COGNATE OBJECTS IN KENYANG: A LINGUISTIC TREASURE WAITING TO BE EXPLORED

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Abstract

This paper examines the use of cognate objects in Kenyang, a Niger-Congo language spoken in Cameroon, and their relationship with transitivity. Cognate objects are nouns that display both argument and adjunct properties and share etymological roots with the verb. The study categorizes 50 Kenyang verbs based on whether their cognate objects are morphologically or semantically related to the verb and explores the syntactical properties that distinguish cognate objects from regular transitive objects. The paper also discusses theoretical implications within the generative framework and the transitivity properties of the verb as translated by the Case Theory and Theta Theory. The research findings contribute to the understanding of cognate objects and their relationship with transitivity in lesser-known languages, as well as the role of Kenyang in expanding the scope of linguistic research.

Introduction

Typologically, verbs have been classified as transitive and intransitive depending on their valence and subcategorization frame. To this end, a verb can subcategorize for an argument, cognate object,adjunct or both in its immediate postverbal position.While the NP objects of transitive verbs are interpreted as arguments, the interpretation ofthese NPs incorresponding position for intransitive verbs lacks consensus. The object NPsof intransitive verbs have been analysed as cognate objects (COs) which display argument properties (Massam 1990; Hale and Keyser 1993; Pham 1998) or adjunct properties(Jones 1988; Moltmann 1990; Mittwoch 1998) or both(Pereltsvaig 2001; Nakajima 2006) based on whether the verb is unergative orunaccusative(cfPermutter 1978).In the literature, cognate objects are construed as noun forms which are etymologically related to the verb in form and function by virtue of incorporating the action or state translated by the verb that governs it in the clause (cf Jones 1988; Yuko 1996). Cognate objects are inextricably linked with intransitive verbs particularly unergative verbs (Quirk et al 1984; Keyser and Roeper 1984; Jones 1988; Massam 1990; Levin and RappoportHovav1995; Macfarland 1995; Mitwoch 1998; Felser and Wanner 2001, etc.). The intransitive verb combines with a noun phrase whose head noun is morphologically, syntacticallyor semantically cognate as illustrated in the following: a. Bill sighed a weary sigh

b.   John laughed a heavy laugh

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c.   Harry lived an uneventful life

 (Jones 1988:89)

We notice in (1) that the unergative verbs *sighed, laughed, lived*, and the following object complements *sigh, laugh* and *life* have the same root. This explains why the*surrogate* object complement and valence of the input verb carries a referential index identical to the verb (Horrocks and Stavrou 2010) in (2):

a.Bill sighed a weary smile

b.John laughed a heavy laugh$_j$

In contrast to (1) and (2), the COCs in (3) which include unaccusative verbs are considered ungrammatical and thus unacceptable:

a.*The glass broke a crooked break (Levin and Rappaport Hovav 1995:40)

b.*The ship sank a strange sinking (Keyser and Roeper 1984:404)

c.*The actress fainted a feigned faint (Levin and Rappaport 1995:40)

Judging onthe interpretability of (1) and (2) against (3), many researchers posit that COCs can be captured with unergative verbs only. This selectional restriction appears to be immaterial to some researchers in the analysis of COCs. In this connection,Kuno and Takami (2004) maintain that COs can also be subcategorized by unaccusative verbs as illustrated in the following:

a.The tree grew a century‟s growth within only ten years

b.The stock market dropped its largest drop in three years

c.The apples fell a short fall to the lower deck, and so were not too badly bruised

(Kuno and Takami 2004: 116)

Their argument rests on the fact that intransitive verbs (unergatives and unaccusatives) must represent an activity or event involving a temporal process (2004:129) and that the verbs *grow, drop* and *fall* in (3) characterise the temporal process experienced by the unaccusativesubjects*tree, stock market* and *apples*. The subjects do not exert energy or volition in the process.Like many others, Jong BokandJooyoung (2012:4-5) argue for a distinction between unergative verbs and unaccusative verbs based on such syntactic properties as the form of modification of COCs for unergative and unaccusative verbs, and the processes involving the passivization, pronominalization, etc. of COs. In other words, given sentences (5) and (6) below, involving the modification of the cognate objects,

a.Bob grinned a sideways grin   (Horita 1996:224)

b.The wolf howled a long howl (Kuno and Takami 2004:105)

The apples fell a smooth fall   (Levin and Rappaport 1995:148)

the COCs in (5a) and (5b) are grammatical because the adjectives *long* and *smooth/sideways* modify unergative verbs *howl* and *grin* while the ungrammaticality of (6) rests on the fact that thecognate noun is modified by the adjective *smooth* in unaccusative (*fell*) construction.

