

DOUBLE-LOCATIVE ARGUMENTS IN YAQUI EXTERNAL POSSESSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS

**SYNTAX OF THE WORLD LANGUAGES VIII
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Lilián Guerrero
IIFL-UNAM
Valeria A. Belloro
FLyL-UAQ

I. INTRODUCTION

- Possession is a semantic manifestation of the relations between an individual and her environment, including kinship terms, body-parts, garments, domestic animals, natural entities, physical, cultural, and emotional objects.
- What makes the study of possessor-possessum relations intriguing is the fact that languages use a wide variety of constructions, and their distribution usually correlates with different semantic relations (Seiler 1983; McGregor 2009; Heine 1997; Payne & Barshi 1999; Stassen 2009; Nichols & Bickel 2013; Aikhenvald 2013).
- The Yaqui language is not the exception (Uto-Aztecan; Mexico).
- Previous studies (Jelinek & Escalante 1988; Dedrick & Casad 1999: 165-171; Gurrola 2005; Guerrero 2007; Muchembled 2010; Álvarez 2012) (i) have described attributive and predicative possession; (ii) have shown that the notion of (in)alienability is not a grammatical category, and (iii) there are very few restrictions between semantic relations and possessive structures. However, external possession (EP) constructions have gone unnoticed.

- We examine external possessive constructions and analyze whether Yaqui data belong to the well-known dative EP constructions found in European and many other languages (Payne & Barshi 1999; Haspelmath 1999; Slotz et al. 2008).
- Based on corpora, we claim that Yaqui EP constructions are atypical for the following reasons:
- While the possessum is systematically coded as a locative argument (possessum demotion), there are three coding strategies for the external possessor:
 - (i) the ‘dative-like’ marking *-u*
 - (ii) the accusative marking *-ta*
 - (iii) the locative oblique marking *-t*
- The most common EP constructions involve the last two patterns. Unlike the accusative EP, the locative EP shows some but not all the syntactic privileged of direct core arguments, i.e., language-specific construction.

Outline:

§2 The Yaqui language

§3 A corpus-based study of Yaqui possessive constructions

§4 Yaqui external possessors (EP)

§5 A characterization of Yaqui EP constructions

§6 Final comments

3. THE YAQUI LANGUAGE

It is an agglutinating, accusative, dependent-marking, primary object language; except for a few suppletive forms, verbs are not inflected for person or number. Yaqui formally distinguishes between direct core arguments (nominative and accusative NPs) and oblique core arguments (NPs marked by postpositions).

- (1) a. *U-∅* *o'ou-∅* *batwe-u* *yeu=siika*
DET-NOM man-NOM river-DIR out=go.SG.PFV
'The man went to the river.'
- b. *U-∅* *o'ou-∅* *u-ka* *kari-ta* *bicha-k*
DET-NOM man-NOM DET-ACC house-ACC see-PFV
'The man saw the house.'
- c. *Aapo* *u-me* *chu'u-im* *bicha-k*
3SG.NOM the-PL dog-PL see-PFV
'He/She saw the dogs.'

There is no dative case, but the directional postposition *-u* ‘to’ marks several semantic roles typically associated to dative. Thus, verbs like *bittua* ‘send’ (2a) mark the recipient with the directional *-u* (when inanimate) or *-ta-u* (when animate); verbs like *maka* ‘give’ mark the same argument as accusative only (2b). Constructions with multiple accusative arguments are very common (2c).

- (2) a. *Bempo u-me seewa-m u-e jmut-ta-u bittua-k*
 3PL.NOM DET-PL flower-PL DET-OBL woman-ACC-DIR send-PFV
 ‘They sent the flowers to the woman.’
- b. *Bempo u-me seewa-m u-ka jmut-ta maka-k*
 3PL.NOM DET-PL flower-PL DET-ACC woman-ACC give-PFV
 ‘They gave the flowers to the woman.’
- c. *Peo-∅ usi-ta mansana-ta yoem-ta miik-tua-∅*
 Peo-NOM child-ACC apple-ACC man-ACC give-cause-PRE
 ‘The teacher made/let the child give the man the apple.’

