The development of echo-subject markers in Southern Vanuatu

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Abstract

One of the defining features of the Southern Vanuatu language family is the echo-subject (ES) marker (Lynch 2001: 177-178). Canonically, an ES marker indicates that the subject of the clause is coreferential with the subject of the preceding clause. This paper begins with a survey of the various ES systems found in Southern Vanuatu. Two prominent differences amongst the ES systems are: a) the level of obligatoriness of the ES marker; and b) the level of grammatical integration between an ES clauses and the preceding clause. The variation found amongst the ES systems reveals a clear path of grammaticalisation from the VP coordinator *ma in Proto–Southern Vanuatu to the various types of ES marker in contemporary Southern Vanuatu languages.

1. Introduction

All languages of the Southern Vanuatu language family (e.g. Lynch 2001) are described as having an 'echo-subject' (ES) prefix or proclitic. Depending on the language, and in some cases the person specification of the subject, an ES marker is used obligatorily or optionally in place of a normal subject cross-reference prefix/particle to indicate that the subject of the clause is coreferential with the subject of a linearly preceding clause. The following is an example from Lenakel. Canonically, in Lenakel the ES prefix *m-* is obligatorily used in a non-initial clause to indicate that the subject is coreferential with the subject of the preceding clause. A clausal coordinator like *kani* 'and' can optionally occur between the two clauses.[1]

(1) *r-əm-va*   *(kani)* *m̲-̲ə̲m̲-̲a̲u̲ŋ̲ə̲n̲.*
     3SG-PST-come (and)   ES-PST-eat
     'He$_i$ came and (he$_i$) ate.' (Lynch 1983: 212)

In contrast, the use of a normal subject cross-reference prefix in a non-initial coordinated clause obligatorily indicates that the subject is disjoint-referential with the subject of the preceding clause. (See §2.1.1 for rare exceptions.)

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[1] All vernacular texts (italicised) have been converted from orthographic representation to IPA-phonemic representation. All voiced plosive phonemes in the Oceanic languages exemplified in this paper are prenasalised phonetically.

(2) *r-ǝm-va*   *(kani)* r̠-ǝm-auŋǝn.
     3SG-PST-come (and)   3SG-PST-eat
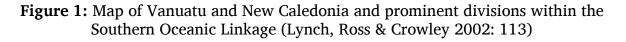   'He_i came and he_j ate.' (Lynch 1983: 212)

This paper begins with a brief survey of the ES systems found in the Southern Vanuatu languages. The most salient difference amongst the various ES systems is the level of syntactic dependency of the ES clauses. The least dependent ES clauses are found in North Tanna where the ES clauses can have an overt subject NP and inflect independently for most TAM categories . At the other extreme is Anejõm̃ , where the ES proclitic is actually a VP coordinator which coordinates VPs that share all of their TAM and subject expressions (i.e. the entire string of VPs exists within the same clause). Other important differences include the range of references which a subject of an ES clause can be coreferential with (e.g. the subject of an ES clause can be coreferential with a non-subject in some but not all languages), and the obligatoriness versus optionality of ES marking in relation to normal subject cross-referencing.

The paper then proceeds to the historical development of the ES markers in Southern Vanuatu. All ES markers in Southern Vanuatu contain the consonant *m*, and they are the reflexes of the VP coordinator *ma in Proto–Oceanic (Moyse-Faurie & Lynch 2004). We will see that the ES markers in various Southern Vanuatu languages represent different stages in the development of the ES markers: at one extreme is Anejõm̃ where the ES marker is still a VP coordinator, and at the other extreme is North Tanna, where the ES marker marks a 'barely dependent' clause which can be preceded by a (contemporary) coordinator, and have its own subject and (some) TAM.[2]

2.   Survey of Southern Vanuatu ES systems

The Southern Vanuatu language family (e.g. Lynch 2001) is part of the Southern Oceanic Linkage, which in turn is part of the Oceanic branch within the Austronesian language family. Figure one is a linguistic map of Vanuatu and New Caledonia with prominent linguistic divisions. All languages in Vanuatu and New Caledonia — with the exception of four Polynesian outlier languages — are part of the Southern Oceanic Linkage (according to Lynch, Ross & Crowley (2002)). The Southern Vanuatu languages are more-closely related to the New Caledonian languages than the other Vanuatu languages. Figure two shows the position of the Southern Vanuatu family within the Oceanic family.

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[2] There are five other Vanuatu languages to the north of Southern Vanuatu which are reported as having ES markers or something similar, but they are not dealt with in this current paper. None of these ES markers are cognates with the *m*-series of ES markers in Southern Vanuatu: *kai* in South Efate (Thieberger 2006: 112), *ka-* in V'ënen Taut (Fox 1979: 82), *ko-* in Nese (Crowley 2006b: 80), *d(ǝ)-* in Tape (Crowley 2006a: 145), and *ana-* in Aulau (Paviour-Smith forthcoming). South Efate is spoken in Efate Island in Central Vanuatu, and the remaining four are spoken in Malakula Island in Northern Vanuatu. See de Sousa (forthcoming) for discussions on the ES markers in these languages.
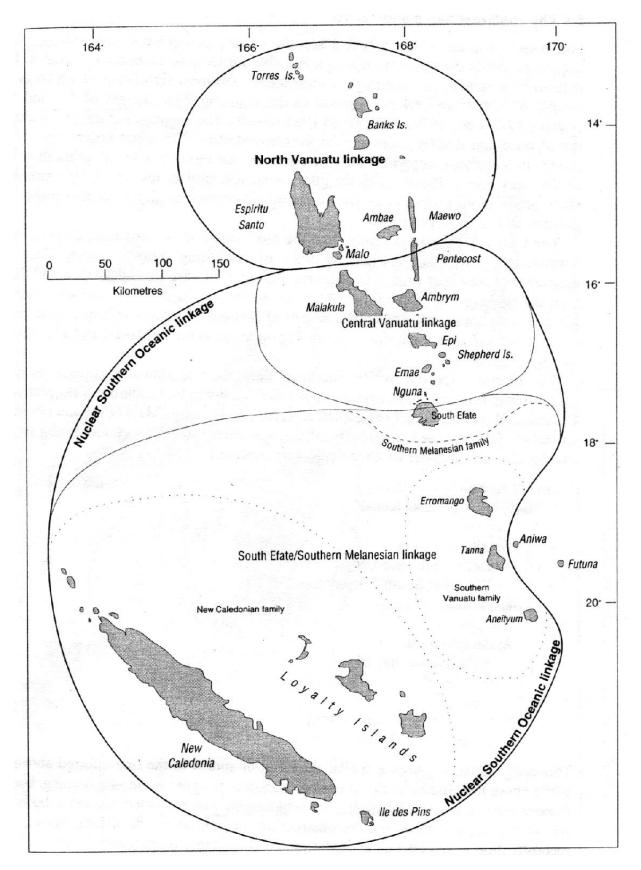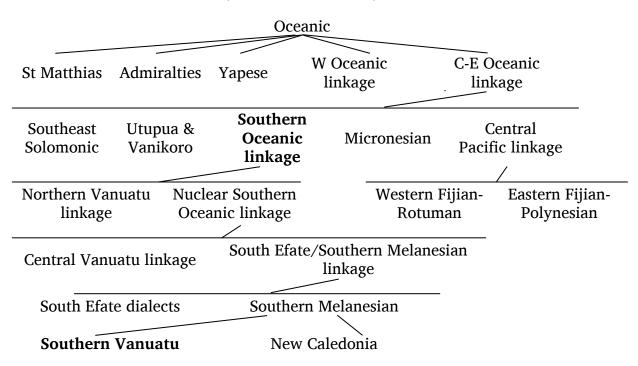
Figure 1: Map of Vanuatu and New Caledonia and prominent divisions within the Southern Oceanic Linkage (Lynch, Ross & Crowley 2002: 113)

Figure 2: Partial genealogy of the Southern Oceanic linkage
(Lynch, Ross & Crowley 2002)

Oceanic

St Matthias   Admiralties   Yapese   W Oceanic linkage   C-E Oceanic linkage

Southeast Solomonic   Utupua & Vanikoro   **Southern Oceanic linkage**   Micronesian   Central Pacific linkage

Northern Vanuatu linkage   Nuclear Southern Oceanic linkage   Western Fijian-Rotuman   Eastern Fijian-Polynesian

Central Vanuatu linkage   South Efate/Southern Melanesian linkage

South Efate dialects   Southern Melanesian

Southern Vanuatu   New Caledonia

There are three islands in (linguistic) Southern Vanuatu: Tanna, Erromango and Aneityum.[3] The rest of this section is a basic survey of the ES systems found in these three islands: the languages in Tanna are dealt with in §2.1, Erromango in §2.2 and Aneityum in §2.3. The ES construction is the least grammatically integrated in Tanna and most integrated in Aneityum. Erromango is intermediate, but resembles Tanna more than Aneityum.