Cross-linguistically, COs exhibit syntactic properties that both relate to and distinguish them from genuine transitive objects. Cognate objects are considered low in transitivity compared to the protype objects of their transitive counterparts. They are said to be low in transitivity because they are not targets of activities but rather supplementary materialinformation to characterise the activities denoted by the verbs. In this connection, the presence of cognate objects in a clause is optional (cf Kim and Lim 2012 and Kari 2017). The issue of low transitivity accounts for the distinction of two types of COs: Eventive-COs and Referential-COs by Jong-Bok and Jooyoung (2012).In line with Langacker (1999), they maintain that COs of unergative verbs are arguments while those of unaccusatives are adjuncts because the COs in the former are construed as affected objects in their interactions with other participants as is the case with passivization, for example. Phenomenal differences between both can be captured in constructions that require the CO to

undergopassivization, pronominalization, topicalization, wh-question, etc.(Massam 1990; Matsumoto 1996; Real-Puigdollars 2008; Shin-ya-Iwasaki 2007; Lavidas 2014).

(7) a.*An uneventful life was lived by Mary (Jones 1988)

b.*A sad laugh was laughed by Mary at the meeting   (Kuno a Takami 2004)

c.*Fred smiled a silly smile and Sandy smiled it too (Jong Bok and Jooyoung 2012)

d.*What did Fred smile?   (Jong Bok and Jooyoung 2012:4)

Although the sentences show some parallelism in morphology, syntax and semantics with the clausal verbs, the analysis of this parallel relationship, it has been observed, fails to be captured satisfactorily from a single theoretical approach. In the generative framework, for instance, cognate objects are characterised as arguments and captured within the case theory (Massam 1990) and modifiers (Jones 1988). In contrast, cognitive grammar lays emphasis on the cognitive structure of verbs that includes frame semantic meanings. The assumption is that the lexical meaning and encyclopaedic knowledge form a continuum. This provides a frame rich with world and cultural knowledge (see Jong-Bok (2012) for a usage-based model in the analysis of cognate objects (Yuko 1996).

In this paper, I investigate the morphosyntax and semantics of cognate objects and their transitivity in Kenyang, an under-described Niger-Congo language spoken in the South WestCameroon.

The study will type the kind of verbs that can co-occur with COs. It further investigates the syntactic properties of COs that distinguish them from genuine transitive objects comprising the forms of modification, processes such as passivization and pronominalization and discourse related process like topicalization, whquestions, among others. To capture these properties, adetailed classification of 50 verbs that occur in COCs in the Kenyang language constitutes the relevant data presented in the analysis. The verbs are characterised based on two conceptual parameters: theCOs that are morphologically related to the verbs, and the COs that are semantically but not morphologically related to the verbs. An overview of the Kenyang clause structure and transitivity is presented in Section 2. This is followed by the classification and discussion of the form and function of cognate objects in the clause in Section 3. A comparison of the transitivity of cognate objects and their noncognate objects is the discussion of Section 4. The last section wraps up the paper.

Theoretical Implications

In the generative framework, the transitivity properties of the verb have been translated by the Case Theory and the Theta Theory. Case features are intrinsic to V and T:NPs are licensed nominative case in T and accusative case in V. NPs that co-occur with the verb must be assigned case either structurally or inherently in satisfaction of the *Case Filter*. Structural case is materialized in a probe/goal relation (Spec-head relation) through AGREE ([Spec, Agrs] by T for external arguments and [Spec, Agro] by V for internal arguments) while inherent case is associated with theta roles (Chomsky 1981, 1993, 1995).Unaccusative constructions, however, are exceptions to this assumption. The external arguments of unaccusatives are base-generated as the internal arguments of the verb. This explains why it must raise to Spec Agrs rather than Spec Agro to check its case feature as the external argument in conformity with the case filter. Unergatives are transitive constructions with a covert object. Like all transitive construction, unergatives are assumed to allow a double VP structure. When V raises overtly to a light verb v, the result is a light verb complex vP. The subject raises from Spec V and merges with Spec v. It is in this v-VP configuration that the subject receives the external theta-role.

2. Some preliminary notes on Kenyang grammatical relations

Structurally, Kenyang has many of the morphosyntactic features commonly associated with Niger-Congo languages: noun class system to encode number and agreement, pro drop, verbal extension, etc. In Kenyang, three grammatical relations hold between the verb and co-occurring NPs to indicate the unmarked sentence

structure SVO: (i) subject, (ii) direct object and (iii) indirect object/oblique. The construction in (8) illustrates these relations:

Tabi   à   kwù   ɛ̀kátì   ǹtáh   Besong
Tabi   3sg.Perf buy   book   for   Besong   "Tabi
bought a book for Besong".

