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To cite this version:

Katharina Haude. Clefting and nominal predication: Two focus-marking constructions in Movima. Faits de langues, 2021, Clefts and related focus constructions, 52 (1). hal-03093271v2

HAL Id: hal-03093271

https://hal.science/hal-03093271v2

Submitted on 21 Dec 2021

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Clefting and nominal predication: Two focus-marking constructions in Movima

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Final preprint-version. Published in *Faits de Langues 52(1)*:117-138 (special issue *Clefting and other focus constructions*, guest-edited by Enrique Palancar and Martine Vanhove)
https://doi.org/10.1163/19589514-05201006

Abstract

Movima (isolate, Bolivia) has two focus constructions that superficially look very similar. One is a simple clause with a noun in predicate position and a verb placed inside the argument phrase. Its pragmatically marked status stems from the inversion of the prototypical association of lexical and pragmatic categories. In the other construction, the predicative noun is additionally preceded by a free pronoun. This construction is a cleft, the pronoun and noun together constituting an equational matrix clause. The two constructions also differ in function: the simple clause with a nominal predicate is a simple predication, while the cleft is a specificational sentence.

Keywords: cleft; nominal predicate; copula; specification; lexical categories

1. Introduction

This paper discusses two focus-marking constructions in Movima, a linguistic isolate of lowland Bolivia.[1] While the two constructions look very similar, one is a simple clause, whereas the other one is a cleft. Both focus constructions involve a rearrangement of the lexical material of the basic clause, whose propositional content they share. The basic clause is illustrated in (1). The predicate phrase (in boldface), here a transitive verb with its internal argument, occurs in clause-initial position and is followed by the external argument (in square brackets).[2, 3]

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[1] Movima is an endangered language spoken by a few hundred elders in Santa Ana del Yacuma, Beni department, Bolivia. The data on which this research is based were collected by myself during ten field trips between 2001 and 2012. I am deeply grateful to the Movima speakers who taught me their language during that time, especially Esaltación Amblo Ovales, Julia Malale Humasa, Herlan Rojas Rossell, Ela Rossell Mole, and many others. The present paper was prepared as part of the research programme *The Typology and Corpus Annotation of Information Structure and Grammatical Relations* (Axe3/GD1 of the excellence initiative *Investissements d'Avenir*, LabEx EFL, ANR-10-LABX-0083). The research group *L'énoncé et ses composantes* of the *Laboratoire Structure et Dynamique des Langues* (SeDyL: CNRS UMR8202, INALCO, IRD) has provided an inspiring research environment. This paper has benefited greatly from comments by two anonymous reviewers and from the guest editors' constant encouragement. Needless to say, all remaining shortcomings are my own responsibility.

[2] Most transitive clauses in Movima – those in which the verb is marked as 'direct', see below – pattern ergatively, which means that the internal argument represents the agent and the external argument the patient. The terms "internal/external argument" are based on the constituency properties of the noun phrases and not on their semantic role (in contrast to their common use in generative approaches).

[3] Symbols and abbreviations: = cliticization; ~ reduplication; < > infixation; 1, 2, 3: first, second, third person; AB: absent; ABS: absolute state; ANTIP: antipassive; ART: article; BEN: benefactive; BR: bound root; CAUS: causative; CLF: classifier; CO: co-participant; COP: copula; DEM: demonstrative; DET: determiner; DR: direct; DUB: dubitative; DUR: durative; DSC: discontinuous; EMPH: emphatic; EPIST: epistemic; EV: evidential; EVT: event; F: feminine; HAB: habitual; HOD: hodiernal; HYP: hypothetical; INAL: inalienable; INV: inverse; IRR: irrealis; LV: linking vowel; M: masculine; MD: middle voice; MLT: multiple event; MOV: moving; MST: mental state; N: neuter; NEG: negative; NMZ: nominalizer; NSTD: non-standing; NTR: neutral; OBL: oblique; OBV: obviative; PL: plural; POSSPRED: possessive predicate; PRO: free personal pronoun; PST: past; R/R: reflexive/reciprocal; REAS: reason; RED: reduplication; REL: relativizer; REM: remote past; SG: singular; SUB: of subordinate clause; STD: standing; VBZ: verbalizer.

(1) ***Man<a>ye=is*** ***pa:ko*** *[os* *rulrul].*
encounter<DR>=ART.PL dog ART.N.PST jaguar
'The dogs encountered the/a jaguar.' [EAO Tigre y perro 003]

The first focus construction, here labelled "nominal-predicate focus construction" and illustrated in (2), is the result of a syntactic rearrangement of the lexical categories of the basic clause: The noun (*rulrul*) is the predicate, and the verb (*manaye*), together with its internal argument (here, represented by the pronoun *as*), is placed in the external argument phrase. This construction is translated as a pseudo-cleft throughout this paper. (All examples stem from original texts, which is why they do not form one-to-one minimal pairs.)

