

# SUBJECTIVE AND OBJECTIVE RELATIVE CLAUSES IN WARAO

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## ABSTRACT

Warao is a basically O-initial, solidly V-final language, which does not case-mark nominal constituents (Romero-Figueroa 1985a, 1985b). As a result of such typological characteristics, this language offers complex syntactic constructions very difficult to process. However, Warao has developed mechanisms intended for alleviating the burden in message encoding and decoding tasks. Its relative clauses provide an example of sophisticated, yet clear-cut, disambiguating operations. They involve a network of morphophonological and syntactic clues that leads to unequivocal semantic interpretations, and that allows the speaker of the language to know which particular language item is taking part in relativization within any string of discourse. Part of this paper is devoted to the description and explanation of these phenomena. Further, the strategy of relativization used by the language, and the noun phrase accessibility to relative clause formation are discussed. Finally, a brief analysis of free relative nouns (or relative clause-based nominalizations), constructions that seem peculiar to this language, is presented.

### 1. Introduction

As a language which is basically O-initial, V-final and does not case-mark nominal constituents (Romero-Figueroa 1985a, 1985b), Warao offers complex constructions which are very difficult to process. The language processes however some mechanisms which alleviate the burden in the task of encoding and decoding messages. The relative clauses of Warao provide an example of sophisticated, yet clear-cut, disambiguating operations. They involve a network of morphophonological and syntactic clues leading to unequivocal semantic interpretations. Part of this paper is devoted to the description and explanation of these phenomena. We further discuss the strategy of relativization used by this language, and the noun phrase accessibility to relative clause formation. Finally, we

present a brief analysis of free relative nouns (or relative clause-based nominalizations), constructions that seem peculiar to this language.

## 2. Warao Basic Syntax

A review of the syntax of the basic sentence of Warao provided in this section will facilitate the understanding of how relativization works in the language. Warao is an OSV (Object<sup>1</sup>, Subject, Verb) language, this syntactic arrangement being found in major sentence types such as those illustrated in (1) to (3) below:

### TRANSITIVE OSV

- (1) a. erike hube abanae  
Henry snake bit  
'A snake bit Henry'  
(Romero-Figueroa 1985a)
- b. hu tira konae  
basket woman brought  
'The woman brought the basket'
- c. ma wa ine nonate  
my canoe I will dig out  
'I will dig out my canoe'

### (TRANSITIVE) DATIVE OSV

- (2) a. ma saba tai rieko dibunae  
me to that Diego said  
'Diego said that to me'  
(Romero-Figueroa 1985a)
- b. wauta saba domu mokomoko haburi moae  
Wauta (myth.) to bird little Haburi (myth.) gave  
'Haburi gave the little birds to Wauta'

### OBLIQUE OSV

- (3) a. ma hanoko atamo ine naoya  
my house from I come  
'I come from my house'  
(Romero-Figueroa 1985a)

- b. daka aiama hebu Kahiro hakabuae  
 brother after spirit Kahiro ran  
 'Spirit Kahiro ran after (his) brother'

Nevertheless, structural arrangements different from OSV are also often found in the language. It is common in Warao discourse to leave out O's whose referents have been established earlier. Since the person of the object of transitive verbs may be marked in the verb, transitive sentences occur frequently with the verb and the subject only. For instance, (4a) below may be reduced as in (4b):

TRANSITIVE OSV

- (4) a. ma hi rakoi ahiae  
 me your sister hit  
 'Your sister hit me'  
 (Romero-Figueroa 1985a)

TRANSITIVE SV

- b. ∅ hi rakoi m- ahiae  
 your sister me hit  
 'Your sister hit me'  
 (Romero-Figueroa 1985a)

Additionally, stative sentences in Warao nearly always are subject initial, showing mostly S-COMPL.(ement)-COP.(ula) order. Further, ta-kitane and ha-kitane (lit.) 'be-INFINITIVE' to 'to be', the two items denoting COP., may be deleted giving rise to S-COMPL. order. The example below illustrates the case:

STATIVE S-COMPL.-COP.

