ø ndaw ne fuum-e-y ø kawdiir ne*
- CL ash DEF.sg smear-PSS.PFV-EXP CL pot DEF.sg

*The ashes has been smeared the pot.

- (26) e. **ø Xemes a fuum-aa-n-ii ø ndaw*

CL Xemes s3sg smear-PFV-o3sg-EXP CL ash

Xemes has smeared it with ashes.

(26) f. *∅ Xemes a fuum-aa-n-ii ∅ kawdiir ne

CL Xemes s3sg smear-PFV-o3sg CL pot DEF.sg

*Xemes has smeared it the pot.

(26) g. ∅ Xemes a fuum-a-y ∅ kawdiir ne ∅ ndaw

CL Xemes s3sg smear-PFV-EXP CL pot DEF.sg CL ash

Xemes has smeared the pot with ashes.

(26) h. *∅ Xemes a fuum-a-y ∅ ndaw ∅ kawdiir ne

CL Xemes s3sg smear-PFV-EXP CL ash CL pot DEF.sg

Xemes has smeared the pot with ashes.

In the example (26) only the object represented by P which is ∅ kawdiir ne can be promoted to subject function in a passive construction (26c). The extended constituent I, does not have this property (26d). It is also noticed that only P can be replaced by an object pronoun (26e) and not I (26f). The linear order of nominal objects is frozen (AVPI), P comes strictly in postverbal position then followed by I (26g).

Table 2 : Some other verbs in this group

<u>Verbs</u>	<u>Basic structure</u>	<u>Extended structure</u>	<u>Glosses</u>
sing	A sing P	A sing P (I)	to cover (something)
sooc	A sooc P	A sooc P (I)	to clean out
sof	A sof P	A sof P (I)	to cram

4.3.2. The extended constituent is a goal

<24> Verbs within this group are necessarily constructed with a subject whose semantic role is similar to the characteristic of an agent and an object whose semantic role is similar to the patient (28a). With these verbs it is possible to add a third constituent. Semantically the extended constituent has a role that is similar to the goal (28b).

The basic structure is: A V P

The canonical order of the extended structure is: A V (G) P or A V P (PREPG)

With verbs in this class, it is generally noticed that the access of the additional constituent to the syntactic properties of object is conditioned by the feature \pm animate of the referent. If the extended constituent has an animate referent it has access to all object criteria. It can be promoted to subject function in passive (27c) and be replaced by an object pronoun (27d). In this case the verb is constructed with two objects.

- (27) a. \emptyset Maan a $\beta ax-a-y$ \emptyset foof le
CL Maan s3sg pour-PFV-EXP CL water DEF.sg

Maan has poured the water.

- (27) b. \emptyset Maan a $\beta ax-a-y$ a Gooram \emptyset foof le
CL Maan s3sg pour-PFV-EXP CL Gooram CL water DEF.sg

Maan has poured Gooram the water.

- (27) c. \emptyset Gooram a $\beta ax-e-y$ \emptyset foof le
CL Gooram s3sg pour-PSS.PFV-EXP CL water DEF.sg

**Gooram has been poured the water to*

- (27) d. \emptyset Maan a $\beta ax-aa.n-ii$ \emptyset foof le
CL Maan s3sg pour-PFV-o3sg-EXP CL water DEF.sg

Maan has poured him the water

If the extended third constituent has an inanimate referent, it is encoded as an oblique introduced by the preposition *n(u)* and loses therefore all the syntactic characteristics of object (28b). In this case the verb appears in a monotransitive structure. In such a construction the extended constituent in oblique function can be promoted to object function by the non-coded alternation object/ instrument that I analyze in the section 5.2

- (28) a. \emptyset Maan a $\beta ax-a-y$ \emptyset foof le
CL Maan s3sg pour-PFV-EXP CL water DEF.sg

Maan has poured the water.

- (28) b. \emptyset Maan a $\beta ax-a-y$ \emptyset foof le nu
CL Maan s3sg pour-PFV-EXP CL water DEF.sg PREP
 \emptyset ndaxar ne

CL tree DEF.sg

Maan has poured the water on the tree.