In sentence (8), *Tabi* is the subject, *ɛ̀kátì* the direct object, and *Besong* the oblique. The subject precedes and conditions agreement with the subject marker *à* which is in turn directly followed by the verb. The direct object immediately follows the verb and the oblique object if present comes after. Oblique objects in Kenyang can be overtly marked with a preposition as illustrated in the preceding example in which the expression *ǹtáh* ¨for¨ contributes to case mark *Besong* as oblique. The notion of oblique can also be expressed covertly without a preposition. In this case, the verbs take two nominal complements without marking either one with a preposition as in (9) below:

Tabi   à   kwù   Besong ɛ̀kátì
Tabi   3sg.Perf buy   Besong   book   "¨Tabi
boughtBesong a book".

When the oblique object is not preceded by a preposition, there is alternation of syntactic position between the direct object and the oblique. The oblique object occupies a position more local to the verb while the direct object follows the oblique as illustrated in (9). This allows both (8) and (9) to be invariant semantically. However, if the syntax is otherwise as in sentence (10) in which the oblique object that occupies a position remote from the verb (it follows the direct object instead of the verb) is not preceded by a preposition as in (8), the result is a grammatical sentence that shows no semantic correspondence with (8) and (9).

(8)   Tabi   à   kwù   ɛ̀kátì   `   Besong
Tabi 3sg.Perf buy book   Assoc M   Besong
"Tabi bought Be song¨sbook".

The structure in (10) is an associative construction in Kenyang. The associative interpretation is denoted by a floating tone that appears between the direct object *ɛ̀kátì* and the oblique *Besong.*

Transitivity requirement as illustrated above allows the verb to be preceded and followed by nominal expressions. Depending on their valency, transitive verbs can be monotransitve, ditransitive, and trytransitve. Intransitve verbs, in contrast can be unergative or unaccusative. The dichotomy between unergative and unaccusativeconstructions is illustrated in the following constructions:

(11)a. ɛ̀nɔ̀q   ɛ́   syɛ̀bɛ́(unaccusative construction)
Stick 3Sg-SM-Perfbroke
"The stick broke"

b.   *ɛ̀nɔ̀q ɛ́   syɛ̀bɛ́ nɛ̀syɛ̀bɛ̀(unaccusative as unergative)
Stick 3Sg-SM-Perfbreak   a break
"The stick broke a breaking"

(12)a. m̀bwɛ́pǎ   fòk   nɛ̀fí   (unaccusative construction)
Wind 3Sg-SM-Imperf blow   outside
"The wind is blowing outside"

b.*m̀bwɛ́p ǎ   fòk   nɛ̀fòk   nɛ̀fí (unergative use)
Wind 3Sg-SM-Imperf blow blowing outside
"The wind is blowing the blowing outside".

3.Corpus finding andanalysis

This section consists of the presentation and analysis of cognate objects in Kenyang. The methodology of my analysis included a collection of fifty COs objects which have to some extent corresponding morphosyntactic and semantic relationship with the lexicalised verb in the Kenyang clause.

3.1 Methodology

The method adopted here consists of testing the COs of some verbs in Kenyang based on the following parameters: morphology, syntax and sematic interpretation. The analysis of the form and function of cognate objects in Kenyang is derived from a collection of 50 expressions and sentences showing the verb-noun combination in the language. While some COs show morphological relations with the verbs, others do not as illustrated below:

3.1.1 Cognate objects morphologically related to the verbs

(13)	Cognate verb	Gloss		Cognate object Gloss
	nàŋtì	"to gossip"	ɛ̀náŋtí	"gossip"
	kpók	"to grab"	ɛ̀kpók	"grabbing"
	ɣɛ́p	"to steal"	áɣɛ́p	"stealing"
	kwɔ̀	"to borrow"	ákwɔ́	"debts"
	kwàká	"to cough"	ɛ̀kwáká	"cough"
	bhɛ́n	"to dance"	nɛ̀bhɛ́n	"a dance"
	kwáy	"sing "	nɛ̀kwáy	"song"
	kwɛ́n	"fell""	nɛ̀kwɛ́n	"fall"
	kwɛ́n	"to be guilty"	bɛ́kwɛ́nɛ́	"guilt"
	nyù	"fight"	nɛ̀nyù	"fight"
	sàŋ	"to nag"	nɛ̀sàŋ	"nagging"
	séy	"to lie"	ǹséy	"lies"
	tʃáy	"to fear"	bɛ̀tʃáy	"fear
	tó	"to send"	ǹtó	"message"
	bòk	"to tell"	m̀bòk	"story"
	gwù	"to die"	nɛ̀wú	"death"
	tɛ́m	"to hunt"	kɛ̀tɛ́mɛ́	"hunting"
	kàìsì	"to think"	ŋ̀kàìsì	"thoughts"
	kɛ́p	"to take enema"	nɛ̀kɛ̀p	"enema"
	nɨ̀k	"to pray"	nɛ̀nɨk(mwɛ́t)	"prayer"
	nàk	"to invite"	mànàk	"in-laws"
	rwɔ́	"to deceive"	bɛ̀rwɔ̀	"deceit"
	byɔ́p	"to talk"	kɛ́mbyɔ́bhɛ́	"talkative"
bháy		"to marry"	nɛ̀bháy	"marriage"
ɣáp		"to wander"	táŋgáp	"wandering"
yàkàrì		"to move about"	nɛ̀yàkàrì"	"moving about"
nɨŋɛ̀		"to beg"	mɛ̀nɨŋɛ́	"begging"
wènɛ̀		"to scramble for"	kɛ́wɛ́nɛ́	"scrambling "
nyɛ́		"to eat"	nɛ̀nyɛ́	"food"
táŋ		"to quarrel"	bɛ̀táŋá	"quarrel"
sɔ́k		"to insult"	ǹsɔ́k	"insult"