- (5) a. tai tira burebaka ha/ta  
 that woman insane is  
 'That woman is insane'

STATIVE COMPL.

- b. tai tira burebaka ∅  
 that woman insane  
 'That woman is insane'  
 (Romero-Figueroa 1985a)

Warao permits further variations from the basic OSV. Such variations are sometimes syntactically, at other times stylistically motivated. For instance, the fronting of any questioned constituent

is a dominant device for question formation in the language. If the questioned constituent is the subject, then the sentence will show SOV order. The fronting of the subject is also a resource often used for stylistic purposes--for example, to highlight information. Thus, it is frequent to find sentences having SOV order, such an order being of course marked since it is intended for requesting (questioning) or providing by highlighting "new information" (focusing). Frequently, given a kind of "staging relationship" that operates in discourse (Grimes 1975) (constituents of sentences, paragraphs, and episodes are re-arranged once a particular constituent has been focused by fronting), other constituents of the sentence may be also moved. In Warao, this is particularly true of the most peripheral obliques within a sentence. Thus, a sentence such as (6a) below may undergo subject fronting (focusing of the subject) as in (6b):

- (6) a.   ho       amukoho dau     arai warao isaka tobotiayata  
           water by           trunk on                   one     was sitting  
           'A certain Warao was sitting on a tree trunk by the river'  
           (Vaquero 1965)
- b.   warao isaka dau     arai tobotiayata ho       amukoho  
                   one     trunk on     was sitting water by  
           '(It was) a certain Warao (who) was sitting on a trunk  
           by the river'

In (6b), ho amukoho 'by the river', one of the obliques, has been relocated in sentence final position probably because as one of the packages of "old information" in the sentence (as opposed to warao isaka 'a certain Warao' which is the highlighted new information), the speaker has considered it as secondary or unimportant enough as to be side-staged or placed far from the center of the stage now occupied by warao isaka 'a certain Warao'. (See Romero-Figueroa 1985a).

### 3. Relatives in Warao

From a cross-linguistic perspective, the distinction between restrictive (henceforth rc) and non-restrictive (henceforth n-rc) clauses within relative clauses (henceforth RC) appears to be irrelevant. Such a distinction seems to represent, above all, a trait of the Indo-European family of languages. In some Indo-European languages such as English, Spanish, Farsi, etc., rc's and n-rc's are not very different from a syntactic point of view; in

most cases n-rc's are just set off from main clauses by intonational breaks, indicated orthographically by commas; in a few instances n-rc's are marked by inflections on the head noun (henceforth head N), as in Farsi and other western Iranian languages. Nevertheless, in all these languages, rc's and n-rc's signal important differences in meaning. Comrie (1981:132) points out that

they are radically different in semantic ... terms, in particular in that the restrictive clause uses presupposed information to identify the referent of a noun phrase, while the non-restrictive relative is a way of presenting new information on the basis of the assumption that the referent can already be identified.

Comrie notes (1981:132) that the semantic values associated with rc's and n-rc's in the Indo-European languages are absent in most languages of the world. Despite the scarcity of languages having rc/n-rc distinction, Comrie finds that most definitions of RC in the current typological literature are Indo-European biased since they have been formulated to accommodate such a distinction. As a result, RC research in languages of other families necessarily has to contend with such an alien factor. In order to avoid inconveniences that definitions based upon language-specific syntax add to the investigation of RC patterns, and to cover as many RC types across languages as possible, Comrie (1981:136) gives a characterization of the prototypical RC rather than a definition of it based on a set of necessary and sufficient conditions for its identification. Assuming that rc's are more central to the notion of RC than are n-rc's, Comrie (1981:136) argues that an RC consists necessarily of a head N and a rc. He adds that N in itself has a certain potential range of referents, but the rc restricts this set by giving a proposition that must be true of the actual referent of the overall construction.

