Roberts's (2017) parallels between clausal and nominal domains revisited.

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When dealing with the patterns observed in Greenberg's "Universal 20" (also treated in Cinque 2005; 2023, a.o.), Roberts (2017) focuses on a specific subset of languages which, according to the World Atlas of Language Structures (WALS, Dryer & Haspelmath 2013), feature the [Num N A Dem] linearization. Roberts (2017: 155, 157) correctly observes that the 77 languages thus collected are equally distributed between the VS/SV divide. However, the correlation that Roberts (2017) sketches between the VS alignment in the clausal domain and the presence of a "low demonstrative" in the nominal one finds counterexamples in both directions (namely, SV with low demonstratives, and VS with high ones). There is a stronger correlation that seems to hold between VO and low demonstratives, though. Among the 77 languages reported by Roberts (2017: 155-157), only two are not VO, namely Tuvaluan and Basque (which Dryer 2013 classifies as OVS and SOV, respectively). If combined with Dryer's (2018) supplementary materials, data provided by Dryer (2013) apparently show that an almost strict VO order applies to an even larger sample of languages, where linear order can be not only [Num N Dem], but also to any order with [N Dem] preceding both A and Num. The perusal of such typological data seems to hint at another correlation: languages that linearize [A N Num] are strictly SV languages. If these observations are on the right track, then the parallel that Roberts was trying to sketch between the clausal and the nominal domain should be restated as follows: If N raises past Dem, then the internal argument follows the verb. If a pied-piping of [A N] occurs, then the external argument is attracted to the higher clausal phase.

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