2.1 Tanna

There are five languages spoken in Tanna: Lenakel, Southwest Tanna, Kwamera, Whitesands and North Tanna. We will concentrate on Lenakel, of which the ES system is currently the most-described amongst Tanna languages. We will then briefly outline the ES systems in the other Tanna languages, which do not seem to differ significantly from the one in Lenakel (based on the comparatively little amount of information available on them).

2.1.1 Lenakel

Canonically, the subject of an independent clause in Lenakel has to be disjoint-referential with the subject of the preceding clause which it is coordinated with (see below for exceptions). The following example satisfies this requirement as the

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[3] The two remaining smaller islands in geographic Southern Vanuatu — Futuna and Aniwa — speak the Polynesian Outlier language called Futuna-Aniwa or West Futuna(n). This Polynesian language does not have an ES system and is not discussed in this paper. Further south are the Matthew and Hunter Islands, two uninhabited islands which are claimed by both France (as part of New Caledonia) and Vanuatu.

subjects are singular and they do not agree in their number features (i.e. they must be disjoint-referential).[4]

(3)   *i-əm-[Ø-]vən*   *(kani)*   <u>*r-əm-[Ø-]apul.*</u>
         1EXCL-PST-[SG-]go (and) <u>3SG-PST-[SG-]sleep</u>
         'I went and he slept.' (Lynch 1983: 211)

The following example is ungrammatical as the coordinated independent clauses have coreferential subjects.

(4)   * *i-əm-[Ø-]vən*   *(kani)*   <u>*i-əm-[Ø-]apul.*</u>
          1EXCL-PST-[SG-]go   (and)   <u>1EXCL-PST-[SG-]sleep</u>   (Lynch 1983: 212)

For (semantically) coordinated clauses to have coreferential subjects, the non-initial clause(s) must be an ES clause instead of an independent clause. The most salient difference between an ES verb and an independent verb is that an ES verb has an ES prefix *m-* in the morphological slot where an independent verb has a normal subject person-number prefix. (See below for other differences between ES clauses and independent clauses.) The following is a grammatical rendition of 'I went and slept'; also notice that an overt coordinator can intervene between an ES clause and the preceding clause, similar to coordinated independent clauses (cf. example (4)).

(5)   *i-əm-[Ø-]vən*   *(kani)*   <u>*m-əm-[Ø-]apul.*</u>
         1EXCL-PST-[SG-]go (and) <u>ES-PST-[SG-]sleep</u>
         'I went and slept.' (Lynch 1983: 211)

<u>TAM in ES verbs</u>

TAM affixes are optional for both independent and ES verbs; verbs which lack TAM affixes can have their tense-aspect specifications recovered from the context. Verbs which lack TAM affixes — like the independent and ES verb in the following example — are quite common.

(6)   *r-arhapək m-əmʷa, 'kamaalhie?'*
         3SG-ask   ES-say   'they.laugh.where'
         'And Nau asked, "Where is that laughter?"' (Lynch 1978: 131-132)

Most ES clauses have the same TAM as their preceding clause. Nevertheless, each ES clause can be marked independently for TAM. For instance, each ES clause in the following example is marked independently for tense.

(7)   *uus ka r-<u>əm</u>-va*   *m-<u>ep</u>-auŋən kani m-<u>am</u>-apul.*
         man that 3SG-<u>PST</u>-come ES-<u>SEQ</u>-eat   and ES-<u>PRS</u>-sleep
         'That man came and then ate and is now sleeping.' (Lynch 1983: 213)

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[4] Other than the subject person-number prefix in front of the tense-aspect prefix, there is another obligatory subject number prefix immediately in front of the verb root, but the form of the singular prefix is Ø-. This singular Ø- is not indicated in Lynch (1978, 1983), and is indicated in this paper only if it is relevant to the discussion.

Es verbs take nearly the same range of TAM affixes as independent verbs; the only exceptions are that ES verbs do not take the future prefix *t-* and the intentional prefix *na-* (Lynch 1978:45). On independent verbs, these two prefixes are the only prefixes which occur in front of the subject person-number prefixes.[5] Although an ES prefix cannot cooccur with the future prefix *t-*, there is one way of indicating that an ES verb is in future tense: an ES verb which does not carry any tense affixes is interpreted as having the same tense as the preceding clause, and this preceding clause can be in future tense.

(8) *maŋau t-r-va   (kani) m-auŋən.   [*t-m-auŋən]*
     Magau FUT-3SG-come (and)   ES-eat   [FUT-ES-eat]
     'Magau will come and eat.' (Lynch 1983: 213)

If a clause is in future tense but the preceding clause is not, then an ES verb cannot be used; the future tense clause must use an independent verb instead. In the following example, it is ungrammatical to substitute the third person singular prefix *r-* in the second verb with an ES prefix *m-*.

(9) *maŋau r-n-va   (kani) t-r-auŋən.   [*t-m-auŋən]*
     Magau 3SG-PFV-come (and)   FUT-3SG-eat   [FUT-ES-eat]
     'Magau has come and will eat (later).' (Lynch 1983: 213)

This situation, where a future independent clause is preceded by a non-future independent clause, is the only situation where two coordinated independent clauses can have coreferential subjects. In example (9) above, the subjects can be either coreferential or disjoint-referential. Nonetheless, example (9) above is most usually interpreted as having coreferential subjects; disjoint-referential subjects are most usually expressed by having overt disjoint-referential subject NPs.

(10) *maŋau r-n-va   (kani) lomhan t-r-auŋən.*
     Magau 3SG-PFV-come (and)   Lomhan FUT-3SG-eat
     'Magau has come and Lomhan will eat.' (Lynch 1983: 213)

Other properties of ES verbs

Another difference between an independent clause and an ES clause is that an independent clause can have a subject NP preceding the verb, whereas an ES clause cannot have a subject NP. The following example demonstrates two independent clauses each having its own subject NPs.

(11) nasu r-vən   apʷa lenakel kani ner-n   r-əm-arou-pn.
     Nasu 3SG-go LOC   Lenakel and child-3SG 3SG-PST-follow-there
     'Nasu went to Lenakel and his son followed him there.' (Lynch 1978: 113)

Other than *kani* 'and', an ES clause can also cooccur with *kani ka* 'and then' and *merou* 'but' (Lynch 1983: 221). Es clauses are not used with other coordinators, for instance *ua* 'or', in which case the two coordinated clauses must be independent clauses.

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[5] The intentional prefix *na-* is exceedingly rare and will be ignored in this paper.

