Grammatical vs.
Information Structure Prominence:
The Puzzling Ko-Marked Arguments in Rongga

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GR: voice without voice morphology
• The verb has the same form in active and passive structures
• Argument alternations: SUBJ:A becomes OBL:agt, prepositionally marked by ne.

(1) a. Kazi niu achi kazi
   3a call younger.sibling 3a
   ‘she called her younger sibling.’ (LAI AME LEWA.0068)

b. Keti tako ja’o la’a niu ne Koa Roma...
   harvest after 1SG go call by father Roma
   ‘After the harvest (of the rice), I was met and called by Uncle Roma...’ (AUTOB.FRANS.SADUNG.027)

Evidence of grammatical SUBJ (1)
• Only subject can be syntactically controlled and relativised in Rongga

(2) a. Ja’o zapa [ne] wae
   1SG try [take] water
   ‘I tried to take the water.

b. *Ja’o zapa [ja’o ne] wae
   1SG try [1SG take] water
   ‘I tried to take the water.’

c. *Ja’o zapa [wae ne] wae (ne) _
   1SG try water take by
   ‘I tried to take the water.’

d. Wae ndau neku ne ja’o
   water that take by 1SG
   ‘The water was taken by me.’
Evidence of grammatical SUBJ (2)
• Relativising P requires a passive structure:

(3) a. Ana [ata tei me ne meu] ndau bhako ja’o child REL see by 2PL that nephew 1SG
‘The child (whom you saw) is my nephew.’

b. *Ana [ata mei tei —] ndau bhako ja’o child REL 2PL see that nephew 1SG
‘The child (whom you saw) is my nephew.’

c. Ana [ata _ tei meu] ndau bhako ja’o child REL see 2PL that nephew 1SG
‘The child (who saw you) is my nephew.’

The basic fact: weakened Object
• ko can mark a less prominent argument: e.g. the T object if there are two (R and T) objects, in which case T should come later, as seen in (4b) (vs. *(4c)).
• It cannot mark the R object as seen in (4d)

(4) a. Ardi indi ndoi (pe ndia ne ja’o) [A P (R)]
name bring money to here with 1s
‘Ardi brought money (here) (for/to me).’

b. Ardi indi jao (ko=ndoi) [A R ko=T]
name bring 1s ko money
‘Ardi brought you money.’

c. *Ardi indi ko=ndoi jao. *[A ko=R T]
d. *Ardi indi ko=jao ndoi. *[A ko=R T]

The basic fact: new P/S
• Indefinite P or S (i.e. expressing new information) often comes post verbally with ko

(5) a. Ndia sema kumi indi ko Roti ne Anggur
now EMP we bring part bread and grape
pe ndia ngia kita Mori.
to this face 1PLInc god
‘Now we bring bread and grapes to YOU our God.’
(Misa Minggu.005)

b. pela zheta pu’u kaju ndau mango ko lia poh,
actually up there tree wood that exist part hole ghost
‘It turned out that there was a hole of owl in the tree.’ (Pake 020)

Obliques
• The <theme> of the verb reje ‘discuss/talk’ can show up as a complement immediately following the verb (a) or else as a ko=marked oblique following another oblique (b)

(6) a. sizha la’e reje ndii one wolo.
3 go discuss stay at mountain
‘they discussed (about) living in the mountain.’
(Dongeng Lanu dan Ndatu 005)

b. to’o sizha reje ne ata Ende,
go 3 discuss with person ende
ko a rajo ndau
part part boat that
‘Go and talk with the Ende people (for help),
about (using) their boat.’ (NUNU NANGE ANA HALO.0101)
Demoted <displaced theme>
• The displaced theme of the verb *mula* ‘plant’ can appear as an Object (P), or a demoted argument marked by *ko*
• The demoted NP marked by *ko*, analyable as OBJ2 or OBL

(7) a. *Hamente Rongga Koe tau mula muku.*
Hamente Rongga Koe make plant banana
The Head of Hamente Rongga Koe grew bananas
(AUTOBIO.ANTONIUS.GELANG.0113)

b. *Jo'o mula uma jo'o ko nio kana.*
IT plant garden 1SG PART coconut all
'I planted all of my gardens with coconut trees.'
ko functions like a preposition, meaning 'with'

Ko=marked prominent S arguments
• In the following examples *ko* marks TOP or (contrastive) FOC associated with S:

(8) a. *ko lako kazhi kali kombe ndau nande ne'e kazhi part dog 3s also night that sleep with 3s*
'(As for) his dog, (he) was sleeping with him that night'.
(Pape003)

b. *ema mbiwa mata, hunya ko stofes kali bekaregha lucky not dead only part jar also broken*
'Fortunately, (the dog) didn’t die, but only the jar broke up'.
(Pape010)

Promoted P to SUBJ: passivisation
• Re-introduced TOP P triggers passivisation: P is promoted and marked by *ko:*

(9) *Kazhi la'a pe zhele jendela kai ne'e kazhi 3SG go to towards window open by 3SG*
*nio ne'e kazhi ko pake, dano mbiwa shenge ko talu call by 3s PART frog also not hear PART answer*

'He went to the window, open (it), called the frog, he also didn’t hear any answer'.