The analysis of Warao RC's which follows adopts Comrie's characterization of RC. Sentences (7-8) below contain two sets of RC's. The first set illustrates RC in the OSV sentence, the basic order of the language (Romero-Figueroa 1985a); the second set exemplifies RC in the stative sentence, which consistently exhibits S-COMPLEMENT-COPULA order:

OSV

- (7) a. yatu [tai N] [náo -ya HAKOTÁI<sup>rc</sup>] na -te  
 you.PL that(one) come PRES. RELATIVIZER kill FUT.  
 (coming)

'That one (that) comes will kill you (pl.)'

'The coming one will kill you (pl.)'

(Barral 1979:176)

- b. [tai N] [nao -yá -HA KOTÁI<sup>rc</sup>] na -kotu  
 that (one) come PRES. RELATIVIZER kill IMP.2p.PL  
 (coming)

'You (pl.), kill that one (that) comes'

'You (pl.), kill the coming one'

(Barral 1979:176)

- c. [hotarao N] [erehisá -HA KOTÁI<sup>rc</sup>] tatuma  
 non-Warao person steal RELATIVIZER they  
 (Venezuelan criollo) (stealing)

yewere -ae  
 punish PAST

'They punished the criollo (that) stole'

'They punished the stealing criollo'

- d. [warao N] [boyabá -HA KOTÁI<sup>rc</sup>] dosiarao konaru  
 get drunk RELATIVIZER authority take away  
 (drunk) (policeman)

-ae  
 PAST

'The policeman took away the Warao (that) got drunk'

'The policeman took away the drunken Warao'

(Barral 1979:176)

- e. ma saba [tai N] [yaot -aé -HA KOTÁI rc]  
 me for that (one) work PAST RELATIVIZER  
 (working)

ma isiko noa -kunarae  
 me with come IMP.3p.PL

'Let those who worked for me come with me'  
 'They, come with me the working ones'  
 (SP.) 'Que vengan conmigo los que trabajaron para mi'  
 (Vaquero 1965:157)

S-COMPLEMENT-COPULA

- (8) a. [tai waniku N] [nahamutu arai oko mí -ya  
 that moon clouds over we see PRES.  
 seen  
 (visible)

HAKOTÁI rc] wabu ha yama  
 RELATIVIZER mouse COPULA HEARSAY

'It is said that that moon (that) we see over the clouds  
 is a mouse'  
 'It is said that the seen (visible) moon over the clouds  
 is a mouse'

- b. [tai N] [wa -eku nabaká -ya HAKOTÁI rc]  
 that (one) canoe in arrive PRES. RELATIVIZER  
 (arriving)

ma- rahe ha  
 my older brother COPULA

'That one (that) arrives in the canoe is my older brother'  
 'The canoe-arriving one is my older brother'

- c. [tai tahiramo N] [hiaka sekohé -ya HAKOTÁI rc]  
 that old woman dress sew PRES.  
 (sewing)

ma- natu ha  
 my grandmother COPULA

'That old woman (that) sews the dress is my grandmother'  
 'That dress-sewing woman is my grandmother'

(7-8) show that HAKOTAI is the relative marker in Warao. HAKOTAI is essentially a free morpheme. It must be noted, though, that in some contexts part of it becomes a bound morpheme; this matter will be discussed shortly. (7-8) also show that HAKOTAI consistently appears at the end of rc's within RC's. Given that consistent rc-final position, I have assigned HAKOTAI the status of a "post-verbal particle". It is a well documented fact that Warao is solidly V-final, and rc's and RC's are no exception. The behavior of HAKOTAI within rc's lends support to the post-verbal particle status assigned to it: the interaction of HAKOTAI and the corresponding verb within the rc has important phonological, morpho-syntactic and semantic implications for Warao relativization.