(12)　*r-vən　ienətəm　<u>ua</u>　<u>r-arək</u>　am?*
　　　3SG-go　Aneityum　<u>or</u>　3SG-stay　just
　　　'Did he go to Aneityum or did he just stay?'　(Lynch 1978: 116)

An ES prefix is also not used in a subordinate clause to signify that the subject of the subordinate clause is coreferential with the subject of the matrix clause. Subordinate clauses in Lenakel have an overt subordinator (*merouinka* 'because' in the following example), and subordinate verbs take normal subject cross-reference prefixes (*i-* in the following example).

(13)　*i-ak-am-olkeikei　　m-vən　ifila　<u>merouinka</u>　io　i-ak-məs.*
　　　1EXCL-PRS-CONT-want　ES-go　Vila　<u>because</u>　I　1EXCL-PRS-sick
　　　'I want to go to Vila <u>because</u> I am sick.'　(Lynch 1978: 116)

Lastly, ES prefixes are not used in impersonal clauses. Impersonal clauses in Lenakel signify that the subject is unknown or low in discourse salience, and they are often translated into English with passive voice clauses in Lynch (1978). There is no subject NP in an impersonal clause, and the object NP may be promoted to the preverbal position. An impersonal verb is characterised by its third person *non-singular* subject prefix *k-* and the lack of an accompanying dual, trial or plural subject number prefix (in the subject number slot immediately in front of the verb root; see also footnote 4). The following examples show that it is the 3NSG prefix *k-*, rather than an ES prefix *m-*, which is used in a series of impersonal clauses when the subject-agent referents have not changed.

(14)　*k-os　　ilau　　<u>k-avən</u>　<u>k-renəm</u>　　ilau.*
　　　3NSG-take　they.DU　<u>3NSG-go</u>　<u>3NSG-bury</u>　they.DU
　　　'The two of them were taken away and buried.'　(Lynch 1978: 58)

(15)　*[…] k-os　　k-va　　　k-am-avən　　irhe　　［…]*
　　　　3NSG-do　3NSG-come　3NSG-CONT-go　LOC.sea
　　　'[…] people doing things and coming and going to and from the sea […]'
　　　(Lynch 1978: 59)

The ES antecedent in Lenakel

'Es antecedent' here refers to the reference with which the subject of an ES clause is coreferential. The ES antecedent in Lenakel is usually, but not necessarily, the subject of the preceding clause. The ES antecedent in Lenakel is best described as any reference — or references — in the preceding clause which is/are viewed as semantically most compatible with the semantics of the ES verb, with the subject being the default choice when all references in the preceding clause are viewed as equally likely to be the antecedent. ('Semantics' here also include real word knowledge and pragmatic inferences.) In the following example, the ES antecedent is the subject Magau. The subject Magau is the default choice as both the subject Magau and the object Tom in the first clause are viewed as equally likely to run away (i.e. being the subject) in the second clause.

(16) *maŋau r-əm-aamh tom kani m-əm-akəmʷ.*
Magau 3SG-PST-see Tom and ES-PST-run.away
'Magau saw Tom and ran away.' (Lynch 1983: 215)

In the following example, the ES antecedent is the object *kova tahak* 'my child' as it is considered in Lenakel that a 'hittee' ('my child') is more likely to cry than a hitter ('I').

(17) *i-əm-ho   kova taha-k   m-asak.*
1EXCL-PST-hit child POSS-1SG ES-cry
'I hit my child[k] and it[k] cried.' (Crowley 2002a: 205)

If it is 'I' rather than 'my child' who cried, an ES clause cannot be used. An independent clause must be used in this case. (So in this case, the subject prefix in the second independent clause is disjoint-referential with the object, rather than the subject of the preceding clause.) An ES clause cannot be used in this case to indicate that the two subjects are coreferential.

(18) *i-əm-ho   kova taha-k   kani io   i-əm-asak.*
1EXCL-PST-hit child POSS-1SG and 1SG 1EXCL-PST-cry
'I hit my child[k] and I cried.' (Crowley 2002a: 205)

In the following example, the subject of the initial clause cannot be the ES antecedent because *peravən miin* 'women' is plural, whereas the ES verb requires a singular subject (as indicated by the Ø- singular prefix on the ES verb). Out of the two non-subject references, the animacy of the dative reference *in* 'him' suits the semantics of the ES verb *apul* 'sleep', and hence the dative reference is selected as the ES antecedent.

(19) *peravən miin k-əm-ar-ofən   nauŋənaan kam in   kani m-ep-[Ø-]apul.*
woman   PL   3NSG-PST-PL-give food   DAT him and ES-SEQ-[SG-]sleep
'The wom[e]n gave him[j] food and then he[j] slept.' (Lynch 1983: 215)

In the following example, the object *kesi* 'pawpaw' is the ES antecedent as the affectedness of the *kesi* 'pawpaw' being dropped in the first clause suits the semantics of the ES verb *pʷalhepʷalhe* 'splatter'.

(20) *i-əm-alak-hiaav=ín   kesi   m-pʷalhepʷalhe.*
1EXCL-PST-throw-down=TRNS pawpaw ES-splatter
'I dropped a pawpaw and it splattered.' (Lynch 1983: 216)

Sometimes an ES marker can have more than one ES antecedents. In the following example, the ES verb requires a dual subject (as indicated by the *u-* dual prefix on the ES verb). In the initial clause, the subject has one referent, and the object has one referent, and hence both the subject and the object act as the ES antecedents of the same ES prefix.

(21) *maŋau r-əm-aamh tom kani m-u-akəmʷ.*
Magau 3SG-PST-see Tom and ES-DU-run.away
'Magau saw Tom and they both ran away.' (Lynch 1983: 215)

<u>Summary of the ES system in Lenakel</u>

- An ES prefix *m-* is used instead of a normal subject person-number prefix if the subject of the clause is coreferential with some reference(s) of the preceding clause (with exceptions);

- The antecedent of the subject of an ES clause is any reference(s) in the preceding clause which is/are viewed as most-compatible with the semantics of the ES verb, with the subject being the default choice when all references in the preceding clause are viewed as equally likely to be the antecedent;

- An ES verb can be preceded by certain coordinators, but not a subject NP within the same clause (the 'basic word order' in Lenakel is SVO);

- ES verbs can be marked independently for TAM, except for future *t-* and intentional *na-*;

- ES verbs are not used in a subordinate clause to indicate the coreference of its subject with the subject of a matrix clause; and

- ES verbs are not used in impersonal clauses.

2.1.2 Other Tanna languages

From the comparatively little amount of data available on the other Tanna languages, their ES systems seem to be not significantly different from the ES system in Lenakel.

<u>Southwest Tanna</u>

Southwest Tanna also has an ES prefix *m-*. The following is an example of an ES chain in Southwest Tanna.

(22) *l-əmn-uh   mana   <u>m-ʋaan</u> <u>m-aan</u> kəni <u>m-apəl</u>.*
      3SG-PST-kill chicken ES-roast ES-eat and   ES-sleep
      'He killed the chicken, roasted and ate it, and then went to sleep.' (Lynch 1982: 56)

One minor difference is that the ES prefix *m-* is used with the coordinator *ua* 'or' in Southwest Tanna (*m-* is not used with *ua* 'or' in Lenakel; example (12) above).

(23) *l-əmn-aʋən   ie   nəpe   <u>ua</u> <u>m-əmn-am-ol</u>   ielkʷanu?*
      3SG-PST-kill   LOC   dance   <u>or</u> ES-PST-CONT-do   LOC.village
      'Did he go to the dance or stay at home?' (Lynch 1982: 57)

<u>Kwamera</u>

Kwamera also has an ES prefix *m-*, except that the ES prefix becomes Ø- when it is followed by a dual prefix *rou-* (Lindstrom & Lynch 1994: 33). The following example demonstrates an ES chain in Kwamera.