kɔ̀	"to prostitute"	nὲkɔ̀	"prostitution"
tó	"to send"	ǹtó	"message"
fòk	"to raise"	nfòk	"dust"
nɛ́m	"to lose"	mɛ́nɛ́mɛ́	"a lost/chance/luck"
bhé	"to deliver"	nὲbhé	"birth"
sὲn	"to fad" kὲsὲn		"a fad"
gwɔ̀	"to vomit"	kὲgwɔ̀	"vomitus"
tʃéké	"to sneeze"	bétʃéké	"a sneeze"
gwà	"to reproach" bὲgwá		"a reproach"
nɔ́p	"to cajole"	mὲnɔ́ptí	"a cajole".

3.1.2 Cognate objects not morphologically related to the verbs.

(14)
Cognate verb	Gloss	Cognate object	Gloss
bɨ̀k	"to scream"	bàrí	
"screams"			
wày	"to laugh"	ámɛ́n	
"laughter"			
dì	"to cry"	kὲβɔ̀	"crying"
gwàp	"to slap"	ǹsáp	"a slap"
wὲrɛ́	"to sleep"	kὲnɔ́	"sleep"
rὲm	"to talk"	kὲpɨ̀	"talk"

Although the cognate objects in 3.1.2 are morphologically detached from their co-occurring verbsabove,they are however homonyms to the preceding verbs.

3.1.3 Predicate adjective cognate objects

(15)
Predicate adjective	Gloss	Cognate object	Gloss
βòkòrì	"be mad"	ὲβókórí	"madness"
βɔ́t	"be lazy"	àβɔ́t	"laziness"
mé	"be sick"	nὲmé	"sickness"
ŋák	"be happy"	màŋák	"happiness"
ŋɛ́m	"be greedy"	mὲŋɛ́mɛ́	"greediness"

We note from the preceding presentation that the cognate phenomenon is translatable from the extensive verbal prefixes with variation in syllable structure comprising- **V, C** and **CV:**

	Verb	Gloss	Derived cognate object Gloss	
(16)	Kwàkà	"to cough"	ὲ-kwáká	"cough"
		V-CV-CV		
(17)	sɔ́k	"to insult"	ǹ-sɔ́k	"insult"
		C-CVC		
(18)	gwɔ̀	"to vomit"	kὲ-gwɔ̀	"vomitus"
		CV-CV		

These verbal prefixes serve to deverbalize the verbs into nominals.

Some of the cognate objects presented above are not concrete objects but rather concepts that canbe visualized and contextualized relative to the community in question. It can be argued however that the concept of *ὲβòkórí* 'madness" can be visualized but the concept of *tóǹtó* „send a message" is neither concrete nor visualized. The subjects of the cognate verbs host causative and experiencer properties as indicated in the following:

(19) Etaka ă   kɔ̀ Besongm̀bàŋ nὲ   m̀bàŋ   (Caus reading)
      Etaka 3Sg-SM-Imperf walk Besongplace   to   place

"Etaka makes Besong to move from place to place".

(20)   Eta   ă   bhòkòrí ὲbhókórí   (Experiencer reading)
         Eta   3Sg-SM-Imperfis   mad   madness
"Eta is mad".

(21)   Tabi   à   tó   ǹtó   ǹtáh   Egbe
         Tabi   SM-Perf send   message to   Egbe
         "Tabi sent a message to Egbe".

3.2. Forms of cognate objects in Kenyang

Given the data presented above, we can identify three different forms of cognate objects in Kenyang: the cognate objects which are morphologically related to the verb, and thecognate objects which are intrinsically homonymous with the cognate verb, and adjectives/prepositions qualifying the cognate noun understood:

Cognate nouns derived directly from the verb

(22) Eyongă   tɛ́m kὲtɛ́mɛ́ ὲntìǸ ɨ̀ Eyong 3-SM-Imperf huntɲ̀ɲwɔ̀p
hunting every day
"Eyong does hunting everyday".