#### 4. Subjective and Objective RC's

By comparing the sentences in (7) to one another, we note morphological changes affecting the relative particle. In (7a), HAKOTAI is a morphemic unit bearing heavy stress on the penultimate syllable [the canonical syllable pattern in Warao is (C)V]. However, in (7b-e), HAKOTAI no longer appears as a morphemic unit. For example, in (7b), HAKOTAI has split into -HA and KOTAI, the -HA portion then becoming suffixed to the verb stem. As a result of the splitting, a shift of stress has taken place in (7b): the heavy stress has moved from the root naó (as shown in (7a) in which -HA suffixation does not occur) to the present tense inflectional morpheme ya, giving rise to the form nao -yá -HA. In (7b), the remaining portion of the relative particle, i.e., KOTAI, has not upset its stress pattern, continuing to bear heavy penultimate stress. Also, in (7a-e), HATOKAI has experienced morphemic splitting and the verb stems have undergone stress shift. Before extending the present discussion to the syntactic and semantic consequences of the morphemic splitting and stress shift operations described in the preceding, some aspects of the suprasegmental phonology of Warao need to be examined.

According to Osborn (1965:114), the predominant pattern of heavy stress in Warao is on the penultimate vowel, antepenultimate heavy stress remaining confined to some onomatopoeic words and ultimate heavy stress to Spanish loans which are heavily stressed in the ultimate syllable in that language. In conformity with Osborn's observation above, I have found that heavy stress almost without exception falls on the second syllable from the end in disyllables, trisyllables and polysyllables. Monosyllables generally bear heavy stress if their syllable pattern is CV, and weak stress if

the syllable pattern is V. In some cases monosyllables are completely unstressed. Further, I have noticed that heavy stress in Warao often shifts to the right in search of penultimate syllables once roots take inflections. This displacement obviously occurs across morphemic boundaries. An example of Warao stress shift is provided in (9) below:

(9) nahóro-

nàhoró	-ya		'you eat'
nahòro	-náha		'you do not eat'
nàhorò	-nahá	-ra	'don't you eat?'

The marking of weak stress in (9) is based on Osborn's (1965:115) account: in Warao words, alternate syllables are stressed with weaker secondary stress, counting back from the heavily stressed syllable, and syllables not stressed with heavy stress or weak stress are unstressed.

In view of these phonological patterns, the two possible morphological realizations of the Warao relative particle, namely HAKOTAI and -HA KOTAI, are recognizable on the basis of the stress shift that the latter realization provokes on verb stems within rc's. Let us now return to the syntactic and semantic consequences of the splitting and shifting operations.

Close examination of (7-8) reveals that the HAKOTAI realization occurs in rc's with RC's which have head N's acting as subjects of main clauses, whereas the -HA KOTAI realization takes place in rc's within RC's which have head N's performing as objects of main clauses. This syntactic distinction between subjective and objective RC's in Warao is exclusively dependent upon the morphophonological phenomena of relative particle morphemic splitting and verb stem stress shifting already described.

It may be logical for Warao, which is O-initial, V-final and does not case-mark nominal constituents, to have developed the above-mentioned network of morphophonological and syntactic clues to reduce message processing difficulties in complex constructions such as those containing RC's. It is my contention that in the absence of such a network of clues RC's would be extremely hard to encode and decode in the language. I have found that the HAKOTAI/-HA KOTAI dichotomy is the only factor making unequivocal a message such as that conveyed in (10) below:

- (10) [ [muana -tuma a mehokohi N] [ha HAKOTÁI rc] N]  
 dead people PL GEN. soul COPULA  
 (being)
- [rapo ekirá -ya HAKOTÁI rc] hebu karibe kuba -komoni  
 knife lack PRES. goblin Carib murder MOD. NEG  
 (lacking)

'Those (that) are the souls of the dead people (that) lack knives cannot murder Carib goblins' (Mythol.)  
 'Those being the souls of the dead people lacking knives cannot murder Carib goblins'

(10) is a transitive sentence showing SOV order because S has been fronted possibly to avoid the O hebu karibe 'Carib goblins' losing relevance by becoming isolated before the lengthy and complex sequence of RC's muanatuma a mehokohi ha hakotáí rapo ekiráya hakotáí 'those (that) are the souls of the dead people (that) lack knives'. Here, S fronting may be thought to have acted as a meaning-preserving mechanism, though it might have been also intended for highlighting the information contained in the RC's since FOCUS FRONTING is a very common movement in Warao (Romero-Figueroa 1985a). Irrespective of the reason for S fronting in (10), its RC's show the HAKOTAI realization in accordance with the subject roles of muanatuma a mehokohi 'the souls of the dead people' and muanatwma a mehokohi ha hakotáí 'those (that) are the souls of the dead people'. In (10), we cannot consider hebu karibe 'Carib goblins' as the sentential S so that the sentence might express such a meaning as 'the Carib goblins cannot murder those (that) are the souls of the dead people (that) lack knives'. For such a meaning, in (10), the rc's rapo ekiráya hakotáí and ha hakotáí would have been arranged as ekirayáha kotái and háha kotái.

