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## From predication to reference: On “verbal DPs” in Movima

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### Abstract

In Movima (isolate, Bolivia), both verbs and nouns are basically predicates, but when preceded by an article, both nouns and verbs form part of a determiner phrase (DP). The article has an individuating function in that it specifies the referent for humanness/sex, number, and spatio-temporal location. When a DP contains a verb, it refers to an event participant, whose role in the event (single participant, agent, or patient) is identified by verbal morphology. DPs with verbs seem to be complex from an Indo-European perspective, inviting analyses along the lines of nominalization or relativization. However, there is no formal difference between DPs containing nouns or verbs. This paper seeks to find a unified account of content words inside DPs by proposing an analysis in terms of simple embedding. This analysis has the further advantage that it is not unidirectional: It not only states that any content word can be embedded in a DP, but also implies that any content word occurring in clause-initial position is a matrix predicate.

Key terms: article, relativization, nominalization, parts of speech, DP, antipassive

### Introduction <sup>1</sup>

Movima is a linguistic isolate of South-Western Amazonia, spoken by about 500 adults in lowland Bolivia. The data on which the present study is based were collected during approximately 15 months of fieldwork between 2001 and 2012, resulting in an annotated corpus of spontaneous discourse of over 30 hours, or 130,000 words.

The present study focuses on the fact that in Movima, all content words function as main predicates when occurring clause-initially, and that, when preceded by a determiner, they form part of a referring expression. It is argued that both verbs and nouns (with adjectives forming a subclass) are inherently predicative and acquire a referring function when combined with a determiner.

The paper is structured as follows. Section 1 gives an outline of the basic clause structure, describing clauses with verbal predicates (1.1) and clauses with nominal predicates (1.2); the section also provides a brief account of the morphological differences between nouns and verbs in Movima (1.3). Section 2 is dedicated to the functions of the article, split up into a discussion of the semantic (2.1) and the deictic (2.2) categories it codes. Section 3 focuses on DPs containing verbs (3.1) and illustrates the special syntactic properties of the content word inside a DP (3.2). Section 4 discusses the ways in which the facts can be accounted for, proposing analyses in terms of nominalization (4.1) and relativization (4.2). It is concluded that neither of these approaches is fully satisfactory, since they both rely on some kind of morphologically

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zero-marked process involving only one lexical category. The phenomenon should be approached from a broader, exclusively syntactic perspective, acknowledging that it is the syntactic position of a content word that determines its status as main or dependent predicate (4.3). A summary of the findings is provided at the end of the article.

## 1 Movima basic clause structure

### 1.1 Verbal predicates

The typical Movima basic clause, i.e. the clausal skeleton consisting of a predicate and its core argument(s), is predicate initial. Example (1) shows a typical intransitive clause, whose predicate is a verb and whose argument is represented by a DP consisting of an article and a noun. The predicate may be preceded by an adverbial clause or by discourse particles (here, *jayna* ‘discontinuous’), but these are not structural components of the clause <sup>2</sup>.

- (1) *jayna jo'yaj [us dichi:ye]*  
 DSC arrive ART.M child  
 Then the boy arrived. [CCT\_120907\_1 135]

When the argument of an intransitive clause is represented by a bound pronoun, this pronoun is encliticized to the predicate, shown in (2). (On the type of cliticization represented by the double hyphen, see below).

- (2) *jo'yaj--us neyru*  
 arrive--3M.AB here  
 He arrived here. [EAO\_120906\_3 007]

The argument of the intransitive clause is not obligatorily realized. The predicate alone can constitute a clause (usually accompanied by discourse particles), as in (3).

- (3) *jayna jo'yaj*  
 DSC arrive  
 Then (he) arrived. [LTC 020906\_5 389]

Transitive basic clauses contain two arguments, both of which follow the predicate: in (4), one argument is represented by a pronominal enclitic and the other one by a DP.

- (4) *łow-na=is [os kare:ta]*  
 pull-DR=3PL.AB ART.N.PST oxcart  
 They pulled the oxcart. [EAO Ay'ku I 028]

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<sup>2</sup> In the examples throughout this paper, DPs are inserted in brackets. Tense, mood and aspect of the English translations correspond to the context from which the examples were taken, since these categories are not consistently overtly marked in Movima. Some categories that are overtly marked by the determiners, like location/existence of a referent, or modal values indicated by particles, are usually not included in the English translations. The codes in square brackets at the end of or below the translation line indicate the source of the example (usually speaker, date/title, and number of transcription unit). Examples without this indication, which are usually quite simple, stem from my personal intuition and only illustrate basic contrasts.

The core arguments (for which the terms ‘subject’ and ‘object’ are problematic, see e.g. Haude to appear) are distinguished by constituency, which is reflected by linear order and by the way in which they are morpho-phonologically connected to the predicate (phrase). The structural difference between the arguments is reflected by their position either ‘internal’ or ‘external’ to the predicate phrase (see Figure 1 in Section 4 below). As we will see, the argument positions are independent from the semantic roles of the arguments<sup>3</sup>.

The nominal constituent in the internal position, e.g. =*is* in (4) above, is directly adjacent to the predicate and connected to it by what I call ‘internal cliticization’ (represented by = ; see Haude 2006: 97–101), a process that involves not only pronouns, but also determiners. Internal cliticization causes stress to shift from its canonical penultimate position to the last syllable of the host (only when the cliticized element is nonsyllabic, stress remains on the penultimate syllable); on consonant-final hosts, an epenthetic vowel *-a* is attached and participates in the host’s stress pattern. With these properties, the internal argument of transitive verbs is encoded exactly like a Possessor on nouns, illustrated in (5): Here, a DP is marked as possessed by another DP, which, in turn, is marked as possessed by a pronoun.

- (5) [*us alwaj-a=[isnos a:na=u]*]  
 ART.M spouse-LV=ART.F.PST younger\_sibling=3M  
 his younger sister’s husband [EAO Aros I 020]

The other, ‘external’ argument of the transitive clause has the same formal properties as the single argument of the intransitive clause (see (1)–(3)). When expressed by a bound pronoun, the pronoun is attached to the predicate phrase through external cliticization (marked by two hyphens, -- ); Haude 2006: 101–103), as in (6). In contrast to internal cliticization, this type of cliticization has no effect on the prosody of the host, and host-final consonants form the syllable onset of a vowel-initial external enclitic. Like the single argument of the intransitive clause, the external argument can also be expressed by a phonologically independent DP, (7), and it can be omitted, (8).

