Relativization, nominalization, or none of the above? Verbs in referring expressions in Movima (isolate, Bolivia)

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1 The problem

How can we do justice to the fact that in Movima, verbs can occur inside a DP ?

(1)   *[kinos   kwe:ya]*
        ART.F.AB   woman
        'the woman'

(2)   *[kinos   jo'yaj]*
        ART.F.AB   arrive
        'the one (f) who arrived'

(1) = zero relativization: 'the female one who is a woman'?
(2) = zero nominalization: 'the female arriver/arriving one'?

2 Movima: overview

Language:
  – lowland Bolivia; isolate; ~500 adult/elderly speakers; endangered (no L1 learners)

Data:
  – fieldwork 2001-2012 (15 months)
  – annotaded (transcribed and translated) oral corpus of ~26,000 intonation units/clauses
    (~130,000 words; 30h)

Typological characteristics:
  – 5 vowels, 20 consonants
  – syllable structure (C)V(C), (C)V:, (C)V
  – mainly suffixing, but also reduplication and prosody-based infixation
  – productive compounding and incorporation with classifier-like elements
  – weak noun-verb distinction: no TAM on verbs; no case, number, gender on nouns etc.
  – neither case nor agreement
  – detailed reference system (articles, personal pronouns, demonstratives)
  – largely configurational (predicate initial)
  – two basic transitive constructions: direct (ergative) and inverse (accusative), governed
    by hierarchies of person, animay, topicality

3 Nouns and verbs

Weak noun-verb distinction:
- no case, number, gender on nouns
- no tense, aspect, mood, or evidentiality on verbs

But:
- verbs need DIRECT or INVERSE marking to receive an "internal enclitic" (see below); possessed nouns, marked by an "internal enclitic", do not contain any particular morphology
- verbal and nominal predicates are marked differently when embedded:

Embedded verbal predicate:

(3)   *[n-os   iloni:-**wa**=Ø]*
     OBL-ART.N.PST walk-NMZ=1SG
     'when I walked (lit.: at my [former] walking)'

Embedded nominal predicate:

(4)   *[n-os   tolkos<**ya:~**>ya=Ø]*
     OBL-ART.N.PST girl<NMZ.ST~>=1SG
     'when I was a girl (lit.: at my [former] [being a] girl)'

Some affixes can only be attached to a specific type of lexical base, for instance:
- DIRECT marking only on verbs
- verbalizing suffix *-tik* 'make/do N' only on nouns
- incorporation into verbs: only noun roots

Adjectives share properties of both verbs and nouns. Unlike nouns, they cannot be marked as possessed, but like nouns, they undergo reduplication in subordination.

4 Main-clause structure and the expression of arguments

4.1 Intransitive verbal predicates

Ways to express (or not) the single argument (S)

(5)   *jayna **jo'yaj**   [us   dichi:ye]*
     DSC   arrive   ART.M   child
     'The boy arrived already.'

(6)   ***jo'yaj**--us   neyru*
     arrive--3M.AB   here
     'He arrived here.'

(7)   *jayna   **jo'yaj***
     DSC   arrive
     'Then (he) arrived.'

4.2 Transitive verbal predicates

In transitive clauses, both arguments follow the predicate. Transitive verbs are either marked as DIRECT: the first ("internal") argument after the predicate is the agent and the second ("external") the patient; or they are marked as INVERSE: the first ("internal") argument after the predicate is the patient and the second ("external") the agent.

   Direct transitive clauses show **ergative alignment:** the patient argument has the same properties as the single argument of an intransitive clause (i.e. P=S). The agent argument, attached more closely to the verb ("internal cliticization"), is encoded like a possessor.

(8) ***łow-na=is***   *[os   kare:ta]*
     want-DR=3PL.AB   ART.N.PST   oxcart
     'They pulled the oxcart.'

(9) ***jiwa-łe:-na=∅--as***
     come-CO-DR=1SG--3N.AB
     'I brought it.'

(10) *jayna*   ***tikoy-na=us***   ____
     DSC   kill-DR=3M.AB
     'Then he killed (it).'

(11) ***way-na=[os   pa:kona:nak]*** *[os   ko']*
     grab-DR=ART.N.PST   fox   ART.N.PST   tree
     'The fox grabbed the tree.'