Several two-place predicates take an oblique argument marked by locative postpositions. Some verbs take the directional marker *-u* ‘to’ (3a), others use the locative-contact *-t* ‘on, at’ (3b), and a few others the general locative postposition *-po* ‘on’ (3c). When translated into Spanish, oblique pronominal arguments usually use the dative clitic ‘*le*’.

(3) a. *Lupe-∅* *Joan-ta-u* *waate-∅*
 Lupe-NOM John-ACC-DIR miss-PRE
 ‘Lupe misses John.’ (Sp. *le extraña*)

b. *Inepo* *Peo-ta-t* *e’a-∅*
 1SG.NOM Peter-ACC-LOC believe-PRE
 ‘I believe in Peter.’ (Sp. *le cree*)

c. *Loola-∅* *ousi* *tom-po* *wante*
 Lola-NOM a_lot stomach-LOC feel.pain
 ‘Lola’s stomach aches.’ (Sp. *le duele el estómago*)

Some postpositions, including *-u* and *-t*, demand an accusative *-ta* complement when introducing animate participants.

3. A CORPUS-BASED STUDY OF YAQUI POSSESSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS

Possessive constructions		semi-directed	oral texts	direct elicitation	Total
internal (65%)	Juxtaposition	96	13	7	116
	Possessive pronouns	196	342	44	582
	Genitive phrase <i>-ta</i>	59	30	15	104
predicative (24%)	Possessive verb <i>-k</i>	82	38	25	145
	Possessive verb <i>jippue</i>	70	30	24	124
	Possessive verb <i>atte'ak</i>	4	7	13	24
external (11%)	Locative possessives	23	5	1	29
	Applicative possessives	22	9	22	53
	Splitting possessives	32	10	16	58
		584 (47%)	484 (40%)	167 (13%)	1235

TABLE 1. Distribution of Yaqui possessive constructions (data source)

Possessive constructions	Possessive relationships						Total
	kinship	body-part	part-whole	locative	associative	ownership	
Juxtaposition	6	30	51	17	4	8	116
Possessive pronouns	325	86	-	23	38	110	582
Genitive phrase <i>-ta</i>	28	34	3	2	9	28	104
Possessive verb <i>-k</i>	33	45	10	20	17	20	145
Possessive verb <i>jippue</i>	11	46	-	5	16	46	124
Possessive verb <i>atte'ak</i>	4	1	-	-	-	19	24
Locative possessives	-	29	-	-	-	-	29
Applicative possessives	2	27	3	-	-	21	53
Splitting possessives	-	54	2	-	-	-	58
	410	353	69	67	84	252	1235

TABLE 2. Distribution of Yaqui possessive constructions (semantic relations)

(4) Juxtaposition (possessor-possessum)

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|------|-----------|-----------------|
| a. <i>juya buja-m</i> | tree | branch-PL | ‘tree’s branch’ |
| b. <i>waka beea</i> | cow | skin | ‘cow’s skin’ |

(5) Possessive pronouns (possessor-possessum)

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| a. <i>in a’e</i> | ‘my mother’ |
| b. <i>em koba</i> | ‘your (sg) head’ |
| c. <i>itom pweplum, itom batwe, itom wasam</i> | ‘our town, our river, our land’ |

(6) Pronominal possession for 3er person³

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| a. <i>a kari</i> | ‘his/her house’ |
| b. <i>apo’ik kari</i> | ‘his/her house’ |
| c. <i>kari-wa</i> | ‘his/her house’ |
| d. <i>a kari-wa</i> | ‘his/her house of he/she’ |
| e. <i>Joan-ta a kari-wa</i> | ‘his/her house of John’ |

(7) Genitive phrases (possessor-possessum; marking on the possessor)⁴

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| a. <i>Tibu-ta asoa-m</i> | Tibu-ACC | son-PL | ‘Tibu’s sons’ |
| b. <i>uusi-ta yeka</i> | child-ACC | nose | ‘the child’s nose’ |
| c. <i>karo-ta ruera-m</i> | car-ACC | tire-PL | ‘the car’s tires’ |

(8) *-(e)k* possessive clause (marking on the possessee)

Empo tettebem pusse'ebe-k

2SG.NOM long.PL eyelash-have

‘You have long eyelashes.’