- (6) *way-na=n--isne*  
 grab-DR=2SG--3F.AB  
 You grab her. [Leonilda\_1 076]

- (7) *way-na=[os pa:kona:nak] [os ko’], lat*  
 grab-DR=ART.N.PST fox ART.N.PST tree EV  
 The fox grabbed the tree, they say. [HRR\_2009\_tape1\_A 527]

- (8) *jayna tikoy-na=us*  
 DSC kill-DR=3M.AB  
 Then he killed (it). [EGA Cazando 022]

Transitive verbs are overtly morphologically marked as either ‘direct’ or ‘inverse’, indicating which argument is A (i.e. prototypically an agent; see Comrie 1989) and which one is P (i.e. prototypically a patient). When the verb is marked as ‘direct’, the internal argument represents A and the external argument represents P, as in (9)a (see also (4) and (6)–(7) above); when the

<sup>3</sup> In other studies, I use the terms “PROX” and “OBV” for the internal and external argument, respectively, which reflect the relative position of the arguments’ referents on a referential hierarchy. Regarding the terminology for semantic roles, the term “agent” includes the roles agent, experiencer, and causer, i.e. roles that are treated identically in morphosyntactic terms; likewise, the term “patient” includes roles such as patient, theme, recipient, stimulus, or causee.

argument is marked as ‘inverse’, it is the other way round, as in (9)b. The pragmatic function of the inverse can be compared to that of an English passive, as suggested by the translation.

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

The syntactic position of the arguments is determined by their (discourse-)referential properties. The internal position is reserved for the event participant that ranks higher in a hierarchy of person (1>2>3), animacy (human > non-human animate > inanimate), and discourse topicality (given > new; see Haude 2014). Semantic roles, i.e. A (agent, experiencer, causer etc.) and P (i.e. patient, theme, stimulus, causee etc.) are indicated by the direct/inverse morphology. For describing events with two third-person participants, the direct construction is the default; this means that there is a bias towards A to be encoded as the internal argument.

## 1.2 Nominal predicates

Nouns are also inherently predicates: When a noun occurs as the first content word in a clause and is not preceded by a determiner, the noun is the predicate (there is no copula). Therefore, for a noun to function as a clausal predicate it suffices for it to occur in clause-initial position. Its argument is encoded in the same way as in an intransitive verbal clause. Example (10) illustrates a nominal predicate whose argument is expressed by a DP, (11) illustrates a nominal predicate with a pronominal argument, and (12) shows a nominal predicate without an overt argument expression.

- (10) *pe'lete itila:kwa* [kis *majniwa=sne*]  
 all man ART.PL.AB offspring\_of=3F.AB  
 Her children are all men. [EAO Ay'ku II 027]
- (11) *tolkosya--'ne*  
 girl--3F  
 She (is a) girl. [Dial. EA&AH 012]
- (12) *rulrul jayna*  
 jaguar DSC  
 Then it (was) (a) jaguar (i.e. a transformed human). [LYO\_250808\_2 192]

Nouns denoting specific entities only have restricted possibilities of functioning as main-clause predicates, however. We see this, first of all, with possessed nouns. Example (13) is a clause with a possessed noun as predicate and a DP expressing the argument. In (14), the argument of the possessed nominal predicate is unexpressed. The structure of these clauses is similar to that of transitive verbal clauses as in (4) and (8), respectively, above. However, in contrast to other predicates, both nominal and verbal, the expression of the argument by a bound pronoun is highly dispreferred in a clause with a possessed nominal predicate, and considered ungrammatical in elicitation (see e.g. Haude 2010a). Example (15) is the only occurrence of

this construction in the entire corpus. (Usually, the argument of a possessed noun is expressed by a free pronoun in the so-called ‘pronominal construction’ or ‘cleft’; see Haude 2018a.)

- (13) *jayna pekato=sne [os jeya=sne]*  
 DSC sin=3F.AB ART.N.PST state\_of=3F.AB  
 Her sin (was) that she was like that  
 (lit. ‘her being like that’). [EAO Ay'ku II 033]

- (14) *jeya=sne jayna*  
 state\_of=3F.AB DSC  
 (That’s) how she is now (lit.: “[It is] her state now”). [Asilo 085]

- (15) *alwaj-a=us--k-isne*  
 spouse-LV=3M.AB--OBV-3F.AB  
 She was his wife <sup>4</sup>. [CVM\_020906\_1 382]

A similar restriction holds for proper nouns. Again, the corpus contains only one single example, (16) (actually, from the same speaker who uttered (15) above), in which the predicate is a proper name and the argument is a bound pronoun referring to the person with that name. (Elsewhere, the proper noun refers to the name itself.)

- (16) *Katali:na[--'ne]*  
 (name)--3F  
 She (is) Katharina. [CVM\_020906\_1 024]

### 1.3 On the noun-verb distinction

The distinction between verbs and nouns in Movima is weak. Nouns are not marked for the cross-linguistically typical categories case, number, or gender, and verbs are not marked for typical verbal categories like tense, aspect, mood, or evidentiality. Some morphemes are even shared by nouns and verbs (see Haude 2006: 106–111).

Perhaps the best criterion for identifying a noun is that nouns can be combined with an internal enclitic encoding the Possessor (see (5) above) without containing a particular morphological marker, while for a verb this is only possible if it is marked as transitive, i.e. as direct or inverse. However, many words that are intuitively interpreted (and translated) as nouns cannot be marked as possessed. For instance, nouns with the suffix *-ni*, as in (17)a, cannot be possessed, (17)b; to refer to a possessed item, the form without this suffix must be chosen, as in (17)c.

- (17) a. *[is dokwe-wanra:-ni]* ‘(the) clothes’  
 ART.PL clothes-INSTR-PRC  
 b. *\*[is dokwe-wanra-ni=n]* (‘your clothes’)  
 ART.PL clothes-INSTR-PRC=2SG  
 c. *[is dokwe-wanra=n]* ‘your clothes’  
 ART.PL clothes-INSTR=2SG

<sup>4</sup> On the ‘obviative’ prefix *k-* see fn. 9 below.

Possibly, the suffix *-ni* originally derives monovalent verbs. The ending is also found on monovalent verbs (e.g. the unanalyzable *iloni* ‘walk’) as well as on adjectives (e.g. *cho:’es*, *cho’es-ni* ‘dirty’), where its function is usually as opaque as on nouns. All words with this ending have in common that they are monovalent, i.e. they cannot take an internal enclitic <sup>5</sup>. So, the ability to take an internal enclitic without particular morphological marking is a sufficient criterion for identifying a word as a noun, but it may not be a necessary one.

