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This thesis, entitled
Syntactic Ergativity in Nehan

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SYNTACTIC ERGATIVITY IN NEHAN

By

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Presented to the Faculty of
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in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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ABSTRACT

Syntactic Ergativity in Nehan

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Master of Arts
with major in
Applied Linguistics

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In this thesis, I argue that Nehan is a syntactically ergative language. Kroeger (2004:284) states: “The term SYNTACTIC ERGATIVITY refers to a situation in which the syntactic system of the language, and in particular the properties which provide tests for subjecthood, follow an ergative pattern.” In this thesis, I will describe the basic clause structure of Nehan in order to demonstrate that Nehan is a syntactically ergative language; both the single argument of an intransitive clause and the patient of a transitive clause are the grammatical subject. This syntactically ergative alignment will be illustrated with various syntactic constructions.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to our many Nehan friends who have welcomed us and provided us with genuine hospitality and care over the years.

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The author and his family lived in Papua New Guinea for a period of about 20 years beginning in 1986. For three to six months a year, they resided in the village of Balil, located on the Island of Nissan.¹ They worked under the auspices of SIL International in the Papua New Guinea branch. They would like to thank the SIL consultants who have helped them, especially René van den Berg, who encouraged the work on the Nehan grammar and who gave much time to help with difficult problems in the language. They would also like to thank Malcolm Ross at Australian National University who took time to read over and provide helpful comments on our first grammar paper, “Nehan Grammar Essentials.”

The final work on this thesis was done in a master’s program at the Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics in Dallas, Texas. The author wishes to thank the faculty and staff who have helped him, a student 25 years out of date, to try to understand current linguistic theory. Special thanks go to the thesis committee members: Janet Allen helped him to consider other issues such as discourse and its function in the language; Tod Allman gave him some good advice on terminology when everything was new to him. He would especially like to thank Dr. Paul Kroeger for his patience in helping him understand ergativity and grammatical relations. A special acknowledgment and thanks go to his wife Ariana who has encouraged him to pursue this thesis when at times the

¹ See map on page 1.

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ABBREVIATIONS

-	Affix boundary	LIN	Linker
=	Clitic boundary	LOC	Locative
*	Ungrammatical	MAN	Manner
1	1st person	NEG	Negative
2	2nd person	NOM	Nominalizer
3	3rd person	NP	Noun phrase
A	Most agent-like	OBL	Oblique
ACAU	Anticausative prefix	OBJ	Object
APV	Antipassive voice	P	Most patient-like
ANA	Animate	PCL	Possessive classifier
ART	Article	PER	Person marker
AST	Assertive	PERF	Perfective aspect
AUX	Auxiliary	PL	Plural
BG	Background	PO	Possessor
CAUS	Causative prefix	POc	Proto-Oceanic
CLT	Cleft	PUR	Purpose
COMP	Complementizer	RD	Referential distance
CNJ	Conjunction	REA	Reason
DEM	Demonstrative	REL	Relativizer
DIM	Diminutive	RED	Reduplication
DIR	Direction	RECP	Reciprocal
DL	Dual	S	Single core argument of intransitive clause
EMP	Emphasis	SG	Single
EMPH	Emphatic pronoun	SEQ	Sequential
EX	Exclusive	SPG	Spatial grounding
EXCL	Exclamation	STAT	Stative verb prefix
FG	Foreground	SVC	Serial verb construction
GR	Grammatical relation	SUBJ	Subject
IN	Inclusive	TP	Topical Persistence
INAN	Inanimate	Tr	Transitive
INDEF	Indefinite	V	Verb
IRR	Irrealis	VC	Verb complex
LIG	Ligature		

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introductory comments

This thesis represents the culmination of a long desire to understand how the grammar of Nehan works, specifically regarding the issue of transitivity. It was evident that the language had transitive and intransitive clauses, but the presence of a sort of “in-between clause,” or “semi-transitive clause,” which looked like an intransitive but functioned like a transitive, became the stimulus for a more in depth study of the language. The results of that inquiry are presented in this thesis.

This thesis argues that Nehan is a syntactically ergative language: that is, the single argument of an intransitive clause and the patient of a transitive clause are the grammatical subject. The construction which was formerly described as a “semi-transitive clause” is now analyzed as an antipassive voice clause. Various syntactic constructions are used to demonstrate that the absolutive argument is the grammatical subject in Nehan: coordinate clause constructions, purpose clauses, control and raising complements, question formation, relative clauses, and cleft constructions. Other areas of the grammar are discussed to provide the necessary background for the discussion of ergativity and subjecthood: word order, the structure of noun phrases, and the structure of the verb complex. Surprisingly, the antipassive is shown to be the preferred voice in semantically transitive main clauses in Nehan narrative discourse.

1.2 The Nehan language and people

Nehan is an Austronesian language spoken by about 7,000 Melanesian people living on the islands of Nissan and Pinipel² in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, in Papua New Guinea (PNG). The larger islands of Buka and Bougainville are to the south of Nissan, and the island of New Ireland is west of Nissan.



Map 1. The location of the Nehan language in Papua New Guinea

The major geographical feature of Nissan and Pinipel islands is that both are atolls, that is, raised coral reefs. Along with a few small adjacent islands, they are called the Green Islands Group. Nissan has a land area of about twenty square miles; Pinipel has

² Pinipel is also known as Pinipir.

about five to seven square miles of land. Both have lagoons. The ocean side of each island has no barrier reef, and the shore drops off quickly to deep water. These islands are so-called “old atolls,” having 100 foot cliffs on the ocean side with limestone caves. Most of the villages on Nissan and Pinipel are along the lagoons. There are about twenty main villages on Nissan and five on Pinipel.

The Nehan language has two major dialects and one minor dialect. The main dialect spoken on Nissan Island is called *Uanuleik* and is spoken by about 5,000 people. There is a small minor dialect called *Sirouatan* on Nissan, and it is spoken by about 1,000 people. The other major dialect is spoken on Pinipel Island with a population of about 1,000 people and is simply called *Pinipel*. The lexical similarity between the main dialects is about 83% (Glennon 2003:5). This thesis is based on the *Uanuleik* dialect of Nissan Island.

In spite of the increasing use of Tok Pisin, the trade language of Papua New Guinea, Nehan has remained dominant in the village communities. Most of the everyday communication in the villages is in the vernacular, although some haranguing speeches and some of the speeches done at village meetings are in Tok Pisin. Sometimes both languages will be used in the same meeting, even in the same speeches. Village court has, in the past, been primarily in the vernacular, but some speakers are now using Tok Pisin. English is almost never heard in the village. Most people who marry into Nehan villages learn the vernacular and communicate in it. Others, however, learn to understand Nehan but continue to use Tok Pisin in speaking. Communication during sporting events in the

village is in the vernacular, as is scolding and joking. Older people prefer the vernacular in all cases but will use Tok Pisin if necessary. Markets are also predominantly in the vernacular, except for the large market at the government station where Tok Pisin is used. When traveling on Nissan, people use the vernacular unless it is with outsiders, in which case Tok Pisin is used.

1.3 Linguistic literature of Nehan and the surrounding languages

Currently there are four descriptive grammars published among the 16 Austronesian languages in this region. They are: Lincoln (1976a) for Banoni, Allen (1987) for Halia, Mosel and Thiesen (2007) for Teop, and Moyle (2011) for Takuu, a Polynesian outlier.

Steven Nachman (1978) wrote a Ph.D. dissertation on the culture of the Nehan people, giving an exhaustive bibliography of previous work done on the language and culture. Peter Lincoln (1976b), who worked on the Banoni language of southwestern Bougainville Island, classified Nehan as belonging neither to the Bougainville languages nor to the New Ireland languages but rather as an isolate. He gave the percentage of cognate words between Nehan and the other Austronesian languages of Bougainville as 19-22%. He also gave a review of other references, showing where Nehan fits into the languages of the region.

Evelyn Todd (1978) wrote the first grammatical description of the Nehan language entitled "A Sketch of Nissan (Nehan) Grammar." She described Nehan based

on several texts that she received from a Nehan speaker. In this paper, she describes the clause with an oblique patient as the active (transitive) clause type and the transitive clause as a passive construction. Malcolm Ross (1982:49) linked Nehan to the other Austronesian languages of Bougainville and described the verb phrase of Nehan, basing it on Todd's analysis and his own research with a Nehan speaker. In his discussion of the Nehan verb phrase, he uses the term 'topic or subject' for all NPs not preceded by the oblique marker and 'non-topic or non-subject' for the NPs that are preceded by the oblique marker. Ross (1988:236) described the clause structure of Nehan and how it relates to the other languages of Bougainville as well as to the Meso-Melanesian cluster of Austronesian languages. He divides all Nehan NPs into those that are "pragmatic pivot³ or subject and those which are neither." Lynch, Ross, and Crowley (2002:883) classified Nehan as an Austronesian language isolate of the Oceanic / Western Oceanic / Meso-Melanesian Cluster / North-West Solomonian linkage / Nehan-North Bougainville linkage.

Work on the Nehan language in PNG under the auspices of the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) began in July 1985. Since that time a large corpus of language data from Nehan speakers has been collected in both oral and written form. This includes narratives (fiction and non-fiction), war memoirs, letters, songs, instructional presentations, and sermons. Steven Nachman has generously provided numerous recorded and transcribed texts. These texts have been especially helpful since many of

³ For a discussion of pragmatic pivot in Nehan see Ross (1988:237-240). Ross (1988:421) also states, "The 'subject' in an ergative language, like Dyirbal, is also the pragmatic pivot."

them are speeches and dialogues. Many of Nachman's and other texts have been interlinearized using various software programs such as "Shoebox/Toolbox" and "Field Works Language Explorer" (FLEx); both are programs developed by SIL. Also, numerous examples of clause types and paradigms from Nehan speakers were collected.

Published materials in the language now include the Nehan New Testament and one year of elementary school curriculum. Various booklets were also published, including one color comic book, one gardening book, four volumes of native authored stories created in writers' workshops, and numerous small booklets of Bible stories and health topics.

Glennon and Glennon (2005) published a 5,000 word dictionary⁴. They also produced several unpublished manuscripts on the phonology and grammar of Nehan (Glennon and Glennon 1990, 1994, 2001, 2003). Malcolm Ross's comments about Glennon (1994) will be referred to as Ross (1997). Finally, van den Berg and Glennon (2008) presented a paper on grammatical relations in Nehan for the Linguistic Society of Papua New Guinea.

⁴ available online at <http://www.sil.org/pacific/png/abstract.asp?id=48016>

1.4 Phonology

1.4.1 Consonants & vowels

Nehan has the following consonants and vowels: /p/, /t/, /k/, /b/, /d/, /g/, /s/, /h/, /m/, /n/, /ŋ/, /l/, /r/, /a/, /ɛ/, /i/, /ɔ/, /u/. All stops and *m*, *s*, *h* have labialized allophones. /t/ and /k/ have palatalized allophones. The vowels /ɛ/ and /ɔ/ are written as *e* and *o*. The high vowels /i/ and /u/ have the allophones [j] and [w] and are written as *i* and *u*. The phoneme *ŋ* will be written as *ng*.

1.4.2 Syllable characteristics

All consonant phonemes may occur word-initially, finally, or medially. There are no obvious restrictions on the combining of consonants across a word boundary. Consonant clusters are not allowed in syllables. Word-initial or word-final consonant clusters are also not allowed in Nehan.

The most common syllable pattern in Nehan is consonant vowel CV, as in example (1). The CVC syllable pattern is the next most common, as in example (2), but often a word-final consonant is the product of apocope. Apocope will be discussed in section 1.4.3.

CVC syllables are possible apart from apocope. The final C of a CVC syllable can occur word-medially with no vowel following. The consonant *n* in example (3) and the consonant *k* in example (4) are found syllable-final.

- (1) lo 'dog'
- (2) bak 'throw'
- (3) mindal 'earring'
- (4) baklek 'cross over'

VC syllables, which are uncommon, are illustrated in examples (5) and (6). There are also rare instances of words consisting of only a vowel as in examples (7) and (8).

- (5) ut 'louse'
- (6) ok 'round worm'
- (7) i LOC
- (8) a ART

All vowels can geminate, and vowel clusters are common. Diphthongs are also common. The vowel *a* can be diphthongized with any other vowel, while the vowels *e* and *o* are often diphthongized with the high vowels *i* and *u*.

Phonemically, Nehan word stress is predominately penultimate, occurring on the next to last syllable of the word as in examples (9), (10), and (11). Phonetically, these words show no final vowels. Phonemically, all words in Nehan end in vowels, many of which are dropped in a process called apocope. Apocope will be discussed further in

§1.4.3. Some words have phonemically assigned final stress and do not lose the final vowel, in which case the stress remains as in examples (12), (13), and (14).

(9)	/ma ^l na ^s a/	‘now’	[ma. ^l nas]
(10)	/ ^l ma ^t e/	‘die’	[mat]
(11)	/ta ^l bi ^l a/	‘sit’	[ta. ^l bil]
(12)	/iŋ ^l ga/	‘2SG’	[iŋ. ^l gɑ]
(13)	/hi ^l re/	‘tell’	[hi. ^l rɛ]
(14)	/li ^l uo/	‘morning’	[li. ^l wɔ]

1.4.3 *Apocope of stem-final vowels*

Nehan has several morphophonemic processes, and one of these, apocope of stem-final vowels, warrants discussion here. Apocope is the deletion of final vowels in the root/stem of Nehan words and morphemes. Todd (1978:1182), who was the first person to look at Nehan grammar, commented about these vowels, noticing that in some words these word-final vowels appeared in certain contexts but not in others.

Table 1 gives examples of common Nehan words that show deletion of stem-final vowels or apocope. Column 2 shows the phonemic forms with stem-final vowels highlighted by the use of a bold font. Column 4 shows the phonetic forms with the stem-final vowels deleted. However, the last three words in the table, 12, 13, and 14, are examples of words that do not undergo apocope. In many Nehan words, the stem-final

vowel is the same as the previous vowel, as in the first three words in table 1. However, this is not always the case, as several examples in Table 1 demonstrate..

Table 1: Nehan words that undergo apocope and those that do not

	Column 2 Phonemic form	Column 3 English gloss	Column 4 Phonetic form
1.	/ ^h banga/	‘see’	[baŋ]
2.	/ ^h tuku/	‘log drum’	[tuk]
3.	/ ^h baka/	‘throw’	[bak]
4.	/ ^h uma/	‘house’	[um]
5.	/ ^h uani/	‘village’	[wan]
6.	/ta ^h bila/	‘sit’	[ta. ^h bil]
7.	/ ^h mate/	‘die’	[mat]
8.	/ta ^h mata/	‘person’	[ta. ^h mat]
9.	/ha ^h gari/	‘space’	[ha. ^h gar]
10.	/ ^h kusa/	‘hold’	[kus]
11.	/gi ^h sina/	‘they’	[gi. ^h sin]
12.	/ing ^h go/	‘I’	[iŋ. ^h gɔ]
13.	/gi ^h ne/	‘here’	[gi. ^h nɛ]
14.	/ka ^h le/	‘get’	[ka. ^h lɛ]

Note that for the phonemic form in numbers 1-11 above the stress is on the penultimate syllable. Stem-final vowels of words that can undergo apocope do not carry stress, so when these vowels appear in context, they are often barely audible. However, words that are phonemically stress final, like words 12, 13, and 14 of Table 1, do not undergo apocope.

There are four conditions which determine apocope in Nehan, and these are given below. The words used as examples of apocope below are taken from Table 1.

Condition 1. Word-final vowels are deleted when the word is spoken either in isolation or utterance-final, as shown in Table 1 column 4 and also in examples (15) and (16).

(15) a um
 ART house
 ‘the house’

(16) Inggon a um.
 3SG ART house
 ‘It is a house.’

Condition 2. Stem-final vowels are deleted when they are suffixed by a vowel-initial clitic, as in examples (17) and (18), or followed by a vowel-initial word, as shown in example (19), where the word *tamat* ‘person’ drops its stem-final vowel *a* before the vowel *e*- ‘3SG’.

(17) a tamat=on
 ART person=3SG
 ‘this person’

(18) a um=ene
 ART house=DEM
 ‘the house here’

(19) A tamat e-la tar um.
 ART person 3SG-go OBL house.
 ‘The person goes to the house.’

Condition 3. Stem-final vowels are not deleted when a consonant-initial clitic or linking suffix is attached or when they are followed by a consonant-initial morpheme or word as in examples (20) and (21).

(20) a tamata-ng uekih
 ART person-LIN fish
 ‘the fisherman’ or ‘the person of fishing’

(21) Gisina k-a-mate manasa=mpe.
 3PL PERF-3PL-die now=EMP
 ‘They died now indeed.’

Condition 4. If the stem-final vowel is the high vowel *i* or *u*, the vowel is deleted when spoken in isolation or utterance final, as per condition 1. Also stem-final high vowels are deleted when suffixed by a vowel-initial clitic or when followed by a vowel-initial word, as per condition 2. Stem-final high vowels are present before a suffixed clitic or affix beginning with a consonant, as per condition 3. However, stem-final high vowels are absent before a consonant-initial word *contrary* to condition 3. In example (22), the stem-final high vowel *i* for the word *hagar* ‘way’ is absent before the consonant-initial word *manas* ‘now’. In example (23), however, it appears before a consonant-initial clitic.

(22) Te=r hagar manas=ono k-u-uakeluk=i=o.
 CLT=LIG way now=3SG PERF-1SG.A-follow=SG.P=1SG.A
 ‘It is this way now I followed.’

(23) A hagari=mpe
 ART way=EMP
 ‘the way indeed’

The operation of these rules is further illustrated in examples (24), (25), and (26). In example (24), the word *tabil* ‘sit’ has no final vowel because of condition 1. In example (25), the word *tabil* ‘sit’ is cliticized with the demonstrative =*ene* ‘here’, and the stem-final vowel *a* is dropped as per condition 2. In example (26), the word *tabil* ‘sit’ has the final vowel *a* because of condition 3.

- (24) Tabil.
sit
'Sit.'
- (25) Tabil=ene.
sit=DEM
'Sit here.'
- (26) Tabila puk.
sit just
'Just sit.'

These are the main conditions of vowel apocope in Nehan. Words that do not undergo apocope have already been mentioned. A few extra examples are given here in context. In example (27), the stem-final vowel *e* of *hire* 'tell' is not deleted before a vowel-initial clitic, and in example (28), the stem-final vowel *a* of *ingga* '2SG' is not deleted before the vowel prefix *o-* '2SG'.

- (27) K-u-hire=o totomua.
PERF-1SG-told=1SG OBL.2SG
'I told you.'
- (28) Ingga o-la manasa=mpe.
2SG 2SG-go now=EMP
'You go now indeed.'

1.5 Overview of Nehan Syntax

1.5.1 Terminology

In order to discuss syntax in the Nehan language, an overview of syntactic terminology will be helpful. Kroeger (2004:9) defines argument structure as the

“representation of the number and type of arguments⁵ associated with a particular predicate.” The agent and patient arguments of a clause will play an important role in this thesis. Andrews (2007:138) uses the term primary transitive verb (PTV) for the class of verbs that take two arguments, an agent and a patient. When a noun phrase (NP) functions as an argument of a two argument verb, and is treated morphologically and syntactically like the agent of a PTV, it is said to have the grammatical function **A**. Likewise when a NP functions as an argument of a two-argument verb, and is treated morphologically and syntactically like the patient of a PTV, it is said to have the grammatical function **P**. When an NP is treated morphologically and syntactically like the single argument of a single argument verb, it has the grammatical function **S**.

The three grammatical functions of **A**, **P**, and **S** are defined as core arguments of the verb. Other arguments, which are not core arguments but are part of the argument structure of the verb, are called oblique arguments (**OBL**). Oblique arguments are typically expressed as prepositional phrases or marked with semantic case. In Nehan, they are introduced by an oblique marker. Andrews (2007:153) says concerning core arguments: “They tend to be ‘targeted’, that is, singled out for special treatment, by various rules of syntax which appear to function in terms of specific grammatical relations, rather than in terms of semantic roles or pragmatic functions... Rules involving prepositional phrases,

⁵ Andrews (2007:135) defines argument as: “In the most usual type of sentence structure, there is a verbal element that designates a type of situation, which usually implies various roles...The element that defines the type of situation and the roles we call a ‘predicate’, the NPs filling the roles we call ‘arguments’.”

on the other hand, apply to a wide range of constituents...with restrictions being storable in terms of semantically specifiable categories rather than syntactic ones.”

This thesis will deal primarily with syntactic structure, including sentence and clause structure. The premise for this thesis follows Kroeger (1993:1), who states: “My basic assumption is that grammatical relations such as subject and object are syntactic notions, and must be identified on the basis of syntactic properties, rather than semantic roles or discourse functions.” Although some semantic and pragmatic issues will be discussed in chapters 4 and 5, the main thrust of this thesis will be from the perspective of syntax.

Nehan is a syntactically ergative language. Although ergativity in Nehan will be discussed in more detail in chapter 4, a brief introduction to ergativity is given here to establish a basis for the discussion that will appear later in this thesis.

1.5.2 Nominative-accusative vs. ergative-absolutive patterns

In non-ergative languages like English, the single core argument of an intransitive clause **S** and the most agent-like argument of a transitive clause **A** are syntactically treated the same, and the patient-like argument of a transitive clause **P** is treated differently. Linguists call this a nominative-accusative system. The marking of **S** and **A** is called nominative, and the marking of **P** is called accusative. This is illustrated in the following English examples and in figure 1 below.

(29) He went.

(30) He told him.

(31) *Him told he.⁶

The single argument **S** of (29) and the agent argument **A** of (30) are treated the same. They use the same pronominal form ‘he’, and both are positioned before the verb. Example (31) is ungrammatical, because the patient **P** ‘him’ cannot pattern the same as **S** and **A**.

In an ergative language, the **S** and **P** core arguments pattern alike and are called absolutive, while the **A** core argument patterns differently and is called ergative. Linguists call this an ergative-absolutive system. The following illustration, figure 1, shows the two alignment systems of core arguments in a clause.

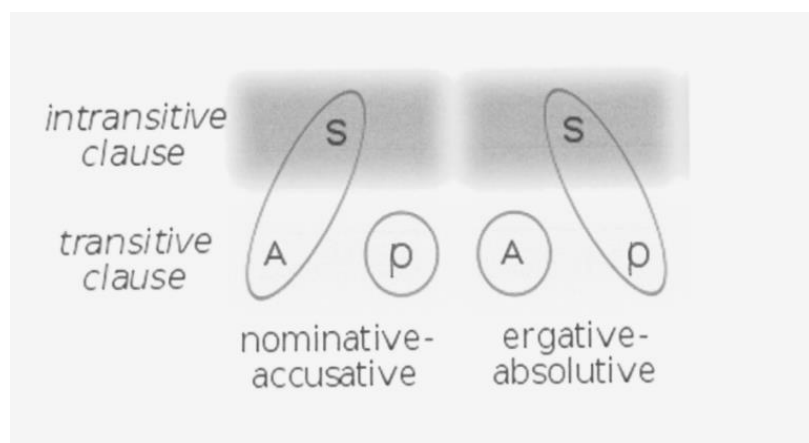


Figure 1. Nominative-accusative vs. ergative-absolutive patterns⁷

⁶ The appearance of an * at the beginning of a clause indicates that the clause or sentence is ungrammatical.

⁷ Figure 1. From Wikipedia ‘Morphosyntactic alignment’ with O changed to P
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:MorphSyntAlign.svg>

There are several types of ergative patterns found in languages. McGregor (2009:480) lists the following: “morphological, syntactic, lexical (in the argument structure of verbs), and discourse.” This thesis will focus on the syntactic pattern of ergativity, where the syntax of the language treats the patient of a transitive clause and the single argument of an intransitive clause the same, but treats the agent of a transitive clause differently. Kroeger (2004:284) states: “The term SYNTACTIC ERGATIVITY refers to a situation in which the syntactic system of the language, and in particular the properties which provide tests for subjecthood, follow an ergative pattern.”

1.5.3 Nehan clause types

Using the terminology already introduced, the basic word order for Nehan transitive clauses is **PVA**. Intransitive word order can be either **SV** or **VS**. These basic clause structures will be illustrated in the following sections with intransitive and transitive clauses. Core constituents in Nehan transitive clauses are **A** and **P**. For intransitive constructions, **S** is the only core constituent. Noun phrases that are preceded by the oblique marker *tar* (which can take several forms depending on animacy and noun class) are oblique arguments (OBL). These OBLs are not core arguments of the verb.

Intransitive Clauses

As already mentioned, intransitive clauses in Nehan have a variable word order with **SV** and **VS** as possibilities. The intransitive clause can have only one core NP, called **S**, expressed in the clause. In examples (33) and (34) below, ‘the coconut crab’ is **S**

and is expressed as a noun phrase (NP). When a core NP that is not a pronoun or proper noun precedes the verb, it is preceded by an article, either *a* or *o*, depending on the noun class. If this core NP follows the verb, it is preceded by a ligature (LIG⁸), which is attached to the last element of the verb complex; however, if the core article is *o*, then the article is retained and is preceded by the ligature as in example (32).⁹

- (32) K-o-luh r=o douk.
 PERF-3SG-burn LIG=ART tree
 ‘The tree burned.’

The **S** argument in example (33) is also marked on the verb with a prefix *e-* ‘3SG’. This prefix is obligatory with all verbs except the existential verb *kae* ‘to be’ in which case the prefix is not allowed. (See section 3.4.3 example (201) for an example.) Examples (33) and (34) show the two possible word orders of **SV** and **VS** for intransitive clauses. In the intransitive clause example (35), there is just a prefix for **S** *e* ‘3SG’ and a pronominal enclitic *=on* ‘3SG’ after the verb. See Table 11 for a list of core prefixes and enclitics.

- (33) A kilon e-uangoul i lolono toro lebang.
 ART coconut.crab 3SG-stay LOC inside OBL cave
 ‘The coconut crab lives inside the cave.’
- (34) E-uangoulu=r kilon i lolono toro lebang.
 3SG-stay=LIG coconut.crab LOC inside OBL cave
 ‘The coconut crab lives inside the cave.’

⁸ Ross (1988:207) describes the ligature *=r=* in Nehan and other Oceanic languages.

⁹ Core articles are discussed further in § 2.2.2.

- (35) E-uangoul=on i lolono toro lebang.
 3SG-stay=3SG LOC inside OBL cave
 ‘He/she/it lives inside the cave.’

Transitive Clauses

Transitive clauses have two core arguments **A** and **P**. In example (36), the word order is **PVA**, and *o keketik* ‘the children’ is the patient. The **P** argument agrees with the enclitic =*is*¹⁰ ‘PL.P’ following the verb. The agent NP in example (36) *kilon* ‘coconut crab’ follows the verb and is also marked on the verb with the prefix *e-* ‘3SG’. Since the prefix references the **A** of transitive clauses and the **S** of intransitive clauses, the prefix operates morphologically on a nominative basis rather than an ergative basis.

Nehan transitive clauses can only have these two core constituents in the clause: **A** and **P**. **P** is the only core NP that can precede the verb in transitive clauses. When there are two overt core arguments in a clause, the **P** argument must precede the verb and the **A** must follow the verb, as in example (36).