(24) *ia-ha-avən   a   ia   nəsu-maha*
      1EXCL-PL-go just LOC leg-1EXCL.PL
      m-ha-avən m-ha-esite nari ɸʷe ianəkər.
      ES-PL-go   ES-PL-reach thing LOC Lenakel
      'We just went on foot and went and reached Lenakel.' (Lindstrom & Lynch 1994: 33)

Similar to Lenakel, the ES antecedent need not be the subject of the preceding clause. The ES antecedent is the object in the following example.

(25) *k-rou-arupʷi   menu ia   nitei   m-arouaráu.*
      3DU-DU-throw bird INS spear ES-fly.off
      'They two threw a spear at a bird but it flew off.' (Lindstrom & Lynch 1994: 11)

The clausal coordinator *na* 'and then' is often used with ES clauses, as shown in the following example.

(26) *na   ia-ha-am-ara   na   m-ha-reŋi m-ua   [...]*
      and.then 1EXCL-PL-CONT-live and.then ES-PL-hear ES-say
      'We were living [on Tanna] and hear that [...].' (Lindstrom & Lynch 1994: 38, 43)

However, *kəni* 'and' seems not to be used with ES clauses in Kwamera. In all the other Tanna languages, *kani/kəni/kən* 'and' is the most frequent coordinator which is used with ES clauses. The following example shows that it is a normal subject prefix rather than an ES prefix which is used after *kəni* 'and'.

(27) *in   r-auta   ia   iasur   kəni r-at-irapʷ   ɸʷe White Sands.*
      he/she 3SG-ascend LOC volcano and 3SG-see-down LOC White Sands
      'He climbed the volcano and arrived at White Sands.' (Lindstrom & Lynch 1994: 38, 43)

There are no clear examples which suggest that two coordinated independent clauses must be disjoint-referential in Kwamera.

Whitesands

The prefix *m-* in Whitesands seems to function similarly with the ES prefixes in Lenakel. The ES antecedent can be the subject, object or an oblique relation of the preceding clause (which can be the last clause in the preceding turn by a conversation partner). The ES prefix *m-* is not used in subordinate clauses to refer to the matrix clause (like Lenakel), and *m-* is also not used in predicative adjectives (Jeremy Hammond p.c.). The following are some examples.

(28) *dʒon t-am-ʉan   (kani) m-ət-awan.*
      John 3SG-PST-come? (and) ES-PRS-eat
      'John came and is eating now.' (de Sousa field-notes)

(29) *dʒon t-am-ʉan   me   pita   t-ət-awan.*
John   3SG-PST-come? and? Peter 3SG-PRS-eat
'John came and Peter is eating now.' (de Sousa field-notes)

(30) *jat-uen   abaha idəhi   m-eiŋ.*
1SG.PROG-go LOC   saltwater ES-bathe
'I am going to the beach and washing.' (J. Hammond p.c.)

(31) *os   m-ua!*
carry ES-come
'Bring that here (SG).' (J. Hammond p.c.)

(32) *tam-aliwok   m-uen m-uen m-uen...*
3SG.PST-walke ES-go ES-go ES-go
'He walked and kept on going and going…' (J. Hammond p.c.)

(33) *jakl-aliwok   m-l-eru   raha-n   nəkawə.*
1EXCL.TR.NPST-walk ES-TR-see POSS-3SG kava
'We (EXCL TR) are going to walk and see his kava plants.' (J. Hammond p.c.)

North Tanna

The ES system in North Tanna (also known as Nan-Naka) is slightly different than in Lenakel.[6] The first difference is that the ES clauses in North Tanna can clearly have subject NPs. The second difference is that the ES prefixes seem to refer to a discourse-salient reference rather than a particular reference of the preceding clause. In example (34) below, the last ES prefix refers to the subject of second preceding clause rather than the immediately preceding clause. In example (35) below, the ES prefix again refers to the salient reference of the discourse rather than references of the immediately preceding clause. In both instances there is an overt subject NP in front of the ES prefix clarifying the identity of the subject; in all the other Southern Vanuatu languages, it is ungrammatical to have an overt subject NP preceding the ES marker. (Subject NPs in ES clauses are underlined in the following examples.)

(34) *in tuva   m-ekek un*
he comes ES-touch that
in m-iet   m-uvən
<u>he</u> ES-go.out ES-go
meto mama in   tatol pək   uak   lan
but   mama she does   much work for.it
kən in   m-aruru nasituan e mama   mə   otələs.
and <u>he</u> ES-unable help   to mama PURP 3SG.FUT.carry
'[H]e[j] comes and touches him, he[j] goes out again, but mama has a lot of work. But he[j] doesn't help the mama to carry the child around.' (Carlson & Carlson ms)

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[6] Carlson & Carlson (ms) call *m-* a 'same subject prefix'.

(35) *kənu etam ah təsəpən   e suatəp u,*
then man this he.comes.out.from to road   this
<u>*rahan tata ne mama*</u> *m-u-eia*   *m-ia-vasən.*
<u>his   father and mother</u> ES-DU-come ES-DU-take.a.first.look
'Then this man comes along this road, his father and mother, they come and have a first look.' (Carlson & Carlson ms)

2.2 Erromango

There are two languages spoken in Erromango: Sye (§2.2.1) and Ura (§2.2.2). The morphology of the Erromango languages is considerably more-complex than the Tanna languages; there are many portmanteau morphs, and one TAM category is often indicated by multiple morphs, sometimes involving verb root mutations.

2.2.1 Sye

Sye is the dominant language in Erromango, and Sye is commonly known as Erromangan. (The other language in Erromango — Ura — only has a few elderly speakers left; see §2.2.2.) Crowley (1998:101) analyses Sye as having six ES prefixes. Nonetheless, in this paper I follow Lynch & Capell's (1983) analysis where there is one ES prefix *m-* followed by one of six prefixes which mark subject person-number and two broad TAM categories called 'basic' and 'mutated' (see below). The following table shows the ES prefix *m-* together with these person-number-TAM prefixes.[7]

Table 3: 'Basic'/ 'mutated' ES and person-number prefixes in Erromango

	SINGULAR	DUAL	PLURAL
FIRST			m-li-/ m-le-
	m-Ø-/ m-e-		
NON-FIRST		m-u-/ m-o-	

The 'mutated' group of TAM includes: a) future, b) present, c) realis conditional, d) irrealis conditional, and e) past habitual, while the 'basic' group includes all other TAM categories. About a quarter of all verb roots also have distinct 'basic' versus 'mutated' (MT) forms which are sensitive to this TAM distinction (see examples (40) and (41)).[8]

Unlike Lenakel, an ES clause in Sye cannot be preceded by a coordinator. In the following example, it is ungrammatical to have a coordinator intervening between the ES clause and the preceding independent clause.

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[7] The set of person-number-TAM prefixes in table 3 is also used with several other TAM prefixes: the 'prior past' prefix *epm-*, the iterative prefix *um-*, and the 'EM' prefix *em-* (Crowley 1998: 106-108). See footnote 10 on the 'EM' prefix.

[8] Crowley (1998, 2002a, 2002b) does not use specific terms to describe the two broad-TAM categories, and the terms 'basic' and 'mutated'/'modified' only refer to the forms of the alternating verb roots ('mutated' is used in Crowley (2002a), while 'modified' is used in Crowley (1998, 2002b) for the same meaning). For instance, Crowley (1998: 101) describes the mutated series of ES markers (*me-/ mo-/ mle-*) as being used 'before verb in modified root environment', while the basic series of ES markers (*m-/ mu-/ mli-*) as being used 'elsewhere'.

(36) *ɣ-avan*　　　　*m-Ø-etvani.*
　　　3SG.RECPST-walk　ES-SG-spit
　　　'(S)he walked and spat.' (Crowley 1998: 280)

Conversely, an independent clause which is semantically coordinated with a preceding clause must be preceded by an overt coordinator. (In Lenakel, an overt coordinator is optional for both independent and ES clauses.) The most common coordinator in Sye is *im* 'and' or its clitic form *m=*.

