Is there a VP in Pendau?

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1. **INTRODUCTION**

- Transitive constructions have:
  - A ‘rigid’ postverbal position
  - A ‘flex’ position that is preverbal or postverbal
- The flex position is identified as a grammatical subject
- The rigid position is identified as a grammatical object
- Subjects and second objects never occur between the V and O
- VP occurs with two orders:
  - S[VO]VP
  - [VO]VP
- Pendau has a symmetrical voice system
  - Active voice
  - Inverse voice

2. **BASIC GRAMMAR NOTES**

(1) **Active Voice**

\[
\text{Siama'u} \quad \text{nonuju} \quad \text{siina'u.}
\]
\[
\text{si=ama='u} \quad \text{N-pong-tuju} \quad \text{si=ina='u}
\]
PN/AB=father=1SG/GE RE-SF/PT-send PN/AB=mother=1SG/GE
\[
Pivot=A \quad \text{non-pivot=P}
\]

‘MY FATHER sent my mother.’

(2) **Inverse Voice**

\[
\text{Siama'u} \quad \text{nituju} \quad \text{niina'u.}
\]
\[
\text{si=ama='u} \quad \text{n-i-tuju} \quad \text{ni=ina='u}
\]
PN/AB=father=1SG/GE IV/RE-send PN/GE=mother=1SG/GE
\[
Pivot=P \quad \text{non-pivot=A}
\]

‘My mother sent MY FATHER.’

(3) **Dynamic Intransitive Construction**

\[
\text{Si}Yusup \quad \text{neriing.}
\]
\[
\text{si=Yusup} \quad \text{N-pe-riing}
\]
PN/AB=Joseph RE-SF/DY-bathe
\[
Pivot= S_A
\]

‘Joseph bathed.’

(4) **Stative Intransitive**

\[
\text{Si}Yusup \quad \text{nanabu.}
\]
\[
\text{si=Yusup} \quad \text{no-nabu}
\]
PN/AB=Joseph ST/RE-fall
\[
Pivot= S_p
\]

‘Joseph fell (down).’
Figure 1. Pronouns and Noun Phrase Markers in Pendau

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Absolute</th>
<th>Genitive</th>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>IV Pronominal Prefixes</th>
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<td>SG.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>a’u</td>
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<td>‘u-, no’u- (irrealis, realis)</td>
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<td>Ø</td>
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<td>nu=</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(5) **Nongkomung** asu jimo ono mbengimoi ri’uo.

*N-pong-’omung* asu jimo ono mbengi=mo ri=’uo

RE-SF/PT-take dog 3PL/AB when night=COMP LOC=yonder

‘They took dogs over there when it was already night.’

(6) **Tarus** nilolo niinanyo unga uo.

*tarus* ni-lolo ni=ina=nyo unga ’uo

continue IV/RE-search PN/GE=mother=3SG/GE child yonder

‘Her mother continued looking for her daughter (lit. child).’

(7) **Paey** rasaur miu ami.

*paey* ro-saur miu ’ami

and.then IV/IR-defeat 2PL/GE 1PL.EXC/AB

‘And then we will defeat you all.’

Pendau transitive clause types can be summarized as below:

- Pendau has two transitive verb forms distinguished by *nong*- and *ni*- prefixes. These verb constructions both have A and P arguments.
  
  **nong-** AVP or VPA word order
  
  Absolute is used in A and P positions
  
  Genitive rarely occurs in the P position
  
  **ni-** PVA or VAP word order
  
  Absolute is used in the P position
  
  Genitive is used in the A position

- The *ni*- verb construction indicates that A is in the non-pivot position, and the P is in the pivot position. The *nong-* verb construction indicates that A is in the pivot position, and the P is in the non-pivot position.

- The choice between *ni-* and *nong-* verb constructions seems to be dependent on the degree of topic continuity. The *ni*- verb construction seems to be the favoured verb construction when the A argument has a low referential distance (nearly a 3:1 ratio; for discussion and evidence of voice selection criteria see Quick 2002, 2003, in press b).
3. Identification of the VP

Figure 2. A and P argument positions in Pendau transitive clauses

1. \( \text{A} \) \( \text{nong-V} \) \( \text{P} \)
2. \( \text{nong-V} \) \( \text{P} \) \( \text{A} \)
3. \( \text{P} \) \( \text{ni-V} \) \( \text{A} \)
4. \( \text{ni-V} \) \( \text{A} \) \( \text{P} \)

Figure 3. The VP and SVO/VOS Word Orders

(8) \text{Unga miu tonialap nutoo ape nipiara nutoo.}
\text{unga miu to=ni-alap nu=too ape ni-piara nu=too}
\text{child 2PL/GE RM=IV/RE-get CN/GE=people or IV/RE-care CN/GE=people}
‘Someone got your child or someone took care of (your child).’

