

V1 in Lopit:  
A basic syntactic analysis  
following Bossi & Diercks (2019)

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# Kipsigis

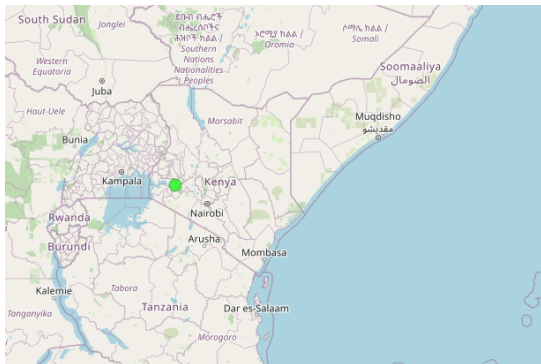
## Classification

- **Nilotic (55)**
  - ▶ Eastern Nilotic (17)
  - ▶ **Southern Nilotic (16)**
    - ▶ **Kalenjin (11)**
      - ▶ **Central Kalenjin (5)**
        - ▶ **Kipsigis** ●
        - ▶ Plateau Central Kalenjin (4)
      - ▶ Elgon-Mau Kalenjin (2)
      - ▶ Northern Kalenjin (2)
      - ▶ Okiek-Akie (2)
      - ▶ Tatoga-Omotik (5)
    - ▶ Western Nilotic (22)

## Comments on subclassification

Distefano, John Albert 1985

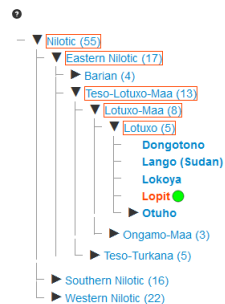
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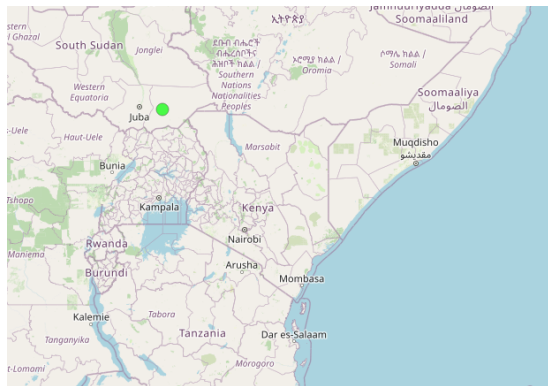
# Lopit

## Classification



## Comments on subclassification

Vossen, Rainer 1982



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## Kipsigis: Word Order

VSO is standard. Discourse-prominent constituents are moved to the IPP (*immediately postverbal position*).

(1) Bossi & Diercks 2019:2-3

a. Kii-∅-geer dzii-ta tee-ta.

PST-3SG-see person cow

'A person saw a cow (long ago).'

→ VSO

b. Kii-∅-geer tee-ta dzii-ta.

PST-3SG-see cow person

'A person saw a cow (long ago).'

→ VOS

c. Koo-∅-e amut tuuga peek.

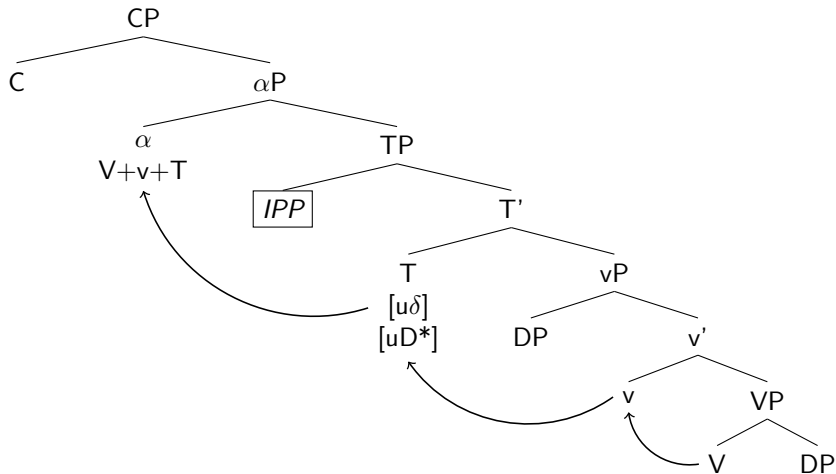
PST-3PL-drink yesterday cows water

'The cows drank the water yesterday.'

→ V-adv-SO

# Kipsigis structure following Bossi & Diercks

(2) Bossi & Diercks 2019:17



## Lopit: Word Order I

VSO is standard. Prominent material directly follows the verb.

(3) Moodie 2019:184-185

a. ε-ìlá            xótójí            ìηè  
3-wash-IPFV mother.NOM baby.ABS  
'The mother washes the baby.'            → VSO

b. ó-ηór-ò            wùré            lóxòtóró  
3-sting-IPFV children.ABS bees.NOM  
'The bees are stinging the children.'            → VOS

(4) **Lopit Prominence Hierarchy**            Moodie 2019:184

1st & 2nd pronoun > 3rd pronoun > proper noun >  
human > animate > inanimate

## Lopit: Word Order II

Focussed material is fronted.

(5) Moodie 2019:187

- a. m̀̀l̀̀ò̀̀ŋ      l-ò-xóŋ      x̀̀ìwà̀̀r̀̀ù̀̀  
baboon.ABS SBO-3-bite.N leopard.ABS  
'(It was) The baboon (that) bit the leopard.' → SVO
- b. x̀̀í̀̀s̀̀ú̀̀ŋ      l-o-wóló      nájórúò̀̀  
cattle.ABS SBO-3-see.N wife.NOM  
'(It was) The cattle (that) the wife saw.' → OVS

## Lopit: Word Order III

Auxiliaries always appear clause-initially, followed by subject and verb.