Another useful criterion for distinguishing nouns from verbs is that nominal predicates undergo reduplication when occurring in a dependent clause, as in (18), while verbs receive the suffix *-wa*, as in (19). These derivations can be considered state or event nominalizations, respectively <sup>6</sup>.

(18) [*n-os*                    *tolkos<ya~>ya=sne*]  
 OBL-ART.N.PST girl<NMZ.ST~>=3F.AB  
 when she was a girl (lit.: “at her [former] [being a] girl”)                    [EAO\_Mala 003]

(19) [*n-os*                    *iloni:-wa=’ne*]  
 OBL-ART.N.PST walk-NMZ.EVT=3F  
 when she walked (lit.: “at her [former] walking”)                    [EAO\_Tomina’ 052]

Some affixes can only be attached to either a nominal or a verbal base. For instance, only bivalent verbal bases are productively combinable with the direct marker *-a/-na*; on the other hand, only nouns can receive the verbalizing suffix *-tik* ‘make/do N’. Furthermore, nouns, but not verbs, can be productively incorporated into verbal bases (see (26) and (38) further below). However, this does not apply to the entire class of nouns, and incorporation often involves classifier-like or suppletive elements (see e.g. *-’oj* in (38) below) rather than nouns (see Haude 2006: 203–226).

Adjectives share properties of both verbs and nouns (see Haude 2006: 112–119). As words denoting a property, they cannot be marked as possessed; however, like nouns, they undergo reduplication in subordination; for this latter reason, it seems adequate to consider property-denoting words as a subclass of nouns.

To sum up, there are words that are clearly verbs – this is the case especially with transitive verbs – and words that can clearly be recognized as nouns, especially when they are marked as possessed. The borderline between these word classes is fuzzy, however, since there exist a number of words whose classification is not straightforward. Furthermore, as will be shown, there are no syntactic criteria to distinguish them.

## 2 The article

A DP minimally consists of a determiner and a content word. The determiner is usually an article (it can also be a demonstrative, not treated here). The label ‘article’ was chosen because this element cannot occur independently, i.e. without a following content word (a pause or particle in between the two is common, though). The Movima articles do not mark definiteness,

<sup>5</sup> There are two exceptions: one is the noun *majni=∅* ‘offspring=1SG’, which is obligatorily possessed, but which can be reconstructed to *\*majniw-*, the form it takes when an overt enclitic is added; the other is the verb *jom<a:>ni=∅* ‘devour<DR>=1SG’, which takes direct/inverse marking and can therefore be combined with an internal enclitic.

<sup>6</sup> Note that nouns can also take the suffix *-wa*, which results in an eventive reading (e.g. *ko’o:-wa=∅* [tree-NMZ.EVT=1SG] ‘my chopping wood’). Therefore, Haude (2011) suggests that the difference in marking may not signal a noun-verb distinction, but that it reflects the difference between states and events; alternatively, the nouns with *-wa* can be analyzed as containing a covert verbalizer, which is dropped before the nominalizing suffix (see Haude 2006: 488–489).

but, as will be shown below, they convey different degrees of individuation of their referent. The paradigm of the articles is given in Table 1 <sup>7</sup>.

Table 1. Movima articles

	presential/ generic	absential (AB)	past (PST)
human male (M)	<i>us</i>	<i>kus</i>	<i>us</i>
human female (F)	<i>(i)'nes</i>	<i>kinos</i>	<i>isnos</i>
non-human (N)	<i>as</i>	<i>kos</i>	<i>os</i>
plural/mass (PL)	<i>is</i>	<i>kis</i>	<i>is</i>

As indicated in Table 1, the articles provide information on inherent properties and on the spatio-temporal location of their referents. We will start out with the inherent categories, i.e. humanness, sex, and number (2.1), and then turn briefly to the deictic categories marked by the articles (2.2).

## 2.1 Semantic categories coded by the articles: humanness, sex, number

No agreement (or concord) is involved in the combination of the article and the content word that forms a Movima DP. Rather, the determiner indicates a property of the referents, which is not necessarily included in the meaning of the noun. For instance, with nouns like those in (20), which denote humans without specifying their gender, it is the article that provides the gender information.

- (20) nouns denoting humans unspecified for sex
- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| <i>us / i'nes dichi:ye</i> | ‘the/a boy/girl’                                    |
| <i>us / i'nes a:na=∅</i>   | ‘my younger brother/sister’ (=∅ ‘1SG’) <sup>8</sup> |
| <i>us / i'nes a:kay=∅</i>  | ‘my older brother/sister’                           |
| <i>us / i'nes alwaj=∅</i>  | ‘my husband/wife’                                   |

Obviously, with nouns that denote gender-specific entities, the article is chosen accordingly. For instance, the nouns in (21) denote female humans, those in (22) male humans, and those in (23) non-human entities. In (23), it can additionally be seen that Spanish loans referring to non-human entities are combined with the neuter article; this means that the gender of the Spanish source lexeme (here, feminine *mesa* and masculine *banco*) does not influence the choice of the Movima article.

- (21) female
- |                       |                           |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>i'nes kwe:ya</i>   | ‘the/a woman’             |
| <i>i'nes tolkosya</i> | ‘the/a girl, young woman’ |
| <i>i'nes ay'ku=∅</i>  | ‘my aunt’                 |

- (22) male
- |                       |                   |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| <i>us itilakwa</i>    | ‘the/a man’       |
| <i>us oveniwankwa</i> | ‘the/a young man’ |

<sup>7</sup> Personal pronouns, which can replace noun phrases, encode the same categories except that they do not have a separate form for the “past” category – for entities out of existence, the absential forms are used.

<sup>8</sup> Many nouns, such as kinship terms, are obligatorily possessed. The absence of an internal enclitic is considered zero marking, which, as with transitive verbs, encodes the first person singular.



*us ya:yak=∅* 'my uncle'

- (23) non-human  
*as ko'o* 'the/a tree'  
*as me:sa* 'the/a table'  
*as wanko* 'the/a bench'

However, also nouns that imply gender, like those in (21)–(22) above, can take the neuter article. Example (24) stems from a story whose protagonists are animals; therefore, the word *ya:yak* 'uncle', even though semantically masculine, is combined with the neuter article. In (25), the DP *os kwe:ya* 'the/a woman' refers to a mythological character that takes the shape of a woman but is, in fact, a jaguar; hence, here as well, the neuter article is used.