(23)Etaka   ă   ɣɛ́p   áɣɛ́p   m̀bɔ̀   má   yí
Etaka 3-SM-Imperf   steal   stealing like   mother his
"Etaka steals like his mother".

(25)Besong   à   tò   ǹtó   ǹtáh   ŋ̀gɔ̀rɛ́ yì
Besong 3-SM-Perf   send   message to   wife   his
"Besong has sent a message to his wife".

Cognateverbs withhomonymous objects

(26) βɔ̀ bá wὲrὲ children 3-SM-Imperf sleepkὲnɔ́
sleep
"The children are sleeping"

(28)Ako ă   dì   kὲβɔ
Ako   3-SM-Imperfcry cry
"Ako is crying".

(29)Ashu   ă   wày   ámɛ́n
Ashu 3Sg-SM-Imperf laugh laughter
"Ashu is laughing".

An adjective /preposition qualifying the cognate noun understood

(30)   Tabi à ɲù nὲ ὲfɔk Tabi 3-SM-Perf fight with strength
"Tabi fought with strength/fiercely".
Sentence (30) can be paraphrased as "Tabi fought the fight of his life". By appearing immediately after the verb, the preposition phrase *nὲ ὲfɔk*"with strength" seems to have absorbed the postverbal position that would

have been filled by the cognate object. In this position, the PP/AdjP is doubly interpreted as a cognate object and a modifier.

(31) bàɣɔ̀rɛ́ bá   kwáy ɛ̀yú
    women   3Pl-SM-Perf   sing   breath(best/sweet melodies)
"The women sang their best".

(32) βɔ̀   bǎ   βɛ́n ǹsóŋó
children 3Pl-SM-Imperf dance best/marvellous "The children
are dancing theirbest".

In general, when the cognate verb is modified by an expression translatable as the cognate verb in Kenyang, the cognate object is banned from co-occurring with the modifier. This accounts for the ungrammaticality of sentences (33)) and (34), the equivalents of sentences (31) and (32) respectively:

(33) *bàɣɔ̀rɛ́ bá   kwáy nèkwáy ɛ̀yú

(34) *βɔ̀ bá   βɛ̀n   nèβɛ́n ǹsóŋó

Accordingly, *nèkwáy*"song"and *nèβɛ́n*"dance"are cognate objects which are followed by expressions which themselves are cognate and compatible with the unpronouncedor null cognate object.

3.2.1 Semantic/pragmatic properties of Kenyang cognate verbs

Kenyangcognate objects are both concrete and abstract nouns which serve to translate an activity or event. Theduplication of the verb through nominalizationin the postverbal position serves to intensify and thus modify the meaning of the activity /event encoded in the verb.Intensification renders the activity / event more emphatic. The preverbal prefix changes the grammatical category of the verb into a noun. The derived verbal noun is a *latent* referent object of the preceding verb by virtue of still carrying inherent characteristics of the cooccurring verb. When the cognate object is substituted for a corresponding adjective that qualifies the cognate noun, the cognate construction is interpreted idiomatically. To this end, sentence (33) above repeated here as (35)is an idiomatic construction in Kenyang. These expressions indicate the manner in which the activities/events are spelled out in the language:

(35) bàɣɔ̀rɛ́   bǎ   kwá ɛ̀yù
 Women 3Pl-SM-Imperf sing breath/sweet melodies "The women sang
their best".

On the basis of their semantics, Kenyang distinguishes between two types of cognate objects comprising: emphatic/intensifying, andmodifying cognate objects.

3.2.2. Syntactic Properties of Kenyang Cognate Objects

Cognate objects seem to display syntactic idiosyncrasies with co-occurring constituents in a clause.As earlier indicated, the syntactic analysis of cognate objects rests on two schools of thought within the generative procedure: the CO seems to display both adjunct and argument properties. The cognate objects in both schools display typical properties of the syntactic object depending on the lexical semantics of the verbs. The lexical semantics of the verb accounts for the distinction of two types of cognate objects: event-Co and referential-Co. The cognate objects are said to translate a resultant state or the activity of the process in question.Given *Transitivity Requirement*, cognate objects are „genuine" syntactic objects. They are the internal arguments that receive case and/or a theta role from the co-occurring verb (Hale and Keyser 1987, 1993; Massam 1990).

In the event-Co construction, the main verb which apparently functions as a light verb merges with the object to form a complex predicate. The subject of the cognate object constructions may play the role of a causer or an experiencer. Contrary to TR, some linguists posit that cognate objects are adjuncts with a manner-adverb type of function that serves as modfiers (Jones 1988; Moltimann 1990, etc.). In fact, phenomenal differences between adjuncts and arguments have been captured in constructions that require the CO to undergo pronominalization, passivization, topicalization, wh-expression, etc. It has been observed that prototypical

cognate objects are incompatible with such constructions in some languages. Cognate verbs of event-Co represent an event whereas the CO of referential-CO denote an individual. The latter is said to host canonical object properties which are compatible with the above constructions. This explains why the referential-CO but not event-CO can be passivized, pronominalized, topicalized, Wh-questioned, etc. However, cognate objects of eventive-CO have been analysed as ambiguous for displaying properties of both eventive-Co and referential CO. This section explores the co-occurrence relation between Kenyangcognate objects and syntactic operations such as passivization, topicalization, pronominalization, wh-questions, relativization, definiteness, etc.