4. The VP and Double Objects

(9) \text{A’u mongolia’} \( \text{io} \) \( \text{vea.} \)
\text{a’u M-pong-oli-a’} \( \text{io} \) \( \text{vea} \)
\text{1SG/AB IR-SF-buy-TZ 3SG/AB raw-rice}
\text{A=Pivot Agent Recipient Theme}
\text{SUBJECT OBJECT 2nd OBJECT}
‘I will buy him/her rice.’

(10) \text{io niolia’o’u} \( \text{vea.} \)
\text{io ni-oli-a’=’u} \( \text{vea} \)
\text{3SG/AB IV/RE-buy-TZ=1SG/GE raw-rice}
\text{P=Pivot Recipient Agent Theme}
\text{SUBJECT OBJECT 2nd OBJECT}
‘I bought him/her rice.’

(11) \text{S V O O2} \text{default order}
\text{V O S O2} \text{subject occurs between two objects, O2 in default position}
\text{O2 V O S} \text{second object is fronted preverbally}
\text{V O O2 S} \text{second object is fronted postverbally}
Active Voice with Double Objects

(12) Nongolia’ io a’u vea.
N pongoli’a’ io a’u vea
RE-SF/PT-buy-TZ 3SG/AB 1SG/AB raw-rice
‘I bought him rice.’

(13) Nongolia’ io vea a’u.
N pongoli’a’ io vea a’u
RE-SF/PT-buy-TZ 3SG/AB raw-rice 1SG/AB
‘I bought him rice’

(14) *Nongolia’ vea io a’u.
N pongoli’a’ vea io a’u
RE-SF/PT-buy-TZ raw-rice 3SG/AB 1SG/AB
*‘I bought him rice.’

(15) Nongolia’ a’u io vea.
N pongoli’a’ a’u io vea
RE-SF/PT-buy-TZ 1SG/AB 3SG/AB raw-rice
‘He bought me rice.’

Inverse Voice with Double Objects

(16) Nisambalea’omo niCeku jimo manu’ niYusup.
ni-sambale-a’=mo ni=C. jimo manu’ ni=Y.
IV/RE-butcher-TZ=COMP PN/GE=C. 3PL/AB chicken PN/GE=Y.
‘Ceku butchered Joseph’s chicken for them.’

(17) Rusa uo nisoputa’o’u jimo riMalawa.
rusa ‘uo ni-soput-a’=’u jimo ri=Malawa
deer yonder IV/RE-shoot-TZ=1SG/GE 3PL/AB LOC=Malawa
‘I shot that deer for them at Malawa.’

(18) Niatora’onyo teule ma’o junjunonyo unga uo.
ni-ator-a’=nyo teule ma’o junjun=nyo unga ‘uo
IV/RE-deliver-TZ=3SG/GE return go house=3SG/GE child yonder
‘He took (lit. delivered) that child home to his house.’

5. THE VP AND THE FLOATING ADVERB MOJE ‘ALSO, TOO’

Floating Adverbs Positions in Inverse Voice

(19) Ami rimoo moje nidua’ nubali.
’ami ri=moo moje ni-dua’ nu=bali
1PL.EXC/AB LOC=this also IV/RE-arrive CN/GE=enemy
‘The enemy again arrived here beside us.’

(20) Ami rimoo nidua’ moje nubali.
’ami ri=moo ni-dua’ moje nu=bali
1PL.EXC/AB LOC=this IV/RE-arrive also CN/GE=enemy
‘The enemy again arrived here beside us.’

(21) Ami rimoo nidua’ nubali moje.
’ami ri=moo ni-dua’ nu=bali moje
1PL.EXC/AB LOC=this IV/RE-arrive CN/GE=enemy also
‘The enemy again arrived here beside us.’

Floating Adverbs Positions in Active Voice
(22) SiYusup moje monyambale japing uo nupiso.
PN/AB=Joseph also IR-SF/PT-butcher cow yonder INSTR=machete
‘Joseph also butchered the cow with the machete.’

