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Nonverbal predication

Recent years have seen many new grammars of Amazonian languages, but few deep treatments of the grammar of nonverbal predication. In its most basic sense, nonverbal predication occurs in a grammatical clause that has no verb. Since predication is the usual function of verbs, the verbless clause is usually seen as a minor clause type. As a result, the general typology of nonverbal predication is less developed than that of verbal predication, and Amazonian languages are especially poorly represented in this typology (for examples, cf. Heine 1997, Stassen 1997, Pustet 2003). In this symposium, we hope to show that nonverbal clauses in Amazonian languages contain typologically rich variation, and should play a more central role in our understanding of main clause grammar in general. We begin by describing the relevant typological dimensions, followed by both internal and external diachronic questions.

Any typology may be organized into structural or functional categories—we begin by asking about the structural subtypes of nonverbal predication. Dryer (2007: 225) distinguishes NONVERBAL CLAUSES, in which the clause has no copula (or else the copula is nonverbal) and NONVERBAL PREDICATES, where the nucleus of the predicate is not a verb but the clause becomes verbal by the addition of a verbal copula. He further distinguishes three categories of nonverbal predicate: Predicate nominals, predicate adjectives, and predicate locatives. A structural typology raises specific questions:

- What word classes can be the nucleus of nonverbal predicates? The usual candidates are nouns, adjectives, and adverbs/adverbial phrases (usually PPs).
- In a nonverbal clause, does the predicate allow expression of typical verbal inflectional categories like tense-aspect, etc.? e.g. Yine (Arawakan) nominal predicates allow aspectual inflections (Hanson 2010); Kamaiurá (Tupí-Guaraní) possessive predicates are inalienably possessed nouns that inflect like stative verbs (Seki 2000).
- Which (if any) nonverbal predicates occur with no copula? Which (if any) nonverbal predicates require a copula? If there is a choice, what conditions use versus non-use of the copula (tense-aspect, negation, questions, temporal stability, etc.)? E.g., Russian predicate nominals have no copula in the present, but require a copula in the past (Payne 1997); Aguaruna (Jivaroan) predicate nominals require an inflected copula for plural subjects, but allow a copular clitic for singular subjects (Overall 2008); Panare (Cariban) predicate nominals have no copula for first and second person subjects, but require them for third person subjects (Gildea 1993).
- If there is more than one copula, what conditions the choice between them? In addition to the variables mentioned in the preceding point, some copulas may be specific to subtypes of nonverbal predicate, e.g. Spanish *ser* occurs with nominal predicates and *estar* with locative predicates; Matses (Panoan) positive predicate adjective clauses use the existential copula *ic*, whereas negative predicate adjective clauses use the equative copula *ne* (Fleck 2003).

- How similar are nonverbal or copular clauses to more typical verbal clauses?
  - Typically the subjects of nonverbal clauses pattern like subjects of intransitive verbal clauses, but nominal predicates rarely pattern like objects of verbal clauses.
  - Typically the copula is a verb, with all the inflectional properties of verbs, but sometimes it comes historically from another word class, and so is invariant or inflects for nonverbal categories, e.g. Panare nonverbal copulas inflect for animacy and deixis rather than the verbal categories of person, number and tense (Gildea 1993).
  - Sometimes copulas are reduced to an affix or clitic, which may attach to the predicate or occur in a fixed position, e.g. the Aguaruna singular copular clitic (Overall 2008).
- What range of functions is found in each type of nonverbal predicate? (cf. next section)

With regard to the functional categorization of nonverbal predicates, Payne (1997) and Dixon (2009) suggest similar sets of categories (see table 1), each also emphasizing the frequent overlap with other functions and clause types. For Payne (1997: 111) there are six: Equation, proper inclusion, attribution, location, existence, and possession, whereas for Dixon (2009: 159) there are five: identity, attribution, possession, benefaction, and location.

Payne (1997)	Dixon (2009)	English	Spanish	Portuguese
Equative	Identity	*He is my father.*	*Él es mi padre*	*Ele é meu pai*
Proper Inclusion		*He is a man.*	*Él es un hombre*	*Ele é um homem*
Attributive	Attributive	*He is old.*	*Él es / está infermo*	*Ele é / está infermo*
Location	Location	*He is here.*	*Él está aquí*	*Ele está aqui*
Existential		*There are fathers*	*Hay padres*	*Têm pais*
	Benefactive	*This is for John*	*Este es para Juan*	*Este é para João*
Possession	Possession	*I have a father*	*Tengo mi padre*	*Tenho meu pai*

Table 1. Structural types of nonverbal predicates

A common Amazonian tendency is for notional adjectives to not form a distinct word class (D. Payne 2001, Krasnoukhova 2012), so while predicate attributives may be adjectival, they are also attested as verbal, nominal, and adverbial. Although English, Spanish, and Portuguese use a transitive verb for possession predicates, it is common to find possession predicated via copular clauses, whether in the mold of the Latin *mihi est* 'to me is', the possessed existential of Matses (1a) or the "having.N" derived adverb in Cariban languages like Tiriyó (1b).

(1a) *cun   chompian   ic-e-c*
    1GEN shotgun   be-NPAST-INDIC
    'I have a gun.' (lit. 'My gun exists') (Fleck 2003: 969)

(1b) *ti-maja-ke* = *w-a-e*
       T-knife-HAVING =1S$_A$-COP-CERTAINTY
       'I have a knife.' (lit. 'I am knife-having / knifed') (Meira 1999: 360)

    The diachronic questions we usually ask about nonverbal predicates have to do with the sources of copulas and their spread through the functional domains (e.g. Heine & Kuteva 2002). A common source of verbal copulas is positional/postural verbs, which begin in locational predicates, usually retaining their positional meanings, such as in Sikuani, where locative predicates are constructed with one of four positional roots, meaning 'sit, 'stand', 'lie', and 'hang' (Queixalós 1992); similarly, Uto-Aztecan languages are known for postural verbs in locative predicates. Such locative copulas may lose their postural semantics and become used for other types of nonverbal predicates: Latin *stare* 'stand' > Spanish/Portuguese *estar* 'be' is used for locative and (temporary) attributive predicates; Matses *tsad* 'sit' is used for both locative and attributive predicates (Fleck 2003), and Wambaya (Australian) *mirra* 'sit' is also used as the predicate nominal copula (Dryer 2007: 226). In most Cariban languages, a modern reflex of the Proto-Cariban verb **eti* 'dwell, live' may occur in all types of nonverbal predicates (e.g. Tiriyó, Meira 1999: 546). A common source of nonverbal copulas is pronouns, which occur originally in nonverbal clauses with left-dislocated subjects (cf. Chinese, Li & Thompson 1977; Panare, Gildea 1993).

    A second type of diachronic question involves the ways that main clause verbal tense-aspect-mood-polarity distinctions are renovated using non-finite verb forms in nonverbal predicates or clauses. Predicate nominal constructions are exploited to create clefts, which evolve into focus and unmarked clause types; predicate adjective constructions utilize participle predicates to create passives, which go on to become (typically) past tense clauses; predicate locative constructions may take nominalizations in locative phrases, the most common source of progressive clauses. Possessive clauses take participles and go on to become perfect and past tense clauses. Copular auxiliaries may further grammaticalize into tense-aspect suffixes, and when a copula is displaced from its function in typical nonverbal predication, it sometimes leaves a relic in tag questions, verbal auxiliaries, verb inflection, and topic/focus markers derived from old cleft constructions.

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