(37) *j-ete*　　　　　*umelwo*　*m=hai*　　　*neteme ji-velom.*
　　　3SG.RECPST-stay　above　　and=INDF　person 3SG.DISTPST-come
　　　'(S)he stayed above and somebody came.' (Crowley 1998: 279)

Unlike Lenakel where all subjects of independent clauses must be disjoint-referential with the subject of the preceding coordinated clause, obligatory interclausal disjoint-reference is only enforced in Sye when the subject of the non-initial clause is third person singular (there are no data in Crowley (1998) with third person plural subjects in the same environment). In example (38), the two subjects are necessarily disjoint-referential as the subject of the second clause is third person singular. However, in example (39), because the subject of the second clause is not third person singular, the subject can be coreferential (as in this example) or disjoint-referential with the subject of the preceding clause.

(38) *ɣ-avan m*　　　　*ɣotvani (< m=ɣo-etvani).*
　　　3SG.RECPST-walk　and=3SG.RECPST-spit
　　　'(S)he walked and somebody else spat.' (Crowley 1998: 280)

(39) *jaɣ-avan m*　　　　*m=joɣotvani.*
　　　1SG.RECPST-walk　and=1SG.RECPST-spit
　　　'I walked and spat.' (Crowley 1998: 279)

The second verb in example (39) can be optionally substituted with an ES verb (but the clausal coordinator *im~m=* must not occur as clausal coordinators are mutually exclusive with ES markers), as demonstrated in Example (40).

(40) *joɣoɣve (<jaɣo-ve)*　*m-Ø-tovop.*
　　　1SG.RECPST-go　　　　ES-SG-laugh
　　　'I went and laughed.' (Crowley 1998: 101)

Except for a few marginal cases (see below), ES verbs in Sye are incapable of taking any TAM inflections, and ES clauses have the same TAM as the preceding clause. In example (40) above, the ES clause has the same recent past tense specification as the preceding clause. The ES clause in example (41) below also has the same tense as the preceding clause, which is future tense. Notice that future tense is a 'mutated' tense category (see above); the verb roots 'go', 'laugh', and the person-number prefix on the ES verb are 'mutated' accordingly (c.f. example (40) above).[9]

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[9] The underlying forms of the recent past and future prefixes are identical for singular subjects, e.g. *jaɣo-* in examples (40) and (41) (Crowley 1998: 90,99).

(41) *jaɣampe (<jaɣo-ampe)*   *m-e-ntovop.*
    1SG.FUT-MT\go   ES-SG.MT-MT\laugh
    'I will go and laugh.' (Crowley 1998: 101)

Nevertheless, ES clauses in Sye can be marked independently for TAM, albeit marginally. One aspect that ES verbs can mark independently is the iterative aspect.

(42) *jam-avan*   *m-Ø-<u>um</u>-etvani.*
    1SG.DISTPST-walk   ES-SG-<u>IT</u>-spit
    'I walked and spit again.' (Crowley 1998: 115)

Otherwise, the only way to indicate a change in TAM on the ES verb is by changing the 'basic'/'mutated' category of the verb root (if the verb root has separate 'basic'/'mutated' forms) and the person-number prefix. For instance, in the following example, the initial independent verb is in recent past tense, which is a basic TAM category, whereas the following ES verb has a mutated person-number prefix and a mutated verb root. This signifies that the TAM of that ES clause is different from the preceding clause. In this case, the mutated morphs and the lack of an 'EM' prefix indicate that the ES clause is in future tense (all the other mutated TAM categories have an accompanying 'EM' prefix; Crowley 1998: 88 table 4.2).[10]

(43) *etme-n*   *ɣoɣ-velom*   *<u>m-e-n</u>aleipo.*
    father-3SG   3SG.RECPST-come   ES-SG.MT-MT\sleep
    'His/her father came and will sleep.' (Crowley 1998: 248)

The referent of an ES-prefix can properly-include the referent of the ES antecedent. In the following example, the subject of the last ES clause refers to the subject referent *misi ravosen* 'the missionary Robertson' of the first clause plus another third person referent.

(44) *misi*   *ravosen*   *ji-vai*   *m-Ø-haɣ*   *upoŋkor*
    missionary Robertson   3SG.DISTPST-take   ES-SG-go.up   Unpogkor
    mute (< <u>m-u</u>-ete) juwi   *nanru.*
    ES-N1NSG-stay   there   together
    'The missionary Robertson took him up to Unpogkor and they stayed there together.' (Crowley 1998: 247)

Crowley (1998) does not mention whether an object can be the sole ES antecedent of an ES prefix. Nevertheless, there is one example in the text in Crowley (1998) where the object is the sole ES antecedent. In the following example, the last verb is clearly an ES verb; it has an ES prefix, and is followed by a zero singular prefix.[11] Nonetheless, the ES antecedent of the last clause is the object *nitni* 'her child' of the

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[10] The 'EM' prefix comes in the form of *em-*, and is used in an assortment of TAM categories. Amongst mutated TAM categories, present, past habitual, realis conditional and irrealis coditional take *em-*, while future does not. Amongst the basic TAM categories, past continuous and dependent past take *em-*, while imperative, recent past, distant past, optative, subjunctive and counterassertive do not. As seen in the list above, it is difficult to pinpoint the meaning of *em-*, and Crowley simply glossed *em-* as EM. See also the tables in Crowley (1998: 88, 108) and Crowley (2002b: 705-706).

[11] Rather than, e.g., the *m* being the coordinating proclitic *m=*, in which case the following verb would be an independent verb with an overt cross-reference prefix.

preceding clause. It is unclear whether this is a processing error of the speaker, or whether this is a rare construction acceptable to most speakers.

(45)   *j-oɣlar*   *m-Ø-orjok-i*
       3SG.DISTPST-get.stuck   ES-SG-pick.up-3SG
       mpe (< m-Ø-ve)   m-Ø-tantvi   nitni
       ES-SG-go   ES-SG-drop.heavily   child.3SG
       mahpe (< m-Ø-mah=pe).
       ES-SG-die=PREC
       'She got stuck and picked it[j] up and went and dropped her child[j] heavily and it[j][ES] died.' (Crowley 1998: 288)

2.2.2 Ura

There were six elderly speakers of Ura left in 1999; all of them were fluent in Sye. Unlike the ES verbs in Sye, the ES verbs in Ura mark no person-number categories, and the ES prefix has phonologically-conditioned allomorphs (Crowley 1999: 163):

       m-   before vowels
       mV-   before *gV* and *dV*   [the vowels harmonise]
       mi- ~ mu-   before *w*   [free variation]
       mi-   elsewhere

Similar to Sye, the ES prefix is mutually exclusive with overt coordinators (e.g. *im* 'and'). With third person subjects, an ES clause indicates coreference (example 46), whereas a coordinated independent clause indicates disjoint-reference with the subject of the preceding clause (example 47).[12]

(46)   *j-avju-venim*   *m-oɣsi ga   u-nabon-ga.*
       3SG.DISTPST-DESID-come   ES-see   2SG   LOC-home-2SG
       '(S)he wanted to come and see you at your home.' (Crowley 1999: 216)

(47)   *i-venim*   *im   j-arap.*
       3SG.DISTPST-come   and   3SG.DISTPST-sit
       'He came and she sat down.' (Crowley 1999: 224)

Similar to Sye, some verb roots in Ura also have separate 'basic' versus 'mutated' forms. The 'mutated' TAM categories in Ura are: a) future tense, b) present tense, c) subjunctive, and d) past habitual.

