

# TYPE AND INSTANCE NOMINALISATIONS IN TOKELAUAN

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## 1. INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

The distinguishing features of Polynesian nominalisations were the subject of two papers published in the 1970s-80s, Chung (1973) and Clark (1981). There were no equally systematic studies of nominalisation in individual languages until Vonen (1988), which contains a chapter on nominalisations in Samoan and Tokelauan, including a comprehensive description of types of lexical nominalisation. More recently, Mosel (1992) and Vonen (1992) examine, respectively, Samoan and Tokelauan nominalisations. Both of these papers are primarily concerned with the distribution of *a* and *o* possessor marking.

First a note on terminology. I distinguish between *lexical nominalisations* and *productive clausal nominalisations*. In lexical nominalisations a verbal stem, with or without a nominalising affix, functions in all respects like a noun, including the ability to occur as a plural if semantically appropriate. Lexical nominalisations are characterised by varying degrees of productivity and by unpredictable semantic relationships between verb and derived noun. I use the term productive or clausal nominalisation to mean the situation whereby any verbal lexeme can function as a noun, with a predictable meaning relation between the verbal and nominal forms. In some cases a considerable amount of clausal material remains as part of the nominalisation. A similar classification is implicit in Clark (1981), who uses the terms 'deverbal noun' and 'productive syntactic nominalisation'.

These comments are necessary because a considerable variety of usages is found in the literature. Comrie and Thompson in their 1985 typological study, entitled 'Lexical nominalisation', consider under this heading many types of structure, including English gerundive *-ing* types of action nominals (pp.358-391), which are fully productive and semantically predictable. These have analogues in Tokelauan which might more conveniently be called 'clausal', and which Vonen (1988) considers under the rubric of 'syntactic' nominalisation. Comrie and Thompson do not look at *-ing* nominalisations in their discourse contexts and do not distinguish between factive and non-factive instances, for example. They consider it criterial for what they term a 'clausal nominalisation' that 'there is no evidence in favour of viewing its head as a lexical noun' – by which they mean, presumably, that the nominalisation cannot be possessed and that there is no nominalising morphology on the verb, such as Tokelauan *-ga* or English *-ing*. However, in Tokelauan, as in other Polynesian languages, a great many nominalisations which would usually be described as 'clausal' (e.g.

<sup>1</sup> I am grateful to Ropati Simona for his patience and helpfulness in discussing, and in some cases providing, examples of Tokelauan nominalisation, and to Ross Clark, Arnfinn Vonen and Fay Wouk for their helpful comments on earlier versions of the paper.

Clark 1981:65) exhibit these two features. Both the bare verb stem without morphological modification and the verb stem with the suffix *-ga* can occur in nominalisations which are clearly lexical (as shown in semantic idiosyncrasy or limited productivity) or clearly clausal. All types can be possessed by noun phrases (NPs) representing the absolutive NP of an underlying predication, and many can be possessed by pronominal agentive NPs. The distinction made by Comrie and Thompson is based on quite narrow formal characteristics and is not helpful in discussing Tokelauan. Moreover, the category boundary between syntactic and lexical nominalisation seems to be a fluid one, and although there are clear cases of both kinds, any substantial body of text in Tokelauan contains some distinctly fuzzy cases which defy categorisation (cf. discussion in Langacker 1991:23). Presumably there is some point at which a regular formation acquires a specialised meaning in a particular sociocultural context, thus becoming what I would regard as a lexicalisation.<sup>2</sup> This paper investigates productive clausal nominalisation, and is primarily concerned with the distribution of suffixed and unsuffixed forms.

## 2. PRELIMINARY COMMENTS ON TOKELAUAN SYNTAX

Like the other Polynesian languages of its subgroup, Tokelauan has ergative case-marking morphology. A first subcategorisation of verbs distinguishes two broad classes: one consisting of verbs which occur with a single primary NP, which is unmarked, the other consisting of verbs which occur with two core participants, the primary unmarked one and the other marked with the agentive preposition *e*. The terminology I use to refer to these verb classes and NPs follows that employed in Dixon (1979). Verbs of the first class are *intransitive*. The single primary participant of an intransitive clause receives the label S. The second class consists mainly of prototypical transitive verbs which I refer to as *agentive*. The NP denoting the primary unmarked participant of an agentive clause, which in clear cases experiences a change of state as the result of the action of the verb, will be called the O, and the NP denoting the agent participant, the entity which initiates/controls the activity, which is marked with the preposition *e*, will be called the A. The S noun phrases of intransitive clauses are associated with a variety of semantic roles, having in some cases a considerable degree of agency, and in other cases being semantic patients. The notation  $S_a$  and  $S_o$  is useful to distinguish these roles.

Agentive clauses may be detransitivised by object incorporation. The noun denoting the O follows the verb stem directly without any intervening determiner, resulting in a compound intransitive verb denoting a type of activity. The notional agent is an S.

The prepositions *o* and *a* indicate a relationship between two NPs. In most contexts these express the well-known contrast between subordinate (*o*-class) possession and dominant (*a*-class) possession, but in some kinds of nominalisation this contrast is neutralised, as we shall see.

The common determiners are contrasted for number and type of reference. Both the specific/non-specific and the definite/indefinite contrasts are at play, but for present purposes it is specificity which is important. The determiners are as follows:

<sup>2</sup> Consider the increasing degree of concreteness of the following nominalisations of *tāfao* 'play': *tāfaoga* 'instance of playing', *tāfaoga* 'match, game (e.g. football)', *tāfaoga* 'toy'; cf. the discussion of *stapler* in Langacker (1987:28-90).