3.2.2.1. Eventive-CO

The cognate object of eventive-CO functions as a predicate. The CO characterises an event and this in turn accounts for why it cannot be pronominalized, passivized, topicalized, Wh-questioned in the following Kenyang constructions:

Pronominalization of Cognate Objects

Can Kenyang cognate objects of eventive-CO be substituted by pronominals, for example, *it*? The (b) counterparts of the following constructions articulate this point:

(36)　(a)　Tabi　ǎ　　　　　　　γέp　áγέp　　tě　　kὲmbǒ
Tabi 3Sg-SM-Imperf steal　　　　stealing since　childhood
"Tabi has been stealing since childhood"

(b)　　*Tabi ǎ　　　　　　　γέp　wú　tě　　kὲmbǒ
Tabi 3Sg-SM-Imperf steal it since childhood　nὲ Ashu ǎ γέp wú ŋkwɔ́
"Tabi has been stealing since childhood".

(37)　(a)Besong　à　　　βὲn　èrití　　　nὲβέn nὲ　　ŋgósí
Besong 3Sg-SM-Perf　　dance beautiful　　dance　　　in　　afternoon
"Besongdanced beautifullyat noon".

(b)　　*Besong　à　　　βὲn　èrití　　　yɔ́　nὲ　　ŋgósí
　　　Besong 3Sg-SM-Perf　dancebeautiful it　in　　afternoon
"Besongdanced beautifullyat noon".

(38)　(a)　bàγɔ̀rέ bá　　　　　　kwày　ὲyú
women 3Pl-SM-Perf　sing　breath/sweetest　melodies　"The　women
sang their best/sweetest melodies".

(b)　　*bàγɔ̀rέ bá　　　kwày　yɔ́
　　　women 3Pl-SM-Perf　sing　it
"The women sang it".

The ungrammaticality of the above constructions indicates the impossibility of pronominalizing cognate objects in Kenyang.

Passivization of Cognate Objects

Kenyang has impersonal passives as illustrated in (39b):

(39)　(a)　Ebot　à　　　　　　wày　m̀pɔ̀ŋ έyú
　　　Ebot　3Sg-SM-Perf　　kill　cow　yesterday
　　　"Ebot killed a cow yesterday".

　　　(b)　bá　　　wáy　m̀pɔ̀ŋ　ὲyú
　　　　　3Pl-SM-Perf　kill　cow　yesterday
　　　　"A cow was killed yesterday".

Given (39) in Kenyang, let us consider the passivization of the cognate objects in sentences (36a)and (37a) repeated below as (40)and(41) respectively:

(40)　(a)　Tabi　ǎ　　　　γɛ́p　áγɛ́p　　tɛ̌　　kɛ́mbɔ̌

　　　　　Tabi　3Sg-SM-Perf　steal　stealing since　childhood

"Tabi has been stealing since childhood".

　　　　(b)　bá　　　　γɛ́p　áγɛ́p　　tɛ̌　　kɛ̀mbɔ̌

　　　　　3Pl-SM-Perf　steal　stealing since　childhood

"They have been stealing since childhood/stealing has been carried out by them since childhood".

(41)　(a)　Besong à　　　　βɛ̀n　ɛ̀rɪtɪ́　　　nɛ̀βɛ́n　nɛ̀　　ǹgósí

　　　　　Besong 3Sg-SM-Perf dance　beautiful　　dance　in　　afternoon

　　　　　"Besong danced beautifully at rnoon".

　　　　(b)　bá　　　βɛ̀n　ɛ̀rɪtɪ́　　　nɛ̀βɛ̀n　　　nɛ̀　　ǹgósí

　　　　　3Pl-SM-Perf　dance　beautiful　　dance　　　in　　afternoon

 "They danced beautifully in the afternoon/A beautiful dance was performed at noon".

As indicated in (40b) and (41b), cognate objects can be passivized in Kenyang contrary to some claims in existing literature about the incompatibility between both. Impersonal passives lack phenomenal features of passive constructions, for example, there is no promotion and demotion of syntactic objects, no insertion rules, etc.

The substitution of the analytic subject with an exclusive generic pronoun allows the verbal morphosyntax to be spelled out by default.The lack of these intrinsic passivization processes seems to be compatible with cognate objects than otherwise transitive objects.

