

## **Conditions on object marker ordering in Moro**

Farrell Ackerman & Sharon Rose

University of California, San Diego - USA

*Verbs in Moro, a Kordofanian language of Sudan, permit the simultaneous presence of two object markers, OMs (Gensler 2003; Lutz et. al. 2007). We present new data documenting what appears to be an unusual condition on the distribution of OMs: their relative position within the verb is not determined by semantic/syntactic role but by i) a person/number hierarchy, ii) verbal aspect, and iii) the size of the object marker. While lexical objects in Moro follow the verb in a fixed order based on semantic/syntactic role, i.e., (verb – recipient – theme), object markers are linearly ordered according to a fixed hierarchy of person 1 > 2 > 3. Similar person hierarchies for object clitics are attested in Yimas (Sepik-Ramu, Papua New Guinea) and Yulparija (Pama-Nyungan, Australia) (see Siewierska 2004 for discussion). In Moro, the fixed linear order renders the semantic/syntactic role of OMs ambiguous, so the order 1pl-3sg means 'he gave us to him/him to us'. Moreover, the position of objects varies depending upon aspect: in perfective aspect, OMs are suffixes, while in imperfective aspect, these OMs are prefixes. If two OMS are present in the imperfective, the first is a prefix and the second a suffix, linearly ordered according to the preceding hierarchy. This split appears to be due to a templatic prefix position which can only be occupied by a single syllable prefix. In single OM constructions, the multisyllabic 1explural OM is suffixal with a 'dummy' single syllable prefix appearing in prefix position. Moro, thus, presents an unusual case of OM ordering in that a confluence of factors other than semantic/syntactic role is responsible for their linear order and position.*