<u>Singular</u>		<u>Plural</u>	
Specific:	<i>te</i>	Definite:	<i>nā</i> , $\emptyset$
Non-specific:	<i>he</i>	Indefinite:	<i>ni</i>

The singular specific article *te* is normally used when a particular individual or object is referred to. It is not necessary that the person addressed should be able to identify the referent. It is also used to introduce generic NPs. The singular non-specific article *he* has the meaning 'any such item', and occurs most frequently in questions, commands, negative or hypothetical clauses, and indefinite descriptions. In the plural, the contrast between the articles appears to be one of definiteness; *ni* occurs freely in NPs with specific but indefinite reference, as well as with genuine non-specific referents. The singular specific article *te* is used almost exclusively to introduce nominalisations, and the contrast between *te* and *he* is relevant to their semantics and their internal structure.

As is well known, in productive clausal nominalisations, a verb phrase, certain locative predicates, or a whole clause can be converted into a nominal structure by replacing the tense-aspect particle with the singular specific article *te*. The absolutive (S or O) noun or pronoun normally becomes a possessive NP taking the preposition *o*, although occasionally *a* occurs with an *S<sub>a</sub>*. In some circumstances the suffix *-ga* is also attached to the verb, or to a following directional particle as in examples (5) and (6). In some types of nominalisation certain additional clause elements may occur: prefixes, suffixes, directional particles or other modifiers that were part of the original verb phrase, and any prepositional phrases that were non-core elements in the original clause. In the following example note how the underlined nominalisation is directly related to the immediately preceding clause.<sup>3</sup>

- (1) *Kae pā au ki Apia, puke au e leoleo.*  
 CONJ arrive 1SG TO Apia grab 1SG ERG police
- Toku puke-ga tēnā e leoleo,*  
 SP.1SG.POSS grab-NOM DEM ERG police
- e hēki feiloaki ki māua ma toku uho tēia i Apia.*  
 T/A NEG meet 1DU.EXC and 1SG.POSS sibling DEM LOC Apia  
 When I arrived in Apia, I was arrested by the police. [Because of] my being arrested by the police, I didn't get together with that brother of mine in Apia.  
 (H 12)

This passage contains two intransitive verbs, *pā* 'arrive' and *feiloaki* 'meet', and one agentive verb, *puke* 'grab, seize'. In the nominalisation, the O participant is encoded as a possessive pronoun, *toku*, in which *t-* represents the specific determiner. The A noun phrase retains its ergative case marking. In some types of nominalisation, a pronominal A can be encoded as an a-class possessive pronoun and precede the nominalised verb:

- (2) *tana kave-ga o nā ika*  
 SP.3SG.POSS take-NOM of DET fish  
 his taking the fish

<sup>3</sup> For a list of the abbreviations used in the examples see Appendix 1; for an explanation of the sources of examples see Appendix 2. The hyphen separating the nominalising suffix from the verb stem is inserted for the purpose of clarity, and is not Tokelauan orthographic practice.

The reverse situation does not occur:

- (3) \**toku puke-ga a leoleo*  
 SP.1SG.POSS grab-NOM of police  
 \*the police's arresting of me

In example (1), the nominalisation is only loosely integrated into the syntax of the larger clause (one would expect the anaphor *ai* after *feiloaki*), but clausal nominalisations can be arguments of the verb like any other noun. Example (4) contains three nominalisations, which are underlined and numbered. The first is subject complement of the phasal verb *uma*, the second is a temporal argument introduced by the preposition *i*, and the third is a causal argument, also introduced by *i*. Note that the second nominalisation is suffixed but that the other two are not:

- (4) *Kua uma foki te kō iloa* (1) *i ta mātou*  
 T/A finished too DET 1SG know LOC 1PL.EXC.POSS  
*nofonofo-ga* *i luga* *o te vaka* (2), *i tana* *kikila*  
 stay.RED-NOM LOC above of DET ship LOC 3SG.POSS look  
*mai kiate ki mātou* (3).  
 DIR TO 1PL.EXC  
 I already knew it too, during our stay on board the ship, from the way he supervised us. (J 6)

Although it is usual for the absolutive NP of the underlying predicate to appear as a possessive NP in the nominalisation, this is not always the case. In particular, if a clitic agent pronoun is retained, the absolutive NP may also retain its unmarked status. Two examples can be seen at (46) and (48).

### 3. TYPES OF PRODUCTIVE NOMINALISATION IN TOKELAUAN

#### 3.1 THE PROBLEM

In the following discussion of the conditions of use of the *-ga* suffix, I proceed from the viewpoint that considerations of meaning are relevant to the understanding of grammatical constructions. I will argue that the primary determinant of use or non-use of the suffix is the ontological status of the situation denoted by the nominalisation in the particular syntactic/semantic context in which it occurs. In addition clause transitivity appears to play a part in a way which conforms to the predictions of Hopper and Thompson (1980) but is otherwise difficult to account for.

To some extent, the distribution of the suffixed type in Tokelauan supports the suggestion in Clark (1981:79) that "unsuffixed nominalisations denote activities or processes, which can be qualified as to manner, or described as beginning or ceasing; whereas suffixed nominalisations denote events, which can be enumerated and located in time". However, I think the difference is not primarily the aspectual one between event and activity/process, although this factor is clearly involved in some cases, but rather that between a situation envisaged as actually obtaining in some world, as opposed to a contemplation of its generic nature or potential occurrence. This can also be expressed as the difference between

(specific) instance and (abstract) type, and seems close to what Clark was suggesting, although the terminology of activity/process versus event is misleading.