(23) SiYusup monyambale moje japing uo nupiso.
PN/AB=Joseph IR-SF/PT-butcher also cow yonder INSTR=machete
‘Joseph also butchered the cow with the machete.’

(24) SiYusup monyambale japing uo moje nupiso.
PN/AB=Joseph IR-SF/PT-butcher cow yonder also INSTR=machete
‘Joseph also butchered the cow with the machete.’

(25) SiYusup monyambale japing uo nupiso moje.
PN/AB=Joseph IR-SF/PT-butcher cow yonder INSTR=machete also
‘Joseph also butchered the cow with the machete.’

6. THE VP AND OBLIQUEs

(31) A’u mongkomung bau rijunjung.
1SG/AB IR-SF/PT-carry fish LOC=house
‘I will carry the fish to my house.’

(32) Rusa uo nisoputa’o ’u jimo riMalawa.
deer yonder IV/RE-shoot-TZ=1SG/GE 3PL/AB LOC=Malawa
‘I shot that deer for them at Malawa.’

(33) Tavala ni’omuni nikai ribuut.
spear IV/RE-carry-DIR PN/GE=grandfather LOC=mountain
‘The grandfather held the spear on the mountain.’
After that he saw that grub, and then he took the grub, and then he put into his nose the grub.'

Only elicited examples with obliques between V and O

1SG IR-SF/PT-butcher LOC=Malava PN/GE=Joseph INSTR=machete

Joseph used a machete to butcher that cow in Malava.'

Joseph butchered that cow with a machete in Malava.'

Only elicited examples with instrument NPs between V and O

1SG IR-SF/PT-butcher LOC=Malava deer yonder

‘I will shoot the deer in Malava.’

‘I shot that deer for them at Malawa.’

‘I shot that deer for them at Malawa.’

‘From there he left that child at the house.’

‘From there he left that child at the house.’

‘After that he saw that grub, and then he took the grub, and then he put into his nose the grub.’

Only elicited examples with obliques between V and O

1SG IR-SF/PT-shoot LOC=Malava deer yonder

‘I will shoot the deer in Malawa.’

‘Like yonder IV/RE-see=3SG/GE grub yonder continue IV/RE-get=3SG/GE

‘Joseph used a machete to butcher that cow in Malava.’

‘Joseph butchered that cow with a machete in Malava.’

Only elicited examples with instrument NPs between V and O

3PL/AB

‘And then we’ll throw him into the lake.’ (monkeys talking about the turtle)
...paey unga nirembasi nuuram niYusup.

and.then child IV/RE-hit-DIR INSTR=medicine PN/GE=Joseph

‘...and then Joseph hit the CHILD with the medicine.’

Lexical Functional Grammar (LFG) for example allows discontinuous VPs (Bresnan 2001:126):

“The noncompositionality of LFG thus implies that VPs can be discontinuous phrases whose heads may appear external to the rest of the phrase.”

7. **Word Order Choice, Topic-Comment and the VP**

Van Valin and LaPolla suggest that (1997:218):

“It is reasonable to suppose, then, that the universal basis for the language-specific phrasal category VP is focus structure.”

Possibilities for VP fronting:

- Thematic continuity and/or action continuity (see Dooley and Levinsohn 2001, Levinsohn 2003)
- Pivotal storyline or primary event (see Longacre 1989, Dooley and Levinsohn 2001)
- Heavy NPs preferred in a postverbal S position

8. **Conclusion**

- The O cannot move, it is a ‘rigid’ argument and must occur immediately following the V. It must be [VO]_{vp}
- The S (or ‘flex’ argument) may not appear between the V and O, although it may appear in almost any other word order position
- The O2 (second argument) may not intervene between the V and the O
- Obliques do not naturally occur between the V and the O
- Nuclear directional serial verbs follow the V1 and occur immediately before the O
- Core directional serial verbs do not occur inside the VP and must follow the O somewhere outside the VP

**References**


**Abbreviations:** 1PL, first plural, 1SG first singular, 2PL second plural, 3SG third singular, 3PL third plural, A actor/agent, AB absolute, CN common noun, COM comitative, COMP completive aspect, DIR directional, DY dynamic verb class, EXC exclusive, GE genitive case, INC inclusive, IR irrealis, INSTR instrument case, IV inverse voice, LOC locative case, NP noun phrase, OBJ object, P undergoer/patient, PN proper noun, PP prepositional phrase, PT primary transitive verb class, RE realis, SF augmented stem former, ST stative verb class, SUBJ subject, TZ transitivizer, V verb, VP verb phrase