(9) *atte'ak* ‘own’ clause

*Aapo wa-ka'a chu'u-ta **atte'ak***

3SG.NOM DEM-ACC dog-ACC own

‘He/She owns that dog.’

(10) *jippue* ‘have’ clause

*Empo bwe koba-ta **jippue-Ø***

2SG.NOM big head-ACC have-PRE

‘You have a big head.’

5. EXTERNAL POSSESSION

- External Possession (EP) construction includes any construction in which a possessor is coded in a syntactic constituent different from that containing the possessum, and where there is no possessive verb, e.g. *le corté el pelo (a María)*.
- The EP is coded as a core argument of the verb (subject, direct object, indirect object/dative, ergative, absolutive). It can also involve noun incorporation, applicative morphemes, 'raising', possessum demotion (Payne & Barshi 1999; Haspelmath 1999).
- In Yaqui, there are three major types of EP constructions and they are prominent with body-parts.

4.1. Locative possession. The possessor serves as an intransitive subject while the body-part is marked by the (general) locative postposition *-po* (11), i.e. possessum demotion.

- (11) a. [*Lupe-Ø*] [*mam-po*] *taja-k*
Lupe-NOM hand-LOC burn-PFV
'Lupe burned [her] hand.' (lit. burned on the hand)
- b. [*U ili uusi-Ø*] [*pujba-po*] *sutum-mea witta-Ø*
DET little child-NOM face-LOC nail.PL-INST scratch-PFV
'The child is scratching [his] face with the nails.' (lit. scratches on the face)

4.2. Applicative possession. The applicative suffix *-ria* has access to the possessor and marks it as an accusative argument; compare the IP construction in (12a) and the EP version in (12b). In addition to body-parts, these double-accusative EP constructions may involve part-whole and a few close possession (14c-d). Note that the possessor and the possessum occur in the inverse order, and other syntactic arguments can occur between them, i.e. they are two separate constituents.

(12) a. *Aapo* *[in* *mam-pusiam]* *pueta-po* *pitta-k*
 3SG.NOM 1SG.POSS hand-finger.PL door-LOC squash-PFV
 ‘He/She squashed my fingers in the door.’

b. *Aapo* *[mam-pusiam]* *[nee]* *pueta-po* *pitta-ria-k*
 3SG.NOM hand-finger.PL 1SG.ACC door-LOC squash-APPL-PFV
 ‘He/She squashed my fingers in the door.’ (lit. squashed me the fingers)

c. *[Soto’i-ta]* *ne* *[jamut-ta]* *jamta-ria-k*
 pot-ACC 1SG.NOM woman.PL break-APPL-PFV
 ‘I broke the woman’s pot.’ (lit. broke the pot the woman)

d. *[U-ka* *kaba’i-ta]*_i *bato’im* *[nee]* *ai* *bwa’a-su-ria-k*
 DET-PL horse-PL people.PL 1SG.ACC 3PL.ACC eat-CMPL-APPL-PFV
 ‘With respect to the horses, the people eat them.’ (lit. eat me the horses)

4.3. ‘Splitting’ possession. In (13), there is no valency morpheme; a body-part is always involved and it is usually marked by the locative postpositions *-po* ‘on’ or *-t* ‘on, at’; and the morphological coding of the possessor varies: it is coded by the accusative suffix (13a), by the directional *-u* ‘to’ (13b), or by the locative-contact postposition *-t* ‘on, over’ in (13c-e).

- (13) a. U *lakron-Ø* **[toma-po]** **[enchi]** *mujuk*
 DET thief-NOM stomach-LOC 2SG.ACC shoot-PFV
 ‘The thief shot you in the stomach.’
- b. U *jamut-Ø_i* *kooka-ta* **[kutanaa-po]** **[a-u]_i** *u’ura-k*
 DET woman-NOM necklace-ACC neck-LOC 3SG.OBL-DIR take-PFV
 ‘The woman took off the necklace on her neck.’ (lit. took the necklace on the neck to her)
- c. **[Tampa’i-m]** **[ne-t]** *yeu=weye*
 wisdom_teeth-PL 1SG.OBL-LOCC out=go.SG.PRE
 ‘My wisdom teeth are coming in.’ (lit. They are coming in on me)