Hopper and Thompson (1980:254) claim that several factors which they see as components of discourse transitivity “co-vary extensively and systematically”. Among other things, they establish an association between realis mood, the presence of A and O participants, individuation of the O, and telicity (in the sense of completion of an action or process), all features characteristic of high transitivity, as opposed to irrealis mood, one core participant only, lack of individuation of the O, and atelicity, which are characteristic of low transitivity. Specificity is the aspect of ‘individuation of the O’ which is relevant here, and I will substitute the expression ‘specificity of the O’, for reasons which will become apparent. These transitivity factors appear to be at work in Tokelauan nominalisations, and to influence the occurrence of the *-ga* suffix. I will show that the presence of both A and specifically-marked O participants in the nominalisation forces a shift from a type interpretation towards an instance interpretation, and that this shift is more likely to occur when the situation represented by the nominalisation is realis and telic.

In the following sections, I consider in turn several semantic types of nominalisation, which can however be syntactically distinguished. It is important to note that these classes depend crucially upon the syntactic and/or discourse context in which the nominalisation occurs, not upon particular types of verb – although verbs denoting states do not normally occur in the first type considered below. Although I adopt a taxonomic approach to the description of the nominalisation types, it will become clear that at certain points they form continua rather than discrete categories, and that the data undermines the notion of strict categoriality.<sup>4</sup> I return to this point in §4.

### 3.2 INSTANCE NOMINALISATIONS

#### 3.2.1 PAST OR ANTERIOR TIME REFERENCE

When a clausal nominalisation refers to a particular event that has taken place, the suffixed form is always used. Nominalisations of this type are frequently the object complements of verbs of cognition or perception:

- (5) *Kua kō manatua toku pā mai-ga ki kinei.*  
 T/A 1SG remember.Cla 1SG.POSS arrive DIR-NOM TO here  
 I remembered my arrival here. (O 22)

It is also common for the nominalisation to occur as a nominal predicate with demonstrative pronoun subject:

- (6) *Ko te galo atu-ga lava tēnā o Lata.*  
 PRED DET disappear DIR-NOM INT DEM of Lata  
 That was the complete disappearance of Lata. (TTT 128)

The usual form for clauses expressing time or cause and with past or relative past time reference is a suffixed nominalisation introduced by the preposition *i*, or by either *i* or *ko* if

<sup>4</sup> I do not deal at all with the question of variation in individual usage but it should be pointed out that occasional counter-examples can be found to most of the generalisations made here. These take the form of the suffix occurring where I would not have expected it, rather than the other way around.

preposed. The English translation equivalents of these structures are adverbial clauses introduced by *when*, *after*, *while*, *on account of* (in the latter case the element of temporal anteriority must be present).

- (7) *Kae nā ko au nae galue i luga o te vaka*  
 CONJ only 1SG T/A work LOC above of DET boat  
*i te tatala-ga o nā puha-aiha.*  
 LOC DET untie-NOM of DET box-ice  
 But I was the only one working on the ship during the dismantling of the refrigeration equipment. (J 6)
- (8) *Na maua lā taku popo i toku havalivali-ga.*  
 T/A obtain INT 1SG.POSS coconut LOC 1SG.POSS walk-NOM  
 However, I had obtained a coconut while I was walking. (H 11)

There are some problematic examples, which will be discussed at this point.

Firstly, temporal clauses in discourse relating to generic events can also take this form, so long as a performance of the action of the verb, an ‘instance’, is envisaged. The presupposed nature of temporal clauses appears to override the generic context:

- (9) *...auā lā ke kē manatua ko te oho-ake-ga o te*  
 because INT MOD 2SG remember.Cia TOP DET leap-DIR-NOM of DET  
*atu e hula ki luga.*  
 skipjack T/A appear TO above  
 ...because you must remember that when the skipjack leaps up, it appears above [the surface of the water]. (PTT)

Secondly, as the following examples from Vonen (1988: 97) demonstrate, “a situation actually obtaining in some world” may include reference to an unrealised event. A temporal nominalisation may denote an *actually obtaining situation* in which it is a significant factor that some event fails to occur or is about to occur. In example (10) the nominalisation contains a negative:<sup>5</sup>

- (10) *I te hēki maua-ga o ia oi toe liliu ai ki lāua ki*  
 LOC DET NEG obtain-NOM of 3SG SEQ again return APH 3DU TO  
*Ieluhalema.*  
 Ieluhalema  
On the occasion of [their] failing to find him they went back to Jerusalem.  
 (= Vonen’s (27): Luke 2.52)

In the case of nominalisations with relative future time reference (future-in-the-past), the tense-aspect marker *ka* can be retained, as in example (11). Here the imminence of the ‘going’ constitutes the situation which is in a temporal and causal relation to the main clause:

- (11) *Ko te ka fano-ga o te tino, na tāofi ai e tētahi tino.*  
 TOP DET T/A go-NOM of DET person T/A stop APH ERG DET person

<sup>5</sup> In transcribing Vonen’s examples, I have added diacritics to the first example, and changed the morpheme glosses to conform to those used elsewhere in this paper.

On the occasion of the person being about to go, he was held back by another person. (=Vonen's (28): female speaker, 26 years)

Examples like these are rare, but not felt by native speakers to be in any way marginal or incorrect.

Thus, suffixed clausal nominalisations encode situations that have extension in real time in some world. To encode a situation in this way is to label it as a 'happening'. Syntactic evidence of this point is provided by the co-occurrence potential of the singular distal demonstrative *tēnā* – see examples (1) and (6). Any NP modified by *tēnā* is referentially specific.

### 3.2.2 NON-PAST INSTANCE NOMINALISATIONS

So far we have examined nominalisations with past or anterior time reference. Instance nominalisations which denote a situation with future or present time reference can occur as arguments of verbs such as *fiafia* 'be pleased'. Use of the suffix is incompatible with absolute future time reference of the nominalisation; compare the following two examples:

- (12) *Ko tō hau-ga ki te fono ananafi na fiafia lele*  
 TOP 2SG.POSS come-NOM TO DET meeting yesterday T/A happy INT  
*ki ei ia toeaina.*  
 TO there DET elder  
 Your coming to the meeting yesterday pleased the elders very much.