Table 3 : Some other verbs in this group

<u>Verbs</u>	<u>Basic structure</u>	<u>Extended structure</u>	<u>Glosses</u>
<i>deḽ</i>	<i>A deḽ P</i>	<i>A deḽ (G) P / A deḽ P (PREP G)</i>	to throw
<i>gadand</i>	<i>A gadand P</i>	<i>A gadand (G) P / A gadand P (PREP G)</i>	to launch
<i>yip</i>	<i>A yip P</i>	<i>A yip (G) P / A yip P (PREP G)</i>	to put
<i>suuy</i>	<i>A suuy P</i>	<i>A suuy (G) P / A suuy P (Prép G)</i>	to spread

5. Non-coded alternations

<25> The non-coded alternations include alternations that do not require any morphological marking. In Seereer it is possible to promote to object function, constituents that did not have access to syntactic properties of object. Non-coded alternations are rendered by verbs that are classified within the monotransitive with an optionally extended constiuent. The constituent in subject function is still the same and the construction remains transitive. The types of alternations are: object/locative and object/instrument.

5.1. Object/locative alternation

<26> According to Levin (1993:50) “the locative alternation involves what Clark & Clark (1979) have called, the locatum argument (substance or entity whose location is changed) and the location argument. Specifically, in each variant one of these arguments is expressed as the object of an appropriate preposition, while the second is not”.

In Seereer, the object/locative alternation applies to monotransitive verbs that can extend their constituents to a third constituent that represents the instrument. This latter is not introduced by any preposition; however, I have shown that (cf. section 4.3.1) if both P and I are inanimate, the access of I to syntactic properties (passivization, pronominalization) of object is blocked. Through the object/locative alternation, I can have access to prototypical object properties. This operation consists of introducing the object of the basic clause P by the locative preposition *n(u)*.

(29) a. ∅ Xemes a fuum-a-y ∅ kawdiir ne ∅ ndaw

CL Xemes s3sg smear-PFV-EXP CL pot DEF.sg CL ash

Xemes has smeared the pot with ashes.

(29) b. ∅ Xemes a fuum-a-y ∅ ndaw nu kawdiir ne

CL	Xemes	s3sg	smear-PFV-EXP	CL	ash	PREP	pot	DEF.sg
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Xemes has smeared ashes on the pot.

(30) a. o qooxoox oxe sof-a-y o saaku le a ñaaw

CL	farmer	DEF.sg	put-PFV-EXP	CL	bag	DEF.sg	CL	bean
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The farmer has crammed beans in the bag (lit. he has crammed the bag with beans).

(30) b. o qooxoox oxe sof-a-y a ñaaw n-o saaku le

CL	farmer	DEF.sg	cram-PFV-EXP	CL	bean	PREP-CL	bag	DEF.sg
----	--------	--------	--------------	----	------	---------	-----	--------

The farmer has crammed beans in the bag.

5.2. Object/ instrument alternation

<27> In the object/instrument alternation, the inanimate goal introduced by the preposition *n(u)* in the basic construction (31a and 32a), is treated as object by its dislocation to immediately postverbal position (which was the initial position of the patient-object in the basic clause) and the deletion of its preposition (31b and 32b). The P of the basic clause is treated like an oblique.

(31) a. a suuy-a-y ø pep n-o qol ole

s3sg spread-PFV-EXP CL grain PREP-CL field DEF.sg

He has spread grain in the field.

(31) b. a suuy-a-y o qol ole ø pep

s3sg spread-PFV-EXP CL field DEF.sg CL grain

*He has spread the field with grain.

(31) c. o qol ole suuy-e-y ø pep

CL champ DEF.sg spread-PSS-EXP CL grain

The field has been spread with grain.

- (31) d. *a suuy-aa-n-ii* \emptyset *pep*
 s3sg spread-PFV-o3sg-EXP CL grain

* He has spread it with grain.

- (32) a. *a yip-a-y* \emptyset *saac'* *n-a* *saxal* *ale*
 s3sg put-PFV-EXP CL couscous PREP-CL calabash DEF.sg

He has put couscous in the calabash.