- (36) O keketik k-e-eit=isi=r kilon.
 ART.PL child PERF-3SG.A-bite=PL.P=LIG coconut.crab
 ‘The coconut crab bit the children.’

Transitive clauses with no overt **A** NP have variable word order like intransitive clauses. The **P** core argument can precede or follow the verb if there is no **A** NP expressed. However, as already stated above, the **A** NP can only follow the verb. In

¹⁰ For third singular it is =*in*. These forms are derived from the Proto-Oceanic (POC) transitive marker *-*i*. See Lynch, Ross, and Crowley (2002:44).

transitive clauses, the **A** NP is often absent, being referenced only by the prefix on the verb. In example (37), the word order is **V** followed by the **P** core argument, the NP *randouk* ‘firewood’, which is linked to the verb by the ligature =*r*. Since there is no expressed **A** NP in this clause, the **P** NP *randouk* ‘firewood’ can follow the verb. This would not be possible in example (36) since there is an **A** NP *kilon* ‘coconut crab’ following the verb.

- (37) Kar-a-kale=igi=r randouk.
 SEQ-3PL.A-get=3PL.INAN.P=LIG firewood
 ‘And then they got the firewood.’

In example (38), the word order is **PV**. The **P** NP *o hueit* ‘the pigs’ precedes the verb, and there is no **A** NP following the verb. In the different types of Nehan texts which have been collected, the number of clauses where more than one core NP is overtly expressed is very low. Often transitive clauses have just a prefix for **A** before the verb, and an enclitic for **P** located after the verb, as illustrated in example (39). Example (39) shows a simple transitive clause where the **A** core argument is marked by the **A** prefix on the verb and the **P** core argument is marked by the **P** enclitic following the verb. The identity of the referents in this clause must be recovered from the context.

- (38) O hueit k-a-suk=is.
 ART.PL pig PERF-3PL.A-singe=PL.P
 ‘They singed the pigs.’
- (39) K-a-suk=is.
 PERF-3PL.A-singe=PL.P
 ‘They singed them.’

In certain cases, there can be up to two enclitics that follow the verb: the first one for **P** and the second for **A**. This is further discussed in chapter 3 section 3.4.

In examples (33) to (38), **S** (single argument of an intransitive clause) is marked by word order in the same way as **P** (the most patient-like argument of a transitive clause). Both can precede the verb or follow the verb, whereas the **A** can only follow the verb. A distinction is made in word order between the **A** of a transitive clause versus the **P** of a transitive clause and the **S** of an intransitive clause. Word order in Nehan thus shows an ergative pattern.

Intransitive Clauses with Antipassive Voice

There is another type of clause commonly found in Nehan. In this clause type, a transitive verb root is marked like the verb of an intransitive clause: as it has only the agent marked on the verb as a prefix and referenced with a possible agent enclitic. In this case, there is only one core NP: the agent. This clause also has a patient argument, but it is expressed as an oblique phrase. An oblique phrase is like a prepositional phrase and is introduced by an oblique marker. Oblique phrases will be discussed in more detail in §2.1, but, for now, these three oblique markers will be used: *tar*¹¹ ‘OBL.3SG’, *toro* ‘OBL.3SG’ (class II nouns), and *tasir* ‘OBL.3PL.ANA’. Table 2 in section 2.2.2 lists the oblique markers.

¹¹ Ross (1988:307) describes the *tar* morpheme as a descendant of the Proto-Oceanic (POC) preposition **ta* prefixed to the ligature =*r*.

These types of clauses have been called ‘semi-transitive’ clauses by some linguists. Ross (1997:3) discussing Nehan clauses states: “I suggest calling verbs where the object is marked with *tar/toro* ‘semi-transitive’ as their ‘object’ is marked as if it were oblique.” Also, Ross (2002:31) mentions the use of the term ‘semi-transitive’ for languages where the traditional labels of transitive and intransitive are problematic. Clauses with oblique patients in certain Austronesian languages are called pseudo-transitive by Lynch, Ross, and Crowley (2002:51). Matthew Dryer (2007:274) states: “The label ‘semi-transitive’ indicates nothing more than the fact that the clauses so designated are problematic as far as the traditional distinction between intransitive and transitive clauses is concerned.”

While van den Berg and Glennon (2008) called transitive clauses with an oblique patient ‘semi-transitive’, in this thesis, these clauses are called antipassive voice (APV). Farrell (2005:72) states:

A clause is said to be in antipassive voice if it: a. is an intransitive clause of a type that functions as a systematic alternative to some more basic transitive clause type, and b. the dependent (core argument) that would be the O in the basic clause type does not have any A/S/O function.

Although the basic transitive clauses in Nehan are clauses with **A** and **P** core arguments, the antipassive is a more common clause type in Nehan narrative texts. Farrell states that the O/P core argument of a transitive clause loses its core function in the antipassive clause. In Nehan, the patient argument in the antipassive clause, instead of being a core constituent of the clause, is expressed as an oblique phrase. In example (40), the agent *kilon* ‘coconut crab’ follows the verb and is also marked on the verb with the

prefix *e-* ‘3SG’. The patient, *keketik* ‘child’, is not referenced on the verb and is expressed as an oblique phrase. Example (41) is similar. The agent *inggeim* ‘1PL.EX’ precedes the verb and is marked on the verb with the prefix *ing-* ‘1PL.EX’, whereas the patient *hueit* ‘pig’ is not referenced on the verb but rather is expressed as an oblique phrase.

(40) K-e-eiti=r kilono tasir keketik.
 PERF-3SG-bite=LIG coconut.crab OBL.3PL child
 ‘The coconut crab bit the children.’

(41) Inggeim k-ing-haluh tar hueit.
 1PL.EX PERF-1PL.EX-hit OBL pig
 ‘We hit the pig.’

This presents a problem. If we look at the English free translations in examples (36) and (40), it would appear that there are two transitive clause types in Nehan. Both examples can have the same free translation of ‘the coconut crab bit the children.’ Example (40) above, however, actually demonstrates a common feature of ergative patterning in some languages, which enables the **A** NP of a transitive clause (the coconut crab) to be realized as the single argument **S** of an intransitive clause and as the absolutive argument. This is in some ways similar to the passive voice in English. A passive construction is one in which the patient **P** of a transitive clause is promoted to **S** in an intransitive clause and the **A** is demoted to an oblique prepositional phrase. An English example is given here to help illustrate this.

(42) Mary hit John.

(43) John was hit by Mary.

Example (42) is an active transitive clause. Mary is **A**, and John is **P**. In example (43), the clause is passive. ‘Mary’ the agent is demoted to an oblique *by* phrase, and ‘John’ the patient is the **S** core argument.

In Nehan, the only way the agent can be the absolutive argument of a transitive clause is if the clause is syntactically intransitive and the patient is demoted to an oblique NP. In the transitive example (44), *kilon* ‘coconut crab’ is the **A**, and the **P**, *keketik* ‘children’, is marked with the agreement enclitic =*is* ‘PL.P’ following the verb. In the antipassive example (45), however, the agent is the **S** of an intransitive clause, and the patient is demoted to an oblique phrase. If the coconut crab is encoded as the absolutive argument of a transitive clause, as seen in example (46), the meaning changes.

- (44) O keketik k-e-eit=isi=r kilon.
 ART child PERF-3SG.A-bite=PL.P=LIG coconut.crab
 ‘The coconut crab bit the children.’
- (45) A kilono k-e-eit tasir keketik.
 ART coconut.crab PERF-3SG-bite OBL.3PL child
 ‘The coconut crab bit the children.’
- (46) A kilono k-a-eit=ini=r keketik.
 ART coconut.crab PERF-3PL.A-bite=3SG.P=LIG child
 ‘The children bit the coconut crab.’

Therefore, for the agent to be the absolutive argument the antipassive must be used; for the patient to be the absolutive argument, the transitive construction must be used.

1.6 Thesis outline

This thesis explores the evidence for syntactic ergativity in the Nehan language. The following chapters will look at various aspects of Nehan syntax and how they relate to the issue of syntactic ergativity. Chapters 2 and 3 are descriptive and discuss issues of Nehan grammar that relate to the syntax and morphology of the language. Chapter 2 looks at the distinctions Nehan makes between core and oblique noun phrases; it first discusses noun classes and then briefly describes the different types of noun phrases. Chapter 3 looks at the verb and verb complex (VC) in Nehan, especially the function of agreement prefixes and enclitics. Although Nehan has few prefixes and suffixes, it is rich in clitics, and these enclitics play an important role in the syntax and identification of core arguments. Chapter 4 deals with the issue of transitivity and ergativity in Nehan in greater detail and also looks at the roles that noun phrases, both core and oblique, play in the syntax. Chapter 4 also lays out various syntactic tests for subjecthood. Chapter 5 considers the various types of voice found in Nehan and how these function in Nehan narrative discourse. Additionally, in chapter 5, there is a discussion of grounding, various tests for topicality, and the role that the antipassive construction plays in making the agent prominent. Chapter 6 is a discussion of typology and the relationship Nehan has to other syntactically ergative languages. There is also a discussion of several characteristics that make Nehan typologically unique. Chapter 7 is the conclusion of this thesis and a summary of the salient findings covered.

2 NOUN AND NOUN PHRASE, CORE AND OBLIQUE

2.1 Introduction

Nehan syntax marks definite nominal phrases as being either core or oblique. Core nominal phrases can be marked with a definite article, although there is usually no article when a core NP is in the post-verbal position except where the *o* article is retained. Core noun phrases can function as **S**, **A**, or **P** in the clause. Oblique nominal phrases are marked with an oblique marker. The oblique marker can have nearly any prepositional meaning or none at all. Oblique NPs are not morphologically marked on the verb. Both core and oblique nouns may be marked as indefinite. This is discussed in §2.4.4 below.

Nouns in Nehan express a person, place, thing, or idea (such as a property or an abstract concept). Nehan noun categories are discussed in section 2.2. Nouns can also be inflected for inalienable possessor agreement. Section 2.3 on possession describes the core and oblique markers for inalienable and alienable possessive noun phrases.

Another category of words found in noun phrases are adjectives. Adjectives have no special morphology to distinguish them, and they are not a particularly large class of words. They normally modify nouns but can also function as a predicate in a clause. Adjectives will be further discussed in section 2.4 below.

Pronouns and demonstratives are distinctly marked to indicate whether they function as core or oblique arguments and are discussed in section 2.5.

2.2 Noun categories

Nouns can be divided into three categories: proper nouns, common nouns, and location nouns.

2.2.1 *Proper nouns*

Proper nouns refer to the name of a person, a village, or an object, such as a ship. Proper nouns do not take an article when core, as in example (47). When proper nouns are non-core and expressed as an oblique phrase, however, they take the personal oblique marker *tang*, as in example (48).

(47) Jon k-e-la.
 J. PERF-3SG-go
 'John went.'

(48) Pita k-e-poul tang Jon.
 P. PERF-3SG-help OBL J.
 'Peter helped John.'

2.2.2 *Common nouns*

Common nouns are the largest class of nouns, and all belong to one of two noun classes. The larger of these is called class I; a singular noun of this class is marked with

the definite article *a*¹² when it is core, as in example (49). A plural noun of class I is marked with the article *o* when it is core, as in example (50). The corresponding indefinite articles for singular and plural nouns of class I are *me* and *mo*, respectively. Indefinite articles are glossed as ‘some’ or ‘a’, as in examples (51) and (52).

(49) a um
ART house
‘the house’

(50) o um
ART.PL house
‘the houses’

(51) me lo
INDEF.ART dog
‘a dog’

(52) mo lo
INDEF.ART.PL dog
‘some dogs’

Class II, the other common noun class, is a smaller class of nouns. These nouns take the *o* article when singular and *a* article for plural, as in examples (53) and (54). In describing the articles for class I and class II nouns Ross (1988:299) states:

The Nehan article *a* marks the singular of the individual noun *um[a]* ‘house’, but a collection of plurality of the mass noun *douk[u]* ‘tree’. The article *o*, on the other hand, marks the plural of an individual noun, but a single entity denoted by the mass noun.

The use of the term “mass noun” is probably no longer a valid term for class II nouns because many are countable. Historically class II nouns were probably uncountable and a few are still in evidence as *o hue* ‘fire’, *o uelhire* ‘talk’, *o ualatut* ‘law’ and *o man*

¹² See Table 2 for a list of articles.

‘truth’. Currently many nouns are in different classes without any discernable reason. Some nouns are semantically similar but are in different noun classes. For example, the word for ‘knife’ *ioub* is class II, whereas the word ‘ax’ *kangan* is class I. There may be historical reasons for this difference. When class II nouns are indefinite, they take the *mo* article for singular and *me* article for plural, as in examples (55) and (56).

(53) o douk
ART tree
‘the tree’

(54) a douk
ART.PL tree
‘the trees’

(55) mo ioub
INDEF.ART knife
‘a knife’

(56) me ioub
INDEF.ART.PL knife
‘some knives’

Table 2 displays the core articles and oblique markers for nouns of class I and class II, as well as proper nouns. Indefinite noun phrases are not marked for core vs. oblique status.

Table 2: Marking for core and oblique NPs

Noun class		Number	Core articles	Oblique marker
proper		SG	-	tang
		PL	-	tas
class I	definite	SG	a	tar
		PL inanimate	o	toro
		PL animate	o	tasir
	indefinite	SG	me	me
		PL	mo	mo
class II	definite	SG	o	toro
		PL inanimate	a	tar
		PL animate	a	tasir
	indefinite	SG	mo	mo
		PL	me	me

2.2.3 Location nouns

Location nouns are preceded by the locative marker *i*. A list of these is given in Table 3. Location nouns can often function as a preposition in a locative phrase as in example (57). The locative phrase is discussed in section 2.2.4. In example (58) the word *um* ‘house’ is polysemous as part of the location noun *i um* ‘inside building’ and as the head noun of the oblique phrase *tar um* ‘the house’

Table 3: Location nouns

<i>i be</i>	‘outside of garden’
<i>i kobour</i>	‘inside of garden’
<i>i kot</i>	‘down’
<i>i kukulebang</i>	‘underneath’
<i>i kalahar</i>	‘outside’
<i>i lolon</i>	‘inside’
<i>i mud</i>	‘behind’
<i>i muduhia</i>	‘later’
<i>i ran</i>	‘on top’
<i>i reh</i>	‘far’
<i>i uantinanin</i>	‘in the middle’
<i>i um</i>	‘inside (building)’
<i>i uoum</i>	‘in front’

- (57) Inggono k-e-uangoul i rana toro douk.
 3SG PERF-3SG-stay LOC on.top OBL tree
 ‘He lived up in the tree.’
- (58) Kar-e-lek=ala i **uma** tar **um**.
 SEQ-3SG-pass=DEM LOC house OBL house
 ‘And then he went over there inside the house.’

2.2.4 Locative phrase

The locative phrase is a type of phrase where the noun is preceded by the locative marker *i*. The locative marker *i* has little or no semantic content except to identify the noun as a location. Often, the locative *i* can express the meaning of the prepositions ‘to’ or ‘at’ in English, as in example (59).

Proper nouns can also be preceded by the locative marker, as in example (60). In example (61), the locative word *i lolon* ‘inside’ functions as a preposition with an oblique

phrase *tar tung* ‘the hole’ as a complement. Some other location words are given in

Table 3.

- (59) Jon k-e-la=ko **i** **teh.**
 J. PERF-3SG-go=DIR LOC beach
 ‘John went down to the beach.’
- (60) O tamata k-a-hihip **i** **Siro**t tar ni-ein.
 ART.PL person PERF-3PL-hunt LOC S. OBL NOM-eat
 ‘The people hunted at Sirot for food.’
- (61) Kar-a-uoutu=ngua=ko=in r-o hue **i** **lolono tar tung.**
 SEQ-3PL.A-light=EMP=DIR=3SG.P LIG=ART fire LOC inside OBL hole
 ‘They then lit the fire down inside the hole.’

2.3 Possession

Possessive forms in Nehan distinguish between core and oblique and can be quite complex. Tables 4 through 7 list the possessive markers, suffixes, and enclitics for possessive constructions.

2.3.1 *Inalienable possession*

Inalienably possessed nouns take many of the same core and oblique markers used for common nouns.

Table 4 lists the inalienable possessive markers, and Table 5 lists the possessor agreement suffixes. Inalienable possessor agreement is obligatory and suffixed to the end of the noun.

Table 4: Inalienable possessive markers

Noun class	Number	Core	Oblique
class I	SG	a	tar/tang
	PL	o	toso
class II	SG	o	toro
	PL	a	tar

Table 5: Inalienable possessor agreement suffixes

1SG	-guo/-g
2SG	-mua/-m
3SG	-non/-n
1DL.IN	-giraig
1DL.EX	-miraeim
2DL	-miraoum
3DL	-srasin/-s
1PL.IN	-gigeig/-gig
1PL.EX	-miueim/-miu
2PL	-miuoum/-miu
3PL	-sisin/-s

For singular class 1 inalienable possessed nouns with a dual possessor the core marker and oblique marked are followed by the dual marker *ra* DL. In example (62), the oblique marker *tara* marks the possessed noun as singular with a dual possessor. The *tara* oblique marker appears to be a case of coalescence of *tar* ‘OBL.3SG’ and *ra* ‘DL’(dual possessor) becoming *tara*. In example (63), the core marker *a* marks the possessed noun *tama*- ‘father’ as singular and the *ra* dual marker indicates that the possessor is dual.

- (62) Rasina k-ura-banga **tara** tu-s.
 3DL PERF-3DL-look OBL.3SG.DL child-3DL
 ‘They looked at their child.’
- (63) Rasina k-ura-hiliu tar bout doh-**a** **ra** tama-s.
 3DL PERF-3DL-leave OBL boat CNJ-ART.SG DL father-3DL
 ‘They left the boat and their father.’

In example (64), the oblique marker *tang* OBL.3SG marks the possessed noun *tina-* ‘mother’ as singular, while in example (65) the oblique marker *toso* OBL.3PL marks the possessed noun *tubu-* ‘ancestors’ as plural. In both examples, the possessor *-gigeig* ‘1PL.IN’ is plural.

- (64) Mu-banga **tang** tina-**gigeig**.
 2PL-look OBL.3SG mother-1PL.IN
 ‘You all look at our mother.’
- (65) Inggono k-e-ualatue **toso** tubu-**gigeig**.
 3SG PERF-3SG-send OBL.PL ancestor-1PL.IN
 ‘He sent our ancestors.’

In example (66), the core marker *a* ‘ART’ marks the possessed noun *tina-n* ‘mother -3SG’ as a singular class I noun. The core marker *o* in example (67) marks the noun *lu-guo* ‘head-1SG’ as a singular class II noun.

- (66) **A** tina-**na** Jon k-e-mat.
 ART mother-3SG J. PERF-3SG-die.’
 ‘John’s mother died.’
- (67) **O** lu-**guo** o-uelmahing.
 ART head-1SG 3SG-hurt
 ‘My head hurts.’

2.3.2 *Alienable possession*

Alienably possessed nouns are preceded by a possessive classifier (PCL), as in Table 6, which is suffixed for person and number of possessor (except for third singular where the un-suffixed form is used). The PCL forms also reflect the noun class of the possessed noun as belonging to either class I or class II. The alienable possessed noun can also be suffixed with an optional enclitic pronoun for possessor, as in example (68) *tono-ng buk=a* ‘your book’. These enclitic pronouns are not possessor agreement markers like the inalienable agreement suffixes above. These pronoun enclitics are in complementary distribution with a lexical NP possessor and cannot co-occur, as shown in example (69). These enclitic pronouns are the same as those used in the verb complex for S/A. See Table 11 column 3.

Alienable possession also makes a further distinction between edible and non-edible nouns. For edible nouns, a different PCL is used, except for third singular or plural which uses *na* or *no*. The edible class of alienable possessed nouns in most cases refers to edible things; however, they also include things which have a close relationship to the possessor, such as anger, desire, and a woman’s cape.¹³ Some nouns can be in both categories, edible and non-edible. The word *lo* ‘dog’ can be both an edible noun *re-g lo=o* ‘my dog’ (as food) or non-edible *na-g lo=o* ‘my dog’ (as pet). Karen Rowe (2005:47) lists a noun class in the Siar language west of Nehan that uses a possessive classifier *nga-* for “food, drink and related items.”

¹³ The woman’s cape has significant cultural importance, especially in relationships.

Table 6: Alienable possessive classifiers (PCL)

Noun class	Number	Core	Oblique
class I	SG	na	tena
	PL	no	tono/teno
class I edible	SG	re	tere
	PL	ro	toro
class II	SG	no	tono/teno
	PL	na	tena
class II edible	SG	ro	toro
	PL	re	tere

Table 7: Alienable PCL possessor suffixes and enclitics

Person	PCL suffix	Possessor enclitic
1SG	-g	=o
2SG	-ng	=a
3SG		=on(o)
1DI.IN	-gira	
1DL.EX	-mira	
2DL	-mira	
3DL	-sira	
1PL.IN	-gi	=eig(i)
1PL.EX	-mi	=eim(i)
2PL	-mi	=oum(u)
3PL	-s	=sin(a)

- (68) Jon k-e-kale tono-**ng** buk=**a**.
 J. PERF-3SG-get OBL.PCL-2SG book=2SG.
 'John got your book.'
- (69) *Jon k-e-kale tono-**ng** buk=**a** ingga.
 J. PERF-3SG-get OBL.PCL-2SG book=2SG 2SG
 (For: 'John got your book.')

In example (70), the noun *kilon* ‘coconut crab’ is marked as class I edible noun by *re-g* ‘PCL-1SG’. In example (71), the noun *hueit* ‘pig’ is marked as class I by *no* ‘PCL.3PL’. In example (72), the noun *nimalian* ‘anger’ is marked as class I edible by *re-s* ‘PCL-3PL’. In example (73) the noun *kuen* ‘coconut’ is marked as class II by *no-go* ‘PCL-1SG’.

- (70) **Re-g** kilon=ene e-uangoul toro lebang.
 PCL-1SG coconut.crab=DEM 3SG-stay OBL cave
 ‘My coconut crab here lives in the cave.’
- (71) **No** hueit Pita k-a-mat.
 PCL.3PL pig P. PERF-3PL-die.
 ‘Peter’s pigs died.’
- (72) **Re-s** nimaliana=r tamata k-e-uleik uain.
 PCL-3PL anger=LIG person PERF-3SG-big move
 ‘The people’s anger increased.’
- (73) **No-go** kuen=o k-o-mat.
 PCL-1SG coconut=1SG PERF-3SG-die
 ‘My coconut tree died.’

2.4 The Noun Phrase

As noted above, NPs can be marked as either core or oblique. Table 2 lists these core and oblique markers. Both core and oblique NPs may be marked as indefinite. Section 2.4.4 has examples and a discussion of indefinite NPs.

The article, an important part of the noun phrase, has already been discussed. The only obligatory elements of the core common NPs are the noun and article. Proper noun phrases do not take articles. When common nouns are elicited in isolation, the core article is invariably included. Other modifiers can follow the noun, such as adjectives *kikitilik*

‘small’ in example (74), adjective phrases *uleik tun* ‘very big’ in (75), and the adverbial enclitic *=mpe* ‘indeed’ in example (76). There are only three of these enclitics, and they are discussed in section 3.3.2.

- (74) A soi **kikitilik** k-e-la-la tar kot.
 ART snake small PERF-3SG-RED-go OBL ground
 ‘The small snake went along the ground.’
- (75) O lo **uleik tun** k-a-ein tar hueit.
 ART.PL dog big very PERF-3PL-eat OBL pig
 ‘The very big dogs ate the pig.’
- (76) Tartumposo=**mpe** ra-la kalekinale tar iom=on.
 T.=EMP 3PL-go work OBL garden=3SG
 ‘Tartumpos villagers indeed go to work in this garden.’

Adjectives can follow or precede the noun. When they precede the noun, they must be suffixed with the ligature and follow the article, as in example (77).

- (77) A **kikitiliki=r** ian k-e-eit tang Jon.
 ART little=LIG fish PERF-3SG-bite OBL J.
 ‘The little fish bit John.’

Numbers precede the noun, follow the article, and are suffixed with the ligature (LIG), as in example (78). Numbers cannot follow the noun they modify.

- (78) A **sioko=r** hueit k-e-leke tar um.
 ART one=LIG pig PERF-3SG-pass OBL house
 ‘One pig entered the house.’

Nouns can also be modified by a relative clause. The relative clause must follow the noun it modifies. Relative clauses will be discussed in section 4.5.5.

Some of the more common noun phrase constructions are given in the following sections.

2.4.1 *Demonstrative phrase*

Demonstratives also make a distinction between core and oblique forms. Free demonstratives precede the noun they modify and are followed by the ligature, as in examples (79) and (80). Bound demonstrative enclitics follow the noun they modify, as in examples (81) and (82).

(79) Pita me Jon k-ura-touboul **taneiti=r** keketik.
 P. with J. PERF-DL.3SG-unsure OBL.DEM=LIG child
 ‘Pete and Jon were unsure about that child.’

(80) **Giti=r** bulout k-e-kila=me tar kuah.
 DEM=LIG man PERF-3SG-call=DIR OBL woman
 ‘This man called the woman to come.’

(81) o dokta=**sila** tar hausik
 ART.PL doctor=DEM OBL house.sick
 ‘the doctors over there at the medical clinic’

(82) a butur=**ene**
 ART place-DEM
 ‘the place here’

2.4.2 *Apposition phrase*

Apposition phrases are used when the speaker is trying to give more information about the same referent. Apposition phrases can be core or oblique NPs.

(83) **Inggono Pater Pita** k-e-nimaliana poluk.
 3SG Father P. PERF-3SG-angry again
 ‘He, Father Pita, was angry again.’

(84) Kar-a-tokout=igi=r **randouk randouk ueltebeiri=mpe**.
 SEQ-3PL.A-cut-3P.INAN.P=LIG firewood firewood common=EMP
 ‘And then they cut firewood, indeed different kinds of firewood.’

- (85) Kar-e-me eiti=ngua **tar pang keke-guo=ene=r pang mua.**
 SEQ-3SG-come bite=EMP OBL part leg-1SG=DEM=LIG part right
 ‘And then it came and bit my leg here, the right one.’

2.4.3 Associative phrase

This type of phrase is identified by the suffix linker *-ng* ‘LIN’ as in example (86). The linker in Nehan indicates a close relationship between the head and its modifier (see Lichtenberk 2006:19-47). This usually seems to include location or use as ‘a house used for cooking’ or ‘things used for sewing’ as in examples (87) and (88).

In the associative construction, the linker is suffixed to the head word, which always precedes the modifier. The modifier word is often a noun, but it can also be a verb or adjective. These phrases are often very short and are not usually expandable. In example (89), the verb *itu* ‘fill’ is the head modified by the adjective *timuh* ‘new’ and the following modifier word *kodom* ‘water’.

- (86) a **uma-ng** lolon
 ART house-LIN bush/inside
 ‘the bush house’
- (87) a **uma-ng** uasilung
 ART house-LIN cook
 ‘the cook house’
- (88) o **inete-ng** samap
 ART.PL thing-LIN sew
 ‘things used for sewing’
- (89) a **timuhu=r itu-ng** kodom
 ART new=LIG fill-LIN water
 ‘the new container used for water’

If the modifier noun is a class II noun, the ligature is used as a prefix to the article that precedes the noun as in example (90).