- (13) *Ko tō hau tāeao ki te fono ka fiafia lele ki ei ia toeaina.*  
 come tomorrow  
 Your coming to the meeting tomorrow will please the elders very much.

Givón (1990:499-500) notes a similar distinction in Turkish nominalised verb complements; different morphology is used for realis and irrealis complements.

Let us now examine examples with present time reference, where a distinction is made between agentive and intransitive clauses, and where the presence of a specifically-marked O participant is a significant factor. If the nominalised clause is agentive, it is suffixed; if it is intransitive, the suffix does not occur. Compare the treatment of the intransitive predicate in (14) (past time reference, suffixed) with those in (15) and (16) (present time reference, unsuffixed), and with the agentive predicate of (17) (present time reference, suffixed):

- (14) *Na fiafia lele au i tō i kinei-ga ananafi.*  
 T/A happy INT 1SG LOC 2SG.POSS LOC here-NOM yesterday  
 I was pleased at your being here yesterday.
- (15) *E fiafia lele au i tō i kinei (i te taimi nei).*  
 T/A happy INT 1SG LOC 2SG.POSS LOC here LOC DET time DEM  
 I am pleased at your presence here (now).
- (16) *E fiafia lele au i tau tuhituhi i te taimi nei.*  
 T/A happy INT 1SG LOC 2SG.POSS write LOC DET time DEM  
 I am pleased that you are writing now.

- (17) *E fiafia lele au i tau ato-ga o te fale i*  
 T/A happy INT 1SG LOC 2SG.POSS thatch-NOM of DET house LOC  
*te taimi nei.*  
 DET time DEM  
 I am pleased that you are thatching the house at this time.

Let us consider the transitivity features mentioned earlier. The ones which are relevant here, in order of importance, are realis mood, presence of a specific O participant, and telicity. Future time reference is unrealis and is incompatible with the suffix. Present time reference, which is associated with atelicity, suppresses the use of the suffix unless a specifically-marked patient is present, as in (17).

### 3.3 ABSTRACT NOMINALISATION

What I am calling abstract nominalisations denote a type of activity or process conceived as an abstraction and evaluated in some way. They are unsuffixed. Usually these are nominalised predicates rather than full clauses ('predicate' being used here in the traditional sense of predicate as opposed to subject). It is important to note that it is the nature of the situation itself, either generic or hypothetical, that is being evaluated or commented upon in these constructions. They are not referential and cannot be modified by *tēnā*. In the following two examples there are no arguments associated with the nominalised verbs:

- (18) *E lelei te lolotu fakatahi.*  
 T/A good DET attend.church together  
 It is good to join together for church services. (O 24)
- (19) *Ko atu e hē aogā lava te ino pōpō.*  
 TOP skipjack T/A NEG useful INT DET enter too.soon  
 In the case of skipjack, it is absolutely useless to enter[the school] too soon.  
 (PTT 12)

If there is a generic S participant, it is encoded as an o-class possessor NP; pronominal possessors do not occur, as they cannot be generic:

- (20) *E lelei te lolotu fakatahi o (nā) kāiga.*  
 T/A good DET attend.church together of DET family  
 It is good for families to join together for church services.

In abstract nominalisations of agentive verbs, an O participant may be encoded in three ways: as an incorporated object (21), as a non-specific NP (22), or as a specific NP if its head is a generic or proper noun (23):

- (21) *He gāluega faigatā te vali fale.*  
 DET work difficult DET paint house  
Housepainting is difficult work.
- (22) *He mea lelei nei te fai o he mālō haoloto?*  
 DET thing good Q DET do of DET government free  
 Is it a good thing to set up an independent government? (TD)

- (23) *E lelei te ako o te gagana Tokelau.*  
 T/A be.good DET teach of DET language Tokelau  
 It is good to teach the Tokelau language.

The occurrence of an agent phrase in addition to an O triggers a subtle change in interpretation. What is being evaluated now is a hypothetical instance, and it is difficult to perceive any principled difference between the following example and one like (13):

- (24) *He mea lelei nei te fai o he mālō haoloto e kitātou?*  
 DET thing good Q DET do of DET government free ERG 1PL.INC  
 Is it/would it be a good thing for us to set up an independent government?

Compare the more drastic shift in interpretation in the following, in which a completed event is evaluated:

- (25) *He mea lelei nei te fai-ga o te mālō haoloto e kitātou?*  
 DET thing good Q DET do-NOM of DET government free ERG  
 1PL.INC  
 Is it a good thing that we have set up an independent government?

Here we have neither a hypothetical instance nor an abstract concept, but an actual instance. The O participant is semantically specific and has to be specifically marked, and the suffix is required; in fact in the absence of any indicators of time reference, it is the suffix which conveys the information that this is a completed event. Once again realis mood and specificity of the O are associated. It is apparent that the evaluative verb does not of itself require an unsuffixed complement. It is the status of the nominalisation as realis, and as instance not type, that is significant.<sup>6</sup>

Examples like the above must be distinguished from those in which the object of evaluation is the manner in which some actor performs an activity:

- (26) *Kafai e lelei te fai-ga o gāluega a teine fōmai...*  
 if T/A good DET do-NOM of work of girl doctor  
 If the nurses do their work well... [lit. if the doing of the work of the nurses is good...] (TOM 1)

This type will be discussed in a later section.

### 3.4 PERSONAL PROPERTIES

Nominalisations of clauses denoting states, qualities or habits of individuals or things are another kind of type nominalisation. They are unsuffixed, and the individual or thing is encoded as an o-class possessor.