(48)   *ur-ebenim*   *m-adap.*
       1PL.EXCL.FUT-MT\come   ES-MT\sit.down
       'We will come and sit down.' (Crowley 1999: 216)

Crowley (1999) does not mention whether a non-subject can be the sole ES antecedent or not. However, there is the following example where the underlined ES prefix refers to the salient reference of the discourse rather than a particular reference of a neighbouring clause. (Levels of embedding are indicated by square

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[12] There are no examples of coordinated independent clauses with coreferential first or second person subjects in Crowley (1999).

brackets in the following example for ease of comprehension. In all the languages discussed so far, an ES prefix cannot be used in a subordinate clause to refer to references in the matrix clause; in this Ura example, the ES antecedent is not even found in the sentence.)

(49) *ja-navos*   *m-ago*   *[ja-namli*   *novul*   *aɾjau]*
       1SG.PRS-MT\happy ES-MT\say   [1SG.PRS-MT\speak language   POSS.1SG]
       [ra   *[nago jawe-nimis]*   *m-ada*   *m-anŋi*   *nelin   sai].*
       [because [if   1SG.FUT-MT\die] ES-MT\stay   ES-MT\hear time   another]
       'I am happy that I am speaking my language because if I die <u>he</u> will keep hearing it another time.' (Crowley 1999: 80)

There is also the following example, where the underlined ES prefix is either referring to the object of the preceding clause, or the salient reference of the discourse.

(50) *j-ovo-<u>kim</u>*   *nebeveŋ   baɣan.*
       3SG.DISTPST-give-<u>1PL.EXCL</u>   food   only
       <u>me-geni</u>   *mi-nubam*
       <u>ES-MT\eat</u>   ES-MT\cook
       m-adabuni   nalinowe   mo-gopolesi   ne.
       ES-lead   dog   ES-MT\follow   river
       'She [mother] just gave us food. And (we) will eat it and cook and go hunting and go (fishing) along the river.' (Crowley 1999: 86)

2.3   Aneityum

Anejom̃ [ʔanɛtʃɔmʷ] is the only language spoken in Aneityum . There are a number of salient differences between Anejom̃ and the other Southern Vanuatu languages   . The first difference is that the 'basic' word order in Anejom̃ is VOS , rather than SVO as in all the other Vanuatu languages.

		OBJECT	SUBJECT
(51)	*eris* *leyse-i* *[istʃi-tal]*	*[aarau].*
	3PL.AORT take.PL-TR [fruits-taro]	[they.DU]

'The two of them took the taro corms.' (Lynch 2000: 115)

The word before the verb in the example above is a subject agreement particle. The subject agreement particle is not a referential expression, somewhat akin to the third person singular present tense suffix *-s* in English where must cooccur with a subject NP.[13] The subject NP is most usually present in independent clauses, even in imperative sentences.
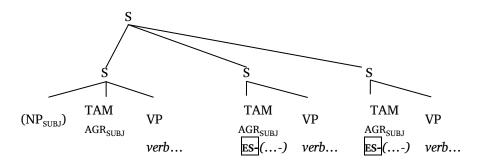
			SUBJECT
(52)	*fi* *aθia* *[aak]!*	
	INTENS go.away [you.SG]	

'Piss off!' (Lynch 2000: 137)

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[13] 'Referential expression' here simply means an expression can refer to some referent or referents on its own and is not simply grammatically agreeing with another reference.

The ES system in Anejoḿ is also very different from those in the other Southern Vanuatu languages. One minor difference is that the ES marker in Anejoḿ is not a prefix; the ES marker in Anejoḿ is a proclitic *(i)m=* (*m=* before a vowel, and *im=* before a consonant). The ES clitic can be cliticised to a verb, an adverbial particle (e.g. *lep* 'again' in example 54), or a negator (*itiji* in example 55). The following are examples of the ES proclitic *(i)m=*.
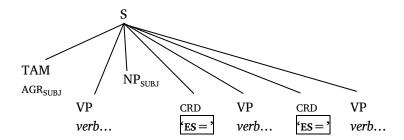
(53) *ekris   apan aarau,*
      3DU.PST go   they.DU
      m=aŋo   nupʷut
      ES=make k.o.laplap
      m=aŋo   ihnii.
      ES=make finish
      'They two went and made *nup̃ut* and finished making it.' (Lynch 2000: 148)

(54) *et   amen aan,*
      3SG.AORT stay   (s)he
      im=lep   tas-putʃhou   ehele-i etwa-n
      ES=again talk-outside DAT-TR   brother-3SG
      m=ika…
      ES=say
      'He again talked to his brother outside and said…' (Lynch 2000: 148)

(55) *is   itiji eŋe-ktit   nitiniŋ   is   asɑŋ aan,*
      3SG.PST NEG hear-well something 3SG.PST say   (s)he
      m=itiji atou   intas-apʷat iniŋ   is   asɑŋ aan.
      ES=NEG know word-dark   DEM.PROX.SG 3SG.PST say   (s)he
      'He didn't hear clearly what he said, and so didn't know this secret word.' (Lynch 2000: 148)

The most striking difference in Anejoḿ conce   rns the syntactic structure of an ES constituent. In the Tanna and Erromango languages (§2.1, §2.2), the ES prefix is attached to a verb which heads a clause. An ES clause in Tanna and Erromango can have its own TAM (albeit a reduced range), be preceded by a clausal coordinator in the case of the Tanna languages, and have its own subject NP in the case of North Tanna. The subject of an ES clause in Tanna and Erromango is not necessarily entirely coreferential with the subject of the preceding clause. The following schematises the ES construction in the Erromango languages.

On the other hand, the ES proclitic in Anejoḿ is cliticised to a VP. The (so called) ES clitic is a VP coordinator. These coordinated VPs must always have identical TAM

and subject, because they actually share all the TAM and subject expressions within the same clause.

The VP coordinator *(i)m=* is mutually exclusive with clausal coordinators (and hence *(i)m=* cannot occur in independent clauses). The most common clausal coordinator in Anejom̃ is *am^w* 'and'. In Anejom̃, the subject of an independent clause can be either coreferential or disjoint-referential with the subject of the preceding clause, with no restrictions. (In the Tanna and Erromango languages, the subject of an independent clause is required to be disjoint-referential with the subject of the preceding clause in at least some environments.)

(Same subject referents:)
(56) *is   eɣohos-pan   aan ehele-n*
      3SG.PST appear-there   he   DAT-3SG
      is   am^w imj-eɣetʃ   jin.
      3SG.PST and COM-say.come   him
      'He appeared before him and told him to come with him.' (Moyse-Faurie & Lynch 2004: 457)

(Different subject referents:)
(57) *… m-eɣtʃeɣtʃa-n*
          ES-ram-him
      is   am^w asuol   inti-n   a   nittʃini-n.
      3SG.PST and   go.down excrement-his OBL head-his
      '… and he rammed him and his shit went into his head.' (Lynch 2000: 146)

(58) *… lep   aθia   a   titʃiraaki […] im-jip^wal*
          again leave SBJ this1.TR   ES-tell.story
      am^w astʃeɣ a   nomraŋ a-nlii-i   niom^w.
      and   lie   SBJ old.man LOC-middle-CS house
      '… these three again went outside […] telling stories, and the old man was lying down inside the house.' (Lynch 2000: 146)

2.4 Summary

The following table summarises the key points of the ES systems found in Southern Vanuatu.

Table 4: Summary of Southern Vanuatu ES systems.

	North Tanna *m-*	Lenakel *m-*	Southwest Tanna *m-*	Kwamera *m- /Ø-*	Whitesands *m-*	Sye *m-*	Ura *m(V)-*	Anejom̃ *(i)m=*
subject NP in ES clause	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
coordinator preceding the ES marker	*kən* 'then'	*kani* 'and' *merou* 'but'	*kəni* 'and' *meləŋ* 'but' *ua* 'or'	*na* 'then'	*kani* 'and' *me* ?	no	no	no
independent marking for : number	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no
: tense	?	yes	?	?	yes?	yes	yes	no
: mood	?	yes	?	?	yes?	yes	yes	no
: aspect	?	yes	?	?	?	yes	yes	no
disjoint-referential marking	?	yes	yes	?	?	3(SG?)	3(SG?)	no

3.   Development of ES systems in Southern Vanuatu

The ES markers in Southern Vanuatu are all reflexes of the Proto–Oceanic coordinator *ma. Moyse-Faurie & Lynch (2004) reconstruct the function of *ma more-precisely as a VP coordinator. Assuming that *ma existed in Proto–Oceanic and functioned as a VP coordinator, the development of the ES markers in Southern Vanuatu languages is as follow.