- (90) a patehe r=o hue
 ART table LIG=ART.II fire
 ‘the table used for the fire’ or ‘fire table’

2.4.4 *Indefinite noun phrase*

Indefinite nominal phrases are preceded by the indefinite article. These are listed above in Table 2. They commonly occur when the noun is generic, unspecific, or of an indefinite amount. Indefinite noun phrases are often glossed with the word ‘some’. They can function as either core or non-core. In example (91), the indefinite nominal phrase ‘some taro’ is the patient, but it is non-core since it is not marked on the verb and the verb is not marked as transitive. This clause is an antipassive clause. It is also an imperative, and the addressee *o* ‘2SG’ is the subject and the only core argument. In example (92), the INDEF NP ‘some gravel’ is core and marked on the verb as the **P** 3PL.INAN. Example (93) has an INDEF NP *me tamat* ‘someone’ as core agent. This clause is also an antipassive with the patient *tagigeig* ‘1PL.IN’ expressed in an oblique phrase.

- (91) O-la us me hon.
 2SG-go pull.out INDEF.ART taro
 ‘You go pull out some taro.’
- (92) Ra-koho=ig me karanas.
 3PL.A-dig=3PL.INAN.P INDEF.ART gravel
 ‘They dig some gravel.’

- (93) Me tamata k-e-hire tagigeig.
 INDEF.ART person PERF-3SG-tell OBL.1PL.IN
 ‘Someone told us.’

2.5 Pronouns

Nehan is rich in pronoun forms, also making a distinction between core and oblique forms. Like nouns, core pronouns can function as **S**, **A**, or **P** arguments. Oblique pronouns are not core arguments of the clause. Table 8 lists various pronominal forms. The pronoun enclitics, which are part of the verb complex, are listed in Table 11 and discussed in chapter 3.

Table 8: Pronouns

Person and number	Core	Oblique	Emphatic	Possessive
1SG	inggo	totoguo/toguo	totoug(u) ¹⁴	noguo
2SG	ingga	totomua/tomua	totoum(u)	nomua
3SG	inggon(o)	tatanon(o)/tanon(o)	tatan(a)	nanon(o)
3SG CLASS II NOUNS	roon(o)	tanaroon(o)/tang roon(o)		
1DL.IN	raeig(i)	tagiraeig(i)		nagiraeig(i)
1DL.EX	raeim(i)	tamiraeim(i)		namiraeim(i)
2DL	raoum(u)	tamiraoum(u)		namiraoum(u)
3DL	rasin(a)	tasrasin(a)	taratatas(a)	nasrasin(a)
1PL.IN	inggeig(i)	tagigeig(i)	tatagig(i)	nagigeig(i)
1PL.EX	inggeim(i)	tamiueim(i)	tatamiu(i)	namiueim(i)
2PL	inggoum(u)	tamiuoum(u)	totomiu(i)	namiuoum(u)
3PL (ANIMATE)	gisin(a)	tasisin(a)	tatas(a)	nasisin(a)
3PL (INANIMATE)	ginin(a)	taninin(a)	tatan(a)	

Emphatic pronoun forms are rare in text material. They always modify the **S** argument, as in examples (94) and (95). Possessive pronouns are also rare in text material, but some examples are illustrated in examples (96) and (97). Free or independent pronouns frequently occur before the verb and rarely occur after the verb where pronoun enclitics are used. For dual pronouns, the full form is always used.

- (94) Rasina k-a-hiku-r liouana ua-sa taratatas.
 3DL PERF-3PL-cover-LIG spirit CAUS-bad EPH.3DL
 ‘They were themselves possessed by evil spirits.’

¹⁴ Phonemically all Nehan stems end in vowels. These are dropped when a word is used in isolation. They are included in tables 2 & 3 in parentheses. See §1.3.3 apocope in Nehan.

- (95) Inggo u-uel-hire=mpe tar tamata **totoug**.
 1SG 1SG-RECP-tell=EMP OBL person EMPH.1SG
 ‘I speak indeed to the person myself.’
- (96) A inet=on ahik pah-a **nagigeig**.
 ART thing=3SG NEG IRR-ART PO.1PL.IN
 ‘This thing is not ours.’
- (97) K-a-tuha tar bokisi=r **nanon**=ene k-e-mat.
 PERF-3PL-make OBL box=LIG PO.3SG=DEM PERF-3SG-die.
 ‘They made the coffin of him here that died.’

As already stated, free core pronouns normally precede the verb complex, as in example (98). They can also follow the verb complex, as in example (99), but this is rare. Transitive **A** free pronouns can never precede the verb since only absolutive NPs can precede the verb. Following the verb **A** pronouns are reduced to a pronoun enclitic, as in example (100). Transitive **A** dual pronouns can also follow the verb, as in example (101), since there are no dual enclitic pronouns. Transitive **P** free pronouns can precede the verb as in example (100) and (102).

- (98) **Gisina** k-a-nimalian.
 3 PL PERF-3PL-angry
 ‘They were angry.’
- (99) K-e-la manasa=mpe **inggon**.
 PERF-3SG-GO now=EMP 3SG
 ‘He went now indeed.’
- (100) **Ginina** k-ing-bulaua=gi=**eim** i Sigon.
 3PL.INAN PERF-1PL.EX.A-buy=3P.INAN.P=1PL.EX.A LOC S.
 ‘We bought them at Sigon.’
- (101) K-ura-simuk=in **raoum**.
 PERF-2DL.A-smoke=3SG.P 2DL
 ‘You two smoked it.’

- (102) **Inggeig** k-a-hire=**isieig**.
 1PL.IN PERF-3PL.A-tell=1PL.IN.P
 ‘They told us.’

Oblique pronouns follow the verb complex, as in examples (103) and (104).

- (103) Jon k-e-la ualo siaua **tatanon**.
 J. PERF-3SG-go run miss OBL.3SG
 ‘John went and ran past him.’
- (104) O tamata k-a-nimaliana **tamiraeim**.
 ART.PL people PERF-3PL-angry OBL.1DL.EX
 ‘The people were angry with the two of us.’

Pronoun clitics are very common, but since they are part of the verb complex, they will be discussed in §3.4.

2.6 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter gave a brief description of the nouns and noun phrases of Nehan, illustrating how Nehan categorizes all definite nouns as either core or oblique. Noun phrases, pronouns, demonstratives, and possessive noun phrases all make this distinction. The difference between core and oblique arguments plays an important role in the syntax of the language. This will become clearer in the following sections of this thesis, especially chapter 4.

Core NPs function as the core arguments of the clause **S**, **A**, and **P**. Oblique NPs by definition are not core constituents of the clause. Later, evidence will be shown that the antipassive clause makes it possible for a **P** core argument to be demoted to an

oblique phrase and the **A** core argument to become the **S** argument of an intransitive clause.

3 THE VERB AND VERB COMPLEX

3.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the verb and verb complex of the Nehan language. Verbs and the verb complex will be discussed in §3.2 and §3.3, respectively. Briefly, the verb complex includes the verb and other constituents that are in a close relationship to the verb. These include the auxiliary verb, main verb, various adverbs, and pronominal enclitics. Many of these constituents are optional, and clauses can include only a verb, as in example (105). In such sentences, the identity of the various referents must be recovered from the larger context.

- (105) K-a-hua=is.
PERF-3PL.A-paddle=PL.P
'They paddled them. (canoes)'

For verbal clauses, the only obligatory constituents besides the verb are the aspectual prefix, *k-* for perfective or \emptyset - for imperfective, and the **S/A** agreement prefix, for the person and number of the **S** argument of an intransitive clause or the **A** of a transitive clause¹⁵. If the clause is transitive, the **P** agreement marker enclitic follows the verb with the number of the **P** argument. The **P** agreement marker is required in transitive clauses. The exception to this requirement is the presence of two overt core NPs. This

¹⁵ Sometimes in recorded texts these constituents are omitted being understood from the context, but often in editing or transcription they are reinserted.

construction will be discussed in §4.3.3 of chapter 4. The prefixes and enclitics are discussed in more detail in §3.4 of this chapter.

As already stated, the NPs that are core arguments (**S**, **A**, and **P**) are often absent. Core arguments are then identified by prefixes and enclitics on the verb complex. The function of the **S/A** agreement prefix and core enclitics are crucial to understanding how syntactic ergativity works in the language.

3.2 Verbs

Verbs in Nehan have little morphology. They appear as stems prefixed by the obligatory aspect marker and **S/A** prefix. They express an action, a process, or a state. The main verb is the central component, or head, of the verb complex. Causative and reciprocal verbs can be created or derived by the addition of the causative prefix *ua-* and reciprocal prefix *uel-*, respectively. Anticausative verbs can be derived from certain transitive verbs by prefixing the transitive verb with the anticausative prefix *ta-*. Nominalization of verbs is accomplished with the prefix *ni-* added to the beginning of the verb stem. The following three sections give examples of derived verbs in Nehan.

3.2.1 Causative verbs

Causative verbs add a new participant into a clause. Verbs are made causative by the addition of the prefix *ua-/uala-*. Example (106) illustrates an intransitive verb made transitive by prefixing it with the causative marker. A few transitive verbs of experience

can also take the causative marker. Some examples include *ate* ‘know’ and *ua-ate* ‘make know’, *longor* ‘hear’ and *ua-longor* ‘make hear’ or ‘listen’, and *ein* ‘eat’ and *uala-ein* ‘make eat’ or ‘feed’. Most transitive verbs cannot take the causative prefix. Examples (107) and (108) illustrate the transitive verb *ein* ‘eat’ without and with the causative prefix. Example (109) illustrates the verb *ate* ‘know’, and (110) has *ua-ate* ‘to make know’, the same verb with the causative marker. In example (108), the woman is a new participant in the causative clause, and, in (110), the plural agent ‘they’ is the new participant in the clause. More study is needed to understand causative constructions.

- (106) Kar-a-ua-toko=ko=ini=r puhu-ng darum tar tung,
 SEQ-3PL.A-CAUS-locate=DIR=3SG.P=LIG part-LIN drum OBL hole
 ‘And then they placed the half drum down in the hole.’
- (107) A soi k-e-**ein** tar ni-ein.
 ART snake PERF-3SG-eat OBL NOM-eat
 ‘The snake ate the food.’
- (108) A kuah k-e-**uala-ein** tar soi.
 ART woman PERF-3SG-CAUS-eat OBL snake
 ‘The woman fed the snake.’
- (109) O keketik ra-**ate** tena uan Manukeke.
 ART.PL child 3PL-know OBL.PCL.3SG village M.
 ‘The children know about Manukeke’s village.’
- (110) O keketik ra-**ua-ate**=is tena uan Manukeke.
 ART.PL child 3PL.A-CAUS-know=PL.P OBL.PCL.3SG village M.
 ‘They make the children know about Manukeke’s village.’

3.2.2 *Reciprocal verbs*

Verbs are made reciprocal by the prefix *uel-*. A unique constituent of the reciprocal verb is the addition of the *-e* morpheme suffixed to the end of the verb. It is not always present, and its use is not completely understood.

- (111) Rasina k-ura-uel-koi manasa=mpe.
 3 DL PERF-3DL-RECP-angry now=EMP
 ‘They (two) were now angry with each other.’
- (112) Rasin ura-uel-tel-e=is.
 3 DL 3DL.A-RECP-not.know-RECP=PL.P
 ‘Those (two) don’t know each other.’

3.2.3 *Derived Anticausative verbs*

Bethwyn Evans (2003:267) cites (Pawley 1972:38-39, 45) stating: “Two prefixes, **ma-* and **ta-* are reconstructed for Proto Oceanic as stative verb derivatives, with **ta-*, also indicating that the state came about spontaneously.” The *ta-* prefix is still found in Nehan to derive anticausative verbs from transitive verbs. The *ma-* prefix is productive in only a few words, but it is evident in many other words that have been lexicalized, as shown in Table 9. Example (113) is the verb *ror* ‘clean’ without the *ma-* prefix, while (114) illustrates the stative prefix *ma-* prefixed to the same verb. Proto-Oceanic (POc) forms in Table 9 are from Evans (2003:274-276).

- (113) O kuaha k-a-roro tar iom.
 ART.PL women PERF-3PL-clean OBL garden
 ‘The women cleaned the garden.’

- (114) A iomo k-e-**ma**-ror.
 ART garden PERF-3SG-STAT-clean
 ‘The garden is clean.’

Table 9: Lexicalized forms of stative verbs in Nehan using *ma-* prefix

POc	English gloss	Nehan
*malasong	cold	malahong
*[ma]panas	warm, hot	mahirum
*[ma]rango	dry, withered	makmakor
*[ma]najam	tame	mahanam
*ma-gatel	be itchy	magigil
*[ma]koto	straight	makmakos

Examples (115) and (116) illustrate the anticausative prefix *ta-* prefixed to the transitive verb *polak* ‘break’. These verbs express an event not a state. Only certain transitive verbs take the prefix *ta-*. Some other verbs of this category that take the prefix *ta-* are: *kih* ‘tear’, *puk* ‘open’, *puh* ‘explode’, *liah* ‘dismantle’, and *go* ‘fracture’.

- (115) O mono k-a-polaka=ig.
 ART.PL plank.canoe PERF-3PL.A-break=3PL.INAN.P
 ‘They broke up the plank canoes.’
- (116) A mono k-e-**ta**-polak.
 ART plank.canoe PERF-3SG-ACAU-break
 ‘The plank canoe broke up.’
- (117) Jon k-e-ding tar iru.
 J. PERF-3SG-spill OBL hot.drink
 ‘John spilled the tea.’
- (118) A iru k-e-**ta**-ding.
 ART hot.drink PERF-3SG-ACAU-spill
 ‘The tea spilled.’

- (119) O tagun k-o-**ta**-kuras manas.
 ART egg PERF-3SG-ACAU-crack now
 ‘The egg cracked/hatched now.’

3.2.4 Nominalized verbs

Verbs are nominalized by prefixing the verb with the nominalizer *ni-*, as in examples (120) - (123). Many verbs can be nominalized, such as the verb *la* ‘go’ to *nila* ‘trip’.

- (120) K-u-poro-poro ua-sa tun tar **ni-sokor**.
 PERF-1SG-RED-shake CAUS-bad very OBL NOM-afraid
 ‘I shook with fear.’
- (121) O mamang te-tetiaua-lik o bureh nas **ni-guat**.
 ART.PL all RED-bird-DIM ART.PL many PCL.3PL NOM-do
 ‘All the birds have many different customs.’
- (122) A **ni-ein** k-e-moh.
 ART NOM-eat PERF-3SG-cook
 ‘The food is cooked/ready.’
- (123) K-a-uel-uatata tar timuhu=r **ni-namana**=nin.
 PERF-3PL-RECP-talk OBL new=LIG NOM-think=DEM
 ‘They talked about these new ideas.’

3.3 Verb complex

Many of the constituents in the verb complex will not be thoroughly discussed in this thesis, but they will be briefly listed here in their order of appearance. The verb complex may be divided into two groups: those constituents that precede the main verb and those that follow. Most of these constituents are optional. As already stated above, the only obligatory constituent of the verb complex is the main verb, which is prefixed

first with aspect marker and then the **S/A** agreement prefix. If the clause is transitive, the **P** enclitic is required at the end of the verb complex. In Table 10 below, the order of constituents is from left to right, row by row.

Table 10: The constituents of the verb complex

Motion verb	Habitual aspect	Auxiliary verb	Quantifier	Main verb	Serial verb
Derived adverb	Free adverb	Adverb enclitic ¹⁶	Directional enclitic	P enclitic	S/A enclitic
Demonstrative enclitic	Ligature				

3.3.1 Pre-Verbal Constituents

The beginning of the verb complex is identified by the presence of the aspect prefix, either perfective or imperfective. This precedes the **S/A** prefix¹⁷ which inflects the verb for person and number of the **S/A** core arguments. The **S/A** prefix is always prefixed to the first constituent of the verb complex, which can be a motion verb, habitual aspect, auxiliary verb, quantifier word, or main verb.

The first position of the verb complex is occupied by a small closed class of two motion verbs, *la* ‘go’ and *me* ‘come’, as in examples (124) and (125).

¹⁶ These adverb enclitics can attach to various post-verbal constituents.

¹⁷ The **S/A** prefix could be analyzed as a pro-clitic but in this thesis it is treated as a prefix which prefixes to the initial verbal element of the verb complex.

- (124) Tomas k-e-**la** uekih.
 T. PERF-3SG-go fish
 ‘Thomas went fishing.’
- (125) Ra-**me** banga tar eid pous.
 3PL-come look OBL aid post
 ‘They come to look at the aid post.’

Following the motion verbs, the habitual aspect morpheme *uoto* ‘HAB’ can occur, as in example (126) and (127). This morpheme indicates habitual or repetitive action of the verb.

- (126) E-la **uoto** ein tena ni-ein Makor.
 3SG-go HAB eat PCL.3SG NOM-eat M.
 ‘She always goes and eats Makor’s food.’
- (127) O titia ra-**uoto** pilai.
 ART.PL teacher 3PL-HAB play
 ‘The teachers are always playing.’

The next constituent is a class of auxiliary verbs. Auxiliary verbs are distinguished from other verbs by the auxiliary derivational suffix *-ng* ‘AUX’. They can express various verbal meanings, including tense, ability, desire, etc. They form a productive class, and many verbs can be drafted into this class by the addition of the AUX suffix *-ng*. Examples (128) and (129) use the auxiliaries *banotong* ‘able to’ and the auxiliary *marang* ‘want to’, respectively. The auxiliary slot only allows one auxiliary verb per clause.

- (128) K-e-**banoto-ng** sir katongo manasa me na ni-ein.
 PERF-3SG-able-AUX seek self now INDEF.ART PCL.3SG NOM-eat
 ‘She is able to seek now some food for herself.’

- (129) K-a-me **mara-ng** la tar toilet.
 PERF-3PL-come want-AUX go OBL toilet.
 ‘They came wanting to go to the toilet.’

Following the habitual aspect marker and/or auxiliary verb, the quantifier word *siok* can occur. This word is cliticized with the ligature =*r*. It is a polysemous morpheme that can have several meanings. It can mean ‘all’ or ‘both’ in example (130). In example (131), the quantifier word follows the verbal auxiliary *turung* ‘will’ and means ‘all’.

- (130) K-ura-la **sioko=r** hu.
 PERF-3DL-go all=LIG dive
 ‘They (two) both went and dove.’
- (131) Inggoum mu-turu-ng **sioko=r** kotpokoso=ngua pon.
 2PL 2PL-will-AUX all=LIG arrive=EMP also
 ‘You will all arrive also then.’

The next two examples (132) and (133) show the use of the word *siok* not as part of the verb complex. In example (132), the word *siokor* means ‘one’. In example (132), the word *siok* means ‘different’ or ‘special’.

- (132) K-a-tina kout tar **sioko=r** tin.
 PERF-3PL-divide cut OBL one=LIG tin
 ‘They divided in half one tin.’
- (133) Kar-u-la puraka=hia tar butur **siok**.
 SEQ-1SG-go surface=DIR OBL place different
 ‘And then I go and surface at a different place.’

3.3.2 Post-Verbal Constituents

Following the pre-verbal constituents, all of which are optional, are the main verb and post-verbal constituents. Main verbs are words that can stand alone in a verb complex as the predicate. When there are two or more verbs in the verb complex, it is a

serial verb construction (SVC). The first verb in the SVC can be one of the motion verbs and then up to two verbs can follow the main verb. There can be a maximum of four verbs in a SVC in Nehan as shown in example (134).

- (134) Pita k-e-la **haluh pous keip** tar soi tar puhu-ng douk.
 P. PERF-3SG-go hit crush bring OBL snake OBL part-LIN tree
 ‘Peter went and killed the snake with the stick.’

Adverbs, beginning with derived adverbs, follow the main verb or SVC. The derived adverbs are created by adding the causative prefix *ua-* to a verb or adjective. This is a non-causative use of the causative prefix. The *ua-* prefix can also precede a numeral to derive a multiplicative adverb such as *ua-torik* ‘twice’. Derived adverbs form an open class.

- (135) Gisina k-a-tuha **ua-kapa** toro mon.
 3PL PERF-3PL-make CAUS-finish OBL.PL plank.canoe.
 ‘They finished making the plank canoes.’

- (136) Inggo k-u-hagou **ua-sa** tar uihi-g.
 1SG PERF-1SG-feel CAUS-bad OBL buttock-1SG
 ‘I felt badly in my buttock.’

- (137) K-e-ualo **ua-hiu** i teh.
 PERF-3SG-run CAUS-down LOC beach
 ‘He ran down to the beach.’

The next optional constituent of the verb complex is called a ‘free adverb’. There can be more than one free adverb in this position. There are probably some constraints on ordering of free adverbs, but further research is needed to determine this. In example (138), the two adverbs *manas* ‘now’ and *poluk* ‘again’ are seen following the main verb. These two adverbs together are common in narrative discourse.

- (138) Gisina k-a-hohouo **manasa poluk.**
 3PL PERF-3PL-sleep now again
 ‘They slept now again.’

There is a small closed class of adverbial enclitics found in the verb complex which express intensity or emphasis. There are only three of these adverbial enclitics: =*ntieh* ‘very much’, =*ngua* ‘then’, and =*mpe* ‘indeed’. These are all glossed as ‘EMP’ in the examples. In example (139), the adverb enclitic =*ntieh* ‘very much’ follows the verb *la* ‘go’. These enclitics can cliticize to various elements of the verb complex, but they never precede the main verb. If more than one adverbial enclitic is found in the verb complex, they follow a strict ordering of =*ntieh*, =*ngua*, and =*mpe*. In example (140), the clitic =*ngua* follows the main verb *uangoul* ‘stay’ and precedes the enclitic =*mpe* which is cliticized to the adverb *poluk* ‘again’. These enclitics can also be found in the noun phrase. More study is needed to understand their function in the verb complex.

- (139) Raeim k-ira-la=**ntieh.**
 1DL.EX PERF-1DL.EX-go=EMP
 ‘We went very quickly.’
- (140) Inggo u-uangoulu=**ngua** baka poluku=**mpe.**
 1SG 1SG-stay=EMP first again=EMP
 ‘I was then staying again indeed.’

The next post-verbal constituents are called ‘directional enclitics’ or ‘directionals’ (Aikhenvald 2006:31). These form a small closed class including =*la* ‘away from addressee’, =*me* ‘toward addressee’, =*ko* ‘away from speaker’, =*ha* ‘toward speaker’, =*hia* ‘further’, =*tig* ‘up’, and =*hahai* ‘in series’. These are glossed as ‘DIR’, as in example (141). Ross (2004) discusses how some of these directional clitics evolved from motion verbs in Austronesian languages.

- (141) K-a-me dingi=ngua=**la**=igi=r rais.
 PERF-3PL.A-come pour=EMP=DIR=3PL.INAN.P=LIG rice
 ‘And then they came and poured out the rice there.’

The final constituents in the verb complex are various enclitics. The **P** agreement enclitic is required if the clause is transitive. The **P** enclitic can be followed by the **A** pronoun enclitic. If the clause is intransitive, the enclitic pronoun for **S** can occur. These **S/A** pronoun enclitics are coreferential with the **S/A** prefix already mentioned above. These prefixes and enclitics are further discussed in the next section. Two other optional enclitics are a demonstrative enclitic and the ligature =*r*, which can link a core NP to the verb complex. These enclitics are the final constituents of the verb complex and can attach to verbs, derived adverbs, free adverbs, adverb clitics, and directionals. Example (142) shows a verb complex where the final **P** agreement enclitic is separated from the main verb *kapa* ‘finish’ by a serial verb and two adverbs. In example (143), the verb complex ends with a pronoun enclitic for =3SG and also the demonstrative enclitic =*eit* ‘this’.

- (142) K-e-la kapa kout puk manasa=**isi**=r bensin.
 PERF-3SG.A-go finish cut just now=PL.P=LIG gasoline
 ‘The gasoline now just ran out on them.’
- (143) K-e-kiring manasa pe=**on**=**eit**.
 PERF-3SG-cry now MAN=3SG=DEM
 ‘This one she cried now this way.’

In the next section, example (165) includes both **P** agreement marker enclitics and **A** pronominal enclitics attached to the verb complex. Table 11 below lists the various prefixes and enclitics that are found in the verb complex.

Various nominal phrases can follow the verb complex. Core NPs that are common nouns are linked to the verb complex by the ligature =*r*. All NPs that are not core are marked as oblique, with an oblique marker such as *tar*, *toro*, *tasir*, etc., or as a location with the locative *i*. These NPs are described in §2.2.4 and §4.3.4.

3.4 Verb complex marking of core constituents

Table 11 lists the various **S/A** prefixes and enclitics found in the verb complex.

Table 11: Core prefixes and enclitics

Person and number	1. S/A prefix	2. P Core enclitic		3. S/A Core enclitic
		short	long	
1SG	u-	=i	=io	=o
2SG	o-	=i	=ia	=a
3SG	e-	=i	=in/ion(o)	=on(o)
3SG class II	o-	=i	=in/inroon(o)	roon(o)
1DL.IN	ira-	=is	=israeig(i)	
1DL.EX	mira-	=is	=israeim(i)	
2DL	mura-	=is	=israoum(u)	
3DL	ura-	=is	=israsin(a)	
1PL.IN	i-	=is	=isieig(i)	=eig(i)
1PL.EX	mi-/ming-	=is	=isieim(i)	=eim(i)
2PL	mu-/mung-	=is	=isioum(u)	=oum(u)
3PL (animate)	ra-	=is	=isisin(a)	=sin(a)
3PL (inanimate)	o-, e-	=ig	=iginin(a)	=nin(a)

Column 1 of Table 11 lists the verbal agreement prefixes for the **S** argument of an intransitive clause or the ergative **A** of a transitive clause. The prefixes in column 1 only

mark agreement on the verb with the **S/A** core argument but never with the patient. These prefixes are obligatory in all main/independent verbal clauses. Prefixes from column 1 follow the aspect marker *k-* PERF for perfective aspect, as in example (144). Imperfective aspect is marked with the null morpheme \emptyset . In some subordinate clauses, the column 1 prefixes are preceded by the ligature *r=*. The ligature marks the clause following the ligature as a dependent clause, as in example (145). This example also illustrates the **S** core pronoun *=on* ‘3SG’ from column 3 following the verb and cliticized to the manner adverb *pe*. This is different from the **P** agreement enclitic which is *=ion* ‘3SG.P’, as in example (146) below. These two examples (145) and (146) show that Nehan makes a distinction between **S/A** enclitic forms and **P** enclitic forms. This is different from what was presented in van den Berg and Glennon (2008:6) where a single set of enclitics was used for **S**, **A**, and **P**.

(144) A hueit **k-e**-ualo liu.
 ART pig PERF-3SG-run away.
 ‘The pig ran away.’

(145) Inggo k-u-longoro=**mpe** **r=e**-kula pe=**on**.
 1SG PERF-1SG-hear=**EMP** **LIG**=3SG-speak **MAN**=3SG
 ‘I heard indeed, the way he was speaking.’