Topicalization of Cognate Objects

Kenyang topicalized constructions follow the pattern in (42b), the topicalized counterpart of (42a):

(42)　(a)　Eware　　　à　　　　　　　　kwù　ɛ̀βà　ɛ̀kátì

　　　　Eware　　　3Sg-SM-Perf　　　　buy　bag　school

　　　　　"Eware bought a school bag".

(b)　ɛ̀βá　ɛ̀kátì　　ɛ́-rɛ́,　　　Eware à　　　　kwù　yɔ́

　　　bag　school　　Aug-Top,　Eware 3Sg-SM-Perf buy　Res-Pron

"As for the school bag, Eware has bought it".

The topicalization of cognate objects in eventive-CO in Kenyang results to ungrammaticality as exemplified in (43b) and (44b):

(43)　(a)　Eware ǎ　　　　βɔ̀kɔ̀rì　　ɛ̀βókórí　　　　　Eware

3Sg-SM-IPerf mad　madness　　　　　　"Eware is mad".

(b) *ɛ̀βókórí ɛ́-rɛ́, Eware ǎ βɔ̀kɔ̀rɔ̀ yɔ́　madness Aug-Top, Eware 3Sg-SM-Imperfmad　it

　　　　　"As for madness, Eware s is mad".

(44)　(a)　Tabi　ǎ　　γɛ́p　áγɛ́p　tɛ̌　　kɛ̀mbɔ̌

　　　　　Tabi　　3Sg-SM-Imperf steal　stealing

　　　"Tabi has been stealing since childhood".

　　　　(b)*àγɛ́p　　á-rɛ́,　　　Tabi　ǎ　　　　　　　γɛ́p　　wú

　　　stealing Aug-Top,　　Tabi　3Sg-SM-Imperf steal　Res-Pron

　　　tɛ̌　　kɛ̀`mbɔ̌　　　since　childhood

 "As for stealing, Tabi has been stealing it since childhood".

Cognate objects are incompatible with topicalization as illustrated in the ungrammticality of(43b) and (44b).

Relativization of Cognate Objects

(45) àɣɛ́p   á-nɛ́   Tabi   ǎ   ɣɛ́p   tɛ̌   kɛ̀mbɔ̌
stealing Aug-Rel Tabi 3Sg-SM-Imperf steal since childhood   "The
stealing which Tabi does since childhood"

(46)   kɛ̀ntɛ́mɛ́   ɛ́-kɛ́n   sɛ́   tɛ́mɛ́   m̀myɛ́ ɛ́yú
    hunting Aug-Rel 1Pl-SM-Perf year   yesterday
"The hunting that was carried out last year".

(47)   nɛ̀ɲù ɛ̀-nɛ̀n Manyi á   ɲú   nɛ̀   ɛ̀fɔ̀k
    fight Aug-Rel Manyi 3Sg-SM-Perf   fight with   strength
        sɛ́   ʧǐ   màŋáq
        1Pl-SM-Perf Cop   happy
 "The fight which Manyi fought with strength surprises us".

Focusing of Cognate Objects

(48)   *(Chi) àɣɛ́p   kɛ̀   Tabi   á   kî /ɣɛ́pɛ́
        It is   stealing Foc   Tabi   3Sg-SM-Perf do / steal
"It is stealing that Tabi carried out".

(49)   *(chi) ǹsɔ́k kɛ̀ Eta á sɔ́k-ɔ́ ǹtɔ̀ŋ It is insult Foc Eta 3Sg-SM-Perf insult-Fv teacher
"It is an insult that Eta levied on the teacher".

(50)   *(chi) ɛ̀βɔ́kɔ́rí kɛ̀ Eware á   βòkórì It is madness Foc Eware 3Sg-SM-Perf mad
"It is madness that has transformed Eware".

Cognate Objects and Wh-expressions

(51)   *Eta   ǎ   βökörì   yì?
        Eta   3Sg-SM-Imperf mad   what
    "What is Eta mad of?"

(52)   *yì   Eta   ǎ   sɔ́q?
        Who   3Sg-SM-Perf   insulted insult
    "What does Eta insult?"

3.2.2.2. Referential-CO

Unlike their eventive-CO, the cognate objects of referential-CO host the referential properties of the matrix NP. The NP in question has the capacity to initiate and execute an act voluntarily or non-voluntarily. This has generated significant differences in the computation of COs in syntactic constructions involving pronominalization, passivization, topicalization, Wh-questions, relativization, focussing, among others. The following constructions are interpretable in Kenyang because the cognate object refers to the individual involved in the act:

Passivization in Referential-CO

(53)   bá βɛ̀n nɛ̀βɛ́n ɛ̀ʧɔ̀ŋ 3Pl-SM-Perf dance dance today
"They danced today".

(54)   bá   kwáy   nɛ̀kwáy nɛ̀   màŋáq
    3Pl-SM-Perf   sing   song   with   happiness
    "They sang with the song with happiness".