- (24) [*os ya:ya=as di' rulrul*]  
ART.N.PST uncle=3N.AB REL jaguar  
his (i.e., the fox's) uncle, who (was) (the/a) jaguar [HRR\_2009\_tape1\_A 518]

- (25) *tavoj-bet lat [os kwe:ya]*  
white-BR.skin EV ART.N.PST woman  
The woman was white, they say. [HRR\_120808-tigregente 099]

The neuter article can furthermore be used for nonspecific reference to humans, as in (26), as well as for derogatory reference to specific humans, as in (27). The difference between these functions can only be recognized from the context, if at all (see also (52) and (53) below). Thus, discourse-related properties such as (non)specificity can be indicated by the article, but this interpretation is at least in part context-dependent.

- (26) *sal-a-kwe:ya di:ra, mo:ra:ni ja'*  
look\_for-DR-woman still lack just  
*[os kwe:ya]*  
ART.N.PST woman  
(He) was still looking for a woman (to marry), a woman was  
lacking. [LTC\_020906\_5 342-343]

- (27) *bey-lo:maj [os kwe:ya]*  
few-CLF.time ART.N.PST woman  
The woman (the protagonist's wife) was lazy. [HRR\_2009\_tape1\_B 293]

The plural form is used to refer to any non-single referent, as well as to liquids and masses, as shown in (28) and (29). Since plurality is not marked on the noun, again, it is not the noun that triggers the plural form.

- (28) a. *as ko'o* 'the/a tree'  
b. *is ko'o* '(the) trees; (the) firewood'
- (29) a. *as to:mi* '(the) water (manipulable,  
e.g. in a glass)'

- b. *is to:mi* ‘(the) water (as Ground, e.g. in a lake, pond, river)’

## 2.2 Deictic categories coded by the articles: space and time

In addition to the the categories described above, the article marks the referent’s presence at or absence from the speech situation, and it also indicates if the referent has ceased to exist. The lists in (21)–(23) above contained the forms used for present referents and generic reference. The spatio-temporal categories are illustrated in (30).

- (30) a. *i’nes* *kwe:ya* ‘the/a woman (here or in general)’  
 b. *kinos* *kwe:ya* ‘the/a woman (somewhere else)’  
 c. *isnos* *kwe:ya* ‘the/a woman (not here and not alive anymore)’

Here as well, the choice of the article is not based on grammar, but depends on the situation of the referent with respect to the speech situation. Therefore, different referents can be referred to with different forms within one sentence. The coexistence of the presential and the absential feminine articles in one sentence is illustrated in (31), and that between the presential and the past form is given in (32).

- (31) *yey-na=[kinos monja] lat*  
 want-DR=ART.F.AB nun EV  
*[as eney joy-a-le:-wa=∅ [i’nes ma:mi]]*  
 ART.N (filler) go-DR-CO-NMZ.EVT=1SG ART.F mum  
 The (absent) nun wants me to bring (lit.: “wants my bringing”)  
 my (present) mother there. [Asilo 028]

- (32) *joy-le-kay-a=’ne [i’nes a:kay-a=’ne]*  
 go-CO-INV-LV=3F ART.F older\_sibling-LV=3F  
*[n-os asna=[isnos bitok]]*  
 OBL-ART.N.PST home=ART.F.PST old\_woman  
 She was taken by her (present) older sister to the (past)  
 home of the (now deceased) old woman. [Escape Marivel 049]

As can be seen in Table 1 above, absence is overtly marked on all gender/number categories of the article: The absential forms all bear an initial *k*. The past form, by contrast, is not always overtly marked: In the masculine and the plural, the past-tense article is identical to the presential form. The correct interpretation simply depends on the referent’s presence at or absence from the speech situation: If an absent male or plural referent is referred to by the unmarked form, this means that the referent does not exist anymore (see Haude 2010b for further details), as shown in (33).

- (33) *jayna kayni [us bi:jaw]*  
 DSC die ART.M old\_one  
 The old man was dead already. [HRR\_120808-tigregente 448]

The past article cannot be used if the referent still physically exists, even if deceased or not functioning anymore. This can be seen in (34), uttered during the aunt’s funeral. This example

also shows that, while the article does not mark definiteness, the deictic element *ney* ‘here’ can be used to indicate definiteness, especially with past and absent referents.

- (34) [*kinos ney ay'ku=Ø di' jayna kayni*]  
 ART.F.AB here aunt=1SG REL DSC die  
 That aunt of mine who died already. [Ay'ku I 013]

### 3 From predication to reference

#### 3.1 DPs containing verbs

It is not only nouns that can be combined with a determiner in Movima; verbs can, too (which is why the term ‘noun phrase’ would be inadequate for a DP). A DP containing a verb refers to the event participant that would be represented by the external argument of the verbal predicate: When the verb is intransitive, the referent of the DP represents the single event participant (see (35)); when the verb is marked as direct, the referent is the more patient-like event participant (see (36)), and when the verb is marked as inverse, the referent of the DP is the more agent-like event participant (see (37)). (The alternative translations of the examples will be discussed in Section 4.)

- (35) Main clause vs. DP with intransitive verb  
 a. *ji<wa:~>wa--us*  
 come<MD~>--3M.AB  
 He came.  
 b. [*us ji<wa:~>wa*]  
 ART.M come<MD~>  
 the/a (man/boy) who came; the/a (male) comer
- (36) Main clause vs. DP with transitive direct verb  
 a. *vel-na=us--k-is*  
 watch-DR=3M.AB--OBV-3PL.AB  
 He watched them <sup>9</sup>.  
 b. [*kis vel-na=us*]  
 ART.PL.AB watch-DR=3M.AB  
 the (ones) he watched; his watched (ones)
- (37) Main clause and DP with transitive inverse verb  
 a. *vel-kay-a=us--k-is*  
 watch-INV-LV=3M.AB--OBV-3PL.AB  
 They watched him.  
 b. [*kis vel-kay-a=us*]  
 ART.PL.AB watch-INV-LV=3M.AB  
 the (ones) who watched him; his watchers

<sup>9</sup> When the internal argument is or includes a third person, a bound pronoun encoding a third-person external argument is preceded by a *k-*, which is therefore analysed as a redundant obviative marker (not synchronically related to the *k* that occurs on the absential articles).

The inherent and deictic properties of the referent (humanness, sex, and presence/absence/ceased existence) are encoded in the same way as with nouns. In the above examples, the article indicates that the referent is a male human, present at the speech situation in (35) and absent from it in (36) and (37).