Column 2 lists the agreement marker enclitics which mark the verb for person and number of the **P** argument of a transitive clause. There are two forms for the **P** enclitic, short and long. Short **P** forms are used when there is a following **A** pronoun enclitic from column 3. These short forms are glossed as SG.P or PL.P except for *=ig* which is always glossed as 3PL.INAN.P. The long form is used when the **A** pronoun enclitic is absent. In many cases, for dual and plural **P** arguments, the short form is preferred, even if there is

no following pronoun enclitic. For singular **P** arguments, the long form is used if there is no following **A** pronoun enclitic. The third singular **P** has two long forms, *=in* and *=ion*. The shorter form *=in* is preferred. In example (146), the longer form is used.

- (146) K-a uih=**iono** tar gumi.
 PERF-3PL.A-tie=3SG.P OBL rubber
 ‘They tied him with the rubber band.’

The long form of the **P** enclitic can be cliticized to the end of the verb complex as was seen in example (146). In example (147), however, the short form *=i* ‘SG.P’ is used, because there is a following enclitic pronoun *=o* ‘1SG.A’ from column 3.

- (147) A mimi k-u-la tila=**i**=o.
 ART papaya PERF-1SG.A-go divide.up=SG.P=1SG.A
 ‘I went and divided up the papaya.’

The **P** enclitic agreement marker may be absent in a transitive clause if the clause contains two core NPs, as in example (148). However, the use of the long form **P** enclitic is possible when there are two core NPs, as in example (149).

- (148) Inggo k-e-eiti=r hilang toro uaruaro-g.
 1SG PERF-3SG.A-bite=LIG centipede OBL chest-1SG
 ‘The centipede bit me on my chest.’ (Todd 1978:1208)

- (149) Inggo k-e-eit=**io**=r hilang toro uaruaro-g.
 1SG PERF-3SG.A-bite=1SG.P=LIG centipede OBL chest-1SG
 ‘The centipede bit me on my chest.’

In cases where the **P** enclitic is reduced to just *=i*, because of a following **A** pronoun enclitic from column 3, the **P** enclitic can be easily overlooked. For example, Ross (1988:237-239) observed an apparent lack of a **P** enclitic in a clause and cited it incorrectly as an example where the patient marking “does not occur.” The example is

repeated here with correct glossing, as example (150). Compare this example with example (151) where the patient, ‘woman’, is changed to plural ‘women’. In this case, the example contains a less ambiguous form of the **P** enclitic *=is* ‘PL.P’ and is not likely to be overlooked.

(150) A kuaha k-u-nihi-ng banga puku=**i**=o.
 ART woman PERF-1SG.A-just-AUX look only=SG.P=1SG.A
 ‘I saw the woman just now.’/ ‘the woman I saw just now.’ (Ross 1988:237)

(151) O kuaha k-u-nihi-ng banga puku=**si**=o.
 ART.PL woman PERF-1SG.A-just-AUX look only=PL.P=1SG.A
 ‘I saw the women just now.’/ ‘the women I saw just now.’

The **P** enclitics are derived from the Proto-Oceanic transitive marker **-i* (Lynch, Ross, and Crowley 2002:44). In van den Berg and Glennon (2008:4), *-i* was glossed as ‘OBJ’ an object marker. In this thesis, it is argued that Nehan has reinterpreted the transitive marker as a part of the **P** agreement marker enclitic. The **P** enclitics are single morphemes/units which agree with the person and number of the **P** core argument, as in example (152), where the **P** enclitic *=in* 3SG.P agrees with the person and number of the NP *a tamat* ‘the person’.

(152) A tamata k-a-kusa=**in**.
 ART person PERF-3PL.A-hold=3SG.P
 ‘They held the person.’

P enclitics are considered a single unit, because they always operate as a unit even if separated from the verb by adverbs. In example (153), the *=io* ‘1SG.P’ enclitic is attached to the manner adverb *pe*. In example (154), the ‘1PL.EX.P’ enclitic *=sieim* is

cliticized to the adverb *poluk* ‘again’. In no case can the initial /-(s)i/ be separated from the rest of the **P** agreement marker.

- (153) Ra-reih-reih teil pe=**io**=ane i lolon.
 3PL.A-RED-pull about MAN=1SG.P=DEM LOC inside
 ‘They were pulling me about like this inside (the water).’
- (154) Inggeim k-a-keip manasa poluku=**sieim** tar um.
 1PL.EX 3PL.A-bring now again=1PL.EX.P OBL house
 ‘They brought us now again to the house.’

Column 3 of Table 11 lists the optional **S/A** pronominal enclitics, which are coreferential with the column 1 verb prefixes and are in complementary distribution with, or can replace, the core **S/A** NP of the clause. As already stated in section 2.5, free core pronouns do not normally follow the VC but instead are reduced to an enclitic pronoun. A core **S/A** NP and the pronoun enclitic cannot co-occur in the same clause. Examples (155) and (156) have the same meaning. Example (157) is ungrammatical, because the free pronoun *Gisina* ‘they’ and the pronoun enclitic =*sin* cannot co-occur in the same clause.

- (155) Gisina k-a-la.
 3PL PERF-3PL-go
 ‘They went.’
- (156) K-a-la=**sin**.
 PERF-3PL-go=3PL
 ‘They went.’
- (157) *Gisina k-a-la=**sin**.
 3PL PERF-3PL-go=3PL
 (For ‘they went.’)

To summarize, Column 1 lists the verbal prefix agreement markers for the person and number of the **S** or **A** core argument. Column 2 lists the verb agreement enclitics for the **P** core argument. The short forms agree with the number of the **P** core argument, and the long forms agree with the person and number of the **P** core argument. These enclitics are analyzed as agreement enclitics, because the **P** enclitic is obligatory in transitive clauses. A free **P** pronoun and the **P** agreement enclitic can co-occur, as in example (158) where the pronoun *inggo* ‘1SG’ co-occurs with the **P** agreement enclitic *=io* 1SG.P. On the other hand, the pronoun enclitics for the **S** or **A** core argument from Column 3 are analyzed as clitic pronouns, rather than agreement enclitics, because they are in complementary distribution with free pronouns and lexical NPs which refer to the **S** or **A** core argument. Example (159) is ungrammatical, because the free pronoun *inggo* ‘1SG’ and the enclitic S/A pronoun *=o* ‘1SG’ cannot co-occur in a clause. Example (160) is grammatical, since only one pronoun occurs.

- (158) **Inggo** k-a-ein=**io**.
 1SG PERF-3PL.A-eat=1SG.P
 ‘They bit me.’
- (159) ***Inggo** k-u-ein=**o** tar bakue.
 1SG PERF-1SG-eat=1SG OBL shark
 (For: ‘I ate the shark.’)
- (160) **Inggo** k-u-ein tar bakue.
 1SG PERF-1SG-eat OBL shark
 ‘I ate the shark.’

3.4.1 *Verb complex core inflection*¹⁸ *in clauses*

Understanding coreferential marking of referents is probably the most complex area of morphology in Nehan. One of the difficulties, as already stated, is that the **P** enclitic =*in* ‘3SG.P’ can be reduced in many situations to just =*i* ‘SG.P’, and this shortened form can often be missed in fast speech. This section will discuss the core inflection of **S**, **A**, and **P**.

S Core Inflection

As previously stated, **S** is the single core argument of an intransitive clause. The **S** is marked on the verb with the **S** prefix (Column 1), and there may also be an optional enclitic pronoun (Column 3) in the clause, as in examples (161) and (162). Pro-drop is very common in Nehan, and the **S** prefix from Column 1 is sometimes the only reference of the **S** core argument in the clause, as in example (163). If there is only an **S** prefix on the verb, the identity of the **S** core argument must be recovered from the context.

- (161) **K-a-la** hohouo=**sin**.
 PERF-3PL-go sleep=3PL
 ‘They went to sleep.’
- (162) **K-e-la** kap=**on**.
 PERF-3SG-go finish=3SG
 ‘He/she/it went and finished.’
- (163) **K-e-la** kap.
 PERF-3SG-go finish
 ‘He/she/it went and finished.’

¹⁸ Core inflection marks the person and number of the core arguments of the clause.

A Core Inflection

Transitive clauses have two core arguments **A** and **P**. The verb is marked for the person and number of the **A** core argument, as in example (164), with the prefix *a-* ‘3PL.A’ from Column 1. There are cases where there is also an optional enclitic pronoun for **A** in the clause. In example (165), the verb is prefixed with *a-* ‘3PL.A’ reflecting the person and number of the **A** core argument and the pronominal enclitic *=sin* ‘3PL.A’ follows the verb. The **A** verb prefix is obligatory, and the pronoun clitic is optional. Once a referent is introduced in a text as a NP or pronoun, there can be two or three clauses where the only reference to the **S** or **A** is the prefix on the verb. Often following these clauses, there is a pronoun enclitic on the verb complex referring to the **S** or **A** argument. Sometimes, in a long sequence where the **A** or **S** referent and verb are unchanged; the only marking on the verb is the **S** or **A** prefix. When only the verbal agreement prefix identifies the **A** core argument in the clause, as in examples (164) and (166), the identity of the **A** must be recoverable from the context.

(164) **K-a-suk=isi=r** hueit.
 PERF-3PL.A=singe=PL.P=LIG pig
 ‘They singed the pigs.’

(165) **A sioko=r inete k-a-la** hagouo **ua-sa=ini=sin.**
 ART one=LIG thing PERF-3PL.A-go feel CAUS-bad=3SG.P=3PL.A
 ‘They felt bad about one thing.’

(166) **K-a-kale=in.**
 PERF-3PL.A-get=3SG.P
 ‘They got him/her/it.’

In cases where both the **P** and **A** enclitics are found in the verb complex, the enclitic closest to the verb is the agreement marker for **P**, and the next enclitic is the **A**

enclitic pronoun. In example (167) below, the first enclitic *=in* ‘3SG.P’ is the **P** agreement marker for the **P** NP *a inet* ‘the thing’. The second enclitic *=sin* ‘3PL.A’ is a pronoun enclitic for the **A** core argument. The verbal **A** prefix *a-* ‘3PL.A’ marks the verb for the person and number of the **A** core argument.

- (167) **A** *inete* *k-a-banga=ini=sin*.
 ART thing PERF-3PL.A-look=3SG.P=3PL.A
 ‘They saw the thing.’

P Core Inflection

In example (168), the **P** agreement marker enclitic *=in* from column 2 agrees in person and number with the fronted **P** NP ‘Peter’. However, in example (169), the **P** enclitic has been reduced from *=in* to just *=i*. When **P** and **A** enclitics co-occur, the **P** enclitic is reduced to the shortened forms of Column 2 of Table 11. The only case where both long forms co-occur is when **A** ‘3PL’ and **P** ‘3SG’ co-occur, as in example (167) above. The **P** enclitic *=in* ‘3SG’, in example (167), can be reduced, and example (167) above can be pronounced as in example (170).

- (168) **Pita** *k-u-hire=in*.
 P. PERF-1SG.A-tell=3SG.P
 ‘I told Peter.’
- (169) **Pita** *k-u-hire=i=o*.
 P. PERF-1SG.A=tell=SG.P=1SG.A
 ‘I told Peter.’
- (170) **A** *inete* *k-a-banga=i=sin*.
 ART thing PERF-3PL.A-look=SG.P=3PL.A
 ‘They saw the thing.’

In examples (171)-(174), the **A** is marked on the verb by the prefix *i-* ‘1PL.IN.A’, and there is an enclitic pronoun *=eig* ‘1PL.IN’ following the verb. The patient NP is fronted, and the verb is marked with the short form of the **P** agreement enclitic, because of a following **A** enclitic pronoun. The short **P** enclitics are glossed with the number of the **P** NP. Example (174) is grammatical, but example (176) is ungrammatical as it includes the full enclitic forms for both **P** and **A**. These examples show that the **P** agreement enclitic and the **A** enclitic pronoun can both co-occur in the clause. For each example the reduced **P** enclitic *=i* ‘SG.P’, *=is* ‘PL.P’ and *=ig* ‘3PL.INAN.P’ agrees in number with the preposed patient NP. The enclitic *=eig* ‘1PL.IN’ is the **A** enclitic pronoun. This analysis differs from van den Berg and Glennon (2008:5) where no distinction was made between a class of **P** agreement enclitics and a class of **S/A** enclitic pronouns. Under that analysis, only one enclitic should occur in any given verb complex, following the transitivity suffix.

(171) **Ingga** k-i-hire=**i**=eig.
 2SG PERF-1PL.IN.A=tell=SG.P=1PL.IN.A
 ‘We told you.’

(172) **Inggono** k-i-hire=**i**=eig.
 3SG PERF-1SG.A=tell=SG.P=1PL.IN.A
 ‘We told him/her/it.’

(173) **Inggoum** k-i-hire=**si**=eig.
 2PL PERF-1PL.IN.A=tell=PL.P=1PL.IN.A
 ‘We told you all.’

(174) **Gisina** k-i-hire=**si**=eig.
 3PL PERF-1PL.IN.A=tell=PL.P=1PL.IN.A
 ‘We told them’

- (175) **Ginina** k-i-hire=**gi**=eig.
 3PL PERF-1PL.IN.A=tell=3PL.INAN.P=1PL.IN.A
 ‘We told them. (inanimate).’
- (176) ***K**-i-hire=**sisin**=eig.
 PERF-1PL.IN.A=tell=3PL.P=1PL.IN.A
 (For: ‘We told them.’)

In examples (177)-(180), the **P** NP *ingga* ‘2SG’ is fronted, and the short form of the **P** core enclitic =*i* ‘2SG’ is used. Each clause has a different **A**. The **A** is identified by the **A** prefix on the verb and the following **A** enclitic pronoun. In example (181), there is no **A** enclitic pronoun but an **A** NP; consequently, the long form of the **P** enclitic =*ia* ‘2SG.P’ can be used. Moreover, this example could have no marking for **P** on the verb, since there are two core NPs. For a further discussion of the lack of marking for **P** when there are two core NPs, see section 4.3.3. Also see section 4.3.1 for a discussion of the criteria for core arguments.

- (177) **Ingga** k-u-hire=**i**=o.
 2SG PERF-1SG.A-tell=SG.P=1SG.A
 ‘I told you.’
- (178) **Ingga** k-e-hire=**i**=on.
 2SG PERF-3SG.A-tell=SG.P=3SG.A
 ‘He/she/it told you.’
- (179) **Ingga** king-hire=**i**=eim.
 2SG PERF-1PL.EX.A-tell=SG.P=1PL.EX.A
 ‘We told you.’
- (180) **Ingga** k-a-hire=**i**=sin.
 2SG PERF-3PL.A-tell=SG.P=3PL.A
 ‘They told you.’
- (181) **Ingga** k-e-hire=**ia** Pita.
 2SG PERF-3SG.A-tell=2SG.P P.
 ‘Peter told you.’

In van den Berg and Glennon (2008), transitive clauses in Nehan are described as agreeing or non-agreeing based on whether the **S/A** prefix from column 1 agrees or does not agree with the pronominal enclitics in column 3. The =*i* enclitic is glossed as a transitive/object marker distinct from the pronominal enclitics. In this thesis, the **A** enclitics from Column 3 are analyzed as a separate class of enclitic pronouns that are in complementary distribution with the **S/A** NP core argument. The **P** agreement marker enclitics from column 2 are a class of agreement enclitics. The short forms agree with the number of the **P** core argument, and the long forms agree with the person and number of the **P** core argument.

Examples (182) and (183) illustrate the same phonological string =*sieig* following the verb but with different morphological interpretations, ‘We told them’ and ‘They told us.’ In example (183), only the **P** enclitic follows the verb. Example (184) also illustrates the use of the long form of the **P** enclitic. The **A** core argument is only marked on the verb with the *a-* 3PL prefix. There is no **A** enclitic pronoun following the verb; therefore the long forms of the **P** enclitic pronouns can be used.

(182) Gisina k-**i**-hire=**si**=**eig**.
 3PL PERF-1PL.IN.A-tell=PL.P=1PL.IN.A
 ‘We told them.’

(183) **Inggeig** k-a-hire=**sieig**.
 1PL.IN PERF-3PL.A-tell=1PL.IN.P
 ‘They told us.’

- (184) **Inggeim** k-a-ua-pidi=**sieim** tar pisar tar udeili=r
 1PL.EX PERF-3PL.A-CAUS-shine=1PL.EX.P OBL sun OBL whole=LIG
 marein.
 day
 ‘They made us stand in the sun for the whole day.’

As stated above, **S/A** pronominal enclitics are in complementary distribution with overt pronouns and NPs referring to **S/A** core arguments. There are cases, however, where the **A** pronoun enclitic can co-occur with an **A** NP as seen in examples (185) and (186). In intransitive clauses, the **S** enclitic can also co-occur with an **S** NP, as in examples (187) and (188). In these clauses, the **S/A** NP follows the **S/A** enclitic pronoun. As the free translations in these examples illustrate, the **S/A** enclitic does not function as a pronoun but has a demonstrative meaning. Proper nouns and free pronouns do not co-occur with **S/A** enclitic pronouns, as shown in the ungrammatical example (189), since they would not normally be modified by a demonstrative.

- (185) A hueit k-a-suk=ini=**sina**=r **tamat**.
 ART pig PERF-3PL.A-sing=3SG.P=3PL.A=LIG person
 ‘These people singed the pig.’
- (186) Inggo u-uoto hire tauete tar inete=nine **ra**-guata=igi=**sina**=r
 1SG 1SG-HAB tell out OBL thing=DEM 3PL.A-do=3PL.INAN.P-3PL.A=LIG
sa.
 bad
 ‘I always tell out about these things here these bad (people) are doing.’
- (187) K-a-la=ngua=**sina**=r **keketik**.
 PERF-3PL-go=EMP=3PL=LIG child
 ‘These children then went.’
- (188) K-ing-longoro=mpe r=e-kul-kula ualeik pe=**ono**=r **lo**.
 1PL.EX-hear=EMP LIG=3SG-RED-say loudly MAN=3SG=LIG dog
 ‘We heard indeed this dog barking loudly.’

- (189) *Pita k-e-hire=on tang Jon.
 P. PERF-3SG-tell=3SG OBL J.
 (For: ‘Peter told John.’)

3.4.2 *Transitive clause with non-specific agent: the functional equivalent of passive*

In both (190) and (191), the prefix *a-* ‘3PL.A’ refers to specific persons or things already introduced as an NP in a previous clause.

- (190) Doh-**o burehe=r tunu=mpe=r tetiau** k-a-uan=**isi**=sin.
 CNJ-ART many=LIG very=EMP=LIG bird PERF-3PL.A-shoot=PL.P=3PL.A
 ‘And they shot very many birds indeed.’
- (191) **Inngo** k-a-ein=**io**=r bakue.
 1SG PERF-3PL.A-eat-1SG.P=LIG shark
 ‘The sharks bit me.’

In some transitive clauses, however, the S/A prefix *a=* ‘3PL.A’ is used when the A is non-specific or not identified, as in examples (192) and (193). In these cases, the S/A prefix does not agree with an A; the 3PL.A appears to be the default. Enclitic pronouns are not allowed with this type of clause. An enclitic pronoun would refer to a specific person or thing already introduced into the discourse.

- (192) **K-a-hire=io**.
 PERF-3PL.A-tell=1SG.P
 ‘They told me.’ or ‘I was told.’
- (193) **K-a-hire=isieig**.
 PERF-3PL.A-tell=1PL.IN.P
 ‘They told us.’

In other cases, the 3PL form of the prefix is used, even though the A is known to be singular. In example (194), the speaker tells how he made charcoal, by first cutting a

drum in half to contain the fire. He uses the 3PL.A ‘they’ even though he, himself, or some non-specified person or persons, is cutting the drum for the charcoal. Likewise, in example (195), the agent is known to be a specific person doing the action. That person is not identified in the clause, and a non-specific 3PL ‘they’ is used.

(194) A tina=r kerosin k-a-tokout=in.
 ART tin=LIG kerosene PERF-3PL.A-cut=3SG.P
 ‘They cut the kerosene tin.’

(195) K-a-tung pou=ion.
 PERF-3PL.A-fight crush=3SG.P
 ‘They killed him.’

This type of clause is described by Keenan and Dryer (2007:329) as a type of passive substitute. They state:

It appears however, that languages without passives have somewhat more grammaticized means of expressing functional equivalents of basic passives. Perhaps the most common means is to use an active sentence with an ‘impersonal’ third person plural subject. By impersonal here we mean simply that the third person element is not understood to refer to any specific group of individuals.

This is a common type of transitive clause in Nehan. If the identity of the **A** is not important, or if it is unknown, the **A** can be marked on the verb with just the *a-* ‘3PL.A’ prefix. In natural text material, up to 50%¹⁹ or more of the transitive clauses can have the verb marked this way. In Nehan, however, it would not be an impersonal third person plural *subject* but rather a third person plural **A**. The ergative **A** can never be the subject

¹⁹ This amount was calculated from the narrative texts used in section 5.2.2. Out of a total of 55 transitive (Tr) clauses 29 or 53% had non-specific **A**.

of an active transitive clause in Nehan; only the **P** can serve this role. This will be discussed further in the next chapter.

3.4.3 Other types of verb complex core inflection

Unaccusatives

In Nehan, there are semantically intransitive clauses in which the patient agreement marker enclitic is present, but there is no identifiable agent, even though the verb is prefixed with *e-* ‘3SG.A’. There is nothing directly acting upon the patient. In this case, the **P** enclitic identifies the verb as unaccusative. In these clauses, only the **P** is identified, and it is the subject. In example (196), the **S/A** prefix *e-* ‘3SG.A’ is used on the main verb *duh* ‘heavy’, and the main verb is followed by the **P** enclitic *=in* ‘3SG.P’, which refers to the mackerel fish. In this clause, there is no **A** argument. Similarly, in examples (197)-(200), the verb is marked with *e-* ‘3SG.A’, but no agent is involved. In each case, the single core argument is **P**.

(196) K-**e**-duh pe=**ini**=r tangili.
 PERF-3SG.A-heavy MAN=3SG.P=LIG mackerel
 ‘The mackerel was heavy.’

(197) Inggo k-**e**-mahing=**io**.
 1SG PERF-3SG.A-pain=1SG.P
 ‘I had pain.’

(198) Gisina k-**e**-bele=**is**.
 3PL PERF-3SG.A-drift=PL.P
 ‘They drifted.’

- (199) Inggo k-**e**-mataia ua-sa tunu=mpe=**io**.
 1SG PERF-3SG-beautiful CAUS-bad very=EMP=1SG.P
 ‘It really was indeed very beautiful to me.’
- (200) O gisiamhe=r tamat=ane i Retan k-**e**-tokouasa=**is**
 ART other=LIG person=DEM LOC R. PERF-3SG.A-hate=PL.P

 tasir tamata=sine.
 OBL.PL person=DEM
 ‘Other people here at Retan have hate for these people here.’

Existential

The existential verb *kae* ‘to be’ never has an **A** prefix on the verb but includes only the **P** agreement enclitic. In example (201), the verb *kae* takes the **P** enclitic for third singular =*in* to reference the **P**, *ro sauoi* ‘the climbing rope’. Like the previous clauses, the only core argument is the **P**, and there is no agent.

- (201) Ia kae=**in** r=o sauoi?
 where be=3SG.P LIG=ART climbing.rope
 ‘Where is the climbing rope?’
- (202) Ginina kae=mpe=**ig** tena uan kabi-guo.
 3PL.INAN be=EMP=3PL.INAN.P OBLPCL.3SG village uncle-1SG
 ‘These are indeed at my uncle’s village.’

Another verb, *tabo* ‘absent’, can also take the **P** agreement enclitic without any **S/A** prefix on the verb, as in example (203). There are cases, though, where this verb does take the **S/A** prefix, as in example (204). In these examples, like the previous ones, the only core argument is **P**.

- (203) Sapi tabo=**in**.
 S. absent=3SG.P
 ‘Sapi is absent.’

- (204) Inggono k-e-tabo=**in** tar sioko=r bialok.
 3SG PERF-3SG.A-absent=3SG.P OBL one=LIG moon
 ‘He was absent for one month.’

Reflexives and reciprocals

Reflexives and reciprocals are included here, because they can be marked like other transitive clauses. In both reflexives and reciprocals, the **P** and **A** core arguments are coreferential and refer to the same referent.

Reflexives

In examples (205) and (206), the adverb *katong* ‘self’ is one that is often evident in these constructions. The adverb, however, is not obligatory if it is understood from the context that the construction is reflexive, as in example (207). In each of the examples where the **P** agreement enclitic is marked on the VC, the **A** and **P** core arguments are coreferential. Example (208) is intransitive and antipassive, and ‘her food’ is an oblique theme/patient.

- (205) A hueit k-e-la banga katongo poluk=**in** toro sisir.
 ART pig PERF-3SG.A-go look self again=3SG.P OBL mirror
 ‘The pig went and looked again at himself in the mirror.’

- (206) Ma=eit k-o-uasilung katongo=**ia**?
 REA=DEM PERF-2SG.A-cook self=2SG.P
 ‘So you cooked yourself?’

- (207) K-a-bele=mpe=**isisin**.
 PERF-3PL.A=drift=EMP=3PL.P
 ‘They let themselves drift.’

- (208) K-e-banoto-ng sir katongo manasa tena ni-ein.
 PERF-3SG-able-LIN seek self now OBL.PCL.3SG NOM-eat
 ‘She was able now to seek for herself her food.’

Reciprocal

Reciprocal constructions are similar to reflexive constructions. If the verb complex is marked with the **P** enclitic, the **A** and **P** are coreferential. In examples (209)-(211), the verb complex is marked with the **P** agreement enclitic. In example (212), the agent, the Japanese soldiers, met the native people. The reciprocal prefix *uel-* is used on the verb *tupar* ‘find’ to show a reciprocal meaning of the two groups meeting.

- (209) Kar-a-uel-kiring-e=**is**.
 SEQ-3PL.A-RECP-cry-RECP=PL.P
 ‘And then they cried for each other.’
- (210) Kar-**ing**-gata-ng uilia-tung baka=**siem**.
 SEQ-1P.EX.A-almost-AUX RECP-fight first=1PL.EX.P
 ‘And then we almost began to fight each other.’
- (211) Gisina **ra**-uel-heir-e=**is** tar mahar hueit.
 3PL 3PL.A-RECP-give-RECP=PL.P OBL part pig.
 ‘They were giving to each other pieces of pig meat.’
- (212) O Siapan k-a-uel-tupara tasir kukurum.
 ART Japan PERF-3PL-RECP-find OBL.3PL black
 ‘The Japanese met the native people.’

3.5 Chapter conclusion

This chapter looked at the heart of the Nehan clause: the verb and verb complex. The first part of this chapter looked at various verb derivations, and the verb complex was described. The various constituents of the verb complex were listed and briefly discussed.

The majority of this chapter section 3.4 discussed the morphology of **S**, **A**, and **P** core arguments in the verb complex. The **S/A** verbal prefix is required in all verbal clauses. The **P** agreement marker enclitic is required in transitive clauses. The diachronic development of the pronominal **P** enclitic from the Proto-Oceanic transitive suffix **-i* was discussed. It was determined that the **P** agreement enclitic is a unit. The transitive marker has become part of an agreement marker enclitic on the verb complex, which agrees with the number of the **P** core argument in the short form and with the person and number of the **P** core argument in the long form. It was also illustrated in this chapter that if there are two core NPs in a clause, the patient enclitic is optional. The use of the optional **S/A** pronominal enclitic was also discussed. Numerous examples were given to illustrate the relationship between the **S/A** prefix before the main verb and the enclitics for **P** and **S/A** that follow.