Inverse transitive clause show **accusative alignment:** the agent argument has the same properties as the single argument of an intransitive clause (i.e. A=S). The patient argument, attached more closely to the verb ("internal cliticization"), is encoded like a possessor.

(12) a. Transitive direct
         *vel-**na**=us*   *[is   juyeni]*
         watch-DR=3M.AB   ART.PL person
         'He watched (the) people.'

      b. Transitive inverse
         *vel-**kay-a**=us*   *[is   juyeni]*
         watch-INV-LV=3M.AB   ART.PL person
         'He was watched (by the) people.'

The inverse is chosen when the patient outranks the agent in person (1>2>3), animacy (human>inanimate) or discourse topicality (topical>less topical).

Cf. possessor encoding, identical to "internal argument" encoding:

(13) *jay<a>moł-a=us*   *[isnos   alwaj-**a**=us]*
     call<DR>-LV=3M.AB   ART.F.PST   spouse-LV=3M.AB
     'He called his wife.'

3

(14) *[us   alwaj-**a**=[isnos   a:na=u]]*
　　　ART.M   spouse-LV=ART.F.PST   younger_sibling=3M
　　　'his younger sister's husband'

4.3 Nominal predicates

Unpossessed nouns: S is expressed in the same way as with verbs.

(15) ***itila:kwa***   *[kis   majniwa=sne]*
　　　man   ART.PL.AB   offspring_of=3F.AB
　　　'Her children are boys.'

(16) ***tolkosya--'ne***
　　　girl--3F
　　　'She (is a) girl.'

(17) ***rulrul***   ___   *jayna*
　　　jaguar   DSC
　　　'It (was) already (a) jaguar.' (a transformed human)

Possessed nouns as predicates (rare):

(18) *jayna*   ***pekato=sne***   *[os   jeya=sne]*
　　　DSC   sin=3F.AB   ART.N.PST   state_of=3F.AB
　　　'Her sin (was) her behavior.'

(19) ***jeya=sne***   *jayna*
　　　state_of=3F.AB DSC
　　　'(That's) how she is now (lit.: "[It is] her state now").'

(20) **** pa:ko=us**--k-as*
　　　　dog=3M.AB--OBV-3N.AB
　　　　(intended meaning: "It is his dog.")

(Here, a "cleft" construction with initial pronoun is used)

5 The status of verbs in DPs

5.1 Relative clauses?

Bickel 2011: 428: "Relative constructions turn a propositional expression into a referential one, for example, a clause like *he read it* into *the one he read*."

Citko 2004: "light-headed relative clause": RCs headed by "morphologically 'light elements'", e.g. demonstratives or wh-words → in Movima, a determiner (article)

Properties of Movima relative clauses (RCs):
　　　– RCs follow their head

- Headed RC are introduced with the particle *di'*
- The relativized argument is gapped
- Any content word can form the predicate of a relative clause
- Only the external argument can be relativized

(21)   RC with intransitive verb
    a.   *[is   rulrul di' ji<wa:~>wa]*
        ART.PL jaguar REL   come<MD~>
        'the jaguars that came'

    b.   *[is   ji<wa:~>wa]*
        ART.PL   come<MD~>
        'the (ones that) came'

(22)   RC with transitive verb (direct)
    a.   *[is   majni=Ø   di' vel-na=us]*
        ART.PL offspring=1SG REL watch-DR=3M.AB
        'my children, who he looked after'

    b.   *[is   vel-na=us]*
        ART.PL   watch-DR=3M.AB
        'the (ones) he looked after'

(23)   RC with transitive verb (inverse)
    a.   *[kis   senyo:ra di' vel-kay-a=sne]*
        ART.PL.AB lady   REL   watch-INV-LV=3F.AB
        'the ladies who look after her'

    b.   *[kis   vel-kay-a=sne]*
        ART.PL.AB   watch-INV-LV=3F.AB
        'the (ones who) look after her'

(24)   RC with unpossessed noun
    a.   *[os   ya:ya=as   di'   rulrul]*
        ART.N.PST uncle=3N.AB REL jaguar
        'his (the fox's) uncle, who (was a) jaguar'

    b.   *[os   rulrul]*
        ART.N.PST   jaguar
        'the jaguar'