Stage 0: *ma as a VP coordinator in Proto–Southern Vanuatu

The 'basic' word order in Proto–Southern Vanuatu was SVO. (All Vanuatu languages except Anejom̃ are SVO, and SVO is — genealogically speaking — the most wide-spread word order amongst Oceanic languages (Lynch, Ross & Crowley 2002: 49).) The coordinator *ma coordinated VPs in Proto–Southern Vanuatu. In Anejom̃, *(i)m=* still functions as a VP coordinator, and the only major differences are that the 'basic' word order has changed from SVO to VOS, and *(i)m=* is a proclitic.

Stage 0: Proto–Southern Vanuatu

Stage 0a: Anejom̃

Constructions similar to the one schematised for Proto–Southern Vanuatu are not difficult to find in the vicinity of Southern Vanuatu. For instance, the Nguna dialect of Nakanamanga to the north (Central Vanuatu) has a VP coordinator *poo*.[14]

Nakanamanga

(59) *e too umai poo punusi k͡pila-na.*
3SG PROG come and see mother-3SG
'He would come and see his mother.' (Schütz 1969a: 50)

(60) *raŋi waia tu ŋa woo mari rarua sikai,*
time that 1INCL INT will make canoe one
poo laaŋa toko-ra waina e towo asa,
and seek place that 3SG land in.it
'Now we'll make a canoe and seek the place where it landed.' (Schütz 1969b: 39, 58)

In contrast to the VP coordinators, these languages also have clausal coordinators where each of the coordinated independent clauses can have their own subject NPs. The subjects of these coordinated clauses can be either coreferential or disjoint-

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[14] To the south, VP coordinators are also claimed to exist in New Caledonia, but clear examples are not yet known to me. Moyse-Faurie & Lynch (2004) list a number of languages in New Caledonia as having VP coordinators which are distinct from clausal coordinators. However, the 'VP' coordinators in Xârâcùù and Drehu that they exemplify in their §3.1.1 seem to be verb coordinators (e.g. S [[V₁ and V₂] O], i.e. the verbs cannot have separate object phrases) rather than VP coordinators (e.g. S [[V₁ O₁] and [V₂ O₂]]). See Moyse-Faurie (1995: 124) on the verb coordinator *mɛ̃* <mê> in Xârâcùù and Moyse-Faurie (1983: 184) on the verb coordinator *me* in Drehu. On the other hand, the Nemi example (54) quoted in Moyse-Faurie & Lynch (2004: 469; quoting Ozanne-Rivierre 1979, vol. 2: 59) does contain a coordinator *ma* where each VP has its own object phrase. However, since *ma* is also used to coordinate clauses, it looks like that *ma* is actually coordinating clauses (and subject/TAM ellipsis is allowed).

referential.   (Anejom̃ also has a clausal coordinator   *am^w* 'and' which functions similarly; §2.3.)
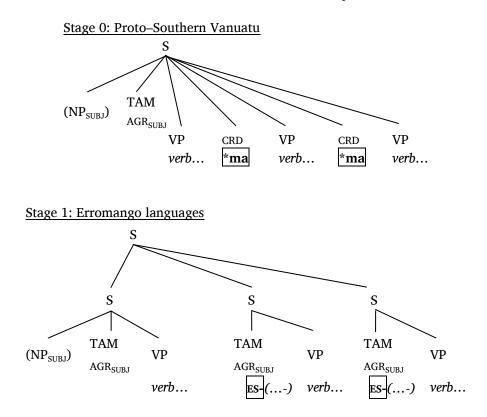
Nakanamanga
(Coreferential → Disjoint-referential:)
(61) *ŋo   e   leŋa sua*
      and 3SG sing COMPL
      ŋo   te   pa-ki varea   ke-rua   paapaa pa-ki varea   ke-latolu
      and 3SG go-to branch.level ORD-two until   go-to branch.level ORD-eight
      ŋo   tama-na   e   toŋo na-taleo-na   poo mitoaki naŋa […]
      and father-3SG 3SG hear   ART-voice-3SG and think   that
      'He finished singing and went to successive levels until he reached the eight. Then his father heard his voice, but thought […]' (Schütz 1969b: 9, 13)

The VP coordinators in Nakanamanga are not described as ES markers, and there is also no synchronic reason why the VP coordinator *(i)m=* in Anejom̃ should be called an ES marker (rather than simply a VP coordinator).

Stage 1: coordinated VPs become clauses in Erromango and Tanna

In Tanna (§2.1) and Erromango (§2.2), the non-initial VPs in Proto–Southern Vanuatu were reanalysed as clauses. Because the ES marker now marks clauses, the subject of an ES clause in Erromango and Tanna does not need to be coreferential with the subject of the preceding clause. In Erromango, the ES prefix has retained many properties of a coordinator: the ES prefix cannot be preceded by another coordinator, and the ES clause cannot have an overt subject NP.
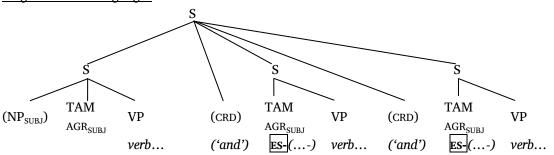

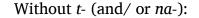Stage 0: Proto–Southern Vanuatu

Stage 1: Erromango languages

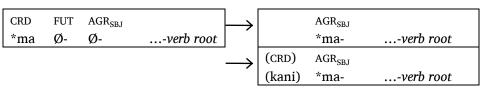<u>Stage 2: ES markers further lost their trait as coordinators in Tanna languages</u>

In the Tanna languages, the ES prefixes have further lost their properties as a coordinator: the ES prefixes in Tanna can now be (optionally) preceded by a contemporary clausal coordinator. The ES antecedent is also more frequently a non-subject in the Tanna languages than in the Erromango languages.
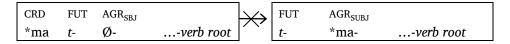
<u>Stage 2: Tanna languages</u>

There is one trait in Lenakel which demonstrates that the ES prefix is in the same prefix slot as the normal subject cross-reference prefixes. The ES prefix in Lenakel cannot cooccur with the future prefix *t-* and the intentional prefix *na-* (§2.1.1). These are the only prefixes which exist in the prefix slots preceding the subject cross-reference prefix on an independent verb. A *t-* and/or *na-* suffix which intervene(s) between the VP coordinator *ma and the zero subject prefix would have prevented *ma from being reanalysed as a subject cross-reference prefix of the verb. This is schematised in the following diagram.