Even though the **S/A** verbal prefix is required in all verbal clauses, there are cases where the **A** is non-specific or non-agreeing. Examples of non-specific agents were illustrated and discussed as a passive substitute.

The final section of the chapter looked at other types of clauses which have similar core inflection as transitive clauses. These include the unaccusative construction, existential clause, and reflexives and reciprocals.

This chapter concludes much of the descriptive part of the thesis. The next two chapters look at the issues of transitivity, NP function in clause types, voice selection in discourse, and, in particular, the main focus of this thesis – syntactic ergativity.

4 TRANSITIVITY AND ERGATIVITY IN NEHAN

4.1 Introduction

This chapter constitutes the main focus of the thesis. The previous two chapters, although primarily descriptive, are foundational to understanding how ergativity works in Nehan syntax. Much of the first part of this chapter is theoretical. Section 4.2 will introduce transitivity. Section 4.3 looks at the role that core NPs and oblique NPs play in the clause structure of Nehan. Section 4.3.1 lists the criteria that distinguish core and oblique arguments in the clause. Section 4.4 will first give the theoretical basis for syntactic ergativity in Nehan. Section 4.5 looks at various subjecthood properties in Nehan that illustrate the primacy of the absolutive argument as the subject in transitive and intransitive clauses. Section 4.6 illustrates another type of transitive construction found in Nehan.

4.2 Transitivity

Some of the following will be a repeat of what was stated in the introduction in section 1.5.1. Transitivity is concerned with the number of core arguments in the clause. Concerning transitivity, Andrews (2007:139) states: “A sentence is called ‘transitive’ if it has **A** and **P** function in its syntactic structure, ‘intransitive’ if one or both of these is

missing.” Transitive verbs have two core arguments, which have been referred to as **A** and **P**. Intransitive verbs have a single core argument referred to as **S**.

4.2.1 Syntactic transitivity

Anna Kibort (2008:1) explains: “Syntactic transitivity refers to the number and type of core arguments which appear in the clause and which are determined by the predicate's head.” Nehan allows only one or two core arguments in a clause; a maximum of two participants are allowed as core arguments in the transitive clause, which we label as **P** and **A**. If a clause has patient and recipient arguments, one of these arguments is always expressed as an oblique phrase. In example (213), the **P** argument, ‘the food’, is core and referenced with the enclitic =*ig* ‘3PL.INAN.P’, while the recipient argument ‘that village’ is expressed as an oblique phrase. In example (214), the **P** core NP *ingga* 2SG ‘you’ is the recipient, whereas the theme/patient, ‘the four coconuts’, is expressed as an oblique phrase. The only exception to the two core argument limit is “possessor raising,” discussed in section 4.6.1, when it is possible to have three core arguments in a clause.

(213) A ni-ein k-a-heir=*ig* tar uan=*eit*.
 ART NOM-eat PERF-3PL.A-give=3PL.INAN.P OBL village=DEM
 ‘They gave the food to that village.’

(214) *Ingga* k-a-heir=*ia* tar toueiti=*r* kuen.
 2SG PERF-3PL.A-give=2SG.P OBL four=LIG coconut
 ‘They gave you four coconuts.’

4.3 Core vs. Oblique arguments in Nehan

4.3.1 *Criteria that distinguish core and oblique NPs*

There are several characteristics that distinguish core and oblique NPs in a Nehan clause.

Core noun phrase criteria

A. Only core arguments can be marked with definite articles²⁰. See examples (36) and (45).

B. Only core arguments can trigger/control agreement with a prefix and/or enclitics on the verb complex. See examples (34), (35), and (39).

C. Core arguments must be marked in the verb complex with a prefix and/or enclitics. See examples (162) and (166).

Oblique noun phrase criteria

A. Oblique noun phrases are always preceded by an oblique marker. See examples (228), (229), and (230).

B. Oblique NPs never trigger/control agreement with a prefix and/or enclitics on the verb complex. See examples (233) and (225).

²⁰ Oblique NPs can be glossed as definite or indefinite depending on context and are not marked for definiteness.

C. Oblique arguments (OBL) can be omitted without any morphological trace (prefix or enclitic). See examples (238) and (239).

4.3.2 Core noun phrase

Core NPs can be **S**, **A**, or **P**. The **S** and **P**, which are absolutive arguments, can precede the verb or, as in examples (215) and (217), follow the verb. Post-verbal common NPs must be preceded by the ligature suffixed to the verb complex. For proper nouns and pronouns, the ligature is not used. The ergative core argument **A** of a transitive clause must follow the verb, as in example (216).

(215) K-e-la=r **soi** i lolono tar tung.
 PERF-3SG-go snake LOC inside OBL hole
 ‘The snake went into the hole.’

(216) **A** **soi** k-e-haluh=ini=r **tamat.**
 ART snake PERF-3SG.A-hit=3SG.P=LIG person
 ‘The person hit the snake.’

(217) Kar-a-kale=igi=r **randouk.**
 SEQ-3PL.A-get=3PL.INAN.P=LIG firewood
 ‘And then they got the firewood.’

The basic clause structure of Nehan has already been described in section 1.5.3. The following is a brief review of what was detailed there. For transitive clauses (Tr), the basic word order is **PVA**. The **P** NP can follow the verb if there is no expressed **A** NP. Intransitive clause basic word order is **SV** or **VS**. **SV** word order is preferred when a sentence is spoken in isolation, but, in narrative texts, both types are used. The antipassive clause is syntactically intransitive but semantically transitive, and the patient

argument is expressed as an oblique phrase. The antipassive is discussed further in section 4.3.5.

4.3.3 *Transitive clause without patient enclitic*

There are rare instances when there are two core NPs and the verb/verb complex lacks a **P** enclitic. In this case, the **P** enclitic is optional, as in example (218) and (219). Many texts do not contain any clauses of this type. Though rare, clauses of this type show that there may be two core NPs in a clause without any clitic agreeing with **P**. One native speaker stated that if **A** and **P** are both proper nouns, the **P** enclitic should be absent, as in example (218). It was already stated in section 1.5.3 that the presence of two core NPs in a clause is rare in natural text; therefore, when two core NPs do appear, the hearer automatically identifies the clause as transitive, even if there is no **P** enclitic. This type of construction seems to apply to any type of verb. The **P** in example (219) is a coconut. In the other examples, the **P** is animate. These clauses cannot be called intransitive, even though the patient enclitic is absent, because only transitive clauses allow two core arguments.

(218) **Jon** k-e-palihi=ngua **Pita**.
 J. PERF-3SG.A-change=EMP P.
 ‘Peter then replaced John.’

(219) **A** **kuen** a sioko-ng sioun k-a-inumu=mpe=r **tamat**.
 ART coconut ART one-LIN before PERF-3PL.A-drink=EMP=LIG person
 ‘The people drank indeed only this one coconut.’

The three examples (220), (221), and (222) were elicited from two native speakers and were all considered grammatical. In example (222), there are two core NPs and no **P** core enclitic on the verb.

(220) Inngo k-a-banga=**io**=r tamat.
 1SG PERF-3PL.A-look=1SG.P=LIG person
 ‘The people saw me.’

(221) Inngo k-e-banga=**io**=r tamat.
 1SG PERF-3SG.A-look=1SG.P=LIG person
 ‘The person saw me.’

(222) Inngo k-a-banga=r tamat.
 1SG PERF-3PL.A-look=LIG person
 ‘The people saw me.’

4.3.4 *Oblique noun phrase*

Oblique NPs, by definition, are not core arguments of the clause. These phrases are preceded by the oblique marker. A list of these is given in Table 2. There are possibly some restrictions on the ordering of oblique phrases in the clause, but further study is needed to determine this. Oblique arguments usually follow the verb complex. Fronted oblique NPs are adjuncts, which are often time phrases, as in example (223), and location phrases, as in example (224). Adjuncts are optional. The location phrase *tar butur=on* ‘at that place’ adds meaning to the whole sentence in (224) but is not necessary to complete the meaning of the predicate *memet* ‘feed’.

(223) **Tar mareini=on=ene** k-a-tung pous=in Pater Pita.
 OBL day=3SG=DEM PERF-3PL.A-fight crush=3SG.P Father P.
 ‘On this day here, they killed Father Peter.’

- (224) **Tar butur=on** o uaia-ng hueit ra-memete teil.
 OBL place=3SG ART herd-LIN pig 3PL-feed about
 ‘At that place, a herd of pigs was feeding.’

The oblique NP can express many different semantic roles. The following examples illustrate some of these.

- (225) Patient:
 O lo k-a-ein **tasir** **hueit**.
 ART.PL dog PERF-3PL-eat OBL.PL pig
 ‘The dogs ate the pigs.’
- (226) Location:
 O hueit k-a-leke **toro** **iom**.
 ART.PL pig PERF-3PL-pass OBL.PL garden
 ‘The pigs entered the gardens.’
- (227) Goal:
 A keketik k-e-la **tar** **sikul**.
 ART children PERF-3SG-go OBL school
 ‘The child went to the school.’
- (228) Instrument:
 Jon k-e-haluh keip tar soi **toro ioub**.
 J. PERF-3SG-hit bring OBL snake OBL knife
 ‘John hit the snake with the knife.’
- (229) Benefactive:
 Pita k-e-uakapis **tang Jon** tar tinih.
 P. PERF-3SG-steer OBL J. OBL canoe
 ‘Peter steered the canoe for John.’
- (230) Recipient and theme:
 Matiu k-e-heir **tang Meri toro buk**.
 M. PERF-3SG-give OBL M. OBL book.
 ‘Matthew gave Mary (recipient) the book (theme).’
- (231) Source:
 Kris k-e-hiua=ko tur **toro kuen**.
 K. PERF-3SG-descend=DIR stand OBL coconut
 ‘Kris came down from the coconut tree.’

The maximum number of oblique arguments observed in a clause is three. In example (232) below, four semantic roles are expressed in a single antipassive clause: agent, ‘the elders’; patient, ‘the Japanese person’; location, ‘the road’; and goal, ‘the police’. Each of these semantic roles, except the agent, is preceded by an oblique marker.

- (232) Kar-a-la tupara keip to manasa=mpe=sina=r ma-mahoho-lik
 SEQ-3PL=go find bring SPG now=EMP=3PL=LIG RED-elder-DIM
- tar pe-ng Siapan tar lele tasir polis.
 OBL MAN-LIN J. OBL road OBL.PL police
 ‘And then these elders went there bringing the Japanese man along the road to the police.’

4.3.5 *The oblique patient in the antipassive clause*

As already mentioned, Nehan has an antipassive clause where a transitive verb has no patient enclitic following the verb and the patient argument is expressed as an oblique phrase. The APV clause was already discussed in section 1.5.3. Semantically, transitive clauses and antipassive clauses are both transitive, but, syntactically, the antipassive is intransitive. Both the transitive and antipassive clauses have arguments that function in the semantic role of agent and patient. In the transitive clause, these arguments are both core arguments. On the other hand, in the antipassive, only the agent is core and the other argument is expressed in an oblique phrase. Therefore, the role of the antipassive clause is to allow the **P** to be demoted and the **A** to be promoted to the absolutive argument and subject of the clause.

In the antipassive clause, the patient is expressed as an oblique phrase, the clause has no patient enclitic on the verb complex, and there is only one core NP **S**. The proper noun *Pita* ‘Peter’ in example (233) is the only core NP. Other proper noun examples in oblique phrases are illustrated in section 2.2. Example (233) illustrates a plural proper noun expressed as an oblique phrase.

- (233) Pita k-e-kila baka tas **Kolias me Matiu.**
 P. PERF-3SG-call first OBL.PL K. with M.
 ‘Peter called first for Kolias and Matthew.’

In example (234), the **S**, *gisin* 3PL ‘they’, precedes the verb and is also marked on the verb with the prefix *a=*. The **S** argument is thus the only core argument of the clause. There is no enclitic for **P** after the verb. The patient, ‘the birds’, is expressed as an oblique phrase. Semantically, examples (234) and (235) have the same meaning. In example (234) the agent *gisin* ‘they’, which refers to boys who are hunting, is **S**. The patient ‘the birds’ is expressed as an oblique phrase. In the transitive clause of example (235), the patient ‘the birds’ is a core argument (**P**) and is modified with the adjective phrase ‘very many’.

- (234) Gisina k-a-uana manasa=mpe tasir tetiau.
 3PL PERF-3PL-shoot now=EMP OBL.PL bird
 ‘They shot now indeed the birds.’
- (235) Doh-o burehe=r tunu=mpe=r tetiau k-a-uan=isi=sin.
 CNJ-ART many=LIG very=EMP=LIG bird PERF-3PL.A-shoot=PL.P=3PL.A
 ‘And they shot very many birds indeed.’

The next two examples are similar. In the antipassive first clause of example (236), the **S** is the core argument ‘the elder’, and the patient ‘the child’ is expressed as an

oblique phrase. In the second clause, the **S** is the child who dies. In example (237), ‘the child’ is the **P** of the transitive first clause and the **S** of the second clause.

(236) A mahoh k-e-haluh tar keketik doh-a keketik k-e-mat.
 ART elder PERF-3SG-hit OBL child CNJ-ART child PERF-3SG-die
 ‘The elder hit the child, and the child died.’

(237) A keketik k-e-haluh=ini=r mahoh doh-a keketik
 ART child PERF-3SG.A-hit=3SG.P=LIG elder CNJ-ART child
 k-e-mat.
 PERF-3SG-die
 ‘The elder hit the child, and the child died.’

The oblique patient expressed as an antipassive is optional in certain cases. In example (238), which consists of three clauses, the agent ‘the man’ is expressed in the first clause. In the next clause, he gets the fishing arrow, which is expressed as an oblique phrase. In the final clause, he sits and carves the arrow, which is the unexpressed patient. Clauses composed of a sequence of actions where the patient is known and identifiable, and can therefore be excluded, are quite common. Similarly, in example (239), the patient ‘the food’ is expressed as an oblique phrase in the first clause and not in the following clauses.

(238) Kena k-e-la manasa=mpe=ene=r **bulot** k-e-la kale
 CNJ PERF-3SG-go now=EMP=DEM=LIG male PERF-3SG-go get
 tena **tuluh** kar-e-me keih tabil=ane i
 PCL.3SG fishing.arrow SEQ-3SG-come shave sit=DEM LOC
 moren.
 village.square

‘Then this man here went now indeed, he went and he got his fishing arrow and he then came and shaved (it) in the village square.’

- (239) Ra-heir tar **ni-ein** tamiueim kar-ing-kale
 3PL-give OBL NOM-eat OBL.1PL.EX SEQ-1PL.EX-get
- doh-o gisiamhe ra-ein o gisiamhe ra-bak ra-de.
 CNJ-ART others 3PL-eat ART others 3PL-throw 3PL-dislike
- ‘They give us the food, and then we get (it), and others eat (it) others throw (it) away, they dislike (it).’

4.4 Syntactic Ergativity in Nehan

I repeat here the statement by Kroeger (2004:284) quoted in §1.5.2 above: “The term SYNTACTIC ERGATIVITY refers to a situation in which the syntactic system of the language, and in particular the properties which provide tests for subjecthood, follow an ergative pattern.” The hypothesis proposed in this section is that the grammatical subject in Nehan can be the **S** of an intransitive clause or the **P** of a transitive clause. These two core arguments are the absolutive argument of their respective clauses. The **A** core argument of a transitive clause can never be the subject of the clause. This hypothesis will be supported with tests for subjecthood in various grammatical constructions, such as coordinate clauses §4.5.1, purpose clauses §4.5.2, control relationships §4.5.3, question formation §4.5.4, relative clauses §4.5.5, and cleft sentences §4.5.6.

Much of the theoretical background for the material being presented here comes from Kroeger (2004:307-308) and Manning (1996:40-42). Kroeger states that, “The crucial difference between a syntactically ergative language like Dyirbal²¹ and a language

²¹ Dyirbal is an indigenous language of northern Australia.

of the more familiar (nominative-accusative) type (e.g., English) has to do with the alignment of semantic roles to grammatical relations (GRs).” He also provides examples (240) and (241) below to show the different assignments of semantic roles and grammatical relations in nominative-accusative and ergative-absolutive languages. Using the verb ‘cut’ and the semantic roles of agent and patient, the diagram shows how the semantic roles link to the grammatical relations of subject and object. In an active transitive clause example (242), the semantic role of agent links to the subject GR, whereas the patient semantic role links to the GR of object. In an ergative clause example (243), the agent links to the object GR and the patient to the subject GR.

(240)	cut	< agent, SUBJ	patient> OBJ	Active
(241)	cut	< agent, OBJ	patient> SUBJ	Ergative

Concerning the passive and antipassive, Kroeger (2004:308) also states, “The passive rule demotes the agent to oblique status and typically promotes the patient to subject...The antipassive rule in ergative languages has the opposite effect, demoting the patient to the status of an oblique.” He provides examples (242) and (243) below to show the result of this rule. In this case, the agent of a passive clause links to an oblique (OBL) GR, and in the antipassive, the patient links to an OBL GR.

(242)	cut	< agent, (OBL)	patient > SUBJ	Passive
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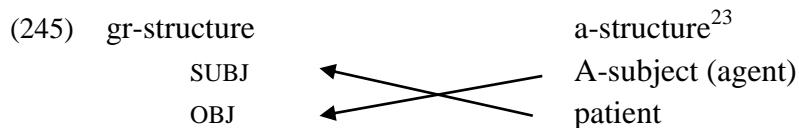
(243)	cut	< agent,	patient >	Antipassive
		SUBJ	(OBL)	

Manning (1996:41) states: “In syntactically ergative languages, the properties of absolutive NPs are the properties of grammatical subjects.” He also argues for a separation of grammatical relations from argument structure. Manning (1996:36) defines argument structure as a structure that “results from the grammaticization of notions of semantic prominence, roughly along the lines of the proto-agent and proto-patient properties of Dowty (1991).” Manning (1996:42) posits two notions of subject: argument structure subject and grammatical subject. He then shows how these two notions of subject have what he calls “inverse mapping” to produce syntactic ergativity. Example (244) below shows “direct mapping” which produces syntactic accusativity.

(244)	gr-structure		a-structure ²²
	SUBJ	←	A-subject (agent)
	OBJ	←	patient

Languages that exhibit an inverse mapping for transitive clauses, as in example (245) are syntactically ergative. In this case, the **A** is realized as the object, and the patient serves as the subject of the syntactically transitive clause.

²² In what follows, gr-structure stands for grammatical relations structure and a-structure for argument structure.



In ergative languages like Nehan, the linking of grammatical relations to semantic roles is different from what we see in English, where the agent is usually the subject and the patient is usually the object. The next two examples help to illustrate the ergative nature of Nehan. In example (246), an active transitive clause, the patient *niein* ‘food’ is the subject, and the agent ‘Rita’ is the object. Likewise, in example (247), the antipassive clause, the agent is the subject, and the patient is expressed as an oblique phrase.

(246) a. Active transitive:
 A ni-ein k-e-uasilung=ig Rita. PATIENT=subject
 ART NOM-eat PERF-3SG.A-cook=3PL.INAN.P R. AGENT=object
 ‘Rita cooked the food’ or ‘The food was cooked by Rita.’

(247) b. Antipassive:
 Rita k-e-uasilung tar ni-ein. AGENT=subject
 R. PERF-3SG-cook OBL NOM-eat PATIENT=oblique
 ‘Rita cooked the food.’

This is quite different from English. It is hard to comprehend the agent as an object and the patient as an oblique in a prepositional phrase, but there are many languages that have this type of syntax (Manning 1996:10). This is why some people like to gloss the Nehan transitive clause into an English passive and the antipassive voice as the English active voice. Other languages have a similar situation to Nehan. Phil Quick (2007:361), in his analysis of the inverse voice system of the Pendau language of

²³ In what follows, gr-structure stands for grammatical relations structure and a-structure for argument structure.

Indonesia, states: “Lexical Functional Grammar . . . is one theoretical model that allows the possibility for an actor (or agent) to be the grammatical object.”

4.5 Subjecthood properties in Nehan

In this section, various syntactic operations will be shown to select the absolutive argument as the grammatical subject. The absolutive is the single constituent **S** of an intransitive clause and the **P** of a transitive clause. The **A** argument of a transitive clause is the object. The **A** of a transitive clause can never be the grammatical subject in Nehan. The agent can only become the grammatical subject in an antipassive clause as the **S** core argument. In each of the syntactic operations that follow, the syntax of Nehan selects the absolutive argument, and not the ergative **A** argument as the grammatical subject.

4.5.1 *Coordinate Clauses*

In Nehan, there is a conjunction, *kar-*, which is a sequential conjunction (SEQ) meaning ‘and then’. It is prefixed to the **A** prefix of a transitive clause or the **S** prefix of an intransitive clause in the coordinate construction. This conjunction is also used when one clause follows another in a temporal sequence of events. When the absolutive arguments of both clauses are coreferential, the absolutive argument is deleted in the second clause. This fact supports the claim that the absolutive arguments are the grammatical subjects of their respective clauses.

In example (248), the first clause is syntactically intransitive with antipassive voice, and the patient, ‘the pig’, is expressed as an oblique phrase. The child is the subject and absolutive argument of the first clause as well as the understood subject and absolutive argument of the second clause. In example (249), the first clause is transitive. ‘The pig’ is the **P**/absolutive argument and subject of the first clause and is also the understood subject and absolutive argument of the second clause.

(248) A keketik k-e-bak pous tar hueit kar-e-ual-ualo.
 ART child PERF-3SG-throw crush OBL pig SEQ-3SG-RED-run
 ‘The child stoned the pig and then he ran.’

(249) A hueit k-e-bak pous=ini=r keketik kar-e-ual-ualo.
 ART pig PERF-3SG.A-throw crush=3SG.P=LIG child SEQ-3SG-RED-run
 ‘The child stoned the pig and then it ran.’

In example (250), ‘the woman’ is the absolutive argument **S** of the first and second clauses. The patient, ‘the pig’, is the oblique argument of an antipassive construction. Example (251) is ungrammatical, because the **A**, ‘the woman’, is not the absolutive argument of the second clause. Instead, ‘the pig’ is identified as **P** of the transitive clause and is the subject and absolutive argument of that clause.

(250) A kuaha k-e-ualo=me kar-e-me haluh tar hueit.
 ART woman PERF-3SG-run=DIR SEQ-3SG.A-come hit OBL pig
 ‘The woman came running and then came and hit the pig.’

(251) *A kuaha k-e-ualo=me kar-e-me haluh=ini=r hueit.
 ART woman PERF-3SG-run=DIR SEQ-3SG.A-come hit=3SG.P=LIG pig
 (For: ‘The woman came running and then came and hit the pig.’)

Example (251) could be made grammatical if the non-specific *a-* ‘3PL’ prefix is used. However, the meaning changes, as in example (252).

- (252) A kuaha k-e-ualo=me kar-a-me haluh=ini=r hueit.
 ART woman PERF-3SG-run=DIR SEQ-3PL.A-come hit=3SG.P=LIG pig
 ‘The woman came running and then they came and hit the pig.’

This pattern of coreferential absolutive argument deletion in coordinate clauses supports the claim that the absolutive argument is the subject of the clause in Nehan.

4.5.2 Purpose Clauses

Purpose clauses in Nehan also show syntactic ergativity. These clauses involve a purpose marker *mar-* ‘PUR’, which is prefixed to the **A/S** prefix. Purpose clauses are subordinate clauses which must be preceded by a matrix clause which expresses the main event. The absolutive argument of the matrix clause (controller) controls the unexpressed absolutive argument (controllee) of the purpose clause. In example (253), both clauses are intransitive; ‘the child’ (controller) is subject of the matrix clause and the understood subject (controllee) of the purpose clause. In the next example (254), the first clause is transitive, and the second is intransitive. ‘The chicken’ is the subject/absolutive patient of the matrix clause and the understood subject of the purpose clause.

- (253) A keketik k-e-gulet mar-e-la i teh.
 ART child PERF-3SG-arise PUR-3SG-go LOC beach
 ‘The child arose in order to go to the beach.’

- (254) A paol k-e-haluh=ini=r keketik mar-e-pung.
 ART chicken PERF-3SG.A-hit=3SG.P=LIG child PUR-3SG-fall
 ‘The child hit the chicken in order that it fall.’ (the chicken falls)

In example (255), both of the clauses are transitive with ‘the crab’ serving as both the subject/absolutive **P** of the matrix clause and the understood subject/patient of the

purpose clause. In example (256), the matrix clause is transitive, and the purpose clause is antipassive with the patient, ‘the children’, expressed as an oblique phrase. ‘The woman’ is the subject/absolutive **P** (controller) of the matrix clause and the understood subject/absolutive **S** (controllee) of the antipassive purpose clause. Example (257), however, is ungrammatical, because ‘the woman’ is the subject/absolutive argument of the matrix clause but cannot be the subject of the transitive purpose clause. The subject of the transitive purpose clause is the absolutive **P** ‘the children’.

(255) A milang k-e-kale=ini=r keketik
 ART crab.sp PERF-3SG.A-get=3SG.P=LIG child
 mar-o-uasilung=i.a.
 PUR-2SG.A-cook=SG.P=2SG.A
 ‘The child got the mangrove crab in order for you to cook it.’

(256) A kuaha k-e-kila=me=ini=r bulout
 ART woman PERF-3SG.A-call=DIR=3SG.P=LIG man
 mar-e-ua-gulete tasir keketik.
 PUR-3SG.A-CAUS-arise OBL.3PL child
 ‘The man called the woman to come in order to wake up the children.’

(257) *A kuaha k-e-kila=me=ini=r bulout
 ART woman PERF-3SG.A-call=DIR=3SG.P=LIG man
 mar-e-ua-gulet=isi=r keketik.
 PUR-3SG.A-CAUS-arise=PL.P=LIG child.
 (For: ‘The man called the woman to come in order to wake up the children.’)

These examples show that purpose constructions select the absolutive argument as the unexpressed subject (controllee) of the purpose clause. Kroeger (2004:287) states: “There is a strong cross-linguistic tendency for controllees to be grammatical subjects.”

This pattern of control in purpose clauses supports the claim that the absolutive argument is the grammatical subject in Nehan.

Controllees are normally grammatical subjects. There are cases, however, in which an ungrammatical purpose construction can be made grammatical by using the non-specific **A** prefix *a-* ‘3PL.A’. This is also an example of the functional equivalent of the passive, which is discussed further in section 3.4.2.

In the next three examples, the matrix clause is antipassive, and the subject/ absolutive argument of the matrix clause is the agent *tamat* ‘person’. Example (258) is grammatical, and the **S** of the matrix clause controls the subject (antipassive **S**) of the purpose clause. On the contrary, example (259) is ungrammatical, because the **A** cannot be the subject of the transitive purpose clause. If, however, the agent prefix of the purpose clause is changed to *a-* ‘3PL’, then the purpose clause becomes grammatical, as in example (260). There is no control in this example, because each clause has a different subject.

(258) A tamata k-e-kale tar milanga mar-e-uaselung
 ART person PERF-3SG-get OBL mangrove.crab PUR-3SG-cook

(tatanon).

(OBL.3SG)

‘The person got the mangrove crab in order to cook (it).’

(259) *A tamata k-e-kale tar milanga mar-e-uaselung=in.
 ART person PERF-3SG-get OBL mangrove.crab PUR-3SG.A-cook=3SG.P
 (For: ‘The person got the mangrove crab in order to cook it.’)