- (27) *...ona ko te vāivai o te maufaufau*  
 because PRED DET be.weak of DET mind  
 ...because of the weakness of [my] intelligence (O 1)

<sup>6</sup> For completeness, note that a question of the form 'Would it have been a good thing for us to have set up an independent government?' would not be expressed by means of a nominalisation, but as a counterfactual conditional.

- (28) *Kua tuku tona inu pia.*  
 T/A stop 3SG.POSS drink beer  
 He has given up his beer-drinking. (TD 405)
- (29) *E toka-lahi foki ia tautai kua tamate*  
 T/A HUM-many INT DET fisherman T/A lose.a.skipjack  
*ona ko te fakahētonu pea o te foeliu.*  
 because PRED DET be.confused MAN of DET bilge.paddler  
 There are many master fishermen who have lost a skipjack because of the confused behaviour of the bilge-paddler. (PTT 6)
- (30) *Ko te ala ia o toku fia hola.*  
 PRED DET path DEM of 1SG.POSS wish run.away  
 That was the reason for my wanting to run away. (J 4)

The manner particle *pea* in (29) indicates persistent behaviour. It is easy to see that these examples do not refer to particular instantiations in real time of an activity, but to a habitual behaviour or state.

It is with this type that the aspectual distinction between events and habitual situations comes into play. Consider the following example:

- (31) *Kāmata loa toku havalivali mai ki te kakai.*  
 begin then 1SG.POSS walk.REDUP DIR TO DET village  
My [habit of] walking to the village began then. (H 10)

When queried on the possibility of inserting *tēnā* in the nominalisation of (31) my consultant was comfortable with the result only if *-ga* was added also, with the expected consequences of an adjustment of the meaning of the phrase, as shown in (32):

- (32) *Kāmata loa toku havalivali mai-ga tēnā ki te kakai.*  
 begin then 1SG.POSS walk.REDUP DIR-NOM DEM TO DET village  
That [particular] walk of mine to the village began then.

So habitual or intermittent activities are treated as personal properties. Note that there is no restriction on the use of the suffix when a durative situation is seen as a whole (i.e. perfectly), as in *nofonofoga* in (4), *tatalaga* in (7), and *havalivaliga* in (8).

Specific Os do not occur in personal property nominalisations. Agentive predicates are detransitivised by object incorporation, as in (28) above. The notional agent is encoded as an S participant, which receives o-class possessor marking. The occurrence of a possessive phrase denoting the O of the agentive clause triggers a complete change of interpretation from personal property to specific event, with concomitant use of the suffix. Compare the following two examples:

- (33) *E matakau au oi kaukau, ona ko te kai tino o*  
 T/A be.afraid 1SG COMP swim because PRED DET eat person of  
nā magō.  
 DET shark  
 I am afraid to swim, because sharks eat people.

- (34) *E matakū au oi kaukau i kinei, ona ko te*  
 T/A be.afraid 1SG COMP swim LOC here because PRED DET  
*kai-ga o te tino i kinei e magō.*  
 eat-NOM of DET person LOC here ERG shark  
 I am afraid to swim here, because sharks ate a person here.

It should be noted that neither personal property nor abstract nominalisations collocate with the demonstrative *tēnā*.

### 3.5 'MANNER' OR 'METHOD' NOMINALISATIONS

Nominalisations relating to the manner or method of performing some action are a very productive type. Once again, transitivity plays a part in the form of the nominalisation. Intransitive verbs and agentive verbs not accompanied by specifically-marked O participants form unsuffixed method nominalisations, although translation requests often provoke the periphrastic use of the lexicalised form *faiga* 'way, method, technique' together with the unsuffixed nominalisation. Agentive participants, whether A or  $S_a$ , take the form of a-class possessive NPs or pronouns, not of ergative NPs.

Examples (35) - (38) contain unsuffixed method nominalisations without O participants:

- (35) *E filifili lava e te tino tana teka / te faiga o*  
 T/A choose INT ERG DET person 3SG.POSS bowl DET method of  
*tana teka.*  
 3SG.POSS bowl  
 A person chooses his/her own way of bowling.
- (36) *Kai te kehe o tau lalaga!*  
 EXCL DET different of 2SG.POSS weave  
 What a peculiar way of weaving you have!
- (37) *E lelei te kavetāvale a te fafine.*  
 T/A be.good DET drive.vehicle of DET woman  
 The woman's driving is good.
- (38) *te lelei o tana tā*  
 DET goodness of 3SG.POSS hit  
 the excellence of his batting (TD 335)

As an additional example, note the contrast in example (4), repeated here as (39), between the suffixed *ta mātou nofonofoga* in the backgrounded temporal clause and the unsuffixed method nominalisation *tana kikiila* 'his way of supervising':

- (39) *Kua uma foki te kō iloa i tamātou nofonofoga*  
 T/A finished too DET 1SG know LOC 1PL.EXC.POSS stay.RED-NOM  
*i luga o te vaka, i tana kikiila mai kiate ki mātou.*  
 LOC above of DET ship LOC 3SG.POSS look DIR TO 1PL.EXC  
 I already knew it too, during our stay on board the ship, from the way he supervised us. (H 6)

I now turn to method nominalisations of agentive verbs which have overt O participants marked with the specific determiner. In such cases the suffix is present, even though the O participant may be generic. This seems to be the only case in which a suffixed nominalisation can denote a generic situation rather than a specific instance.

- (40) *E hē mālamalama iate au te tāofi-ga o nā tāvale.*  
 T/A NEG clear LOC 1SG DET stop-NOM of DET.PL vehicle  
 I did not understand how to stop the buses. (H 9)

The following examples were obtained through elicitation, and as the English versions demonstrate, the possessive NPs can refer to both generic (41-42) and specific (43-44) O participants.