(6) Moodie 2019:374,188

- a. e-pei ije i-li-ruma nabo  
2-not.be 2SG.NOM 2-PER-find one  
'You still can't find anyone.' → AUX-SVO
- b. xə́jɔ́ mùnù x-ò-xón ìpè dè=xèjùk  
and.then snake.NOM SEQ-3-bite 3SG.ABS on=leg.ABS  
'and then the snake bit him on the leg.' → AUX-SVO



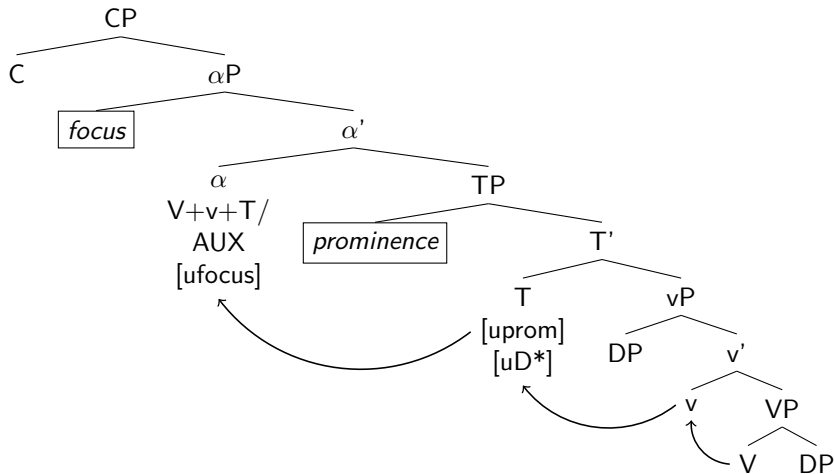
# Lopit: Word Order IV

The following word orders have to be derived for Lopit:

- VSO, VOS (for prominence)
- SVO, OVS (for focus)
- AUX-SVO

# Applying the analysis to Lopit

(7)



# Wh-questions

Wh-questions in Lopit do not require a change in word order.

(8) Moodie 2019:228

- a. x-ì-fíjǎ                      íjé                      ɲò  
Q-2SG-clean.IPFV 2SG.NOM what  
'What are you cleaning?'

→ VSO

# Ditransitives I

In ditransitive constructions, the indirect object is placed before the direct object.

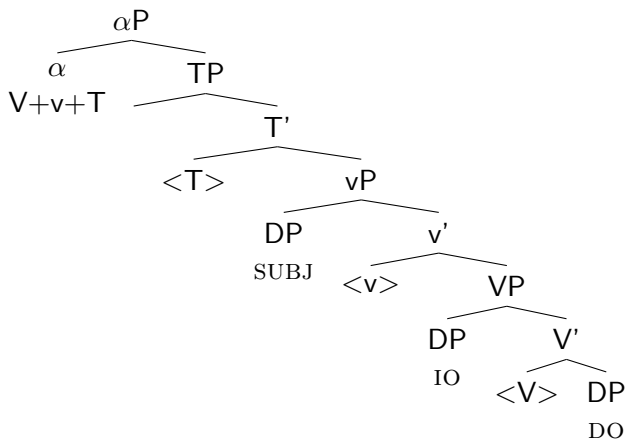
(9) Moodie 2019:200

- a. a-ísó      náŋ      ìjè      bùk  
1SG-give.N 1SG.NOM 2SG.ABS book.ABS  
'I gave you the book.'

→ VS-IO-DO

## Ditransitives II

(10)



## Ditransitive wh-questions I

For ditransitive content questions, the order of direct and indirect object changes.

(11) Moodie 2019:203

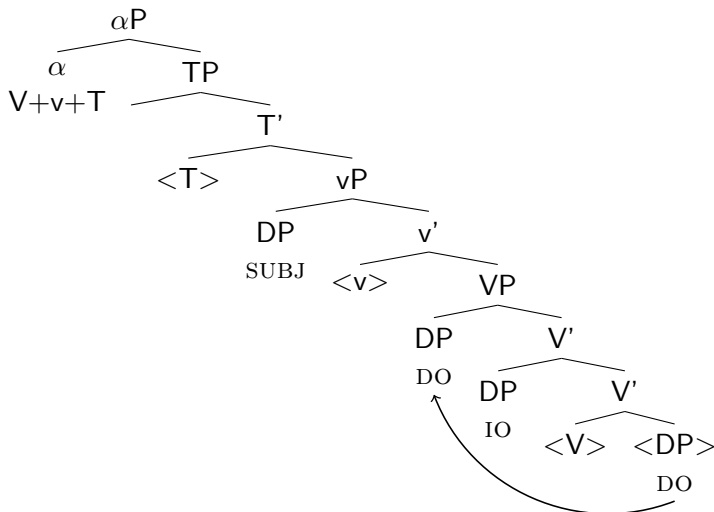
- a. x-í-l:úm-órì      íjé      bìl jò  
Q-2SG-hit.N-INS 2SG.NOM Bill what  
'What did you hit Bill with?'

→ VS-DO-IO

**How can this be accounted for syntactically?** The direct object must be raised to a position above the indirect object, but below the subject. As of yet, no such position exists.

## Ditransitive wh-questions II

(12)



## References

Bossi, Madeline & Michael Diercks. 2019. *V1 in Kipsigis: Head movement and discourse-based scrambling*. *Glossa: A Journal of General Linguistics* 4(1).

Miyagawa, Shigeru. 2010. *Why agree? Why move?: Unifying agreement-based and discourse-configurational languages*. Vol. 54 *Linguistic Inquiry Monographs*. MIT Press.

Moodie, Jonathan Paul. 2019. *A Grammar of the Lopit Language*. University of Melbourne dissertation.