- (260) A tamata k-e-kale tar milanga mar-a-uaselung=in.
 ART person PERF-3SG-get OBL mangrove.crab PUR-3PL.A-cook=3SG.P
 ‘The person got the mangrove crab in order that they cook it.’

In a purpose construction where the non-specific *a-* 3PL.A ‘they’ is used in both clauses, as in example (261), both the matrix clause and the purpose clause can have different subjects. In such a case, the subject of the matrix clause does not control the subject of the purpose clause.

- (261) A kara k-a-bulaua=in mar-a-kale=igi=r palang.
 ART car PERF-3PL.A-buy=3SG.P PUR-3PL.A-get=3PL.INAN.P=LIG timber.
 ‘They bought a car in order to get the timber,’ or ‘A car was bought in order to get timber.’

4.5.3 *Control and Raising*

Complement clauses involving Equi²⁴ (control) or raising follow the same pattern and select the absolutive argument as the unexpressed/implicit subject of the complement clause.

Equi

Nehan control predicates, like *uedang* ‘try’ and *ualatoh* ‘command’, place a semantic restriction on their complement clauses. The complement clause must express a volitional action. Kroeger (1993:74), in discussing the controllee of the complement clause, cites Fodor (1974) and states: “controllees in Equi constructions must be

²⁴ Equi is short for “equivalent NP deletion”, and refers to an old transformational rule in which an equivalent NP is deleted in a complement clause. Equi constructions are now generally referred to as control.

construed as having some kind of control (in a semantic sense) over the event described in the complement clause.” Because of the semantic restriction that Equi verbs place on their complement clauses, the controllee of the complement clause must be a volitional agent, not a patient.

Nehan also puts syntactic constraints on the complement clause of an Equi predicate: the controllee must be the absolutive argument. The result of these two constraints is that if the complement clause is transitive, the agent must be the **S** of an antipassive clause. In discussing Dyirbal, a syntactically ergative language of Australia, Kroeger (1993:105) states: “Equi controllees could only be intransitive subjects, which are both initiators and terms. To appear as Equi complements, transitive verbs would have to undergo the antipassive rule, demoting the patient to oblique status and making the agent the subject.” This same pattern is illustrated in the next two sets of Nehan examples. In example (262), *tamat* ‘person’ is the understood agent/subject of the complement clause in antipassive voice. Example (263), however, is ungrammatical, and according to a native speaker, it “really does not make any sense at all.” The example is ungrammatical, because the controllee is a core argument but not the subject of the clause.

(262) A tamata k-e-uedang tar²⁵ tung pous tar soi.
 ART person PERF-3SG-try COMP fight crush OBL snake
 ‘The person tried to kill the snake.’

(263) *A tamata k-e-uedang tar tung pous=ini=r soi.
 ART person PERF-3SG.A-try COMP fight crush=3SG.P=LIG snake
 (For: ‘the person tried to kill the snake.’)

²⁵ The oblique marker *tar* can function as a complementizer to introduce a complement clause.

The second set of examples is similar. In example (264), the matrix clause is transitive, and ‘the children’ is the subject/patient of the matrix clause and also the subject/agent of the intransitive antipassive voice complement clause. In example (265), both clauses are antipassive voice. The subject of the matrix clause is ‘the teacher’, and the implicit subject of the complement clause is ‘the children’. Example (266) is ungrammatical; the matrix clause is transitive with ‘the children’ as the patient/subject. The complement clause is also transitive. The controllee (understood agent) is the ergative **A**, while the subject (**P**) is *um* ‘house’. This is not acceptable, because the controllee must be the absolutive **S** argument of the complement clause.

(264) O keketik k-e-ualatoho=isi=r titia tar io
 ART child PERF-3SG.A-order=3PL.P=LIG teacher COMP sweep
 tar um.
 OBL house
 ‘The teacher ordered the children to sweep the house/room.’

(265) A titia k-e-ualatoho tasir keketik tar io tar um.
 ART teacher PERF-3SG-order OBL.3PL child COMP sweep OBL house.
 ‘The teacher ordered the children to sweep the house/room.’

(266) *O keketik k-e-ualatoho=isi=r titia tar
 ART child PERF-3SG.A=ordered=3PL.P=LIG teacher COMP
 io=ini=r um.
 sweep=3SG.P=r house/room.
 (For: ‘The teacher ordered the children to sweep the house/room.’)

In the next two examples (267) and (268) the complement clause is intransitive. The first clause of example (267) is antipassive and the first clause of example (268) is transitive.

(267) Herod k-e-ualatoho tasir soldia tar la.
 H. PERF-3SG-ordered OBL.3PL soldier COMP go
 ‘Herod ordered the soldiers to go.’

(268) O soldia k-e-ualatoho=is Herod tar la.
 ART soldier PERF-3SG.A-ordered=PL.P H. COMP go
 ‘Herod ordered the soldiers to go.’

Like coordinate and purpose constructions, certain Equi constructions that have the **S/A** prefix in the complement clause can be made grammatical with use of the **A** non-specific *a-* 3PL prefix. In example (269), the matrix clause and complement clause are antipassive, and the patient ‘coconut’ is in an oblique phrase. The subject of the complement clause is the agent **S** ‘child’ *e-* 3SG. Example (270) is ungrammatical, because the **A** ‘the child’ cannot be made the controllee of the transitive Equi complement clause. Example (271) uses the **A** non-specific *a-* 3PL prefix on the complement verb and the construction is grammatical with the **P** ‘coconut’ as subject. There is no control in this construction, and there are two different agents.

(269) A mahoho k-e-ualatoho tar keketik e-la kale=me me
 ART elder PERF-3SG-order OBL child 3SG-go get=DIR INDEF.ART
 kuen.
 coconut
 ‘The elder ordered the child to go get a coconut.’

(270) *A mahoho k-e-ualatoho tar keketik e-la kale=me=ini=r
 ART elder PERF-3SG-order OBL child 3SG.A-go get=DIR=3SG.P=LIG
 kuen.
 coconut
 (For: ‘The elder ordered the child to go get a coconut.’)

(271) A mahoho k-e-ualatoho tar keketik **ra-la** kale=me=ini=r
 ART elder PERF-3SG-order OBL child 3PL.A-go get=DIR=3SG.P=LIG

kuen.

coconut

‘The elder ordered the child, for them to go get a coconut.’

Control constructions in Nehan select the absolutive argument as the unexpressed subject (controllee) of their complement clause. Since, cross-linguistically, controllees are typically the subject, this is further evidence that the absolutive argument is the grammatical subject in Nehan.

Raising

In subject-to-subject raising, the grammatical subject of the complement clause is raised to be the subject of the matrix clause. The verb of the matrix clause selects a dependent that is not its semantic argument but is instead the semantic argument of an embedded complement clause. If both clauses are transitive, the **P**/subject of the complement clause is raised to be the **P**/subject of the matrix clause as in example (272). The subject of both clauses is *a parau*, ‘the ship’. In example (273), the matrix clause is transitive, and the **P**/subject is the BRA.²⁶ The complement clause is antipassive, and the **S**/subject, ‘the BRA’, of the complement clause has been raised to be the subject of the matrix clause. Example (274) is ungrammatical. The subject of the transitive complement clause is the ship (**P**), and it must be the subject of the matrix clause, not the BRA.

²⁶ O BRA stands for the Bougainville Revolutionary Army.

- (272) A parau k-u-ate=i=o pare²⁷
 ART ship PERF-1SG.A-know=SG.P=1SG COMP
 k-a-du-dur=ini=r BRA.
 PERF-3PL.A-RED-sink=3SG.P=LIG BRA
 ‘I know that the BRA sank the ship.’
- (273) O BRA k-u-ate=si=o pare ka-du-dur
 ART BRA PERF-1SG.A-know=PL.P=1SG.A COMP PERF-3PL-RED-sink
 tar parau.
 OBL ship
 ‘I know that the BRA sank the ship.’
- (274) *O BRA k-u-ate=si=o pare
 ART BRA PERF-1SG.A-know=PL.P=1SG.A COMP
 k-a-du-dur=ini=r parau.
 PERF-3PL.A-RED- sink=3SG.P=LIG ship
 (For: ‘I know that the BRA sank the ship.’)

In example (275), both clauses are intransitive antipassive. The **S** argument of each clause is the subject: 1SG ‘I’ for the matrix clause and ‘the BRA’ for the complement clause. There is no raising in this construction. The absolutive arguments of both clauses are the subject of their respective clauses.

- (275) Inggo k-u-ate pare o BRA k-a-du-dur tar parau.
 1SG PERF-1SG-know COMP ART BRA PERF-3PL-RED-sink OBL ship
 ‘I know that the BRA sank the ship.’

The following examples use the verb *banga sir* ‘look like/appear’ as the matrix clause verb. These examples follow the same pattern as the previous examples, selecting the absolutive arguments as the grammatical subject. If the clause is transitive, the **P**

²⁷ *Pare* is often used as a complementizer. It means ‘that’ or ‘this’.

argument, not the **A** argument, is the grammatical subject. In example (276), the complement clause **P**/subject, ‘the pig’, is raised to be the subject of the matrix clause. In example (277), the **S**/subject of the antipassive complement clause, ‘Peter’, is raised to be the subject of the matrix clause. Example (278) is ungrammatical, because it raises the incorrect argument. The subject of the complement clause is ‘the pig’, and, therefore, the **A** argument ‘Peter’ cannot be raised to become the subject of the matrix clause.

(276) A hueit u-banga sira=i=o pare e-turu-ng
 ART pig 1SG.A-look like=SG.P=1SG.A COMP 3SG.A-will-AUX
 uenaua=in Pita.
 steal=3SG.P P.
 ‘It appears to me that Peter will steal the pig.’

(277) Pita u-banga sira=i=o pare e-turu-ng uenaua
 P. 1SG-look like =SG.P=1SG.A COMP 3SG-will-AUX steal
 tar hueit.
 OBL pig
 ‘It appears to me that Peter will steal the pig.’

(278) *Pita u-banga sira=i=o pare e-turu-ng
 P. 1SG.A-look like=SG.P=1SG.A COMP 3SG.A-will-AUX
 uenaua=ini=r hueit.
 steal=3SG.P=LIG pig
 (FOR: ‘It appears to me that Peter will steal the pig.’)

The next example (279) has no raising, and both matrix and complement clauses are intransitive.

(279) Inngo u-banga sira pare Pita e-turu-ng uenaua tar hueit.
 1SG 1SG-look like COMP P. 3SG-will-AUX steal OBL pig
 ‘It appears to me that Peter will steal the pig.’

The examples presented in this section have demonstrated that both Equi and raising constructions require the unexpressed subject of the complement clause to be its absolutive argument.

“Tough movement” Patient Raising

The following examples are similar to the previous examples of raising. They involve the Nehan verbs/adjectives *parakukuh* ‘difficult’ and *malagir* ‘easy’. In these clauses, the **A** prefix on the matrix predicate is 3SG, but there is no matrix **A** argument. In these examples, the patient of an embedded complement clause can be raised to become the subject of the matrix clause. The patient of the complement clause of example (280), *tinih* ‘canoe’, is raised in example (281) to be the subject of the matrix clause. Likewise, in example (282), the patient of the complement clause is *totoguo* ‘OBL.1SG’ and is raised to be the subject of the matrix clause in example (283). The only core argument in examples (281) and (283) is **P**.

(280) Inggeim k-e-parakukuh puku=**sieim** tar²⁸ reih kai tar tinih.
 1PL.EX PERF-3SG.A-difficult just=1PL.EX.P COMP pull up OBL canoe
 ‘It was difficult for us to pull up the canoe.’

(281) A tinih k-e-parakukuh puk=**in** tar reih kai.
 ART canoe PERF-3SG.A-difficult just=3SG.P COMP pull up
 ‘The canoe was difficult to pull up.’

(282) Ingga e-parakukuh puk=**ia** tar tur tane totoguo.
 2SG 3SG.A-difficult just=2SG.P COMP stand prevent OBL.1SG
 ‘It is difficult for you to oppose me.’

²⁸ The oblique marker *tar* is often used as complementizer in Nehan to introduce a complement clause.

- (283) Inngo e-parakukuh puk=**io** tar tur tane.
 1SG 3SG.A-difficult just=1SG.P COMP stand prevent
 ‘I am difficult to oppose.’

A few examples using the word *malagir* ‘easy’ are given here. Like the examples above, the **A** prefix is ‘3SG,’ but there is no matrix **A** argument. In example (284), the patient of the complement clause *kamuk* ‘crab’ is raised to be the subject of the matrix clause in example (285).

- (284) Inngo e-malagir=**io** tar kale me kamuk.
 1SG 3SG.A-easy=1SG.P COMP get INDF.ART crab
 ‘It is easy for me to get a crab.’

- (285) A kamuk e-malagir=**in** tar kale.
 ART crab 3SG.A-easy=3SG.P COMP get
 ‘A crab is easy to get.’

“Tough movement”, like other raising constructions already illustrated, selects the absolutive argument as the grammatical subject and never the ergative argument.

4.5.4 Question formation

In Nehan, when a question word corresponds to a core argument it must be the absolutive argument. **S** and **P** core arguments, but never the **A** argument, can be questioned. For example, in example (286), *Jon* the **S** argument is the subject of a simple intransitive clause. In example (287), the question word *mai* ‘who’ replaces John as the **S** argument of the clause. For transitive clauses, such as example (289), the question word *mai* ‘who’ refers to the **P** of a transitive clause and is, therefore, the absolutive argument. In example (290), the question word *mais* ‘who’ refers to the ergative **A** of the transitive

clause. The clause is ungrammatical, because the **A** is not the absolutive argument and cannot be questioned. If the clause is antipassive, with the patient expressed as an oblique phrase and the agent as the **S** of an intransitive clause, then the structure becomes grammatical, as in example (291).

- (286) Jon k-e-la.
 J. PERF-3SG-go
 ‘John went.’
- (287) Mai k-e-la?
 who PERF-3SG-go
 ‘Who went?’
- (288) Pita k-a-kuse=in=r polis.
 P. PERF-3PL.A-hold=3SG.P=LIG police
 ‘The police arrested Peter.’
- (289) Mai k-a-kuse=in=r polis?
 who PERF-3PL.A-hold=3SG.P=LIG police
 ‘Who did the police arrest?’
- (290) *Mai=s k-a-kuse=in Pita?
 who=3PL PERF-3PL.A-hold=3SG.P P.
 (For: ‘Who arrested Peter?’)
- (291) Mai=s k-a-kuse tang Pita?
 who=3PL PERF-3PL-hold OBL P.
 ‘Who arrested Peter?’

The question word *hau* ‘what’ often selects the **P** absolutive argument to be questioned, as in example (292) where the question word *hau* ‘what’ corresponds to the **P** core argument. It can also replace an oblique argument, as in example (293).

- (292) A **hau** r=o-guata=i=a?
 ART what LIG=2SG.A-do=SG.P=2SG.A
 ‘What are you doing?’

- (293) Inggono k-e-heir tar **haua=r** noguo.
 3SG PERF-3SG-give OBL what=LIG PO.1SG
 ‘He gave what was mine.’

Other question words commonly seen in Nehan are *mangih* ‘when’, *hope* ‘how’, and *ae maene* ‘why reason here’. These examples show that adjuncts can also be questioned.

- (294) **Mangiha** k-o-me pokos=a=ane?
 when PERF-2SG-come arrive=2SG=DEM
 ‘When did you arrive here?’
- (295) **Hope** r=o-namana pe=a?
 how LIG=2SG-think MAN=2SG
 ‘How do you think?’
- (296) **Ae ma=ene** r=o-guat=a?
 why REA=DEM LIG=2SG-do=2SG
 ‘Why are you doing that?’ Lit. ‘Why reason here you doing?’

As the examples above show, questioning core arguments are restricted in Nehan to absolutive arguments. Manning (1996:24-25) gives evidence from the Mayan language, Mam, and states, “Similar evidence of syntactic ergativity appears in question formation. The **S**²⁹ and **O (P)** can be simply questioned, while questioning an **A** is impossible without a change to antipassive verbal morphology.” Also Trick (2006:13-15) for Sama Sothern (south-western Philippines) states: “In Sinama, Wh-question formation follows an ergative pattern of syntactic control. **S** and **O (P)** may be questioned; **A** may not.” This is further support that in Nehan absolutive arguments function as grammatical subjects.

²⁹ Core arguments made bold for emphasis.

4.5.5 *Relative Clauses*

Relative clauses also show the subjecthood properties of the absolutive argument, because only the absolutive argument can be relativized. Nehan uses a gap strategy, which means that the relativized subject of the relative clause is not expressed in the relative clause except as a core prefix or core enclitic. Both core and oblique phrases can contain a relative clause. Examples (297) and (299) show oblique NPs which contain a relative clause; in both cases, the relativized argument is **P**. Example (298) has a left-dislocated core NP which serves as the head of a relative clause in which the relativized argument is the **S** of an antipassive.

- (297) Ra-la marang kalekinale baka poluku=mpe **tar** **kalekinale**
 3PL-go want work first again=EMP OBL work
- ra-kal-kalekinale teil=in tena uma Pita.
 3PL.A-RED-work about=3SG.P OBL.PCL.3SG house P.
 ‘They just want to first go work again the work which they are working at Peter’s house.’
- (298) **A** **kuah=on=ene** r=e-mene-mene totoguo inggon
 ART woman=3SG=DEM LIG=3SG-RED-speak OBL.1SG 3SG
- a kuaha liouan.
 ART woman spirit
 ‘This woman here who was speaking to me, she was a woman spirit.’
- (299) K-a-la heheke poluku=io **tar** **inete=nine** k-a-tupara
 PERF-3PL.A-go question again=1SG.P OBL thing-DEM PERF-3PL.A-find
- to=ig tar limo-guo.
 SPG=3PL.INAN.P OBL hand-1SG
 ‘They went and questioned me again about these things which they found there in my hand.’

Comrie (1989:156) lists the accessibility hierarchy for relative clauses as “subject > direct object > non-direct object > possessor.” This hierarchy means that relative clauses are more likely to relativize on subjects than any other category. Nehan only relativizes on subjects, i.e. the absolutive arguments, and never relativizes on the ergative **A** of a transitive clause.

Relative clauses can be introduced by a relativizer (REL) *ge*³⁰. There are cases which lack a relativizer and have only a relative clause juxtaposed to a NP, as in example (300). This example is taken from a text about a snake that came to a house, where her daughter lived, to get food. In this example, the noun *tena ni-ein* ‘her food’ is modified by the relative clause *k-e-ua-toko=igi=r tu-n* ‘which her child had put’. The enclitic *=igi* ‘3PL.INAN’ agrees with the head noun ‘food’, which is understood as being the **P** subject of the relative clause.

(300) Kar-e-me ein tena ni-ein
 SEQ-3SG=come eat OBL.PCL.3SG NOM-eat

k-e-ua-toko=igi=r

tu-n.

PERF-3SG.A=CAUS-locate=3PL.INAN.P=LIG child=3SG

‘And then it (the snake) came and ate its food (the snake’s food) which her child had put.’

In the following examples, the head noun of the relative clause is the ‘coconut crab’. In example (301), the relativized argument is the absolutive **P**, ‘the coconut crab’.

³⁰ *Ge-* is a multi function morpheme. It can also precede other types of dependent clauses. Often people leave it out in fast speech and insert it in written text.

Example (302) is ungrammatical, because the relative clause is an antipassive; thus, the absolutive argument is not the coconut crab but the **S** argument *u-* 1SG ‘I’.

- (301) Inggono k-e-eit=ini=r kilon=ene
 3SG PERF-3SG.A-bite=3SG.P=LIG coconut.crab=DEM

ge-k-u-haluh=i.o.

REL-PERF-1SG.A-hit=SG.P=1SG.A

‘He was bitten by the coconut crab here which I hit.’

- (302) *Inggono k-e-eit=ini=r kilon=ene
 3SG PERF-3SG.A-bite=3SG.P=LIG coconut.crab=DEM

ge-k-u-haluh tatanon.

REL-PERF=1SG.A=hit OBL.3SG

(For ‘He was bitten by the coconut crab here which I hit.’)

Example (303) is grammatical, because ‘the coconut crab’ is the absolutive **S** argument of the antipassive relative clause in which the patient is expressed as an oblique phrase. On the other hand, example (304) is ungrammatical, because ‘the coconut crab’ is the **A** of the transitive relative clause and cannot be the relativized argument.

- (303) Inggono k-e-eit=ini=r kilon=ene
 3SG PERF-3SG.A-bite=3SG.P=LIG coconut.crab=DEM

ge-k-e-eit baka uoum totoguo.

REL-PERF-3SG-bite first ahead OBL.1SG

‘He was bitten by the coconut crab here which already bit me.’

- (304) *Inggono k-e-eit=ini=r kilon=ene
 3SG PERF-3SG.A-bite=3SG.P=LIG coconut.crab=DEM

ge-k-e-eit baka uoum=io.

REL-PERF=3SG.A-bite first ahead=1SG.P

(FOR: ‘He was bitten by the coconut crab here which already bit me.’)

These examples show that relative clauses give additional evidence for the absolutive argument as the grammatical subject.

4.5.6 *Cleft construction*

The cleft construction in Nehan is initiated with the *te* morpheme which is glossed as ‘it is’. The clause following the cleft is a dependent clause, similar to a relative clause, in which the absolutive argument is the focus of the cleft. In example (305), ‘the snake’ is the absolutive argument and subject of the cleft sentence, and the patient is expressed as an oblique phrase of an antipassive clause. In example (306), the child is the absolutive **P** argument and the subject of the cleft sentence. Example (307), however, is questionable; the only possible interpretation for it would be ‘It is the snake that the child bit’. These demonstrate that the **A** of a transitive clause cannot be the focus of a cleft construction.

(305) Te=r soi k-e-eit tar keketik.
 CLT=LIG snake PERF-3SG-bite OBL child
 ‘It is the snake that bit the child.’

(306) Te=r keketik k-e-eit=ini=r soi.
 CLT=LIG child PERF-3SG.A-bite=3SG.P=LIG snake
 ‘It is the child that the snake bit.’

(307) ?Te=r soi k-e-eit=ini=r keketik.
 CLT=LIG snake PERF-3SG.A-bite=3SG.P=LIG child
 (Cannot mean: ‘It is the snake that bit the child.’)

In this section, it has been shown that the cleft construction selects for the absolutive arguments **S** or **P**. The focus of the cleft must be the absolutive argument, providing additional evidence that the absolutive argument is the grammatical subject.

4.6 Another ergative type construction

In this section possessor raising, another type of construction where ergativity is found, is discussed.

4.6.1 Possessor raising

In this type of construction, only the possessor NP of a possessed NP is raised and fronted in a transitive clause. The possessed NP follows the verb and is marked on the verb with the **P** agreement enclitic. In example (308), the pronoun *inggo* ‘1SG’ is the possessor and is raised and fronted. The possessed NP, *no-go galas* ‘my (diving) glass’, follows the verb and is marked on the verb with *=in* ‘3SG.P’ enclitic. The **A** is a non-specific ‘3PL’ *a-* prefixed on the verb. In these constructions, a non-core argument, or possessor, is made into a core argument of the verb. Both possessor and possessed NPs are core and absolutive arguments of the clause. In example (309), the possessed NP *na ni-guata ua-sa* ‘his sins’ follows the verb and the possessor *inggono* ‘3SG’ precedes the verb. This type of construction is also found in intransitive clauses, as in example (310), in which the possessor *inggeim* 1PL.EX ‘we’ is fronted, and the possessed NP *botol* ‘bottle’ follows the intransitive verb *biol* ‘empty’. Example (311) involves inalienable possession.

The possessor raising construction is not common and needs more study. Examples of possessor raising with **A** core argument other than *a-* ‘3PL’ have not been found. This construction is similar to the transitive clauses discussed in section 3.4.2 in which a clause with a non-specific agent is a type of passive substitute. The **A** argument

can sometimes be identified from the context but can never be realized as an NP in this type of clause, because the limit is two core NPs per clause. In example (308), the fish is the non-specific **A** that knocks away the mask. In example (309), the agent is non-specific and not identified in the text. In example (311), the **A** core argument of clause is the people referred to as *a*- ‘3PL’. Transitive clauses can select three core arguments in this type of clause, but only two can be overtly expressed. This is the only type of clause found in Nehan where a transitive clause has three core arguments. Joyce Wood (2012:41-41) describes a similar construction in the Urim language of Papua New Guinea.

(308) Inngo k-a-posar bise=in no-go galas.
 1SG PERF-3PL.A-slap away=3SG.P PCL-1SG glass
 ‘I had my diving glass knocked away by them.’

(309) Inggono k-a-kuse luara=ig na ni-guata ua-sa.
 3SG PERF-3PL.A-hold let.go=3PL.INAN.P PCL.3SG NOM-do CAUS-bad
 ‘He had his sins forgiven.’

(310) Inggeim k-e-biol nami botol.
 1PL.EX PERF-3SG-empty PCL.1PL.EX bottle
 ‘Our bottle is empty.’

(311) Inggono k-a-uoto tiein tane baka=igi=r
 3SG PERF-3PL.A-HAB chain prevent first=3PL.INAN.P=LIG

lima-n.
 hand/arm-3SG
 ‘They always chained his arms.’

Since only the possessor of the **P** absolutive argument can be raised, this construction also shows the preference for the absolutive argument as the grammatical subject.

4.7 Chapter conclusion

In this chapter, it has been argued that Nehan syntax shows a syntactically ergative pattern. In the first part of this chapter, the theoretical basis for this argument was discussed. This included a discussion of transitivity and the relationship between semantic roles and grammatical relations. Citing the work of Kroeger (2004:308) and Manning (1996:41-42), it was shown that in the transitive clause of a syntactically ergative language, the absolutive **P** is the grammatical subject, while the ergative **A** is the object. In an antipassive clause, the absolutive argument **S** is the subject, while the patient is expressed as an oblique phrase. Various syntactic tests were applied to determine the subject. These tests were exemplified in coordinate constructions, purpose clauses, Equi and raising constructions, question formation, relative clauses, and cleft constructions. Each construction demonstrated the subjecthood properties of the absolutive argument in Nehan. Another ergative type of construction, possessor raising, was discussed.

van den Berg and Glennon (2008) proposed a different analysis for transitivity in their paper. A transitive clause with a fronted core **P** NP was called an ‘inverse clause’. The transitive clause without fronted **P** NP was simply called ‘transitive’. The clause with a patient expressed in an oblique phrase was called ‘semi-transitive’. In that study, ergativity was not considered as a possibility for understanding the syntax and grammatical relations of Nehan. In the conclusion of that paper, however, the following question was asked: “Are there other criteria which can help to define the notions ‘subject’ and ‘object’?” It is hoped that this thesis, and especially this chapter, has helped to

answer this question. The various syntactic constructions, presented in this chapter, provide tests to determine the syntactically ergative nature of Nehan and identify the subject of the clause as the absolutive argument.