- (41) *Ko te lalaga-ga tēnā o te moega e faigatā.*  
 TOP DET weave-NOM DEM of DET mat T/A difficult  
That method of weaving a mat is difficult.
- (42) *E pule lava te tino i tana ato-ga o te fale.*  
 T/A control INT DET person LOC 3SG.POSS thatch-NOM of DET house  
 A man chooses his own method of thatching roofs.
- (43) *Na filifili e ia te fau-ga tēnā o te fale.*  
 T/A choose ERG 3SG DET construct-NOM DEM of DET house  
 He chose that method of building the shed.
- (44) *E lelei lele te ako-ga o te gagana Tokelau i te āoga.*  
 T/A be.good INT DET teach-NOM of DET language Tokelau LOC DET  
 school  
The teaching of the Tokelau language is very well done in the school.

Two features, the use of a-class possessor marking for A or Sa, and the potential for inclusion of a specifically-marked NP representing the O without a loss of the method interpretation, clearly distinguish method nominalisations from the personal property type.

As (41) and (43) show, method nominalisations with O participants collocate happily with the demonstrative *tēnā*. However, it is difficult to imagine contexts for utterances such as these other than one in which the speaker is observing the activity in question. Indeed, in (40) he is reporting on his own participation in a situation. These examples, as well as (44), have a kind of semantic indeterminacy in that there seems to be no sharp division here between method and instance; or rather, it is the method employed in a particular instance which is the subject of comment. Note however that this indeterminacy does not affect instance nominalisations of the first type, which have no connotations of manner or method whatsoever, but refer to the occurrence of an event. We should note too that method nominalisations are intrinsically high in kinesis, another transitivity feature. State verbs cannot occur in them.

The following example consists of extracts from a passage of text which concerns methods or techniques for performing an action known as *fakalalau*, which is common to several types of fishing: the strike, or upward jerk of the line with which the fisherman responds to the fish's taking the hook. When *fakalalau* or its synonym *fakanofu* occurs with a possessive full NP denoting the generic O participant (i.e. the fish) it is suffixed, as in lines

1, 4 and 5; when it occurs alone, or with a possessive pronoun referring to either the O or the A (i.e. the fisherman), it is unsuffixed, as in lines 2 and 3. This passage provides crucial evidence for our analysis of method nominalisations, which otherwise depends heavily on elicited examples; at the same time the analysis provides an explanation for the otherwise baffling variations in the form of these nominalisations.

- (45) 1 *E iloga lava te fakalalau-ga o te ika.*  
 T/A well.known INT DET strike-NOM of DET fish  
The technique for striking each [variety of] fish is clearly distinguished.
- 2 *Ko te humu, e lua ona fakalalau, e tuālima pe*  
 TOP DET triggerfish T/A two 3SG.POSS.PL strike T/A backhand or  
*hamu tonu.*  
 pull direct  
 As for the triggerfish, there are two techniques for striking, backhanded or with a single jerk.
- 3 *E pule lā lava te tino i tana fakalalau.*  
 T/A control INT INT DET person LOC 3SG.POSS strike  
 A person chooses his own technique.
- 4 *E i ei foki tētahi tāofi e vēia, ko te fakalalau-ga*  
 T/A LOC there INT DET belief T/A like.that PRED DET strike-NOM  
o te atu  
 of DET skipjack  
 There is also another theory as follows, to do with the striking of the skipjack
- 5 *pe ko te faka-nofo-ga o te atu, ke kē iloa.*  
 or PRED DET CAUS-sit-NOM of DET skipjack MOD 2SG know  
 or the setting the hook of the skipjack, that you should know about. (PTF 28)

### 3.6 COMPLEMENTS OF PHASAL AND DEGREE VERBS

Two types of verb appear to select unsuffixed nominalisations as subject complements: some phasal verbs and a few verbs that denote the degree or intensity of the situation described in the nominalised clause. It is difficult to account for these cases in terms of the semantic factors considered elsewhere in this paper.

The situation with phasal verbs is far from uniform. Since both suffixed and unsuffixed complements are encountered with most of them,<sup>7</sup> I will only give examples of the

<sup>7</sup> The common phasal verb, *kāmata* 'begin', takes several different kinds of complement, including suffixed nominalisations. We have noted above the contrast between 31 and 32, where the inclusion of the demonstrative *tēnā* 'that' in the nominalised complement of *kāmata*, making reference to a specific occasion, makes the suffix mandatory. The following example has the features of a typical instance nominalisation:

*E kāmata mai lā i kinei te fetōlaki-ga lahi lele o nā mähina.*  
 T/A begin DIR INT LOC here DET be.mixed.up-NOM big INT of DET month  
 It was at this point that the terrible mix-up in the [calculating of the days of the] months began.  
 (PTT 41)

commonest one, *uma* 'be finished, be completed', which is nearly always followed by an unsuffixed form;<sup>8</sup> the presence or absence of a specific O participant is irrelevant.

- (46) *Kua uma te kō kitea te uiga o te tamaloa.*  
 T/A finished DET 1SG see DET nature of DET man  
 I had already seen what the fellow was like. [lit. My perceiving the nature of the fellow was complete.] (J 6)
- (47) *Uma loa toku fia tali faka-pepelo atu ki te tamaloa.*  
 finished then 1SG.POSS want reply CAUS-lie DIR TO DET man  
 Then my wanting to reply deceptively to the young man came to an end. (H 11)

See also example (4). We must assume that unsuffixed nominalisations after *uma* are syntactically conditioned.