(25)   RC with possessed noun
    a.   *[is   dichi:ye di' majni=Ø]*
        ART.PL   child   REL offspring=1SG
        'my children (lit. "the children who [are] my offspring")'

    b.   *[is   majni=Ø]*
        ART.PL   offspring=1SG
        'my children'

5.2 Antipassive

The verb in an RC is detransitivized to relativize the agent (this is the case when the agent outranks the patient; the inverse, cf. (23), is not possible then). The detransitivation is usually only found with direct-marked verbs, i.e. it functions as an antipassive.

VALDECR *kwey/kaw*:
  A → S
  P → oblique

(26)   RC with detransitivation:

      a.   *[kinos   kwe:ya   **di'**   **kaw**   **vel-na**   **n-**isko]*
            ART.F.AB woman   REL   VALDECR   watch-DR   OBL-PRO.PL.AB
            'the woman who looks after them'

      b.   *[us   **kaw**   **vel-na**   **n-**is   waki:ya]*
            ART.M   VALDECR   watch-DR   OBL-ART.PL calf
            'the one who looked after the calves'

5.3 Negation

The predicate inside an RC is negated with the particle *loy*. This is different from main clauses, which are negated with a negative copula, *ka* (and show systematic nominalization)

Main-clause negation:

(27)   **kas**   *joy-wa=is*
       COP.NEG:DET   go-NMZ.EVT=3PL.AB
       'They did not go (lit.: Their going was not).'

RC negation:

(28)   a.   *[is   juyeni **di'** **loy**   **joy-wa**   **n-**as   lo:los]*
            ART.PL person   REL   NEG.SUB go-NMZ.EVT OBL-ART.N village
            'the people who do not go to the village'

      b.   *[is   **loy**   **joy-wa**   **n-**as   lo:los]*
            ART.PL   NEG.SUB go-NMZ.EVT OBL-ART.N village
            'the ones (who) do not go to the village'

5.4 Or is it nominalization?

Inserting a verb inside a DP might also be considered a participant nominalization, deriving a noun that denotes S of an intransitive predicate, P of a direct-marked predicate, or A of an inverse-marked predicate.
An argument favouring this analysis is that ALL nouns can occur as predicates of RCs, including possessed nouns (see (25)), whereas not all nouns can occur as predicates of all

basic clause structures (see (20) above). Furthermore, the operations found in RCs also apply to DPs with nouns (productive, but rare):

"Antipassive" with a noun:

> VALDECR *kwey/kaw*:
>   possessor → possessee
>   possessee → oblique

(29)   a.   *[us   a:na=is]*
            younger_sibling=3PL.AB
            'their younger brother'

        b.   *[is   **kwey**   a:na   (n-usko)]*
            ART.PL   VALDECR younger_sibling   OBL-PRO.M.AB
            '(his) older siblings (or: the ones who have [him as] younger sibling)'

Nominal negation:

(30)   *[kos   **loy**   rey   **mowimaj-łe**]*
        ART.N.AB NEG.SUB   MOD   Movima-NMZ.ST
        'the one/someone who is not (a) Movima.'

6 Conclusion

To sum up:
    – The predicate in a "verbal DP" is a / shares the properties of a relative clause
    – The predicate in a "verbal DP" is a / shares the properties of a noun
    ➔ The placement of a verb inside a DP can be considered a (zero) relativization or (zero) nominalization.

However:
    – The distinction between nouns and verbs is difficult to make; when are we dealing with a simple noun vs. with an RC/a nominalization?
    – Nouns can also function as main-clause predicates; the difficulty of possessed nouns (and also proper nouns) to occur in all main-clause structures could eventually be due to a functional restriction on specific predicate nominals
    – As a consequence of the analysis, nouns in main-clause predicate function would also have to be considered (zero) verbalized
    ➔ Assuming a zero-marked operation, just because in more familiar languages some operation would be necessary to arrive at the constructions seen here, seems like an unnecessary complication of the facts.