5 THE ANTIPASSIVE AND TRANSITIVE VOICES IN NEHAN DISCOURSE

5.1 Introduction

Nehan has a two voice system consisting of the ergative transitive voice (Tr) and the antipassive voice (APV). These two voice constructions were described in section 1.5.3. The main purpose of this chapter is to look at how voice selection is made between these two types of voices in Nehan discourse. While this chapter does not directly deal with the issue of syntactic ergativity, it does show how the APV and Tr voice are used in the language and in narrative text material. To do this, the chapter will look at the following: 1) discourse grounding, including both foreground and background; 2) topicality of referents in a discourse utilizing the measurable parameters of referential distance and topic persistence; and 3) the introduction of new referents into a discourse.

It will be argued that the agent of the antipassive voice (APV) is the most topical participant in the narrative discourse. The topicality of patient is less prominent in voice selection. The **S** argument of intransitive clauses and oblique patient of APV clauses are the preferred means of introducing new referents into a discourse.

In this study, four separate texts were used. All of these were spoken narrative texts, transcribed with help of Nehan speakers. Most of the examples in this chapter are taken from those texts. The number of total clauses in these texts is 503.

5.2 Discourse parameters

Prior to the discussion of grounding and topicality, the methodology used to measure these parameters will be presented.

I Wayan Pastika (1999), in his dissertation on Balinese discourse, considered two types of transitive voices and a passive voice. He has developed several methods for measuring correlates of voice selection in Balinese. For grounding, he separates foreground, the main event line, from background, the supportive material to the main event line. Pastika uses several indicators to distinguish background from foreground, including degree of transitivity, as described by Hopper and Thompson (1980), and word order. Under topicality, he measures referential distance (RD), or how recently the participant is mentioned in the previous three clauses, and topic persistence (TP), or how often the participant is mentioned in the following ten clauses.

The overall frequency for antipassive and transitive main clauses in the Nehan text corpus of this study is shown in Table 12 below. Main clauses are clauses that are not subordinate or dependent, such as relative and purpose clauses. The table shows that the antipassive voice is used in 72% of the 195 semantically transitive main clauses in the four narrative texts.

Table 12: Voice selection in semantically transitive main clauses

APV	Tr	Total
140 (72%)	55 (28%)	195 (100%)

For semantically transitive clauses, APV clauses predominate in recorded narrative texts. APV clauses are even more prevalent in written narratives. These frequencies can change depending on the genre of text studied. For example, in a procedural text about making charcoal, over 80% of the main transitive clauses were Tr. Although the number of Tr main clauses is low in narrative texts, there are quite a few found in subordinate clauses, such as relative and purpose clauses.

5.2.1 Foreground and Background

Pastika (1999:142) makes a distinction between foreground events (FG) and background events (BG) by studying various criteria. Several of these criteria are specific to Balinese, such as linkers and particles that signal FG or BG information. Word order and degree of transitivity are also considered in relation to FG and BG.

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to look at all of these factors, so the discussion will focus on those that have significant bearing on FG and BG in Nehan. Aspect is an important criterion in foreground and background information in Nehan discourse. Nehan makes a distinction between imperfective aspect, which is unmarked, and perfective aspect, which is marked with the prefix *k-* that is attached to the **S/A** prefix on the verb complex. Longacre (1985:69) states that “In languages with tense-aspect systems, the event line (foreground) is likely to be marked by verbs in the past tense or in the completive/perfective aspect.” Miller (2007:334) also describes the perfective particle

ai as marking the event line (foreground) of a discourse in West Coast Bajau. In both of these cases, it is the perfective aspect which marks foreground clauses.

In Nehan narratives, foreground clauses use the perfective aspect. The next example (312) is a small section of foreground text from a shark attack story, and all verbs are marked perfective here. The second verb is different as it is preceded by a sequential conjunction *kar-* which continues the perfective aspect from the previous clause into the following clause.

- (312) K-e-luluhu=mpe=ha=r sioko=r bakue **kar**-e-eit siau,
 PERF-3SG-fly=EMP=DIR=LIG one=LIG shark SEQ.PERF-3SG-bite miss

k-e-eit siau tar tangili.

PERF-3SG-bite miss OBL mackerel

‘The one shark came and flew indeed, and then bit and missed, it bit and missed the mackerel.’

Background clauses are supportive material to the main event line of the discourse. They can be main or subordinate clauses. Often in Nehan, background clauses are marked with imperfective aspect, and these clauses may be equative. Examples (313) and (314) are from a short section of background information from the same story about a shark attack. The speaker in this section is describing his son who is in a canoe not far away. All the verbs in this section are marked with imperfective aspect.

- (313) Inggo u-banga sira puk pare r=e-lou-lou pe=ono
 1SG 1SG-look like just COMP LIG=3SG-RED-spit MAN=3SG

pah-e-marang lua sikor pare r=e-lou-lou pe.
 IRR-3SG-want vomit somewhat COMP LIG-3SG-RED-spit MAN
 ‘It just looks like to me as though he is spitting, as though he wants to vomit like
 he is spitting.’

- (314) E-marang lua sikoro tar hau=on a butuan
 3SG-want vomit somewhat OBL what=3SG ART waves
 ginin a uleik sikoro tar binak=on.
 3PL.INAN ART big somewhat OBL time=3SG
 ‘He wants to vomit because the waves were somewhat large at that time.’

Using the criteria listed above for FG and BG, a study of the corpus of 503 clauses was conducted to determine which APV and Tr main clauses are FG and BG. The distribution results in Table 13 below show that the preference for APV is slightly higher in background clauses (79% compared to 21% Tr clauses) than in the corpus as a whole. In foreground, the APV to Tr clause ratio is close to the 72%-28% ratio seen in Table 12 for the corpus as a whole.

Table 13: FG and BG distribution of APV and Tr clauses in narrative texts

Voice	Foreground	Background	Total
APV	110 70%	30 79%	140 72%
Tr	47 30%	8 21%	55 28%
total	157	38	195

5.2.2 Topicality: Referential Distance and Topic Persistence

Pastika (1999:189) uses two parameters to judge topicality in discourse: referential distance (RD) and topic persistence (TP), as defined by Givón (1994:10). The

measurements are quite detailed, and the reader is encouraged to refer to the original study to see how the author, Givón, describes them. A brief introduction of RD is presented here. RD, or referential distance, refers to how recently a referent has been mentioned in the previous three clauses. A referent receives a $RD = 1$, if mentioned in the previous clause; $RD = 2$, if mentioned in the second previous clause; $RD = 3$, if mentioned in the third previous clause; and $RD = >3$, if not mentioned in the previous three clauses.

Table 14 gives the RD values for referents in 140 APV clauses and 55 Tr clauses.

Table 14: Referential distance for all texts

Referential Distance		RD of 1	RD of 2/3	RD of >3	total
APV	agt (S)	99	21	20	140
	pat (OBL or Ø)	58	23	59	140
Tr	agt (A)	18	4	33	55
	pat (P)	25	7	23	55

In Table 14, the number of APV clauses with an RD value of 1-3 for the patient is $58+23=81$, while the number of Tr with 1-3 RD value for the **P** is $25+7=32$. The total number of clauses is 113. This means that 72% of the clauses with topical patients appear in APV, while 28% are Tr. These figures mirror the percentages for the total corpus given in Table 12. It shows that the topicality of the patient has little effect on voice selection.

Table 14 also shows that the number of APV clauses with an RD value of 1-3 for the agent is $99+21=120$, and the number of Tr clauses with 1-3 RD values for the **A** is $18+4=22$. The total number of clauses with an RD value of 1-3 for the agent is 142. This

means that 85% of the clauses with topical agents appear in APV, compared with 15% in Tr. This shows that the topicality of agents has some effect on voice selection; APV is somewhat more frequent when agent is topical than in the corpus as a whole.

The data for topical persistence in Table 15 below is similar to that for RD. TP measures how many times the referent under investigation is mentioned in the following ten clauses. 3+ means the referent is mentioned more than 3 times. This scale then counts the exact number of times: 3, 2, and 1. A \emptyset is given if there is no mention of the referent in the following ten clauses. The total number of clauses is lower for TP than RD, because no count is made for the last ten clauses of a text. However, if the referent is mentioned just before these final ten clauses, these clauses are included in assessing topical persistence of that referent.

Table 15: Topical persistence for all texts

Topical Persistence		TP of 3/3+	TP of 1-2	TP of \emptyset	total
APV	agt (S)	91	27	13	131
	pat (OBL or \emptyset)	57	39	35	131
Tr	agt (A)	11	5	35	51
	pat (P)	24	18	12	51

In Table 15, the number of APV clauses with TP value of 1-3 or more for the patient is $57+39=96$, and the number of Tr clauses with a 1-3 or more TP value for **P** is $24+18=42$. The total number of clauses is 138. APV in clauses with topical patient is 70% and the percentage of Tr clauses is 30%. These figures also mirror the percentages for the

total corpus given in Table 12. It shows that the topicality of the patient has little effect on voice selection.

In Table 15, the TP value of 1-3 or more in APV clauses for agent is $91+27=118$, and in Tr clauses for the **A** is $11+5=15$. The total number of clauses is 133. The percentage of APV in clauses with topical agent is 89% and the percentage of Tr clauses is 11%. This is consistent with the findings based on RD: the topicality of the agent does have some influence on the selection of voice. APV clauses are somewhat more strongly preferred when the agent is topical than in the corpus as a whole.

When considering non-topical agents, however, there are $13(\text{APV}) + 35(\text{Tr}) = 48$ clauses with a TP of \emptyset ; $35/48 = 73\%$ of these are Tr clauses. It is similar with non-topical agents that have a RD of >3 of which there are $20 + 33=53$ in the data set. $33/53=62\%$ of these are Tr clauses. When the agent is non-topical, there is a fairly strong preference for Tr clauses, in contrast to the general pattern of preference for APV in the corpus as a whole. This correlation is strengthened by the fact that 53% of Tr clauses have non-specific agents, which receive a TP of \emptyset and an RD of >3 in calculating topicality.

If the RD and TP measurements of topicality are combined, the data in Table 16 result.

Table 16: Frequency of relative topicality of referents in transitive clause types
(combined RD+TP)

	APV		Tr		Total	
TopA + NtopP	10	100%	Ø		10	100%
TopA + TopP	6	75%	2	25%	8	100%
NtopA + TopP	Ø		5	100%	5	100%
NtopA + NtopP	1	25%	3	75%	4	100%

The measurements in this table are more restrictive, measuring topicality (Top) of a referent with a RD value of 1 and TP of 3+ and non-topical (Ntop) referents as those with a RD value of >3 and TP of Ø. There are only 27 main transitive clauses that fit these criteria in the corpus. This number is probably too low to serve as the basis for any firm conclusions. For clauses with a topical agent and a topical patient (second row), 75% are APV clauses compared to 25% Tr clauses. These percentages are close to the percentages given for the total corpus given in Table 12. Rows 1 and 3 suggest that when only one argument is topical, the APV is preferred with a topical agent (first row) and Tr clauses are preferred with a topical patient (third row).

5.2.3 Introduction of new referents into text

John DuBois (1987:827) in his article titled: “The Discourse Basis of Ergativity,” looks at the first mention of a referent in discourse. He finds that the core arguments **S** and **O (P)** have the highest frequency for first mention of referents and that oblique arguments are almost equal to **S** in first mention of referents. The **A** core argument has the lowest number. This study of Nehan narrative texts also shows that new referents can be introduced for the first time in oblique phrases. It was shown in sections 4.3.4 and

4.3.5 that oblique phrases in Nehan may contain the patient of the APV as well as other semantic roles. Table 17 gives the breakdown of how new referents are introduced into the texts used in this study. This table shows a strong preference for new referents to be introduced as the oblique patient of an APV clause (14 instances) or as the S of an intransitive clause (10 instances).

Table 17: First mention of referents

First mention of Referents	APV agt=1, pat=14	Tr P=1, A=1	Intransitive S=10
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Dixon (1994:209), echoing DuBois, claims that it is very rare for new referents to be introduced as an **A** of a transitive clause. DuBois (1987:823-827) uses the term PAS (Preferred Argument Structure) to explain the constraints on **A** arguments in discourse. He explains that there is a preference, in languages, for the **S** and **P** NPs, the absolutive arguments, over **A** NPs, in first mention of participants in a discourse. Specifically, he states, “avoid introducing a new referent in A-role argument position.” It was stated earlier in section 1.5.3 that Nehan prefers a single overt NP in clause structure, and in Table 17 of this chapter, it was demonstrated that, for the first mention of participants, the preference is for the **S** argument of an intransitive clause and the patient argument of an APV clause. These findings partially correlate with Dubois, revealing a preference for S of an intransitive clause and the patient of an APV clause (but not P of the transitive clause) over the A of a Tr clause.

In the following examples, from the introduction to the ‘Manukeke’ story, the first three referents, namely the four boys, the birds, and Manukeke, are introduced sequentially as **S** of intransitive clause, oblique patient of an APV, and possessor of the patient of an APV. This mirrors Table 17 above.

- (315) A sioko=r binak o tan toueiti=r keketik k-a-buai.
 ART one=LIG time ART.PL PER four=LIG child PERF-3PL-hunt.birds
 ‘One time, four boys went bird hunting.’
- (316) K-a-uana manasa=mpe=sina tasir tetiau.
 PERF-3PL-shoot now=EMP=3PL OBL.PL bird
 ‘They shot now indeed the birds.’
- (317) Gisina ra-ate=mpe tena uana Manukeke.
 3PL 3PL-know=EMP PCL.3SG village M.
 They know indeed Manukeke’s village.’

5.3 Chapter conclusion

This chapter looked at the choice made between two types of semantically transitive clauses in Nehan narrative discourse: antipassive voice (APV) and active transitive voice (Tr). The discourse parameters used in this chapter are those followed by I Wayan Pastika (1999) in his study of Balinese discourse.

In the Nehan narrative texts, APV is the predominant clause type. 72% of the 195 semantically transitive main clauses in the corpus were APV, and 28% were Tr causes. In foreground, the choice between APV and Tr clauses was 70%/30%, which follows the percentages for the corpus as a whole. For background, APV clauses were slightly more preferred (79%/21%).

Topicality measured referential distance (RD) and topical persistence (TP) of referents. APV clauses were preferred when the agent was topical, while Tr clauses were preferred when the agent was non-topical. In all the texts in this study, new referents are introduced as the oblique phrase of an APV clause or the **S** of an intransitive clause.

The APV clauses are the most frequent semantically transitive clauses in all of the texts studied for this chapter, except for the text *Laer i Uaneran*, ‘Trip to Uaneran’, where APV and Tr clauses were about equal in number. In other types of discourse, the situation can be different. As already stated, in a procedural discourse text with 27 main transitive clauses (describing how to make charcoal), 89% of the transitive clauses were Tr, and 11% were APV.

Many narrative texts collected from older speakers have more Tr clauses than those collected from younger speakers. Some writers prefer APV clauses for most transitive clauses. Is Nehan in the process of changing from an ergative language to an accusative one? Or was this phenomenon provoked from the elicitation process as perhaps the nominative/accusative pattern of English, a language which has high prestige among the Nehan people, has influence among the younger speakers? Additionally, Tok Pisin, the *lingua franca* of Papua New Guinea, another nominative/accusative language, is second to English in prestige on Nissan. It, too, influences Nehan.

6 TYPOLOGY

6.1 Nehan and related languages

In the region of Oceania³¹ near Nehan, no other language to date has been analyzed as having syntactic ergativity. There are two languages close to Nehan, however, in which there is some data which show similarities in syntax to Nehan, namely, Allen (1987:95-96) for Halia, and Mosel and Thiesen (2007:9.1) for Teop. Both languages are approximately 50-100 miles south of Nehan. Allen gives several examples of what he calls ‘Indicative Actor Focus’ and ‘Indicative Non-actor Focus’. Example (318) is of Indicative Actor Focus and examples (319) and (320) are of Indicative Non-actor Focus. The author gives only a few examples of Indicative Non-actor Focus in the grammar. Perhaps these are examples of the passive substitute that was discussed in section 3.4.2 since the agent in both cases is glossed as just ‘they’. No examples were found with a specific agent NP.

(318) Nonei e kui-e-na a luma.
he v³² work-tr-he c house
‘He is building a house.’

(319) A kiou e na kaho tal-e-r.
c hole v go dig now-tr-they
‘A hole will be dug now’ (Lit: ‘A hole they go dig now.’)

³¹ Oceania refers to the islands of the tropical Pacific Ocean.

³² Halia abbreviations are: c ‘classifier’, d ‘dependent prefix’, rf ‘referent (sing.)’, tr ‘transitive, v ‘verbalizer’.

- (320) A mate e na kaho tala-ne-r.
 c dead v go dig now-rf-they
 ‘The dead man will be buried now.’ (Lit: ‘The dead they go dig concerning now.’)

The situation is also similar in what he calls ‘Question Actor Focus’ and ‘Question Non-actor Focus’. Example (321) is of Question Actor Focus and example (322) is of Question Non-actor Focus. However, in example (322) the agent is a specific NP glossed as ‘you’, not an indefinite ‘they’.

- (321) Esi t-e na lu-e-na-ma a il?
 who d-v go get-tr-he-come c hook
 ‘Who will go get the hook?’

- (322) Aha t-e kato-e-mu lö?
 what d-v do-tr-you you
 ‘What are you doing?’

Allen states: “The object (non-actor) focus is similar in meaning to, but different grammatically from/to, the English passive, as Halia verb morphology does not change (except in allomorphic form) when the focus changes.” This language is also mentioned here, because Halia is considered to be the closest Austronesian language to Nehan even though cognate counts are low. A similar construction is seen in the Teop language of North Bougainville. Mosel and Thiesen (2007:9.1) state: “Teop does not distinguish between active and passive voice.” In example (323) the agent is fronted and in example (324) the patient is fronted.

- (323) A beiko te-naa paa asun-u bene³³ guu.
 ART³⁴ child PREP-1SG TAM kill-IM OBJ.ART pig
 ‘My child has killed the pig.’
- (324) E guu paa asun-u a beiko te-naa
 BASIC.ART pig TAM kill-IM BASIC.ART child PREP-1SG
 ‘The pig has been killed by my child.’

Example (325) from Teop (Mosel and Thiesen (2007:9.1)) is of a construction with a non-specific agent “impersonal 3PL pronoun.” This is similar to the Nehan examples illustrated in section 3.4.2.

- (325) A si otei paa asun vahaa koa v-ori hanana.
 ART DIM man TAM kill again just IM-3PL road
 ‘The man was killed on the road (Lit. ‘The man they just killed on the road.’)

Further study will need to be done comparing Nehan and adjacent languages in order to understand how the syntax in these and other languages is similar or dissimilar from Nehan.

Several Oceanic languages in other regions are described as having some type of ergativity. These include: Samoan (Chung (1978), Ochs (1982), and Mosel and Hovdhaugen (1992)); the Tongan language (Dukes 1998); and the Takuu language (Moyle 2011). These are all Polynesian languages. The Oceanic Melanesian language, Roviana, in the Solomon Islands, has been described by Corston (1996) as having ergative morphology and some ergative syntax.

³³ It could not be determined if *bene* ‘OBJ.ART’ can function as an oblique marker or not. Further study is needed to determine its function.

³⁴ Abbreviation for Teop are: ART ‘article’, BASIC.ART ‘basic article’, DIM ‘diminutive particle’, IM ‘immediateness marker’, PREP, ‘the multi purpose preposition *te-*’, TAM ‘pre-nuclear tense/aspect/mood marker’, 1SG ‘first person singular’.

Some Austronesian languages on the mainland of Papua New Guinea have been described as ergative, including Motu (Dixon (1994:58) and Sinauḡoro (Tauberschmidt and Bala (1992)).

To the west and north of Papua New Guinea are Indonesia and the Philippines where a number of Austronesian languages have been described as having ergative syntax. These include: Balinese (Wechsler and Arka (1998)), Sama Southern (Trick (2006)), Pangutaran (Walton (1986)), and Sama Bangingi' (Gault (1999)).

Several of the Taiwanese indigenous languages are described as having ergative morphology and syntax³⁵ similar to Nehan. Ross (2002:31), in describing the Paiwan language of Taiwan, uses example (326). The equivalent Nehan example is presented in (327). Both of these examples demonstrate the antipassive construction. Example (328) is the corresponding transitive clause in Nehan.

(326) Na qci a caucau tua vatu tua paŋul.
 PF³⁶ <AV>kill SPEC person NPIV dog NPIV cudgel
 'The man killed a dog with a cudgel.'

(327) K-e-haluh pous keipi=r tamata tar lo tar pus.
 PERF-3SG-hit crush bring=LIG person OBL dog OBL club
 'The man killed the dog with the club.'

(328) A lo k-e-haluh pous keip=ini=r tamata tar pus.
 ART dog PERF-3SG.A-hit crush bring=3SG.P=LIG person OBL club
 'The man killed the dog with the club.'

In reference to example (326), Ross (2002:31) states:

³⁵ See Liao (2002) for Kavalan and Huang (1993) for Atayal.

³⁶ PF for perfective, AV for agent voice, SPEC for specific (phrase marker), NPIV for non-pivot, LOC for location

In (326) *tua paŋul*, ‘NPIV cudgel’, is peripheral and therefore oblique. This means that the patient *tua vatu*, ‘NPIV dog’, is also oblique, and the clause is intransitive and behaves like an antipassive. That is, Paiwan and other Philippine type languages which pattern similarly are syntactically ergative under Manning’s definition.

In example (327), the Nehan antipassive voice is similar in that both *lo* ‘dog’, the patient, and *pus* ‘club’, the instrument, are marked oblique.

6.2 Typological features unique to Nehan

As presented in chapter 4, various subjecthood tests show that Nehan selects the absolutive argument as the grammatical subject. The **P** of a Tr clause and the **S** of an APV, as well as the **S** of an intransitive clause, are the absolutive arguments selected as the grammatical subject.

Nehan has several characteristics that make it typologically unique. 1. The antipassive voice is the dominant, semantically transitive, clause type in narrative discourse. 2. The verbal morphology follows a nominative-accusative pattern, whereas the syntax follows an ergative-absolutive pattern. 3. Thus far, Nehan is the only language in this region of Oceania found to show this particular type of syntactic ergativity.

In reference to the occurrence of the antipassive in syntactically ergative languages Manning (1996:73), referring to Dixon (1994) in his discussion of the antipassive, states: “Dixon has observed that an antipassive is necessary in syntactically ergative languages, because of the propensity of humans to wish to talk for a while about the actions of a certain Actor.” The text given at the end of this thesis, ‘The story of

Makor', has very few transitive clauses. Almost all of Makor's actions are in intransitive clauses. If they are semantically transitive, they are in the APV. Therefore, for narrative discourse, the preferred manner of expressing a semantically transitive clause is through the antipassive voice.

Another feature of Nehan is that it has a complex verbal morphology. Besides the affixes for causatives and reciprocal verbs, the most complex morphology in the language is the verbal agreement marking **P** enclitics and the **S/A** prefix in intransitive and transitive clauses. Additional complexity arises from the fact that enclitics can be several words removed from the verb. The use of the non-specific *a-* and non-agreeing prefix *e-* on the verb may be especially confusing. These features of verbal morphology make keeping track of discourse participants difficult for non-native speakers.

Nehan's **P** agreement enclitic is another interesting feature. In Nehan, the POC transitive suffix **-i* has been reinterpreted as (part of) a **P** agreement marker enclitic. The various forms of this clitic are given in Table 11. It was illustrated that these clitics for **P** also occur with the existential verb *kae* 'to be', in intransitive, unaccusative, reflexive and reciprocal constructions (§3.4.3).

It remains to be seen what will be revealed as the grammars of other Austronesian languages in close proximity to Nehan are studied. Is Nehan truly unique, or are there other languages that show similar syntax in their grammars?

7 CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study, as already stated in the introduction, is to understand how transitivity works in the morphology and syntax of Nehan and to determine the grammatical relations of core and oblique arguments within the clause. To accomplish this goal, this thesis has provided a large amount of background grammatical information and various syntactic constructions illustrating the function of core and oblique arguments in the clause structure of Nehan.

This analysis argues for syntactic ergativity in Nehan grammar, because syntactic ergativity best explains many of the hitherto unresolved transitivity issues in the language. As already stated in section 1.5.3, Ross (1997:3) suggests calling the Nehan clause with the patient NP expressed in an oblique phrase a ‘semi-transitive’ clause, and refers to the construction with two core arguments as the ‘transitive’ clause. Van den Berg and Glennon (2008:3-4) adopted this terminology: the clause type in which the patient is expressed as an oblique phrase is called ‘semi-transitive’, and the clause with the patient marked on the verb complex is called ‘transitive’.

However, in this thesis, it is argued that the Nehan semi-transitive clause should be reinterpreted as an antipassive clause in which the **A** core argument of a transitive

clause becomes the **S** core argument of an intransitive clause, and the patient is expressed in an oblique phrase. The transitive clause has two core arguments, **A** and **P**, and the syntax follows the same pattern as other syntactically ergative languages with both the antipassive clause and the transitive clause selecting the absolutive argument as the grammatical subject.

The topic of ergativity has been discussed in linguistic literature for more than 30 years. Manning (1996:36-39) lists six different approaches to the issue of ergativity that linguists have employed. He argues for one of these analyses, the ‘inverse analysis’ of ergativity, which is repeated here:

Under this analysis **S** and **O (P)** NPs are subjects and **A** NPs are direct objects. This configuration is often, but not necessarily, seen as being set up before valency changing rules apply, so that antipassive in (syntactically) ergative languages can be said to be the same rule as passive in accusative languages.

This thesis on syntactic ergativity in Nehan follows the analysis proposed by Manning (1996) and Kroeger (2004). For a discussion of this in more detail, see chapter 4 of this thesis.

7.2 Summary of findings

Throughout the chapters of this thesis, various topics have been presented that support the proposed analysis, which will now be summarized below. The language identifies three core arguments **S**, **A**, and **P**. **S** and **P** are identified as absolutive, and **A** is ergative. Each of these core arguments has an important role in Nehan syntax. The **S** core

argument is the single core argument of an intransitive clause. **A** and **P** are the only two core arguments of a transitive clause. The **A** core argument becomes the **S** core argument of an antipassive clause.

The relationship of core NPs and the interplay of the NPs with the **S/A** prefix and **S/A** and **P** enclitics in various grammatical constructions are complex. The **S/A** verbal prefix marks agreement of the verb with the **S/A** core NP or the **S/A** pronoun enclitic. The **P** enclitic, which incorporates the POC transitive marker **-i*, is interpreted in Nehan as a **P** agreement marker. Even though this agreement morphology follows a nominative-accusative pattern, the syntax shows a strong ergative-absolutive pattern and selects the absolutive argument as the grammatical subject.

Many language descriptions that endeavor to determine the subjecthood properties of core arguments use various syntactic tests. The tests included in this thesis which show that the absolutive argument is the grammatical subject in Nehan are the following: coordinate constructions, purpose constructions, control relations, raising, question formation, relative clauses, and the cleft construction. All of these constructions, and most likely others which are not included here, show how the syntax selects the absolutive arguments **S** and **P** as the grammatical subject in both intransitive and transitive clauses. The ergative **A** core argument is never the subject. Thus, the syntax shows a strong pattern of ergative-absolutive alignment.

Another important topic resolved in this thesis was the identification of ‘the semi-transitive clause’ which is now analyzed as an antipassive clause. As already stated, the

antipassive allows the ergative **A** core argument of a transitive clause to be realized as the **S** core argument of an intransitive clause when the patient is demoted to an oblique phrase. In narrative texts, the antipassive clause is the dominant semantically transitive clause. Additionally, the antipassive construction is important in introducing new referents into a text expressed in oblique phrases.