Puzzling ....
• Effects of *ko* marking:
  – Weakening, low in the hierarchy: OBJ1 (P) > OBJ2 (T) (or OBL:theme)
  – Augmenting/promotion, high in prominence: OBJ (P) (active) > SUBJ (passive)
• How can the same particle *ko* have the opposing effects?
• Are we dealing with the same or different *ko*?
The proposed analysis ...

An integrated LFG-based analysis is offered:
The same ‘multifunctional’ ko:

- **Pragmatics: information structure** marking
  ko whose pragmatic function is to mark FOCUS:NEW;
- **Syntax: grammatical structure** marking
  ko marks a structural dependency relation:
  - a close head-dependent relation
    → no/optional ko
  - a dependent being away from its head, not
    subcategorised
    → obligatory ko

Defining information structure

Lambrecht’s (1994:5) definition of i-str:

- That **component of sentence grammar** in
  which propositions as conceptual
  representations of states of affairs are paired
  with lexicogrammatical structures in
  accordance with the mental states of
  interlocutors who use and **interpret these
  structures as units of information in given
  discourse contexts.**

Essential notions in i-str (1)

‘proposition’  (alternative) expressions

Grammatical system & its resources
for information packaging
to facilitate information exchange in a particular
communicative context

Essential elements of i-str

- I-str elements and linear order:
  TOPIC and FOCUS & i-str constraints
  (Choi 1999:133)

- NEW: [−New] should precede [+New]
- PROM: [+Prom] should precede [−Prom]
I-str & its structural marking with ko in Rongga

- Positions of ko: before, or after, or on both sides of, the XP

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Transformation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>XP → (ko, j)</td>
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<td>DF:TOP(FOC)</td>
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<td>DF:FOC</td>
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<td>b.</td>
<td>IP</td>
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<td>(ko=XP)</td>
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<td>VP</td>
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XP can be any unit: argument, non-argument, & PRED

Arguments within VP can be marked by ko, except OBJ:T in VDTR

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More than one unit marked by ko ...

- It is possible to have more than one syntactic dependent unit marked by ko.
- In-situ [QW.FOC] + FOC.VERB + FOC.OBJ

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(12)  Ae ja’o tau apa ko aha ko fai.
hi 1SG make what PART take PART wife

‘Well what for I would take a wife?’
(LAI AME LEWA.0006)
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Double marking with ko

- This appears only in with FOC in the corpus
- T is doubly marked by ko:

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(11) "e mesi Mori ti’i kita ko wae ko" about water part
part may god give 1PL.Incl
ndau were ko ata ka’e,
that groan part rel elder.sibling
mesi mori ti’i kita ko wae ko.
may god give 1PL.Incl part water part

“May God bless us with water”,
the elder child groaned, “May God give us water.”
(Nunu nange mota.0014)
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In a ditransitive structure: overt OBJ:R, elided OBJ:T