- d. *U yoeme-∅ in tu'ule-'u [man-po] [ne-t] tajte*
 DET man-NOM 1SG.POSS like-CLM hand-LOC 1SG.OBL-LOCC touch-PRE
 'The man that I like is touching my hand.' (lit. touches on the hand on me)
- e. *Inepo techoa-ta [e-t] benta-k [pujba-po]*
 1SG.NOM mud-NOM 2SG.OBL-LOCC anoint-PFV face-LOC
 'I anointed your face with mud.' (lit. anointed mud in face at you)

The predicate can be intransitive, transitive and ditransitive; in all cases, there is an extra core argument. The locative possessum can be interpreted directly, 'as indicating the more specific place of which the predicate is true' (Haspelmath 1999: 121).

5. A CHARACTERIZATION OF YAQUI EP CONSTRUCTIONS

Yaqui EP constructions satisfy several features listed in the literature:

- ✓ The possessor is a core argument of a non-possessive verb; the predicate does not require a possessor within its core argument frame (Payne & Barshi 1999)
- ✓ There is a human possessor as the primary experiencer (Seiler 1983; Schaefer 1999; Slotz et al. 2008). Pronominal EP constructions are preferred in Yaqui
- ✓ EP constructions are prominent within the ‘personal domain’ (Chappell 1996), especially body-parts (Haspelmath 1999: 113; Velázquez-Castillo 1999; LØdrup 2009; Van de Velde 2010)
- ✓ There is a preference for (caused/inchoative) patient-affecting or locative situations (Haspelmath 1999: 113), thus the Undergoer role is also privileged (Slotz et al. 2008).

However,

- ❖ The Yaqui data do not correlate with well-known dative EP constructions combining an indirect object or dative possessor (e.g. *le corté el pelo* ‘I cut his/her hair’, *me rompí el brazo* ‘I broke my arm’) found not only in European languages, but also in Asia, North America, and Mesoamerica (Palancar & Zavala 1993). The closest dative-like coding is possible but rare (Table 3).
- ❖ Except for applicative EP, the possessed body-part is coded as a locative oblique argument (no accusative).
- ❖ The roles most commonly assumed by the possessor are OD (53%), intransitive SUBJ (21%) and OBL (26%). There is a competition for accusative EP: with and without applicative morpheme.

		kinship	body-part	part-whole	ownership	Total
Locative possessives	(NOM -Ø)		29	-	-	29
Applicative possessives	(ACC -ta)	2	27	3	21	53
Splitting possessives	(ACC -ta)		20	2		22
	(DAT -u)		5			5
	(OBL -t)		31			31
		2	112	5	21	140

TABLE 3. External possessors in Yaqui

At this point, a few questions would need to be addressed:

(a) **Why are Yaqui EP constructions prominent with body-parts?** The possessor of body-parts is too strongly involved (though not actively) to be left in situ (Lehmann 1998; see also Wierzbicka 1988; Velázquez-Castillo 1999). Thus, EP can be motivated by *relevance* in terms of (a) physical proximity, (b) affecting/affectedness (Shibatani 1994), beneficially/adversely affected (Croft 1994), references point (Langacker 1995), the strict affectedness condition (Haspelmath 1999).

(b) Considering that multiple accusative constructions are common, **why does the language make use of three morphological coding?** The choice of the morphological coding may be motivated by syntax and semantics. Syntactically, the ‘dative’ marking occurs when the subject and the possessor are co-referential (14a); when not, the accusative or locative marking are preferred (14b); this occurs in 50 out of 53 accusative and locative EP, and all cases of applicative EP constructions.

(14) a. *Ili uusi-∅ [gok-pusiam-po] jaiti [a-u] ya'a-k*
 little child-NOM foot-finger.PL-LOC dirty 3SG.OBL-DIR make-PFV
 ‘The little child made his toes dirty.’ (lit. made him dirty on the foot fingers)

b. *[Chu'u-ta]_i [gokim-po] jittoa-ta ne [a-et]_i ya'a-k*
 dog-ACC foot-LOC ointment-ACC 1SG.NOM 3SG.OBL-LOCC make-PFV
 ‘I put ointment on the dog’s foot.’ (lit. made ointment on him on the foot)

Semantically, the coding may be influenced by the meaning of the verb. Accusative EP tends to be associated with verbs that express injury *cut, burn, break, hit, bite, peck, twist, scratch* but also *see, wash*. The dative EP is associated with *take, cut, hit, get dirty*. The locative EP is related to change of position verbs *put, take, sit, stand, fall*, as well as *tie up, hung up, touch, keep, massage, get out/appear, jump, splash*. Therefore, accusative EP highlights the notion of affectedness, while locative EP emphasizes the sense of sub-regions of a whole.