(2) *Rulrul* *[is* *man<a>ye=as].*
jaguar ART.PL.PST encounter<DR>=3N.AB
'What it (the dog) encountered was JAGUARS.' [EAO_ tigreyperro_150808 149]

The second focus construction has the same structure as the one in (2), but in addition contains a free pronoun preceding the nominal predicate. This construction, which is translated as an *it*-cleft throughout this paper, is illustrated in (3).

(3) *Asko* *rulrul* *[os* *man<a>ye=is* *pa:ko].*
PRO.3N.AB jaguar ART.N.PST encounter<DR>=ART.PL dog
'It was the/a JAGUAR (that) the dogs had encountered.' [EAO Jaguar 085][4]

Neither of these constructions is frequent in spontaneous discourse. Especially the cleft is only represented by about two dozen tokens in the corpus, while the corpus contains thousands of sentences of the "basic" type. However, in virtually all the instances in which they occur, the constructions are used in the way described in this paper. Therefore, the scarcity of their occurrence does not mean that the constructions are marginal or that they can even be regarded as an "error". They are simply highly marked constructions, used for particular purposes only.

In this paper I argue that despite their strong similarity, the focus construction in (2) is a simple clause, whose focus-marking effect results from the non-prototypical employment of the noun as predicate and of the verb as part of the argument phrase. The construction in (3), by contrast, is a cleft. Its matrix clause is composed of a pronoun and a nominal predicate, which together constitute a full-fledged equational clause: 'It is/was the/a jaguar.'[5] The argument phrase containing the verb corresponds to the relative (or "relative-like", Lambrecht 2001: 467) clause that is included in most, if not all, definitions of clefts proposed in the literature. The two constructions also differ in their pragmatic function: The cleft is a specificational sentence, whereas the nominal-predicate focus construction is a simple predication, whose marked status comes from the non-prototypical pragmatic employment of noun and verb.

After a description of the central properties of Movima basic clauses in Section 2, Section 3 describes the properties of the "verbal RP", i.e. the argument translated as a free relative clause and which both focus constructions have in common. Section 4 illustrates the nominal-predicate focus construction, showing that nouns can be predicates just like verbs, but that the combination with a verbal RP results in a pragmatically marked construction. The cleft is described in Section 5. Subsection 5.1 describes the focus-marking function of the cleft. Subsection 5.2 describes the

[4] All examples given here are from a 30-hour corpus (i.e. over 130,000 words in 26,222 annotation units) of spontaneous spoken discourse of different genres, mostly narrative. The corpus, annotated in ELAN and translated into Spanish and/or English, is for the most part archived online at *The Language Archive* (https://tla.mpi.nl/), where some of the texts are overtly accessible. The source information in square brackets following the translation line generally includes the speaker initials, the name of the text file, and the number of the annotation unit.

[5] Tense is not obligatory marked in Movima: unless there is a tense particle or a past-tense article, the temporal interpretation of a sentence is context-dependent.

structure of the matrix clause; it is shown with evidence from negation that here, the pronoun (and not the noun) is the syntactic predicate. Section 6 sums up the conclusions.

2. The structure of the basic clause

As mentioned above, the two focus constructions are pragmatically marked alternatives to a propositionally equivalent basic clause, illustrated in (1) above and represented schematically in (4). Below I will outline some properties of Movima basic clause structure that are relevant for understanding the examples in the present paper. For more details, especially regarding argument encoding and alignment, see Haude (2009a, 2019a).

(4) **Verb phrase** [Article Noun]$_{RP}$

The constituent order of Movima basic clauses is predicate initial. The predicate is typically a verb. The argument(s) can be represented by a pronominal enclitic (not further discussed here; see Haude 2009a) or by a referential phrase (RP). An RP is minimally composed of a content word, typically a noun, and a determiner. The determiner is typically an article, which indicates inherent and spatio-temporal properties of the referent: human male or female vs. nonhuman (or "neuter'), singular vs. plural/mass, presence vs. absence, current vs. past existence (see Haude 2019b for details). The article does *not* indicate definiteness: The interpretation of an RP as definite or indefinite depends on the context. However, the non-human, non-presential forms (*kos* and *os*) can be used for nonspecific reference. Personal pronouns encode the same features as the article, except past existence; reference to past existence is covered by the "absential" forms of the pronouns. The paradigms of the articles and the third-person pronouns are presented in Table 1 and Table 2, respectively.