Although Warao is a language in which O is placed before V (V is final) in basic sentences, RC's in Warao are not prenominal as typological classifications would predict. (7-8) and (10) show that in Warao rc's follow their head N's; hence, RC's are postnominal. The existence of postnominal RC's in the language may be attributed to the fact that the verb stem and the relative particle within the rc integrate themselves into a unit that behaves as a participle<sup>2</sup>. Participles as extended forms of adjectives are placed after their head N's in participial phrases in Warao, as are all other types of adjectives (numeral, indefinite, possessive, etc.) in other kinds



- (13) [wahibaka<sub>N</sub>] [nabakan -aé -HA KOTÁI<sub>rc</sub>] naba baribari ebe  
 canoe arrive PAST wave rocking because  
 arriving

wanari -ae  
 flood PAST

'Because of the rocking, the waves flooded the canoe (that) arrived'

'Because of the rocking, the waves flooded the arriving canoe'  
 (Vaquero 1965:67)

- (14) [tai kubamo<sub>N</sub>] [naru -yá -HA Ø<sub>rc</sub>] warao monuka  
 that hunters (that) (have) gone like  
 (already gone)

kubakitane narute  
 to hunt will go

'The Warao will go to hunt like those hunters (that) (have) gone'

'The Warao will go to hunt like those already gone hunters'

- (15) [wahibaka<sub>N</sub>] [nabakan -aé -HA Ø<sub>rc</sub>] naba baribari  
 canoe (that) arrived wave rocking  
 (arriving)

ebe wanariae  
 because flooded

'Because of the rocking, the waves flooded the canoe (that) arrived'

'Because of the rocking, the waves flooded the arriving canoe'

Turning now to the matter of noun phrase (NP) accessibility to RC-formation, my data, as well as Barral's and Vaquero's, reveals that only NP's acting as S and O within rc's are relativizable. (7a-d) and (8b-c) are examples of relativization upon S within rc's, (8a) is an instance of relativization upon O within rc's. Let us illustrate the point with a sentence showing a relativized S-NP, (7c) for instance, and one having a relativized O-NP, (8a). A fully expressed surface configuration for (7c) and (8a) would be as shown respectively in (16) and (17):

- (16) [hotarao N] [∅ erehisá -HA KOTÁI rc] tatuma yewerae  
 Venezuelan criollo steal they punished  
 (stealing)

'They punished the criollo (that) stole'  
 'They punished the stealing criollo'

- (17) [tai waniku N] [nahamutu arai ∅ oko miya HAKOTÁI rc] wabu ha  
 that moon clouds over we see mouse is  
 seen  
 (visible)

yama  
 it is said that

'It is said that that moon (that) we see over the clouds is a mouse'  
 'It is said that that seen (visible) moon over the clouds is a mouse'

In (16), the deleted constituent within the rc is S of its clause. In (17), the deleted constituent within the rc is O of its clause. During RC formation, at some underlying stage, the empty slots in (16-17) (identified by ∅) were filled in by hotarao 'criollo' and tai waniku 'that moon' respectively. These disappeared from the RC's at the moment that the rc's adjoined to their referent head N's. It is a condition of identity between a particular constituent NP of the rc and the head N of the RC which makes possible such a deletion in the relativization process in Warao.