Without *t-* (and/ or *na-*):

With *t-* (and/ or *na-*):

One question which remains is that although we know that *ma has moved into the subject agreement slot, is the ES prefix a referential expression like normal subject prefixes (in which case the ES prefix is a long distance or discourse anaphor)? Or is the ES prefix merely a marker which indicates that the clause is a dependent clause (like, e.g., 'to' in a 'to' clause in English)? I do not have a satisfactory answer to this question, but there are faint hints which lead to the direction of the former analysis, i.e. that the ES prefix is an anaphor. We have seen in the Ura examples (49) and (50) and the North Tanna examples (34) and (35) that the subject of their ES clauses seem to be referring to a discourse salient participant rather than a particular reference in the immediately preceding clause. This makes it likely that there is a discourse anaphor in the clause, with the ES prefix — which is already in the subject agreement slot — being a prime candidate to be the anaphoric expression in
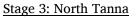
question. (An alternative analysis would be to posit that the ES prefix is simply a marker of dependency, and the aforementioned discourse anaphor is a zero; this is perhaps less elegant as it postulates an obligatory zero morph.)
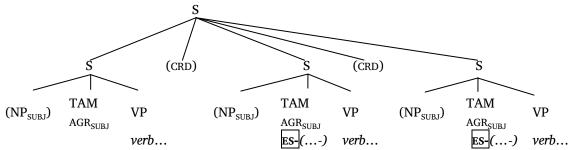
Another trait which suggests that the ES prefix is a referential expression, just like normal subject cross-reference prefixes, is that the ES prefix is not used with impersonal clauses (§2.1.1). Impersonal clauses are used when the subject is low in discourse salience. If an ES prefix is simply a marker of dependence and there are no subject referential expressions in an ES clause, then an ES clause would be an ideal expression for such propositions where the actor referents are to be backgrounded. On the contrary, ES clauses are prohibited from being used in a chain of impersonal clauses. This suggests that there is actually a subject expression in an ES clause, as it is typical for a referential expression (or at least an agreement marker, or other kinds of reference-sensitive devices like a voice marker) to be sensitive to the discourse salience of a referent. Again the prime candidate is for the ES prefix to be the referential expression (rather than positing an obligatory zero referential expression while the ES prefix is doing nothing other than just indicating dependency).

Nonetheless, these are only suggestions, and I leave the question of whether ES prefixes are referential expressions or not open.

Stage 3: ES clauses 'acquires' subject NPs in North Tanna

The ES clauses in North Tanna have become even less like VPs: the ES clauses in North Tanna can carry their own subject NPs. The ES prefix has also become freer in selecting its antecedent: in North Tanna, the ES antecedent is often a discourse-salient reference which is not found in the immediately preceding clause (§2.1.2).

Stage 3: North Tanna

4. Conclusions (and other unresolved issues)

Since Lynch's (1983) description of the ES system in Lenakel, all languages in Southern Vanuatu have been described as having an ES system. Canonically, ES markers indicate that the subject of a clause is coreferential with the subject of the preceding clause. However, as we have seen in this paper, there are also salient differences between the various ES system, and some of the structural differences represents various stages of the grammaticalisation of ES markers from the VP coordinator *ma in Proto–Southern Vanuatu. The ES marker in Anejom̃ is still a coordinator of VPs, whereas the ES markers in the Erromango and Tanna languages to the north have been reanalysed as markers of a dependent clause. The ES marker

in the Erromango languages has retained some of its trait as a VP coordinator: the ES marker cannot be preceded by a contemporary coordinator, and there can be no subject NP in an ES clause.   The ES marker in Tanna has become even less coordinator-like: the ES marker in the Tanna languages can be preceded by a contemporary clausal coordinator. In North Tanna, the ES clause has become more like an independent clause in that the ES clause in North Tanna can have a subject NP.

Another line of development is the obligatoriness of the use of an ES construction to indicate interclausal coreference   (and the correlating optionality of the use of coordinated independent clauses to indicate interclausal disjoint   -reference).   In AnejoM̃, the use of the 'ES' VP coordinator is optional. In the Erromango languages, the use of the ES marker is obligatory only when the subject of the ES clause is third person singular (it is unclear as to what happens to third person plural subjects). In Tanna, the use of the ES marker is obligatory for all subjects.   This cline of optionality versus obligatoriness of the use of the ES marker is perhaps related to the path of grammaticalisation of the ES marker, but the exact nature of this relationship awaits further research.

There are (at least) three other issues which are beyond the scope of this paper; they will be further explored in de Sousa (forthcoming). Firstly, Crowley (2002a) discusses the ES systems in Southern Vanuatu, and considers the ES construction as a consequence of the 'dissolution' from the prototypical serial verb constructions as found in, for example, Central Vanuatu (it is true that the Southern Vanuatu languages are quite poor in serial verb constructions). See Crowley (2002a: 178-214) for more discussions on this issue. The second issue is what type of clause an ES clause is. ES clauses are dependent, but they are distinct from the subordinate clauses in these languages (e.g. Lenakel example (13)). ES chains resembles clause-chaining in, for example, Papuan languages (except for the direction of chaining; in Papuan languages the independent clause is at the end, whereas in Southern Vanuatu the independent clause is at the beginning). However, ES clauses in Southern Vanuatu can be marked independently for tense, whereas this is not the case for the chained clauses in Papuan languages (and as far as I know also in other languages which are described as 'chaining'). Perhaps all we can claim is that ES clauses is a type of dependent clause somewhere in between a less symmetrical type of coordination (see, e.g., Haspelmath 2004, 2007) and prototypical clause chaining.

The third issue is the relationship between ES and switch-reference. Lynch (1983) is presented from the context of comparing ES with canonical switch-reference (SR) systems, especially the Papuan type of SR systems. Some initial observations are as follow. A SR system involves some inflections which indicate coreference , and some which indicate disjoint-reference. AnejoM̃ does not have a SR system as there are no grammaticalised marker of disjoint-reference (coordinated independent clauses do not need to have disjoint -referential subjects in AnejoM̃ ; cf. examples (56) and (57) in §2.3). Another feature of canonical SR systems is that other than the grammatical function of reference tracking/disambiguation, there are evidences in a lot of SR languages that SR also has the discourse function of tacking participant continuity versus discontinuity (i.e. indicating the foreground/background status of the salient participants).   The vast majority of languages which are reported as having SR systems use appropriate SR markers for subjects of all persons, including situations

where no disambiguation is needed (e.g. [… 1SG-verb-SR] [… 1SG-verb-PST]). The ES systems in Erromango, on the other hand, resembles the 'third person SR' systems in Eskimo-Aleut and certain Tupí-Guaraní languages (e.g. Tempé, Guajajára), where proper coreferential versus disjoint-referential markers are only available for third person references. Having proper coreferential versus disjoint-referential markers for only third person references is a response to the grammatical aim of reference tracking (first and second person references seldom need referent disambiguation in comparison with third person references), and not the discourse aim of indicating the foreground/background status of salient participants (which are not-infrequently first or second person). This makes 'third person SR' systems like the ES systems in Erromango very divergent from canonical SR systems. As for the ES systems in Tanna, they are also far from being SR systems; whereas SR systems have rigid discourse criteria ('salience' in terms of being the subject, agent, most animate etc.) in selecting the SR pivots (the references which are tracked by a particular SR marker), the ES antecedent in Tanna languages is best described as any reference or references which fit(s) the semantics, regardless of their discourse salience (c.f. Lenakel examples (16) to (21)). The ES system in Tanna is thus clearly used only for the grammatical function of reference tracking, and not the discourse function of indicating the foreground/background status of salient participants, which is arguably an important function of canonical SR systems. See de Sousa (2006a,b) for points on SR discussed here.

Acknowledgements

Abbreviations

1	first person	CRD	coordinator
2	second person	DAT	dative
3	third person	DEM	demonstrative
ANAPH	anaphoric	DIST	distant
AGR	agreement	DU	dual
AORT	aorist	ES	echo subject
ART	article	EXCL	exclusive
COM	commitative	FUT	future
COMPL	completive	INCL	inclusive
CONT	continuous	INDF	indefinite

INS	inessive	POSS	possessive
INT	intension	PROG	progressive
INTENS	intensive	PROX	proximate
IPFV	imperfective	PRS	present
IT	iterative	PST	past
LOC	locative	PURP	purposive
MT	'mutated' (§2.2)	REC	recent
N	non-	SBJ	subject
NEG	negative	SEQ	sequential
OBL	oblique	SG	singular
ORD	ordinal	TR	trial
PFV	perfective	TRNS	transitive
PL	plural		

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