As with nouns, the neuter article can indicate nonspecific reference to humans, as in (38), where the fact that a human is being referred to is apparent from the verb semantics.

- (38) *[kos joy-chet di' loj-a:-'oj]*  
 ART.N.AB go-R/R REL wash-DR-BE.clothes  
*che [kos del-to:mi]*  
 and ART.N.AB ask\_for-water  
 someone (who) goes to wash clothes,  
 and someone (who) asks for water [Agua sucia 016]

Again, the interpretation of non-human or plural referents as specific or nonspecific depends on the context. (In fact, verbal DPs are quite often used in nonspecific contexts, but a systematic study still waits to be carried out.) Examples (39) and (40) below show typical environments of verbal DPs: With a nominal predicate designating the entity referred to by the DP (this is how argument focus is expressed in Movima) in (39), and with a demonstrative predicate heading an existential clause in (40). In (41), the main predicate is a verb, showing that a verbal DP can also occur in a normal verbal clause, even though this is less common. Example (42) shows a verbal DP denoting a Possessor.

- (39) *pokso [kos yey-na=y'li]*  
 chicha ART.N.AB want-DR=1PL  
 Chicha (is what) we want. [JGD\_130907-06 178]

- (40) *kiro' [kis de<ja:~>jal]*  
 DEM.PL.AB ART.PL.AB cook<MD~>  
 There are (people who) cook. [Asilo 020]

- (41) *ban jayna ji<wa~>wa [us rey yey-kay-a=n]*  
 but DSC come<MD~> ART.M EPIST want-INV-LV=2  
*di' naye-sicha'kwa*  
 REL marry-DESID  
 But now the (man) who wants you, who wants to marry,  
 has come. [JAO Naye 052]

- (42) *[us a:kay-a=[isnos tikoy-na=as]]*  
 ART.M older\_sibling-LV=ART.F.PST want-DR=3N.AB  
 the older brother of the (girl/woman whom) it  
 (i.e. the jaguar) had killed [LYO\_250808\_2 038]

Thus, in Movima, a predicate becomes part of a referring expression simply by having a determiner placed in front of it. A DP containing a verb refers to an event participant, i.e. to a “first-order ontological entity” (Yap et al. 2001), and, just as with DPs containing nouns, the determiner indicates inherent and deictic properties of this entity. This is true both for verbal and for nominal predicates, since, as was seen in 1.2 above, nouns also function as main-clause predicates when not preceded by an article.

DPs referring to states or events function as complement or adverbial clauses, and their properties differ from those of DPs containing bare verbs. The content word in these DPs is overtly morphologically marked (‘nominalized’) and possessed (see also (18)–(19) above), and it can only be combined with the neuter article. In this construction, rather than marking spatial location, the three forms of the neuter article distinguish three temporal categories: The presential article indicates nonpast (43), the past article indicates a time before the day of speaking (44), and the absential article indicates a previous moment on the day of speaking (hodiernal past; (45)); unless cancelled by some overt device in the main clause (e.g. a TAME particle), the main-clause tense is interpreted as being identical to that of the dependent clause; this is to say, the tense of the dependent clause has scope over the main clause (see Haude 2011).

- (43) *yey-na=sne [as rey jiwa-wa=sne]*  
 want-DR-3F.AB ART.N EPIST come-NMZ.EVT=3F.AB  
 She wants to come (lit.: “She wants her coming”), of course. [Asilo 081]
- (44) *yey-na=sne [os ya:lowe-wa=sne]*  
 want-DR-3F.AB ART.N.PST drink-NMZ.EVT=3F.AB  
 She wanted to drink (lit.: “She wants her past-drinking”). [EAO Golpearse 010]
- (45) *[no-kos pokmo:-wa=∅ [no-kos*  
 OBL-ART.N.AB get\_up-NMZ.EVT=1SG OBL-ART.N.AB  
*choj-wa=∅]], tokbaycho*  
 urinate-NMZ.EV=1SGremember  
 When I got up (today) to urinate, (I) remembered  
 (lit.: “at my [today] getting up for my [today] urinating,  
 remember”). [EAO Dialogue 081]

Thus, DPs containing a verb are clearly different from DPs containing a derived, nominalized form, also semantically: They refer to an event participant, while the latter refer to a state or an event.

### 3.2 Properties of the content word in the DP

While morphologically unchanged, the syntactic properties of the content word inside a DP are different from those of a main-clause predicate: the content word can undergo a valency-decreasing operation, and the content word is negated differently than a main predicate.

The valency-decreasing operation comes into play when the referent of the DP represents a high-ranking A (with verbs) or a Possessor (with nouns, see below), which would be encoded by an internal enclitic if the content word were a main-clause predicate, as in (46)a. As was shown in (37) and (41) above, a DP encoding the A argument can be formed by using the inverse form of the predicate, as in (46)b. However, the inverse is highly dispreferred when the referent of the A argument outranks the referent of the P argument in the above-mentioned referential hierarchies; and so, the valency-decreasing operation is applied instead. This is shown in (46)c. The valency decrease is marked by a particle *kwey* (*kaw* in some idiolects) before the predicate. As a consequence, the predicate is now monovalent, and its former internal argument (A, see =*us* in (46)a) becomes the single (i.e. external) argument, S – and so, the agent can become the referent of a DP. The former external argument (P), in turn, is demoted to adjunct status, i.e., marked as oblique if expressed at all.



encoded as the internal argument of a transitive verb becomes the referent of a valency-decreased verbal DP (see (46)), the entity normally encoded by the encliticized Possessor of the noun is now the referent of the nominal DP, while possessee is encoded as oblique.

- (51) a. *[is no:no=Ø]*  
 ART.PL domestic\_animal=1SG  
 my animals [NAO\_FSG\_300706\_1 496]
- b. *[is nono=us]*  
 ART.PL domestic\_animal=3M.AB  
 his animals [GBM Ganado 040]
- c. *[os kaw rey no:no n-isko]*  
 ART.N.PST VALDECR EPIST domestic\_animal OBL-PRO.3PL.AB  
 an owner of the animals (lit.: “an animal owner of them”)  
 [GBM Ganado 004]

Nouns inside DPs can also be negated, in which case the particle *loy* is used, as in (52); as with other intransitive predicates in this construction (see (49)), this negation triggers morphological marking on nouns. For comparison, the negation of a main-clause nominal predicate takes place with the negative copula *ka* and morphological modification plus possessive marking of the noun, as shown in (53) (incidentally, this example also features a verbal DP in the left-dislocated position). This process is structurally similar to the negation of a verbal main clause, shown in (50) above (and also present in the first part of (52)).