(c) **Is there any syntactic motivation for external possession?** In Yaqui, body-parts function as subjects, objects, obliques, and adjuncts. However, internal possession of body-parts is disfavored when serving as direct object; in this context, the possessor and the possessee are coded in different constituents (15c-d) or the possessor is left unexpressed; (15b) is not natural.

(15) a. [*Em* *gokim*] *si* *bweere*
 2SG.POSS foot.PL INT big
 ‘Your foot is too big.’

b. #*U* *chu’u-∅* [*em* *gokim*] *ke’e-ka*
 DET dog-NOM 2SG.POSS foot.PL bite-PFV
 ‘The dog bit my foot.’

c. *u* *chu’u-∅* [*gokim-po*] [*enchi*] *ki-ria-k*
 DET dog-NOM foot.PL-LOC 1SG.ACC bite-APPL-PFV
 ‘The dog bit my foot.’ (lit. bit me on the foot)

d. *u* *chu’u-∅* [*gokim-po*] [*ne-t*] *ke’e-ka*
 DET dog-NOM foot.PL-LOC 1SG.OBL-LOCC bite- PFV
 ‘The dog bit me on the foot.’ (lit. bit me on the foot)

(d) **Is one of the two participants optional?** Some accusative EP can serve as the only argument of the verb, as in (16a). However, the metonymic interpretation is syntactically and/or pragmatically odd with oblique EP:

(16) a. U *lakron-Ø* [*enchi*] *mujuk* (=13a)
 DET thief-NOM 2SG.ACC shoot-PFV
 ‘The thief shot you.’

b. *U *jamut-Ø_i* *kooka-ta* [*kutanaa-po*] *u’ura-k* (=13b)
 DET woman-NOM necklace-ACC neck-LOC take-PFV
 ‘The woman took off the necklace from the neck.’

c. # [*Tampa’i-m*] *yeu=weye* (=13c)
 wisdom_teeth-PL out=go.SG.PRE
 ‘The wisdom teeth are coming out.’ (lit. are running away)

d. U *yoeme-Ø* [*man-po*] *tajte* (=13d)
 DET man-NOM hand-LOC touch-PRE
 ‘The man touches his hand.’ (=the man’s hand)

d’.#U *yoeme-Ø* [*ne-t*] *tajte* (=13d)
 DET man-NOM 1SG.OBL-LOCC touch-PRE
 ‘The man touches me.’ (lit. touches on me)

(e) **What is the status of the external possessor?** In Yaqui, direct and oblique core arguments (but not adjuncts) have access to relativization and cliticization when the NP is extraposed (Guerrero & Van Valin 2004; Belloro & Guerrero 2010); however, only direct (accusative) arguments can undergo passivation; oblique arguments yield impersonal clauses.

Thus, the verbal suffix *-wa* marks both impersonal and passive clauses; the difference between the two depends on whether the direct core argument receives nominative case. For the clause *the man saw your house*:

- (17) a. *U-ka kari-ta bicha-wa-k (=1b)*
DET-ACC house-ACC see-PASS-PFV
'(Someone) saw the house.'
- b. *U kari-∅ bicha-wa-k (=1b)*
DET house-NOM see-PASS-PFV
'The house was seen.'

(18) Locative EP construction: impersonal clauses

- a. [*Mam-po*] *taja-wa-k*
hand-LOC burn-PASS-PFV
'(Someone) burned on the hand.'