##### 5. Free Relative Nouns

In addition to the classes of RC's so far reviewed, there are in Warao some relative constructions that function as nominalizations. I have called them free-relative nouns (henceforth F-rN). Examples are provided in (18) to (20) below:

- (18) kuabu (ha) HAKOTÁI  
 pregnant woman COPULA

'That one (that) is a pregnant women'  
 'That pregnant woman'

- (19) wahabu            -tu            (ha)    HAKOTÁI  
       roast        (V) PERFORM. COPULA  
       roaster

'That one (that) is a roaster'  
 'That roaster'

- (20) kwa    basa            (ha)    HAKOTÁI  
       head square    COPULA  
       square-headed

'That one (that) is square-headed'  
 'That square-headed one'

R-rN's as those above are often used by Warao speakers to identify absent third persons. This particular usage of F-rN's has a social correlate. Warao communities generally consist of a small number of related individuals. Thus, two speakers always address one another by the kinship term that holds between them. The use of kinship terms to address one another in actual conversational exchanges is the sole alternative in view of the Warao taboo that no one may be called by his/her name. The Warao believe that calling the name of someone may bring into the caller the spirit of any dead Warao who may have happened to have borne the same name. The Warao fear the spirits of the dead because they believe that these are destructive and trigger illnesses and death. In the case of a third person not within talking distance, or not related, this person is identified by indicating one of his/her physical features, either temporary or permanent, or one of his/her commonly-performed activities within the community.

A characteristic common to all F-rN's in (18-20) is that they involve the copula ha, to which such a wide variety of meanings as 'be', 'have', 'become', 'appear', etc., may be assigned. Also, all the F-rN's in (18-20) are characterized by the optionality of the copula. In Warao statives, which always show S-COMPLEMENT-COPULA order, the copula is often deleted, giving rise to S-COMPLEMENT arrangements. See for example (5) above, or (21) below:

Stative S-COMPLEMENT-COPULA

- (21) homakaba yakera ha/ta  
       fish        good    is  
       'The fish is good (fresh)'

(21) may be reduced as in (22):

Stative S-COMPLEMENT

- (22) homakaba yakera  $\emptyset$   
 fish good  
 'This fish is good (fresh)'

(21-22) may be thought to be different only in social terms. The absence of the copula in (22) may be a feature of informal speech (but this remains to be verified). In stative rc's, it is very likely that the presence or absence of the copula in (18-20) has a social motivation such as the one suggested for (21-22). The data strongly suggest that only stative-based RC's may function as F-rN's. F-rN's with deleted copulas are also much more common than those with overtly expressed ones. Some examples of F-rN's in context are given below:

- (23) [ [nibora N] [ $\emptyset$  HAKOTAI rc] F-rN] hisanika du -ya  
 husband alone look for food PRES.

'The one (that) is a husband looks for food alone'  
 'That husband looks for food alone'

- (24) noko -kore ayamo [ [hebu N] [ $\emptyset$  HAKOTAI rc] F-rN]  
 listen SUBJUNCT. in back of spirit

nao -ya  
 come PRES.

'Once (it) listens in the back, the one (that) is a spirit comes'  
 'Once (it) listens in the back, that spirit comes'

In the F-rN's (18-20) and (23-24) that have been interpreted here, HAKOTAI acts as a demonstrative adjective that follows its head. The overall construction behaves syntactically as any NP in the language, or perhaps in most languages.

Finally, (23-24) as well as all the other examples in the data indicate that only subjective RC's underlie F-rN's. This seems to be an expected pattern because subjective RC's do not involve the morphophonological phenomena (morphemic splitting and stress shift) that have been shown to occur in objective RC's. It appears that it is HAKOTAI, and not KOTAI, which may function as a demonstrative adjective. Barral in his dictionary (1979:176) enters both jakotai (HAKOTAI) and -ja kotai (-HA KOTAI), the former as the form to be used when the relative construction is the subject in the main clause, the latter when the relative construction is non-subject in

the main clause. Further, Barral (1979:176) enters jakotai (HAKOTAI) again, as a demonstrative adjective meaning 'that' and 'those'. Nevertheless, Barral (1979:268) cites kotai (KOTAI) only as the Warao relative pronoun meaning 'that', 'that one that' and 'those ones that'; he does not give KOTAI as a demonstrative adjective.