Some examples of nominalised complements of degree verbs are given below:

- (48) *E atili ai te hē kē toe mafai-agia he mea.*  
 T/A in.excess APH DET NEG 2SG again possible-Cia DET thing  
Your not being able to do a thing will be intensified. (PTF 9)
- (49) *Kua hili atu ai te feiloaki hō o oku ma nā pia.*  
 T/A extreme DIR APH DET meet often of 1SG and DET beer  
 My constant beer-drinking [lit. my frequent meeting with beers] was at its most intense. (O 24)
- (50) *Aunoa ma te kō iloa pe ko fea te mea tēia...*  
 be.without REL DET 1SG know Q PRED where DET thing DEM  
 Without my knowing where that place was... (H 9)

An alternative form for subject complements of most of these verbs is a clause introduced by *ona*. The nominalisations presented in this section closely resemble such clauses. In my data these are the only kind of nominalisation in which clitic agentive pronouns and absolutive O participants occur. In (46), (48) and (50), no change has taken place in the internal syntax of the clause, and the determiner *te* seems to assume the role of complementiser. These are the only examples we have considered which conform to the definition in Comrie and Thompson (1985) of a clausal nominalisation.

### 3.7 LEXICALISED FORMS WITH INCORPORATED OBJECT

We have now distinguished five types of clausal nominalisation with different semantic and functional properties. As stated earlier, this paper is not concerned with lexical nominalisations. However, one type needs to be mentioned here. We have seen examples of verbs with incorporated objects in unsuffixed abstract and personal property nominalisations. The incorporated object construction also participates in nominalisations which denote occasions or styles of the activity in question, and which contain the suffix. Several features show these forms to be lexicalisations: the vowel lengthening on the suffix, the possibility of

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The differing behaviour of *uma* and *kāmata* is difficult to account for. Other phasal verbs exhibit similar variability.

<sup>8</sup> It is probable that the exceptions are lexicalisations denoting types of event, such as *tāfaoga* 'match, game'.

semantic idiosyncrasy, the fact that they are count nouns, and that only verb + noun combinations which denote a culturally-recognised type of activity are eligible for the construction:

- (51) *E fai tamātou holi-gā-ula i te pō nei.*  
 T/A do 1PL.POSS trample-NOM-crayfish LOC DET night DEM  
 We are having a crayfishing-expedition tonight.

4. CONCLUSIONS

At this point it will be helpful to summarise the correlation of the various types of nominalisation with a number of syntactic features. The table shows that there are syntactic grounds for distinguishing between clear cases of the five types. It should also be pointed out that other syntactic options exist for expressing many of the meaning types considered here. For example, many personal property nominalisations could be expressed as relative clauses or verbal clauses introduced by *ona* 'because'; hypothetical instance nominalisations and some abstract nominalisations could be paraphrased by hypothetical conditional clauses introduced by *kafai* 'if'. These different kinds of paraphrase (as well as different English translation equivalents) are a significant way of distinguishing between personal property and abstract nominalisations.

TABLE: CORRELATION OF TYPES OF NOMINALISATION WITH SYNTACTIC FEATURES

	Instance	Method	Abstract	Personal property	Phasal & degree verbs
specific O	+	+   -	[+] <sup>2</sup>	-	+
-ga	+	+   -	-	-	-
tēnā	+	+   -	-	-	-
Possessor marking:					
A	a <sup>1</sup>	a	-	-	[eNP]
S <sub>a</sub>	o	a	o <sup>3</sup>	o	o
absolute O, -Cia suffix and clitic pronoun	-	-	-	-	+

- Notes: 1. Pronominal possessors only; full noun phrase agents are ergatively marked.  
 2. Generic or proper NPs only; see example (25).  
 3. Generic NPs only; no pronominal possessors.

The variations in possessor marking are summarised below:

O: An NP in O role is always an o-class possessor, except in those occasional examples of complements of phasal and degree verbs where it retains its absolutive status.

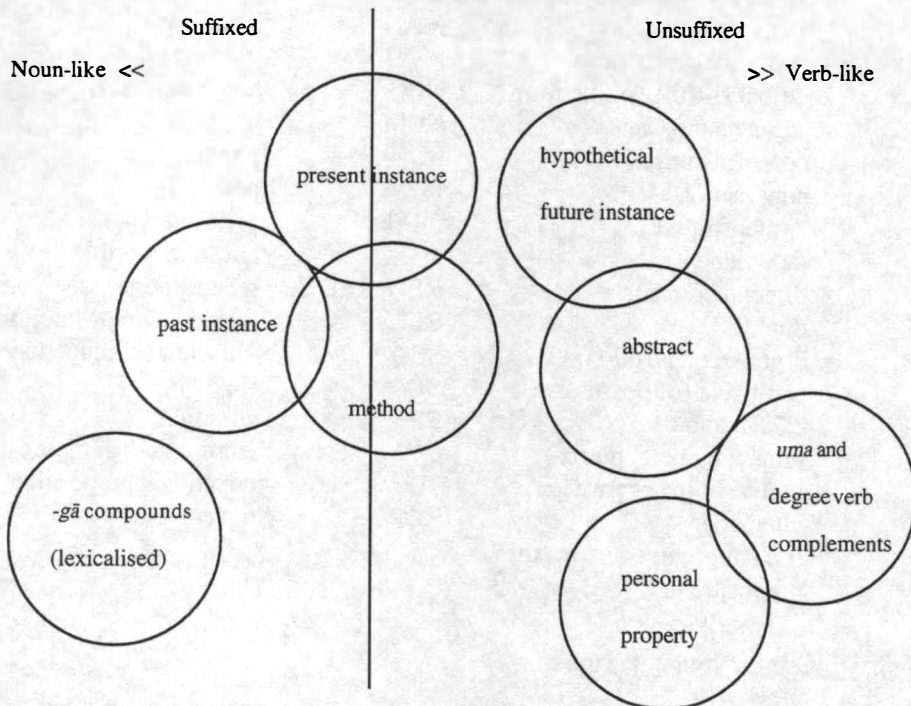
S: Similarly, an  $S_O$  is always an o-class possessor. In instance nominalisations, possessor marking of  $S_a$  is usually o-class, but a-class marking of  $S_a$  occurs occasionally – see the second nominalisation in example (2). The  $S_a$  in a method nominalisation receives a-class marking.