This thesis also looked at differences between antipassive voice (APV) clauses and transitive (Tr) clauses in Nehan discourse. APV clauses predominate in the narrative texts used in the study. A brief look at background and foreground clauses was also discussed. APV clauses were slightly more common as background but both types of clauses could be foreground or background. Topicality of referents in a discourse was also noted; it was shown that APV clauses are used when the agent is topical, but when the agent is non-topical transitive clauses are used. Although transitive clauses are common in dependent clauses, these were not counted in this study.

Some areas of Nehan grammar were only mentioned briefly. Nehan is unique in having 200 pronoun forms and 130 demonstrative forms (van den Berg and Glennon 2008:1). The verb complex and the serial verb construction (SVC) are complex and both will need further study. This thesis has only looked at some of the Nehan clause types. Other types of clauses have yet to be described.

7.3 Concluding remarks

It is hoped that this thesis will be a stimulus to further study of syntactic ergativity in many of the Austronesian and non-Austronesian languages in Papua New Guinea as well as in other areas of Oceania. Is it possible that Nehan is the only language in its region of Oceania with this type of syntax, or are there other languages yet to be discovered with similarities in syntax? Very few of the languages in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville have been described. René van den Berg has helped with the publication of several other grammars among the Austronesian languages of PNG, but so far none of these seem to have anything similar to the syntax evident in Nehan.

This thesis was primarily concerned with syntax, apart from semantic and pragmatic criteria, to show that syntax determines the grammatical subject. As already stated, the evidence presented in this thesis, especially section 4.5, strongly supports a conclusion that the absolutive argument is the grammatical subject in Nehan. Over six different syntactic constructions are presented illustrating the **syntactically ergative** nature of the Nehan language. Hopefully, this thesis and the discussion in chapter 6 on typology will be a catalyst which stimulates further inquiry into the role that syntax plays in other Oceanic languages.

APPENDIX 1: KIUKIU TANG MAKOR (THE STORY OF MAKOR)

- (329) O kiukiu tang Makor
 ART story OBL Makor
 ‘The story of Makor’
- (330) A siokor binak giti=r bulout mahoh e-uangoul
 ART one time DEM=LIG man elder 3SG-stay
 manasa=mpe tena uan mepahe-n.
 now=EMP OBL.PCL.3SG village alone-3SG
 ‘One time, this man lives now indeed at his place alone.’
- (331) Inggon a hanga-na tang Makor.
 3SG ART name-3SG PER M.
 ‘His name is Makor.’
- (332) Ahik pono=mpe me tamata baka poluk r=e-uangoul
 NEG also=EMP INDEF.ART person first again LIG=3SG-stay
 ua-huhut tatanon.
 CAUS-close OBL.3SG
 ‘Also indeed, no one was living close to him.’
- (333) Gitie r=e-uangoul pe=la=on e-uoto kalekinale
 DEM LIG=3SG-stay MAN=DIR=3SG 3SG-HAB work
 tono iomo mepahe-n.
 OBL.PCL.3SG garden alone-3SG
 ‘There where he was living, he always works in his garden by himself.’
- (334) Doh gitie ge-t-e-marang libur=on e-uoto la ko=mpe
 CNJ DEM COMP-IRR-3SG-want urinate=3SG 3SG-HAB go just=EMP
 tar sioko=r butur toro tenkana r=o kour.
 OBL one=LIG place OBL base LIG=ART tree.sp.
 ‘And there, if he wants to urinate, he always goes just indeed to one place at the base of the kour tree.’
- (335) Tar butur=on e-la uoto uang-uangoul dede=r
 OBL place=3SG 3SG-go HAB RED-stay continually=LIG

tuku-ng lair bo Makoro puk e-tele
 very.large-LIN snake.sp but M. only 3SG-not.know

tatanon.

OBL.3SG

‘At this place, a very large python was always living, but Makor does not know about it.’

- (336) Inggono Makor a uoto marang bele-bel.
 3SG M. ART HAB want RED-spear
 ‘He, Makor, is always wanting to be spearing (fish).’

- (337) Kenua a burehe manasa=r binaka k-e-uangoul pe=la=on.
 CNJ ART many now=LIG time PERF-3SG-stay MAN=DIR=3SG
 ‘Then now a long time, he lived there this way.’

- (338) Ma=eit a sioko=r liuo k-e-la bele-bel=on
 REA=DEM ART one=LIG morning PERF-3SG-go RED-spear=3SG

kar-e-me uk tasir ian kar-e-ein
 SEQ-3SG-come cook OBL.3PL fish SEQ-3SG-eat

kar-e-la libur poluk toro tenkana r=o kour
 SEQ-3SG-go urinate again OBL base LIG=ART tree.sp.

kar-e-la poluku=mpe i lolon.
 SEQ-3SG-go again=EMP LOC inside

‘So one morning, he went spearing, and then he cooked the fish, and then ate, and then went to urinate again at the base of the kour tree, and then went again indeed to the bush.’

- (339) Doh giti=r soi k-e-balakoso manas te=eit
 CNJ DEM=LIG snake PERF-3SG-pregnant now CLT=DEM

r=e-uoto inum pe tar liburu-n Makor.
 LIG=3SG-HAB drink MAN OBL urinate-3SG M.

‘And this snake was pregnant now because it always drank Makor’s urine.’

- (340) K-e-la=mpe=ini=r puhu-ng barah song
 PERF-3SG.A-go=EMP=3SG.P=LIG part-LIN long so.then

k-e-la poho=r soi tar tu-n a kuaha
 PERF-3SG-go give.birth=LIG snake OBL child-3SG ART female

tamat.

person

‘After a long time, and then the snake gave birth to its child a female person.’

- (341) K-e-uel-uarur manasa=mpe=r soi tatanon
 PERF-3SG-RECP-gentle now=EMP=LIG snake OBL.3SG

e-tuka k-e-ma-mahoho-lik sikoro pe=on k-e-banoto-ng
 3SG-up.to PERF-3SG-RED-elder-DIM little MAN=3SG PERF-3SG-able-LIN

sir katongo manasa me na ni-ein.
 seek self now INDEF.ART PCL.3SG NOM-eat

‘The snake now took care of her until she was a little older and now able to seek for herself her food.’

- (342) Bo e-la uoto ein uanomo puk=ono tena ni-ein
 But 3SG-go HAB eat secretly just=3SG OBL.PCL.3SG NOM-food

Makor.

M.

‘But she always goes to eat secretly Makor’s food.’

- (343) Kar-e-uoto kaleuatoro tena um=ono tar binaka=r
 SEQ-3SG-HAB prepare OBL.PCL.3SG house=3SG OBL time=LIG

tabota-n song r=e-tapokis.
 empty-3SG so.then LIG=3SG-return

‘And then she always cleans his house when it is empty, and then she returns.’

- (344) Binaka r=e-me uoto pokoso Makor e-me uoto
 time LIG=3SG-come HAB arrive M. 3SG-come HAB

bataba tena ni-ein.
 absent OBL.PCL.3SG NOM-eat

‘When Makor arrives, he always finds his food gone.’

- (345) Doh e-uoto dangata katongo=in pare,
 CNJ 3SG.A-HAB ask self=3SG.P this

‘And he always asks himself this,’

- (346) “Mai=mpe=ene r=e-me uoto ein tereg ni-ein=o
 Who=EMP=DEM LIG=3SG-come HAB eat OBL.PCL.1SG NOM-eat=1SG

kar-e-uoto kaleuatoro tenag um=o?"
 SEQ-3SG-HAB prepare OBL.PCL.1SG house=1SG
 "Who indeed here always comes, and eats my food, and then always cleans my house?"

- (347) Ma=eit a sioko=r binak Makor k-e-marang ate
 REA=DEM ART one=LIG time M. PERF-3SG-like know
 tun mai=on=ene r=e-uoto la=ha tena um=ono.
 very who=3SG=DEM LIG=3SG-HAB go=DIR OBL.PCL.3SG house=3SG
 'So one time Makor wanted to really know who it was here always coming to his house.'

- (348) Kar-e-guata pare k-e-uasilung tar nouh ni-ein
 SEQ-3SG-do this PERF-3SG-cook OBL clay.pot NOM-eat
 kar-e-ua-toko kar-e-la toko uaouo.
 SEQ-3SG-CAUS-place SEQ-3SG-GO place invisible
 'And then he does this, he cooked a clay pot of food, and then placed (it) and then went and hid.'

- (349) Doh giti=r kuaha k-e-me leke manasa=mpe kar-e-me
 CNJ DEM=LIG woman PERF-3SG=come pass now=EMP SEQ-3SG-come
 ein tar ni-ein.
 eat OBL NOM-eat
 'And this woman came and entered now indeed, and then came and ate the food.'

- (350) Binaka r=e-marang tentur uel-hir=ono toro io
 time LIG=3SG-want get.up RECP-toward=3SG OBL broom
 pah-e-io te-k-e-luluh tauete pe=me Makoro
 IRR-3SG-broom CLT-PERF-3SG-fly out MAN=DIR M.
 mar-e-buaka=ngua tar kuah.
 PUR-3SG-hold=EMP OBL woman
 'When she wanted to get up to get the broom to sweep, then out flew Makor in order to grab the woman.'

- (351) Kar-e-kulo pare,
 SEQ-3SG-say this
 'And then he said this,'

- (352) "Te=a bo=ene r-o-me uoto ein-ein uanomo
 CLT=2SG but=DEM LIG-2SG-come HAB RED-eat secretly

tereg ni-ein=o bidoh?"
 OBL.PCL.1SG NOM-eat=1SG right
 "So, it is you here who always comes eating secretly my food, right?"

(353) "Bo gine daana puk ahiki=a pah-o-tapokis tang tino-m."
 but DEM today just NEG=2SG IRR-2SG-return OBL mother-2SG
 "But now you wouldn't return to your mother."

(354) "O-uangoul dede manas=ane nagu turu-ng kuah inggo."
 2SG-stay continually now-DEM PCL.1SG will-AUX woman 1SG
 "You stay continually here now you will be my wife."

(355) Doh giti=r kuaha k-e-longoro kar-e-uangoul.
 CNJ DEM=LIG woman PERF-3SG-hear PERF-3SG-stay
 'And this woman obeyed and stayed.'

(356) Bo ahik puk=ono pah k-e-ueluatata tang Makoro
 but NEG just=3SG IRR PERF-3SG-RECP-talk OBL M.

pare a soi pe tina-n.
 this ART snake MAN mother-3SG
 'But she just didn't talk to Makor that a snake was her mother.'

(357) K-e-boho ko=mpe pare a luluahar.
 PERF-3SG-lie just=EMP this ART drift.
 'She just lied indeed that she was a drifter.'

(358) Kenua k-ura-uangoulu=mpe=la rasina ka-ura-kalekinale toro iomo
 then PERF-3DL-stay=EMP=DIR 3DL SEQ-3DL=work OBL garden

tar mamang binaka-lik.
 OBL all time-DIM.
 'Then they lived indeed there, and then they worked in the garden all the time.'

(359) Binak ura-uoto hiliu rasina tenasira um giti=r kuah
 time 3DL-HAB leave 3DL OBL.PCL.3DL house DEM=LIG woman

e-uoto ua-moko sioko baka tena ni-ein tina-na
 3SG-HAB CAUS-locate one first OBL.PCL.3SG NOM-eat mother-3SG

tar gon=ono=r um.
 OBL corner=3SG=LIG house
 'When they always leave their house this woman always first puts quietly her mother's food at the corner of the house.'

- (360) Bo ahik puk pah-e-ua-kalahara tena bulout.
 but NEG just IRR-3SG-CAUS-outside OBL.PCL.3SG man
 ‘But she just does not reveal this to her husband.’
- (361) Doh giti=r soi e-me uoto pokoso ge-t-ura-hiliu
 CNJ DEM=LIG snake 3SG-come HAB arrive COMP-IRR=3DL-leave
 baka rasina kar-e-me ein song r=e-la tapokis
 first 3DL SEQ-3SG-come eat so.then LIG=3SG-go return
 tar butur r=e-uoto uangoul=in.
 OBL place LIG=3SG.A-HAB stay=3SG.P
 ‘And this snake always comes arrives when after they leave, and then it comes
 and eats so then it goes and returns to the place where it lives.’
- (362) Ma=eit a sioko=r binaka manasa k-e-kulo Makoro pare,
 REA=DEM ART one=LIG time now PERF-3SG-say M. this
 ‘So one time now Makor said this,’
- (363) “Roliuo tar li-liuo-lik raeig ira-gulete ko=mpe
 tomorrow OBL RED-morning-DIM 1DL.IN 1DL.IN-arise just=EMP
 ka-ira-la i lolon ira-la lebe tar iom.
 SEQ-1DL.IN-go LOC inside 1DL.IN-go plant OBL garden
 “Tomorrow early in the morning we just arise indeed and then we go to the bush
 we go plant the garden.”
- (364) K-e-liuo manas=on doh Makoro k-e-gulete
 PERF-3SG-morning now=3SG CNJ M. PERF-3SG-arise
 kar-e-kulo tena kuaha pare,
 SEQ-3SG-say OBL.PCL.3SG woman this
 ‘It became morning and Makor arose, and then said this,’
- (365) “T-ira-la manas.”
 IRR-1DL.IN-go now
 “Let us go now.”
- (366) Doh-a kuaha k-e-kulo pare,
 CNJ-ART woman PERF-3SG-say this
 ‘And the woman said this,’
- (367) “Ingga deh-o-uoum.”
 2SG AST-2SG-ahead
 “You just go ahead.”

- (368) Bo ahik puk=ono pah k-e-hire pare e-uasilung baka
 but NEG just=3SG IRR PERF-3SG-tell this 3SG-cook first
 me na ni-ein tina-n.
 INDEF.ART PCL.3SG NOM-eat mother-3SG
 ‘But she just didn’t tell that she was cooking first some food for her mother.’
- (369) Kenua git Makoro k-e-la uoum k-e-la pokos=ono
 then DEM M. PERF-3SG=go ahead PERF-3SG-go arrive=3SG
 kar-e-la kalekinale manasa=mpe.
 SEQ-3SG-go work now=EMP
 ‘Then Makor went ahead and he went and arrived, and then he went and worked
 now indeed.’
- (370) Doh git na kuah=ono halana=mpe t-e-me pokos.
 CNJ DEM PCL.3SG woman-3SG not.yet=EMP IRR-3SG-come arrive
 ‘And his wife had not yet indeed come and arrived.’
- (371) K-e-la=mpe=r puhu-ng baraha song k-e-la
 PERF-3SG-go=EMP=LIG part-LIN long so.then PERF-3SG-go
 pokoso=tig=on.
 arrive=DIR=3SG
 ‘After a long time, then she went up and arrived there.’
- (372) Git Makoro k-e-nimaliana manas kar-e-dangata pare,
 DEM M. PERF-3SG-angry now SEQ-3SG-ask this
 ‘This Makor was angry now, and then he asked this,’
- (373) “Eh! K-o-hau-haua bak=a?”
 ‘EXCL PERF-2SG-RED-what first=2SG
 “Hey! What have you been doing?”
- (374) “Mamang binaka-lik ingga o-me uoto pokoso ua-douh
 all time-DIM 2SG 2SG-come HAB arrive CAUS-last
 dede.”
 continually
 “All the time you always come arriving last continually.”
- (375) Doh giti=r kuaha k-e-hire pare,
 CNJ DEM=LIG woman PERF-3SG-tell this,
 ‘And this woman told this,’

- (376) “Inggo k-u-uasilung bak.”
 1SG PERF-1SG-cook first
 “I cooked first.”
- (377) Bo ahik puk pah k-e-hire pare k-e-uasilung
 but NEG just IRR PERF-3SG-tell this PERF-3SG-cook
 me na ni-ein tina-n.
 INDEF.ART PCL.3SG NOM-eatmother-3SG
 ‘But she just didn’t tell that, she cooked some food for her mother.’
- (378) Kenua a sioko=r liuo poluk Makoro k-e-marang
 then ART one=LIG morning again M. PERF-3SG-want
 ate tun pare a haua tun r=e-uoto guata
 know very this ART what very LIG=3SG.A-HAB do
 baka=in ma=ene r=e-me uoto pokoso ua-douh dede.
 first=3SG.P REA-DEM LIG=3SG-come HAB arrive CAUS-last continually
 ‘Then one morning again Makoro wanted to really know this, really what was she doing, reason that she was always arriving late.’
- (379) Te-ma=eit k-e-kula manasa Makoro pare,
 CLT-REA=DEM PERF-3SG-say now M. this
 ‘Therefore Makoro said now this,’
- (380) “Roliuo tar liuo ingga te r=o-la i lolon
 tomorrow OBL morning 2SG CLT LIG=2SG-go LOC inside
 o-la us me hon.”
 2SG-go pull.up INDEF.ART taro
 “Tomorrow in the morning you go to the bush, you go harvest some taro.”
- (381) “Bo inggo te r=u-la bele-bele mogira iana raeig.”
 but 1SG CLT LIG=1SG-go RED-spear INDEF.ART.PCL.1DL.IN fish 1DL.IN
 “But I will go spear some fish for us.”
- (382) Kenua k-ura-hohouo manasa rasin.
 then PERF-3DL-sleep now 3DL
 ‘Then they slept now.’
- (383) Doh giti=r kuaha k-e-gulete uoum kar-e-ua-toko
 CNJ DEM=LIG woman PERF-3SG-arose ahead SEQ-3SG-CAUS-locate

uaia baka poluk tena ni-ein tina-n.
 well first again OBL.PCL.3SG NOM-eat mother-3SG
 ‘And this woman arouse first, and then put well first again her mother’s food.’

- (384) K-e-gulete na buloutu=on kar-e-ualatut bak=ono
 PERF-3SG-arose PCL.3SG man=3SG PERF-3SG-instructed first=3SG

tena bulout pare,
 OBL.PCL.3SG MAN this
 ‘Her husband arose, and then she first instructed her husband this,’

- (385) “Inggo gine r=u-la manas i lolon doh ge-t-o-me
 1SG DEM LIG=1SG-go now loc inside CNJ COMP-IRR-2SG-come

pokoso uoum=ane i um doh-o-me tupara me
 arrive ahead=DEM LOC house CNJ-2SG-come meet INDEF.ART

tamata ue me inete dehene tun t-o-mamantou
 person or INDEF.ART thing AST very IRR-2SG-destroy

banga-ng duk ko=mpe inggono te tino-guo.”
 look-AUX soundly just=EMP 3SG CLT mother-1SG

‘I’m going now to the bush, and if you come arrive ahead here to the house, and you come meet some person or something, stop don’t you destroy, just indeed respect, it is my mother.’

- (386) Kenua git Makoro k-e-la manas i teh.
 then DEM M. PERF-3SG-go now LOC beach
 ‘Then Makor went now to the beach.’

- (387) Bo k-e-la tapokis ualahur puku=mpe=ha i um.
 but PERF-3SG-go return quickly just=EMP-DIR LOC house
 ‘But he went and just returned quickly indeed to the house.’

- (388) Kar-e-me toko uaou i birum.
 SEQ-3SG-come locate invisible LOC back.side.of.house
 ‘And then he came and hid outside at the back of the house.’

- (389) Doh giti=r soi k-e-me hir pokoso manasa=mpe
 CNJ DEM=LIG snake PERF-3SG-come crawl arrive now=EMP

kar-e-me ein tena ni-ein
 SEQ-3SG-come eat OBL.PCL.3SG NOM-eat

k-e-ua-toko=ig=r tu-n.
 PERF-3SG.A-CAUS-locate=3PL.INA.P=LIG child-3SG
 ‘And this snake came crawling arrived now indeed and then it came and ate it’s
 food which was put by her daughter.’

- (390) Te-k-e-banga pe Makoro mar-e-luluh tauete keipi=me
 CLT-PERF-3SG-look MAN M. PUR-3SG-fly out bring=DIR

tono ioub uleik doh no bele kar-e-me
 OBL.PCL.3SG knife big CNJ PCL.3SG spear SEQ-3SG-come

tok-tokout sik-sikin tar soi.
 RED-cut RED-small OBL snake
 ‘Just then, Makor looked, and flew out with his big knife and spear and then
 chopped up the snake into small pieces.’

- (391) Tar binaka r=e-tok-tokout Makoro tar soi=ane
 OBL time LIG=3SG-RED-cut M. OBL snake=DEM

- (392) i um na kuah=on i lolon e-kout-kout
 loc house PCL.3SG woman=3SG LOC inside 3SG-RED-cut

manasa pono tar hon.
 now also OBL taro
 ‘At the time Makor was cutting up the snake in the house, his wife in the bush
 was cutting now also the taro.’

- (393) E-pe-ng kout=ono tar hon e-la kout-kout keip puk
 3SG-MAN-AUX cut=3SG OBL taro 3SG-go RED-cut bring just

tar kam-kamout lima-n.
 OBL RED-digit hand-3SG
 ‘While she cut the taro she also accidentally cuts her fingers.’

- (394) Kar-e-kulo manas=ono pare,
 SEQ-3SG-say now=3SG this,
 ‘And then she said now this,’

- (395) “Eh! Makoro kar-e-tok-tokout tunu=mpe tang ni.”
 EXCL M. SEQ-3SG-RED-cut very-EMP OBL mother
 “‘Hey! Probably Makor is cutting up mother!’”

- (396) K-e-tur manas=ono kar-e-la kir-kiring teil
 PERF-3SG-stand now=3SG SEQ-3SG-go RED-cry about
 manasa=mpe=ko i um.
 now=EMP=DIR LOC house
 ‘She stood now and then went and cried as she went down to the house.’
- (397) K-e-la pokoso=ko=on i um.
 PERF-3SG-go arrive=DIR=3SG LOC house
 ‘She went and arrived down there at the house.’
- (398) Doh Makor e-tur uangoulu-n sioun toro pirik.
 CNJ M. 3SG-stand stay-LIN past OBL door
 ‘And Makor was already standing waiting at the door.’
- (399) Kar-e-lou-louara tar kuah k-e-kulo pare,
 SEQ-3SG-RED-rebuke OBL woman PERF-3SG-say this,
 ‘And then rebuking the woman, he said this,’
- (400) “Ei! La=ntiehe manas doh-o-me keip-keip liu
 EXCL go=EMP now CNJ-2SG-come RED-bring away
 tar inet=etie r=o-me uoto ua-la ein to=i=a
 OBL thing=DEM LIG=2SG.A-come HAB CAUS-go eat SPG=SG.P=2SG.A
 tenag um=o.”
 OBL.PCL.1SG house=1SG
 ‘Hey! Hurry up now and come bring away this thing which you were always
 feeding there at my house.’
- (401) “Te-ma=ene pe ahik=a pah=o-me uoto pokoso
 CLT-REA=DEM MAN NEG=2SG IRR=2SG-come HAB arrive
 ualahuru=tig i lolono.”
 quickly=DIR LOC inside
 ‘So that is why you didn’t always come and arrive quickly to the bush.’
- (402) “Teeit bo r=o-uoto ua-la ein baka pe
 CLT=DEM but LIG=2SG-HAB CAUSE-go eat first MAN
 tar liouan=ela.”
 OBL bush.spirit=DEM
 ‘But, it is because you always go feed first that bush spirit there.’

- (403) “Me=la manasa doh-o-la bak-baka=ko i teh.”
 come=DIR now CNJ-2SG-go RED-throw=DIR LOC beach
 “Come go now and go throw (it) away down there at the beach.”
- (404) Kenua giti=r kuaha ahik baka poluk pah k-e-perer.
 then DEM=LIG woman NEG first again IRR PERF-3SG-argue
 ‘Then this woman didn’t even argue.’
- (405) K-e-ute kir-kiring puku=mpe=la tar puh-puhu-ng soi
 PERF-3SG-load RED-cry just=EMP=DIR OBL RED-part-LIN snake
 tar tolaha kar-e-boun keipi=tig i laur
 OBL basket SEQ-3SG-wade bring=DIR LOC water
 kar-e-kiringi=mpe pare,
 SEQ-3SG-cry=EMP this
 ‘She just indeed cried loading there the pieces of the snake into the basket and then waded out and brought it out into the water, and then she cried this,’
- (406) “O-kula Makor pah-a tamat a tina-gu-gu
 2SG-say M. IRR-ART person ART mother-RED-1SG
 a soi tina-gugu a lair tina-gu-gu.”
 ART snake mother-1SG ART snake.sp. mother-RED=1SG
 “You say Makor, that my mother isn’t really a person, my mother is a snake, my mother is a python.”
- (407) Kenua git Makoro k-e-banga k-e-bounu=ntiehe pe=tigi=r
 then DEM M. PERF-3SG-look PERF-3SG-wade=EMP MAN=DIR=LIG
 kuah i laur kar-e-kil-kila tapokis manasa=mpe.
 woman LOC water SEQ-3SG-RED-call return now=EMP
 ‘Then Makor looked how the woman waded out quickly into the water and then he called now indeed (her) to return.’
- (408) “O-tapokis puku=ha doh-o-baka tar soi=eit la=ha
 2SG-return just=DIR CNJ-2SG-throw OBL snake=DEM go=DIR
 doh-o-me uasilung teregira hono raeig.”
 CNJ=2SG-come cook OBL.PCL.1DL.IN taro 1DL.IN
 “Just come back here and throw away that snake and come here and come cook our taro.”
- (409) Doh giti=r kuaha e-de ua-deili=mpe
 CNJ DEM=LIG woman 3SG-dislike CAUS-whole=EMP

e-la kompe=tig i laur.
 3SG-go just=indeed=DIR LOC water
 ‘And this woman just really didn’t want to, she just continued going out into the water.’

- (410) Doh gitie r=e-boun pe=tig=on a puhu-ng tukunu-non=etie
 CNJ DEM LIG=3SG-wade MAN=DIR=3SG ART part-LIN body-3SG=DEM

k-e-ouo uoum i laur k-e-ua-palih
 PERF-3SG-invisible ahead LOC water PERF-3SG.A-CAUS-change

uoum=in tar soi.
 ahead=3SG.P OBL snake
 ‘And there as she was wading out the part of her body that was hidden in the water was already changed into a snake.’

- (411) Doh tina-nono k-e-uel-tumana tapokis pon
 CNJ mother-3SG PERF-3SG-RECP-join return also

e-tuk k-ura-la siokor hu babala pe
 3SG=until PERF-3DL-go one dive through MAN

rasina ka-ura-la ueldoukout i laur.
 3DL SEQ-3DL-go together LOC water
 ‘And her mother joined back together also until they both were diving in and out and went together out into in the water.’

- (412) Doh Makoro k-e-bak-baka teil=in i kot
 CNJ M. PERF-3SG=RED-throw about=3SG LOC ground

e-kiring uakeluk.
 3SG-cry after
 ‘And Makor threw himself down rolling on the ground crying after.’

- (413) K-e-buk=on song k-e-uangoul poluk mepahe-n.
 PERF-3SG-quiet=3SG so.then PERF-3SG-stay again alone-3SG
 ‘He quit crying and so he lived again by himself.’

- (414) Te-k-o-la kapa to ro kiukiu.
 CLT-PERF-3SG-go finish SPG LIG=ART story
 ‘It is here that the story is finished.’

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