- (52) *ka=[s rey ja' sal-na-wa=i [kos loy*  
 NEG=DET EPIST just look\_for-NMZ.EVT=3PL ART.N.AB NEG.SUB  
*rey mowimaj-ŋe]]*  
 EPIST Movima-NMZ.ST  
 They don't just look for someone who is not Movima.  
 (I.e., they look for someone who *is* Movima.) [EAO Tolkosya II 014]
- (53) *[kos jayna dok-pa:to], ka=[s mowimaj-ŋe=as]*  
 ART.N.AB DSC dress-CLF.shoe NEG=DET Movima-NMZ.ST=3N.AB  
 Someone who wears shoes, he/she is not Movima  
 (lit.: “its being Movima is not”). [HRR\_081009\_isbijaw 106]

While nominal DPs thus behave like verbal DPs, the valency-decreasing operation and the negation occur less often with nouns than with verbs. As for the valency decrease, this can be explained with the fact that, unlike verbal argument encoding, Possessor encoding is not tied to a referential hierarchy (see 1.1), as normally either counterpart of the possessive relationship (e.g. older sister – younger sister) can be designated by a noun. As for negation, the negation of a nominal predicate is usually avoided, and the proposition is rather expressed with a cleft-like construction involving a negated predicative pronoun (see Haude 2018a). Still, the fact that both operations, the valency decrease and the negation with *loy*, also exist with nouns while not occurring with main-clause predicates is important evidence for the absence of a categorical noun-verb distinction on the syntactic level.

## 4 Discussion

As we have seen, in Movima, both nouns and verbs can function as main-clause predicates, and the members of both classes form part of a referring expression when preceded by a determiner<sup>12</sup>. The position behind a determiner can be considered an embedded position, as is depicted in Figure 1, which is a simple representation of the hierarchical structure of a basic Movima clause. The figure shows that a content word (N/V) can occur in a predicate phrase (labelled this way because ‘verb phrase/VP’ would be misleading) on the clause level, but also in a predicate phrase inside a DP. In both positions, a bivalent content word (i.e. a transitive verb or a possessed noun) is followed by an internally encliticized element, which is interpreted as the Possessor of a nominal form, as the A argument of a direct-marked verb, or as a P argument of an inverse-marked verb. The Movima clauses below the tree, repeated from above (and partly shortened), illustrate how the different positions can be filled: The main-clause predicate position is filled by an intransitive verb in (1), by a transitive direct verb in (4), by a transitive inverse verb in (32), and by an unpossessed noun in (39). A possessed nominal predicate (as in (13)) is not shown here because this construction is relatively uncommon (see 1.2 above). The predicate phrase inside a DP contains an unpossessed noun in (1), a possessed noun in (4), and a transitive verb in (39); the DP may, of course, also contain an intransitive or an inverse verb (see (40) and (37)b above, respectively), not shown here for reasons of space<sup>13</sup>. That the internal arguments and Possessors in Figure 1 are illustrated with pronouns and not DPs is due to space limitations as well: The main point of Figure 1 is to show the syntactic possibilities of content words, not the different possible argument expressions<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> See Queixalós (2006) for a similar account with regard to Tupi-Guaraní languages.

<sup>13</sup> Recall that (41) contains a demonstrative predicate, not discussed here (see Haude 2018b).

<sup>14</sup> Figure 1 suggests a potential recursivity, since a DP contains a predicate phrase containing yet another DP, etc. The degree up to which this recursivity, in the form of several DPs in one phrase (see e.g. (5)), may take place has not been investigated systematically yet, but it can be expected that there are pragmatic limitations.



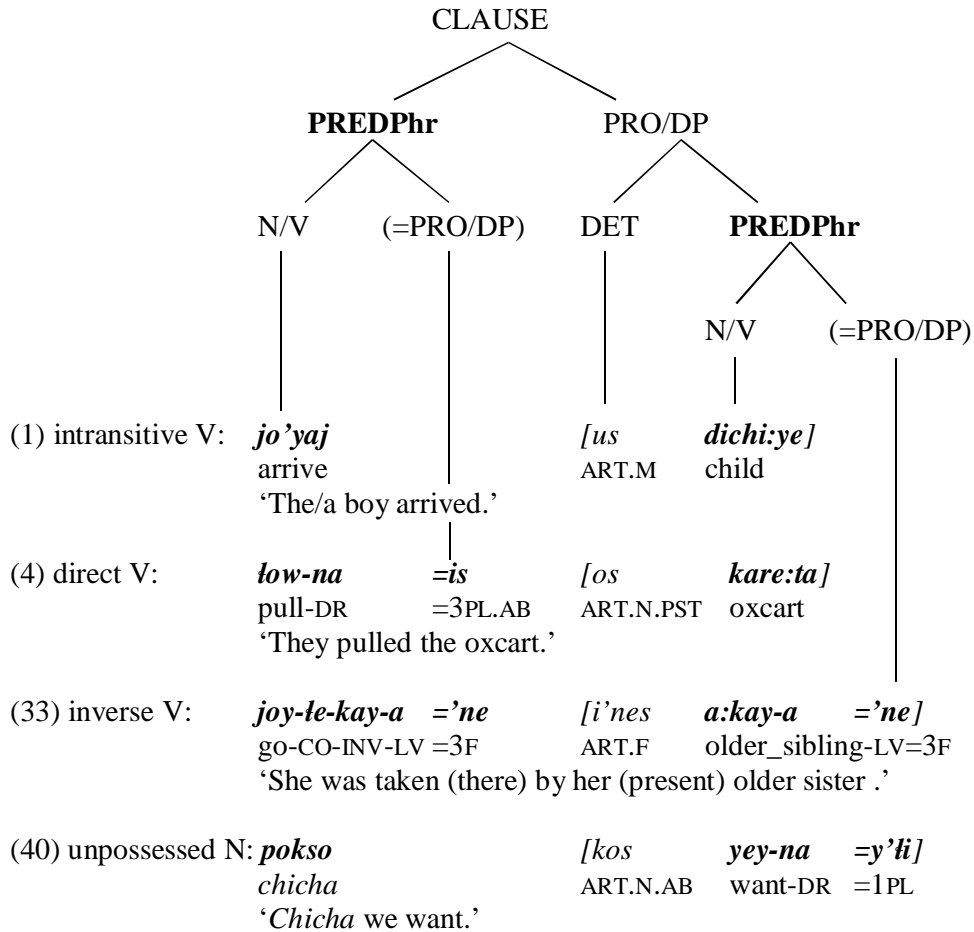


Figure 1. Hierarchical representation of the Movima clause, with examples from the text; abbreviations: DET = determiner phrase; N/V = noun or verb; PREDPHR = predicate phrase; PRO = bound pronoun; DP = determiner phrase.