Pronominalization in Referential-CO

(55)   Ashu à   kwày ɛ̀rití nɛ̀kwáy ǹtáh βɔ́   βì   nɛ̀
    Ashu 3Sg-SM-Perf sing   nice   song   to   children his   and
    Ebob à   kwày **nɔ́** ŋ́kwɔ́
    Ebob 3Sg-SM-Perf   sang   it   too

"Ashu sang a beautiful song to his children, and Ebob sang it too".

Topicalization in Referential-CO

(56)	nèβέn	έ-nèré	Tabi	à	βὲn	nɔ́
	dance	Aug-Top	Tabi	3SgSM-Perf	dance	ResP

"As for the dance, Tabi danced it".

Wh-question of Referential-CO

(57)	*yì	έ-rέ	Tabi	á	sɔ́q̇q-ɔ́	nɔ́?
	What	Aug-Anap	Tabi	3Sg-SM-Perf	insult-Fv	Def

"What did Tabi insult?"

(58)	*yi	έ-έrέ	Enoh	á	βέn-έ	nɔ́?
What	Aug-Anaphor	Enoh	3Sg-SM-Perf	"What did	dance-Fv	Def

Enoh dance?"

Wh-expressions can appear sentence initial or sentence final. This means that the wh-particle *yì* "what"in (57) and (58) can appear also in the final positions as in (59) and (60) respectively:

(59)	*Tabi	à	sɔ̀k	yí	(έ-rέ)?

(60)	Enoh	à	βὲn	yí	(έ-rέ) ?

3.2.2.3. Modification of Cognate Objects

Cognate objects in Kenyang can be subjected to different forms of modification comprising adjectives (as in (61)), (62)), adverbs if the CO is an argument (as illustrated in (62)), relative clause as in (63),focusing as in (64), and by PP in (65), etc.

(61)	m̀bák	Ako	à	kwày	ὲrit́	nèkwáy	ǎ
	If	Ako	3Sg-SM-Perf	sing	beautiful song	3Sg-SM	
	fuέt	nèmɔ̀	(adjectival modification)
	pass	exam

"if Ako sings a beautiful song, he will pass his exams".

(62)	Eta	ǎ		tέm	kὲntέmέ	wáwák (adverbial modification)
	Eta	3Sg-SM-Imperf	hut	hunting	rarely

"Eta rarely does hunting"

Relativization of Referential-CO

(63)Sέ	kɔ̀ŋ	bàkwáy á-nέ		Ebai	á	kwáy
1Pl-SM-Imperf	like	songs		Aug-Rel	Ebai	3Sg-SM-Perf	sing

"We love the songs sung by Ebai".

Focusing of Referential-CO

(64)	t͡ʃĭ	nèkwá έ-nὲn		kὲ	sέ	kwáy	mbwέrέ
	Cop	song	Aug-Rel Foc	1Pl-SM-Imperf	sing	tomorrow

"We shall be singing this song tomorrow".

Modification by Prepositional phrase

(65)	Ako	ǎ		sέ	ǹsέ	kὲ		kyὲptì	àmiḱ
	Ako	3Sg-SM-Imperf	tell	lies	without	blinking	eyes

"Ako tells lies without remorse".

3.3. Findings and Discussions

As indicated in the preceding discussion, transitivity requirement allows the post-verbal position in some languages to be filled by a lexical object which is morphologically and semantically related to the verb (a cognate object) or an object other than the cognate object.Cognate objects are construed as deverbals (the

nominalization of a verb stem). They are more compatible with a class of intransitive verbs: unergative verbsrather than unaccusatives.Unergative verbs allow two types of cognate objects: the event-CO and referential CO. They exhibit different grammatical properties in their syntax within the generative procedure comprising passivization, pronominalization, topicalization, wh-questioning, etc. The study of CO in Kenyang corroborates with the facts on CO in existing literature to a great extent. The language allows COs with verbs that are etymologically related to the cognate verb and with verbs that are morphologically otherwise but semantically compatible with the CO. Depending on its lexical properties, KenyangCOsdisplay both arguments and adjunct features in many syntactic environments. However, cognate objects can be passivized in this language contrary to what is obtained in some languages. There seem to be some compatibility between cognate objects and impersonal passives. Kenyangallows impersonal passives and this accounts for the passivisationof cognate objects in the language.

Conclusion

The paper set out to investigate the form and function of cognate objetcs in a Niger-Congo language spoken in South West Cameroon. Kenyang, an SVO language, allows cognate objects which can either be morphologically related to the cognate verb or detached from it. The grammatical properties of the COC are constrained by numerous syntactic operations in conformity with the elaborate discussions on cognate objects or contrary to the latter.We note, contrary to the existing templatesthat Kenyang cognate objects can be passivized.

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