A more attractive proposal:
All classes of Movima content words (verbs, nouns) can be considered basically predicates. In clause-initial position they are main-clause predicates, in subordinate position (i.e. inserted in a DP or in a relative clause) they are syntactically subordinate predicates that characterize the referent of the preceding referential element/phrase (the head).
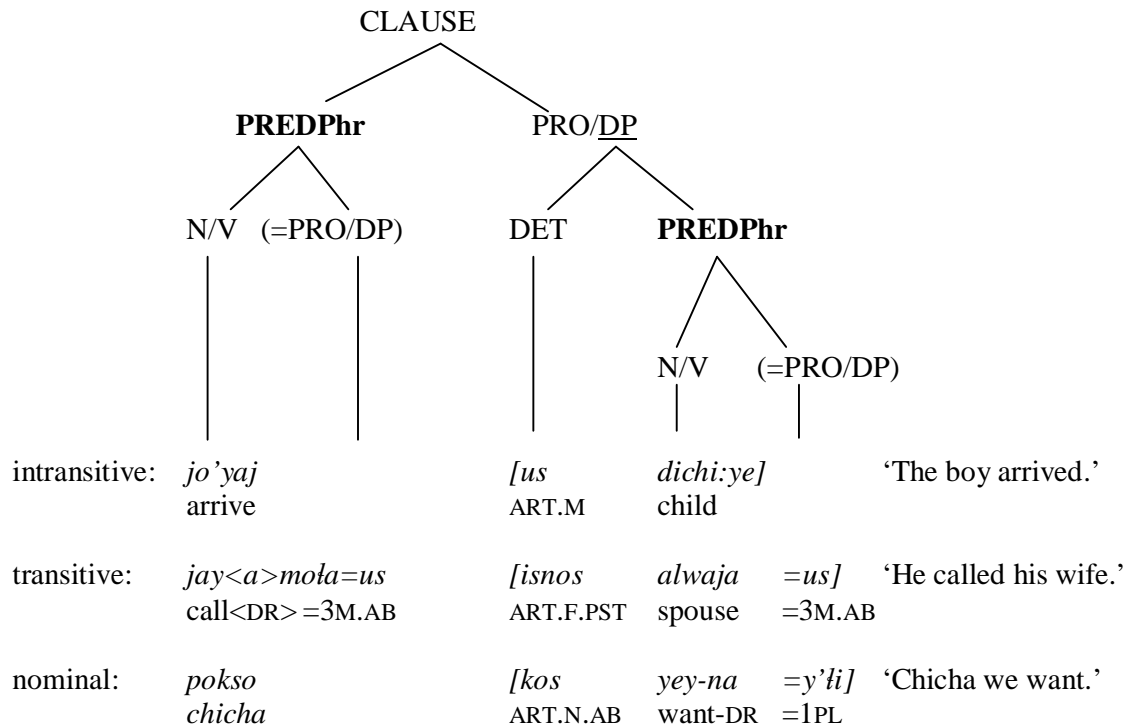
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                        CLAUSE


            PREDPhr                    PRO/DP


       N/V    (=PRO/DP)          DET        PREDPhr


                                        N/V      (=PRO/DP)


intransitive:  jo'yaj                 [us      dichi:ye]          'The boy arrived.'
               arrive                 ART.M    child

transitive:    jay<a>moła=us          [isnos   alwaja    =us]    'He called his wife.'
               call<DR>=3M.AB         ART.F.PST spouse   =3M.AB

nominal:       pokso                  [kos     yey-na    =y'łi]  'Chicha we want.'
               chicha                 ART.N.AB  want-DR  =1PL
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Figure 1. Hierarchical representation of a Movima clause

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Symbols and abbreviations

= internal cliticization; -- external cliticization; ~ reduplication; < > infixation

AB=absent; ART=article; CO=co-participant; COP=copula; DET=determiner; DP=determiner phrase; DR=direct; DSC=discontinuous; EVT=event; F=feminine; INV=inverse; LV=linking vowel; MD=middle voice; MOD=modal; N=neuter; NMZ=nominalizer; OBL=oblique; OBV=obviative; PL=plural; PREDPhr=predicate phrase; PRO=pronoun; PST=past; REL=relativizer; SG=singular; ST=state; VALDECR=valency decreaser.