Inside a DP, a content word has syntactic properties that it does not have when functioning as a main-clause predicate: It can undergo a valency-decreasing operation, and it is negated in a different way than in the main clause (see 3.2). This means that the position behind a determiner has a syntactic effect on the content word. The following sections discuss possible ways to analyse this effect in terms of nominalization (4.1) or relativization (4.2).

#### 4.1 Nominalization?

Movima DPs have a referring function, independently of whether their content word is a noun or a verb. Since the ability to refer is a prototypical property of nouns, one can analyse a DP with a noun as the unmarked case, and the placement of a verb inside a DP as a morphologically zero-marked nominalization (see the English paraphrases of (35)–(37) above). Unlike state or event nominalizations, these “participant nominalizations” denote “first order ontological entities (e.g. persons, objects, locations) and they assume semantic roles” (Yap et al. 2001: 3)<sup>15</sup>; as was shown in 3.1, in Movima, this is the patient role when the (under the present analysis,

<sup>15</sup> The term “participant nominalization” is attributed to Koptjevskaja-Tamm (1993) by Yap et al. (2001: 3).

zero-nominalized) verb contains the direct marker, and the agent role when the verb contains the inverse marker.

Support for a nominalization analysis can be seen in the fact that possessed nouns, which overtly differ from transitive verbs in that they do not show direct or inverse marking (see 1.3), only have limited possibilities to function as main-clause predicates (see 1.2 above), while having unrestricted access to the position inside a DP. Furthermore, in spoken discourse, nouns are much more frequent inside a DP than verbs<sup>16</sup>, so that the occurrence of a verb in this position can be considered the pragmatically marked case. Hence, a prototypical DP contains a noun, and so, the placement of a word from a different lexical category inside a DP can be considered a zero nominalization.

I see several arguments against a nominalization analysis, however. First of all, there is no evidence that a verb in predicate function differs semantically from its equivalent inside a DP: There is no evidence that a verb in a main clause denotes an event rather than an event participant (see Haude 2009). Secondly, for words that cannot take an internal enclitic, i.e. intransitive verbs and unpossessable nouns (including adjectives), there is often no clear evidence as to which lexical category they belong to. This means that often, it would not be clear whether the word inside a DP is an underived noun or whether it is a zero-nominalized form. And last but not least, a consequence of the nominalization analysis would be that nouns functioning as main-clause predicates must, in turn, be analyzed as zero verbalizations.

An analysis in terms of nominalization might be justified if nominalization is understood as a process that turns a predicative expression into a referring one, which seems to be a widespread practice. However, in this case, also Movima nouns – since they function as predicates when not preceded by a determiner – would have to be considered as ‘nominalized’ when occurring inside a DP, which is highly counter-intuitive. In sum, assuming a zero nominalization process for a subset of words, or assuming a general nominalization process that enables any content word to refer, does not do justice to the Movima facts. The lexico-morphological property of being a noun and the ability to refer are orthogonal categories and should be kept apart.

## 4.2 Relativization?

An alternative analysis of Movima DPs can be phrased in terms of relativization. At least according to some definitions, relativization “turn[s] a propositional expression into a referential one” (Bickel 2011: 428). A relative clause is the most versatile way to translate a Movima DP containing a verb into English (or Spanish, as done by Movima native speakers); more adequately than an English or Spanish nominalized form, a relative clause conveys the idea that the content word predicates something about the referent of the DP. And indeed, in Movima, the syntactic properties of the content word inside a DP are identical with those of the predicate of a relative clause headed by a content word.

Headed relative clauses (RCs) are introduced by a particle *di'* following the noun they modify. Like main clauses, a relative clause can have as its predicate a verb, as in (54)–(56), or a noun, as in (57), and the latter may also be possessed, (58).

- (54) RC with intransitive verb  
*[is ney rulrul di' ji<wa:~>wa neyru]*  
 ART.PL here jaguar REL come<MD~> here  
 those jaguars that came here [PMP\_HRR\_etal\_210908 019]

<sup>16</sup> The same is true of other constructions of this type, like headed relative clauses (see 5.2) and clefts (see Haude 2018a).

- (55) RC with transitive verb (direct)  
*[is majni=∅ di' vel-na=us]*  
 ART.PL offspring=1SG REL watch-DR=3M.AB  
 my children, who he looked after [ERM\_150806 146]
- (56) RC with transitive verb (inverse)  
*[kis senyo:ra di' vel-kay-a=sne]*  
 ART.PL.AB lady REL watch-INV-LV=3F.AB  
 the ladies who look after her [Asilo 004]
- (57) RC with unpossessed noun  
*[os ya:ya=as di' rulrul]*  
 ART.N.PST uncle=3N.AB REL jaguar  
 his (the fox's) uncle, who (was a) jaguar [HRR\_2009\_tape1\_A 518]
- (58) RC with possessed noun  
*[is dichi:ye di' majni=∅]*  
 ART.PL child REL offspring=1SG  
 my children (lit. "the children who [are] my offspring")  
 [EAO\_240807\_vibora 101-102]

Also in the headed RC, the valency-decreasing construction is used when the agent is not outranked by the patient in the referential hierarchy, as shown in (59). Negation of the RC is carried out with the particle *loy*, as in (60). (There is no example in the corpus of either of these constructions with a noun; they do occur in clefts, however; see Haude 2018a).

- (59) *[kinos kwe:ya di' kwey vel-na n-isko]*  
 ART.F.AB woman REL VALDECR watch-DR OBL-PRO.PL.AB  
 the/a woman who looks after them [Asilo 021]
- (60) *ka=[s rey koro'-niwa [kos rey, eney,*  
 NEG=DET EPIST DEM.N.AB-VBZ:NMZ ART.N.AB EPIST (filler)  
*ruj-poj-kay=∅ di' rey loy onara:-na=∅]]*  
 harm-CAUS-INV=1SG REL EPIST NEG.SUB know-DR=1SG  
 There isn't anything that hinders me,  
 which I don't know, you see. [Erlan Rojas 097]

The functional similarity between a headed RC and the content word inside a DP is obvious: In the former, the RC adds information about the referent of a full DP; in the latter, the content word adds information on the referent indicated by the determiner, which can thus be considered the "light head" of the relative clause (Citko 2004): The head is not a content word, but a grammatical form that specifies the referent for a particular set of referential properties. Thus, the placement of a verb inside a DP might be considered a zero-marked relativization.