- In natural texts, either R or T is often overtly present, and R never appears with ko in the corpus (cf. unacceptability of (4d)).

```
(13) ndia ja’o ndewe ndia moju ndia rogha
this 1SG that this deer this cook
mema indi kau ramba tau ko.
indeed bring 2SG so.that make eat

‘Here it is the meat that I already cooked brought (it for) you so that you just simply eat it now.’ (Nepa.022)
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VDTR OBJ:T
(T elided)
In Transitive structure: 
[ko OBJ:P] + [OBL:goal]

- An object can optionally take *ko*, but it shows up with *ko* especially if it is ‘new’ (i.e., complete Focus) in terms of information structure:

  (14) Ndia sema kami indi ko Roti ne Anggur
  now EMP we bring part bread and grape
  pe ndia ngia kita Mori.
  to this face 1PL Inc god
  ‘Now we bring bread and grapes to YOU our God.’
  [Misa Minggu.005]

[Ko QW]: unknown information

- Ko typically appears with fronted content QW (i.e., questioning the information sought):

  (15) a. Moende mali nge, ko apa ti’ kami?
    how if can PART what give 1PL.exc
    ‘If we can lift the stone out, what will you give to us?’
    (NUNU NANG E ANA ATA POTA.043)
  
  b. Sei ko ine into ndia
    who PART mother small this
    ‘who is the mother of this child?’
  
  c. ko ine mbiwa dhu
    PART mother not ready
    ‘as for his mother, he does not have one’.
    (LAI AME LEWA.0166-7)

In-situ [ko QW]

- In situ QW also takes *ko*:

  (16) a. ei ema ja’o ndia ala ko apa ndia,
    part boy 1SG this take part what this
    ‘Hey, my son, what can I take?’
    (Nunu Nange Endo Mbu’e Reo (Gadis Reo).227)
  
  b. Hae ndau moende noa, indi ko apa?
    hey that why part bring PART what
    ‘Hey how about that? What are we going to bring?’
    (CERITERA RAKYAT MBU’E NDEKI.0021)

Y/N interrogatives: [ko Noun/Verb]

- Y/N interrogatives also take *ko*

  (17) a. Pu’a rombo kazhi pa’i
    since morning 3SG get up
    Ko nipinatsu ko apa ndia noa?
    PART dream or PART what this part
    ‘when he got up in the morning, (he was wondering)
    was that a dream or what?’
    (LAI AME LEWA.0129-130)
  
  b. Fonga ko mbiwa tima meka ndia?
    want PART not receive old.man this
    ‘Does she really want to accept this (old) person?’
    (LAI AME LEWA.0156)
In imperatives: [V(P) ko]

- Ko marks the whole VP possibly containing SVC:

  (18) a. kau mai ngedho wa’i ja’o dhi ko.
      you come see foot 1SG PART PART
      ‘you come and see my foot.’
      (LAI AME LEWA.0069)

  b. mesu tolol ko.
      you help PART
      ‘you help (us) please’
      (Nunu nange nota.0048)

  c. hae ma’e ko.
      hey NEG part
      ‘No! Please don’t.’
      (Nunu Nange Endo Mbu’e Reo (Gadis Reo).032)

Sentence-initial [ko TOP]

- TOP ko triggers passivisation (i.e. promotion of P to SUBJ TOP as in (b))

  (19) a. Ko doa kazhi moe ndia: ...
      PART prayer 3SG like this
      ‘As its prayer, it goes like this: ...’
      UPACARA DASA JAWA.0004)

  b. ko embu su’a posa ne sizha ga.
      part grandfather angler tell by 3PL already
      ‘He was called the grandfather Su’a by people.’
      (Lit. the grandfather Su’a was called by people.’
      (History of the Wio Clan 023)

Ko + REL.CLAUSE

- In the following example, ko appears with a relative clause:

  (20) Weso ga bhate ata hongga ndia ja’o mbiwa,
      many already all person young this 1SG not
      mbiwa nge tina ko ata dengi ne ja’o ndau
      not can receive part REL ask by 1SG that
      ‘There’re many young men already (coming), not accepting me;
      they can’t accept the thing that I asked.’
      (CERITERA RAKYAT MBUE NDEKI.0015)

Contrastive ko+TOP

- Parallel structures with contrastive TOP

  (21) Bo ko moi mesu ko ura ne bhako.
      as.for part uncle concerned part nephew and niece
      lundi ko foi kazhi kali le ngite.
      but part wife (s)he just part hate
      ‘As for the uncle, he loved his nephew and niece,
      but his wife just hate them.’
      (NUNU NANGE ANA HALO.0002)
Making sense of *i-str* resources in Rongga

- A highly isolating language: making use of linear order and multifunctional words including particle markers for most of coding of crucial information (in addition to prosody)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{DF, GF & WORD ORDER in Rongga} \\
i-str: & \quad \text{SALIENCE} \quad DF: \{\text{TOP}|\text{FOC}[\text{NEW|SALIENCE}]\} \quad > \quad \text{NON_SALIENCE} \quad FOC[\text{NEW|SAP}] \\
c-str: & \quad \text{XP} \quad \text{DF: \{GF|PRED\}} \quad \text{IP/\text{T}} \quad \text{NP} \\
gf-str: & \quad \text{[SUB]} \quad \text{> OBJ.R > OBJ.T}
\end{align*}
\]

**Examples of *ko* in PossP**

- Possessive constructions can be with/without *ko*, when the possessor NP immediately follows the possessed N:

\[(25)\]

\begin{enumerate}
\item a. Gharo [ana jo'o ndau] tau la'o sekolah zihli jago ndau" to persuade child 1s that will go school far, away jaga that 'persuade my child so that he would go to school in jaga' (AUTOBIO.ANTONIUS.GELANG.0047)
\item b. ...tau kapu [ana ko kita ate sahata pu'u zihli Bali] ... make carry child PART we REL come from down Bali 'to welcome the son of ours who just arrived from Bali.' (Kepok-WelcomeRitual.004)
\end{enumerate}

Summary & Final remarks: implications of analyticity in grammar

Multifunctional *ko*: Opposing (weakening vs. augmenting) effects of *ko* is due to the interaction of grammatical & information structure properties associated with *ko*.

1. **PRAGMATICS: INFORMATION STRUCTURE**
   - *ko* marks FOCUS:NEW, where NEW={gap|salience}

2. **GRAMMATICAL/STRUCTURAL MARKING**
   - it signals a head-dependent structural relation: tight, subcategorised vs. loose, away from its head, not subcategorised.

**Examples of *ko* in PossP**

- The possessor must be marked by *ko* when it is not immediately adjacent to its noun head:

\[(26)\]

\begin{enumerate}
\item a. mbo [kau]poss [esa zhubu]numt ndau
  - house you CLASS two that 'your two houses'
\item b. mbo [esa zhubu]numt [ko]kau]poss ndau
  - house CLASS two ko 2s that 'your two houses'
\item c. mbo [esa zhubu]numt [kau]poss ndau
  - house CLASS two 2s that 'your two houses'
\end{enumerate}