## 6. Conclusions

It appears possible to set up an inverse relationship between the degree of explicit case-marking and the degree to which languages develop mechanisms that allow speakers to recover grammatical functions: the less highly developed the case system of a language, the more increased the likelihood that alternative disambiguating devices will be found. In the case of Warao, the interpretive difficulties brought about by the lack of subjective and accusative markers are overcome in RC's by means of such a clue as morphemic splitting and stress shift within rc's. These relativization clues unmistakably identify the RC subject and/or object in any overall construction, thus ensuring accurate decoding.

On the other hand, in addition to the RC's of Warao the cases of RC's in some other O-initial languages spoken in northeastern South America (for example OVS Hixkaryana, and OSV Apurinà and Urubú) strongly suggest that head N/rc paratactic adjoining is the only relativization strategy found in this group of languages having initial objects:

### OVS (Hixkaryana)

- (25) nomokno harha [(xofrye) <sub>N</sub>] [kanihnohnyenhiyamo  
he-came back (sloth) one-who-destroyed-us (incl.) <sub>rc</sub>]

'The sloth who was destroying us all has come back'

'The one who was destroying us all has come back'

(Derbyshire 1979)

### OSV (Apurinà)

- (26) pixena anakory ny-syka-ro -ko [atakoro <sub>N</sub>] [nota nyrekaka-na  
cat litter I give her will girl I want them

sakiretakaro <sub>rc</sub>  
said-who

'I will give the kittens to her, the girl who said "I want them"'

(Pickering 1973)

OSV (Urubú)

(27) [pira<sub>N</sub>] [muka'e<sub>rc</sub>] ihe a'u  
 fish he-roast I ate

'I ate the fish that he roasted'  
 (Kakumasu 1976)

In O-initial languages, moreover, the presence of postnominal RC's appears to be a common trait that cuts across both genetic affiliations and basic work order typology. All these trends, of course, need to be further investigated.

## ABBREVIATIONS

PRES.	PRESENT
FUT.	FUTURE
2.p.	SECOND PERSON
3.p.	THIRD PERSON
PL.	PLURAL
IMP.	IMPERATIVE
SUBJUNCT.	SUBJUNCTIVE
GEN.	GENITIVE
MOD.	MODAL
NEG.	NEGATIVE
PERFORM.	PERFORMATIVE
HEARSAY	BY HEARSAYING

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The data for this research were gathered by the author around Lake Guanoco, State of Sucre, Venezuela, during the months of July and August of 1982. The author's data have been supplemented with examples taken from Vaquero's (1965) and Barral's (1979) studies on the language. The fieldwork for this paper was supported by a grant from the Consejo de Investigacion of the Universidad de Oriente (Venezuela) for which grateful acknowledgement is hereby made. Also, my thanks to John Haiman and H. Christoph Wolfart and Richard Carter (Linguistics Programme, University of Manitoba), who offered comments and criticisms on earlier versions of this paper. Most of all, I wish to express my gratitude to Desmond Derbyshire (Summer Institute of Linguistics, University of North

Dakota) who, based upon his experiences with several northern South American O-initial languages, gave me valuable advice. All mistakes are my own.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Most linguists assume without question that all languages have objects. As in the majority of studies concerning word order, I have considered that the entity that looks like an object is semantically patient. Starosta (1978:472) defines patient in the following way:

'I will define patient as the fundamental case relation. Depending on the verb class with which it co-occurs, this in turn can mean (a) the entity which is viewed as affected by the action of the verb (b) the entity which is viewed as moving or as being located in (abstract or concrete) space, or (c) the entity which is viewed as existing, in a state...'

<sup>2</sup>-ha is the past participle marker in Warao. Generally, -ha is added after -ya, the present tense marker. In some cases, however, -ha may be found attached to verb stems directly. These two different morphological configurations seem to correlate respectively with the adjectival and verbal functions which may be attributed to passives in the language. It is my conclusion that the rc relates to its head N within the RC in the same way as a participial adjective ending in -ha does to its N within any NP. Participles in Warao may behave as true adjectival verb forms (similar to those of English or Spanish).

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