However, the drawbacks of this analysis are similar to those of the nominalization analysis above. First of all, a zero-marked process must be assumed. Secondly, it is counter-intuitive to extend this interpretation to DPs containing nouns. Should it really be the case that a simple nominal DP in Movima should be read, in fact, as 'the/someone who is/was N'? Native speakers usually translate nominal DPs into Spanish NPs; (61) and (62) – the latter containing the

valency-decreasing construction – are the only instances in the corpus where nominal DPs were translated by Movima speakers into Spanish relative clauses <sup>17</sup>.

- (61) [kinos ney jayna tolkosya]  
ART.F.AB here DSC girl  
the (one) who is a young girl already  
(Sp.: *la que está jovencita*) [HRR\_120808-tigregente 433]
- (62) [us kaw majni]  
ART.M VALDECR offspring  
the one who was (his) father (Sp.: *el que era su padre*)  
[HRR commenting on LYO\_250808\_2 181]

In comparison with nominalization, the relativization analysis may be the one that does better justice to the “omnipredicative” nature of Movima (Launey 1994, 2018), where any content word can function as a predicate, be it in main or in dependent clauses. However, similar to the nominalization analysis proposed above, it implies that DPs containing verbs are in some way (zero-)marked (which is not a problem for some, e.g. Harris and Campbell 1995: 153). That verbal DPs are “marked” may indeed be true on the pragmatic level, as is shown e.g. by their lower frequency in discourse. Formally, however, there is no such evidence. Furthermore, any analysis that takes one construction as the default and the other as marked without there being overt evidence neglects the economy of the system, in which the difference between nouns and verbs is simply irrelevant syntactically.

### 4.3 Conclusion

The temptation to analyze DPs containing a verb as either a nominalization or a relativization arises from the fundamental noun-verb distinction in languages like English or Spanish, into which the Movima patterns are translated and in which they are described. In contrast to these languages, however, there is no formal evidence that a Movima content word undergoes a category change depending on its syntactic position. Therefore, an analysis along these lines presupposes a complex process that is, in fact, not there.

Analyzing Movima DPs simply as referring expressions containing an embedded (verbal or nonverbal) predicate, as depicted in Figure 1, does better justice to the facts. This analysis can be reconciled with a relative-clause analysis, thereby facilitating typological comparison with relative clauses in other languages, since relative clauses are by definition dependent. It can also be reconciled with an analysis in terms of participant nominalization if one considers the placement behind the determiner a nominalization, and nominalization as the process of creating a referring expression; nominalization, furthermore, implies reduced finiteness and is, cross-linguistically, typically related to or even identical with subordination (see e.g. Cristofaro 2003).

### Summary

In Movima, a content word functions as a predicate when occurring in clause-initial position. When a content word is preceded by a determiner, the resulting DP refers to an entity; with verbs, this entity is an event participant, whose role is unambiguously specified by verbal morphology. The article characterizes the referent as an individuum, indicating its

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<sup>17</sup> The occurrence of a discourse or TAME particle inside a DP, like *jayna* ‘already’ in (61), is common; this supports the analysis of the content word in a DP as a dependent predicate.

humanness/gender, number, and spatio-temporal properties of the referent. There is a clear formal contrast between these entity-denoting DPs and DPs that refer to a state or event (i.e. complement or adverbial clause), where the content word is overtly morphologically derived (nominalized); still, even here the article shows its individuating properties by signalling temporal features of the state or event.

There seem to be different ways to interpret an entity-denoting DP. When the content word is a verb, it can be considered ‘nominalized’ by the placement behind a determiner. The predicate can also be interpreted as a headless relative clause. Obviously, nominalization and relativization are closely related concepts: Relativization is often described as being achieved through nominalization (see e.g. Lehmann 1984: 169–173). However, since there is no syntactic distinction between nouns and verbs in Movima, under either analysis it would have to be explained why only verbs are seen as undergoing a (zero-marked) process; and likewise, it would have to be assumed that nouns functioning as main-clause predicates are (zero-)verbalized.<sup>18</sup>

I propose to consider the process involved simply as consisting in the embedding of a predicative expression into a referential one, a process that may be termed “referentialization” (Alvarez 2012). Apart from being sufficiently broad, this analysis has the further advantage that it is not unidirectional, going from an unmarked to a (zero-)marked status. It also allows for the reversal of the process: A content word occurring without a preceding referential expression (e.g. a determiner), is a main-clause predicate.

## Symbols and abbreviations

= (‘internal’) clitic; -- ‘external’ clitic; ~ reduplication; < > infixation; : analyzable combination; 1=first person; 3=third person; AB=absential; ART=article; BE=bound nominal element; BR=bound root; CAUS=causative; CLF=classifier; CO=co-participant; DEM=demonstrative; DESID=desiderative; DET=determiner; DR=direct; DIR=directional; DSC=discontinuous; EPIST=epistemic stance; EV=evidential; F=feminine; INSTR=instrument; INV=inverse; LV=linking vowel; M=male; MD=middle; N=neuter; NMZ=nominalization; NMZ.EVT=event nominalization; NMZ.ST=state nominalization; NEG.SUB=negation of dependent clause; NTR=neutral; OBL=oblique; OBV=obviative; PL=plural; PRC=process; PRO=free pronoun; PST=past; REL=relativizer; R/R=reflexive/reciprocal; SG=singular; ST=state; TAME=tense, aspect, mood, evidentiality; VALDECR=valence decrease; VBZ=verbalization.

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<sup>18</sup> After finalization of this text, one piece of evidence surfaced that may indeed point to a lexical nominalization process of a verb inside a DP. Certain intransitive verbs may receive an internal enclitic, i.e. possessive marking, when occurring inside a DP. This involves verbs with an incorporated argument (see Haude 2006: 300) and the intransitive verb *ya:lo:we* ‘drink’: *ya:lo:we-us* ‘He drank’ vs. *os ya:lo:we=us* ‘what he drank; his drink’. Note, however, that these semantically bivalent verbs have particular syntactic properties also in other respects (see Haude to appear).

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