- (32) b. *a yip-a-y* *a* *saxal* *ale* \emptyset *saac'*
 s3sg put-PFV-EXP CL calabash DEF.sg CL couscous

*He has put the calabash with couscous

- (32) c. *a saxal* *ale* *yip-e-y* \emptyset *saac'*
 CL calabash DEF.sg put-PSS-EXP CL couscous

*The calabash has been put with couscous.

- (32) d. *a yip-aa-n-ii* \emptyset *saac'*
 s3sg put-PFV-o3sg-EXP CL couscous

*He has put it with couscous.

In the examples above the constituent in oblique function introduced by the preposition *n-(u)* which is *o qol ole* (31a) and *a saxal ale* (32a) is treated like an object in (31b et 32b). It can be promoted to subject function in passive (31c and 32c) and replaced by an object pronoun (31d and 32d). The constituents \emptyset *pep* and \emptyset *saac'* which were the objects respectively in (31a) and (32a) are treated like obliques although they are not introduced by a preposition. In Seereer this alternation applies to monotransitive verbs that can extend their constituents to a third participant that represents the goal. If this latter is animate, it has the same syntactic properties as the object of the basic clause (cf. 27); if it is inanimate it is introduced by a preposition (28). The prepositional constituent can become object by the object/instrument alternation.

6. Conclusion

<28> In this paper, I have demonstrated the syntactic devices used to identify object namely passivization and pronominalization. Passivization reveals that most of the intransitive verbs are not compatible with the passive morpheme. pronominalization shows that constituents that are introduced by a preposition are not objects. I also describe the linear order of participants and which terms are marked.

- <29> On the one hand, based on the group of ordinary plain monotransitive verbs one can assume that transitivity can be predicted from the lexical meaning of the verb (most of the verbs in this group denote two-participant events that determine their transitivity value). On the other hand, from the group of plain monotransitives with an extended term one can claim that transitivity is determined on the syntactic level. Most of these verbs like *sooc* 'to clean out', *sing* 'to cover something', *gadand* 'to launch' can have a second object that is not involved in the lexical meaning of the verb.
- <30> In the group of plain monotransitives with an extended term, the syntactic behavior of the object of the basic clause and the extended term reveals a tendency to link passivization to linear order. In fact, if the word order between the object of the basic clause and the extended (non-prepositional complement) term is flexible, either of them can be promoted to subject function in a passive construction (cf. 25); if the linear order is frozen, only the constituent in immediately postverbal position can become subject in a passive construction (cf. 26).
- <31> I also show that complements treated like oblique within the group of plain monotransitive verbs with an optionally extended constituent can have access to object criteria through the alternations object/locative and object/instrument.

Abbreviations

A	subject of transitive verb
AGR.s.pl	plural subject agreement
Aux.HAB	habitual auxiliary
BEN.CAUS	benefactive causative
CL	noun class marker
CON	connective
COND	conditional
CONJ	conjunction
DEF.pl	definite plural
DEF.sg	definite singular
DEPV	verbal dependency
E	obligatory extended argument
EPT	epenthesis
EXP	phonological extension
FOC	focalization
FUT	future
G	goal

I	instrumental
IPFV	imperfective
LOC	locative
o3sg	object of third person singular
P	object of transitive verb
PSS	passive
PFV	perfective
POSS3sg	third person singular possessive
PREP	preposition
s1sg	subject of first person singular
s2sg	subject of second person singular
s3sg	subject of third person singular
s1pl	subject of first person plural
s3pl	subject of third person plural
V	verb
X	oblique
*	ungrammatical clause

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Une marque de classe déficitaire en seereer (variante ool de NGoye mbayaar)

[1] According to the census of the population made by the Rural Council of Ngohé Mbayard in 2002.

[2] The passive morpheme is the only derivational morpheme which appears in the aspect slot.

[3] I use here the terms flagging and indexing like Haspelmath (2005)

[4] Independent pronouns are also used for topicalization, focalization and relativization of subject and object; they can also assume the function of personal possession determiner, cf. Faye, W., (1993:202).

[5] The letter between the parentheses means that the constituent it refers to is optional.

Lizenz

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Volltext

Kommentare

Es liegen noch keine Kommentare vor.

Möchten Sie Stellung zu diesem Artikel nehmen oder haben Sie Ergänzungen?

Kommentar einreichen.