(=11a)

(19) Applicative EP constructions: (surprisingly) impersonal clauses are preferred

b. *[Soto'i-ta] [jamut-ta] jamta-ria-wa-k* (=12c)
pot-ACC woman-ACC break-APPL-PASS-PFV

‘(Someone) broke the woman’s pot.’ (lit. broke the pot the woman)

b'. *[Soto'i-ta] jamut-Ø jamta-wa-k* (=12c)
pot-ACC woman-NOM break-PASS-PFV

‘The woman’s pot was broken.’

b''.? *[jamut-Ø] [soto'i-ta] jamta-ria-wa-k* (=12c)
woman-NOM pot-ACC break-APPL-PFV

‘The woman was broken the pot.’

b'''.**[Soto'i-Ø] [jamut-ta] jamta-ria-wa-k* (=12c)
pot-NOM woman-ACC break-APPL-PFV

‘The pot was broken the woman.’

(20) Accusative ‘splitting’ EP constructions: impersonal and passive clauses

- a. **[Toma-po]** **[enchi]** *muj-wa-k* (=13a)
stomach-LOC 2SG.NOM shoot-PASS-PFV
‘(Someone) shot you in the stomach.’
- b. **[Empo]** **[toma-po]** *muj-wa-k* (=13a)
2SG.NOM stomach-LOC shoot-PASS-PFV
‘You were shot in the stomach.’

(21) Dative and locative ‘splitting’ EP constructions: a passive clause is possible if there is an accusative argument (21a); if not, there is an impersonal clause (21b-c)

- a. *U kooka-∅ [kutanaa-po] [a-u] u’ura-wa-k* (=13b)
DET necklace-NOM neck-LOC 3SG.OBL-DIR take-PASS-PFV
‘A necklace was taken off her neck.’
- b. *[Man-po] [ne-t] tajte-wa-k* (=13e)
hand-LOC 1SG.OBL-LOCC touch-PASS-PRE
‘(Someone) is touching my hand.’
- c. *Techoa-∅ [pujba-po] [e-t] benta-wa-k* (=13f)
mud-ACC face-LOC 2SG.OBL-LOCC anoint-PASS-PFV
‘Mud was anointed on your face.’

Only accusative EP may serve as a passive subject (i.e., Undergoer of a static and dynamic state of affairs) but impersonal clauses are more natural. It means that oblique external possessors have some but not all the syntactic privileges of direct core arguments.

6. FINAL COMMENTS

- In sum, Yaqui EP constructions seem to be motivated by (i) the asymmetric relation between a possessor and its body-part, (ii) the prominence of the possessor as a salient or affected participant, (iii) the sense of location.
- In Yaqui, locative predication makes use of its own verbal paradigm (copulative verbs and posture verbs); except for the few instances of possession-as-location (e.g. *the beans have stones, I have sweat in my palms/my palms are sweating*), the two conceptual domains are fully distinguished. Henceforth, the locative marking on both, the possessor and the possessum, results exciting.
- While the possessed entity tends to be demoted to a locative (oblique) argument, the coding possibilities of the EP include intransitive subject, accusative/primary object and oblique object. Unlike accusative EP, dative and locative EP fulfil a syntactic position and an orienting role, and introduce a specific, human, and affected entity (semantically prominent participant), but they do not have full syntactic privileges, i.e. a higher status.
- At this point, the main question would be whether double-locative external possessive constructions have been observed in other languages of the world.

Role and Reference Grammar, the framework I am more familiar with, would suggest a language-specific construction (Table 4) for ‘splitting’ possession.

CONSTRUCTION: Yaqui external ‘splitting’ possessive constructions
<p>SYNTAX:</p> <p>Template(s): syntactic (in)transitive</p> <p>PSA: the highest macrorole argument</p> <p>Linking: The macrorole core argument (Actor) receives nominative case</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The second macrorole core argument (Undergoer) receives accusative case</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Non-macrorole core argument receives one of the locative oblique markers <i>-u</i> or <i>-t</i></p>
<p>MORPHOLOGY: The possessee takes a locative oblique marking (<i>-po</i>, <i>-t</i>)</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The possessor can take accusative, dative or locative marking (lexically marked)</p>
<p>SEMANTICS: Possessive relationships involving body-parts</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The possessor is less agentive and beneficially/adversely affected</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The PSA is neither the possessor or the possessee</p>
<p>PRAGMATICS:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Illocutionary force: Unspecified</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Focus structure: Unspecified</p>

TABLE 4. Constructional schema for Yaqui non-canonical transitive structures