A: Only instance nominalisations and method nominalisations can have As as possessors, in the former case only if they are pronominal. In method nominalisations, the actor/agent role, whether A or  $S_a$ , is always an a-class possessor. In personal property nominalisations As do not appear at all; in the complements of phasal and degree verbs they retain ergative case marking; and in abstract nominalisations, as we have seen, the appearance of an agent causes a shift of interpretation towards hypothetical instance.

As the table shows, the suffix *-ga* correlates with the possibility of occurrence of the demonstrative *tēnā*, and thus characterises the most noun-like nominalisations. There is also, as we have seen, a strong association between the suffix and the presence of a specific O: except in the complements of phasal and degree verbs, specific Os appear only rarely in unsuffixed nominalisations (see example (23) and comment).

Let us now try to summarise the semantic differences between the suffixed and unsuffixed types. Because there is some overlap, the classification remains elusive; neither the two major groupings nor the various subtypes form absolutely discrete categories. There is considerable evidence that grammatical categories and constructions can have a prototype or a family resemblance type of structure (see the survey in Taylor 1989, chapters 10 and 11), and that “there are very real differences...among the various degrees of centrality with which one and the same grammatical category may be instantiated” (Hopper & Thompson 1985:155). Similar comments are found in Heine (1992). The figure attempts to map the relationships between the different types of nominalisation. Instance nominalisations with past time reference are the most central and stable suffixed type. They are referential and realis and have the status of ‘happenings’. Method nominalisations are not happenings, but when a specific O and A are present they veer towards an instance interpretation. The lexicalised compounds which incorporate *-ga* denote culturally-recognised happenings. Abstract and personal property nominalisations are the most stable unsuffixed types. They are non-referential and irrealis and denote generic situations, habits, a state or a type of behaviour. Hypothetical or future instance nominalisations are also irrealis, and are treated as abstractions. Present instance and method nominalisations are variable with respect to suffixation, and this variability is affected by transitivity factors. The nominalised complements of *uma* and the degree verbs are anomalous. Some are indistinguishable from the personal property type. Others, like temporal clauses, denote situations that are thought of as taking place in real time, yet they are unsuffixed and there is little or no change in the clause from which they are derived. Tokelauan treats them as propositions rather than as instances, and they seem in every respect to closely resemble the complement clauses introduced by *ona* which in many cases can be substituted for them.

FIGURE: RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN DIFFERENT TYPES OF NOMINALISATION



The differences between suffixed and unsuffixed types reflect the following co-varying contrasts:

NOUN-LIKE	vs	VERB-LIKE
instance	vs	type
actually occurring situation	vs	abstract concept
realis	vs	irrealis
telic	vs	atelic or habitual
specific O	vs	incorporated or non-specific O
two core participants	vs	one core participant

The use of the more noun-like type to represent the instance may be motivated by the fact that just as a prototypical noun is bounded in space, so an actually occurring situation is bounded in time – the point made in Clark (1981) in the passage cited earlier. This same point may suggest why the more noun-like type should tend to correlate with higher transitivity and the verb-like with lower transitivity. Clauses that can occur in suffixed temporal or causal nominalisations represent the same kind of situations (i.e. instances) as clauses on the event line of narrative, which are typically high in transitivity in the sense used in Hopper and Thompson (1980). In the 'borderline' cases, a referentially specific O participant in the nominalisation pulls in the other transitivity features of realis mood and telicity, and forces a referential instance interpretation of the entire nominalisation.

## APPENDIX 1: ABBREVIATIONS

APH	anaphoric particle	MAN	manner particle
CAUS	causative prefix <i>faka-</i>	MOD	modal particle
Cia	verbal suffixes of the form <i>-a, -agia</i> or <i>-Cia</i>	NEG	negative marker
COMP	complementiser	NOM	nominalising suffix
CONJ	conjunction	PL	plural
DEM	demonstrative	POSS	possessive
DET	determiner	PRED	predicate marker
DIR	directional particle	Q	question word
DU	dual	RED, REDUP	reduplication
ERG	ergative preposition	REL	relational preposition <i>ma</i>
EXC	exclusive (of possession)	SEQ	sequential conjunction
EXCL	exclamation	SG	singular
HUM	human numeral prefix	SP	specific
INC	inclusive (of possession)	T/A	tense-aspect particle
INT	intensifier	TO	directional preposition
LOC	locative, used for the preposition <i>i</i>	TOP	topic marker

## APPENDIX 2: SOURCES OF DATA

Most of the examples are taken from a corpus of Tokelauan texts which includes several discourse types. The texts are identified by letter symbols as follows:

H and J	autobiographical narratives of a 50-year old male speaker (1984)
O	autobiographical narrative of a 35-year old male speaker (1984)
PTF and PTT	monologic expository discourse on Tokelauan traditional fishing techniques, 75-year old male speaker (1977)
TD	<i>Tokelau dictionary</i> ; usage examples were composed by Ropati Simona
TOM	written expository discourse on health practices
TTT	traditional tales told by several speakers, recorded in Tokelau and published as Huntsman (1977); unidentified examples were supplied by Ropati Simona

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