Table 1: Movima articles

	presential/generic	absential	past (ceased existence)
ART.M	*us*	*kus*	*us*
ART.F	*i'nes*	*kinos*	*isnos*
ART.N	*as*	*kos*	*os*
ART.PL	*is*	*kis*	*is*

Table 2: Movima third-person pronouns

	presential/generic		absential	
	free	enclitic	free	enclitic
3M	*u'ko*	*u'*	*usko*	*us*
3F	*i'ne*	*(i)'ne*	*isne*	*(i)sne*
3N	*a'ko*	*a'*	*asko*	*as*
3PL	*i'ko*	*i'*	*isko*	*is*

Transitive clauses have two arguments, which, on the basis of constituency, can be defined as "internal" vs. "external" to the predicate phrase. The internal argument – in (1), *is pa:ko* – is part of the predicate phrase, i.e. it forms a unit with the verb and cannot be separated from it; it is obligatorily expressed (zero marks first person singular), when the internal argument is expressed by an RP, the article is encliticized to the verb in a way such that it forms a phonological unit with it, triggering a stress shift to the right (this is the same for internally encliticized pronouns; see Haude 2009a). An RP representing the external argument (always marked by brackets in the present paper), by contrast, shows no phonological connection with the predicate, and the external argument is not obligatorily

expressed. In intransitive clauses, therefore, which only have an external argument, the argument may be overtly expressed, as in (5), but it may also remain unexpressed, as in (6). When expressed by a pronoun, the external argument is "externally cliticized" (represented as -- ; see Haude 2009a), a process that has does not trigger stress shift, but involves resyllabification with a host-final consonant; see (7).

(5) *Des-cheł* *[os* *rulrul].*
jump-R/R ART.N.PST jaguar
'The jaguar jumped.' [EAO_tigreyperro_150808 061]

(6) *Des-cheł.*
jump-R/R
'(It) jumped.' [EGA_Cazando 106]

(7) *Des-cheł--us.*
jump-R/R--3M.AB
'He jumped.' [EAO_Golpearse 032]

Oblique arguments and adjuncts are marked by the prefix *n-*, as in (8).

(8) *Chi:~chi* *[is* *rulrul]* *n-as* *towa:neł.*
MD~go_out ART.PL jaguar OBL-ART.N path
'(The) jaguars came out onto the path.' [Balvina 212]

The predicate of a transitive clause is a transitive verb, and overtly marked as such. In (1), repeated in (9) below, the verb *manaye* is marked as "direct" by the infix <*a*>, indicating that the internal argument has the agent role and the external argument has the patient role. Transitive verbs can also be marked as "inverse", which indicates a reversal of the participant roles; this is illustrated in (10) with the inverse suffix *-kay*.

(9) *Man<a>ye=is* *pa:ko* *[os* *rulrul].*
encounter<DR>=ART.PL dog ART.N.PST jaguar
'The dogs encountered the/a jaguar.' [EAO Tigre y perro 003]

(10) *Tinok-poj-kay-a=is* *[os* *rulrul].*
fear-CAUS-INV-LV=3PL.AB ART.N.PST jaguar
'They were afraid of the jaguar.' (Or: 'The jaguar caused them fear.')
[HRR_130510-tempanLe 022]

The predicate of an intransitive clause can be an intransitive verb, as in (7)–(9), but it can also be a noun, as in (11), i.e. an entity- or property-denoting word (as will be seen below, this distinction cannot easily be made in Movima).

(11) *Itila:kwa* *[os* *majni].*
man ART.N.PST my_offspring
'My child (of a miscarriage) was MALE.' [EAO Cbba 110]

Basic clauses represent the most frequent clause type in Movima, and they are used in pragmatically unmarked contexts. The context of the basic clause in (1)/(9) is given in (12), which is the beginning of a hunting anecdote. The translation of (1)/(9) is rendered in boldface.

(12) 'We had many dogs. And we walked in the forest, and **the dogs encountered a jaguar**.' [EAO tigre y perro 002-003]

Here, the dogs are introduced in the first sentence, and the last clause describes what the dogs do: They encounter a jaguar. Both the event of encountering and the patient of the event, the jaguar, are new information, and there is no contrast to any other evoked event or to any alternative patient. Hence, this is an unmarked situation, and the utterance simply answers the hypothetical question 'What happened?' The prosodic contour of this basic clause is presented in Figure 1.

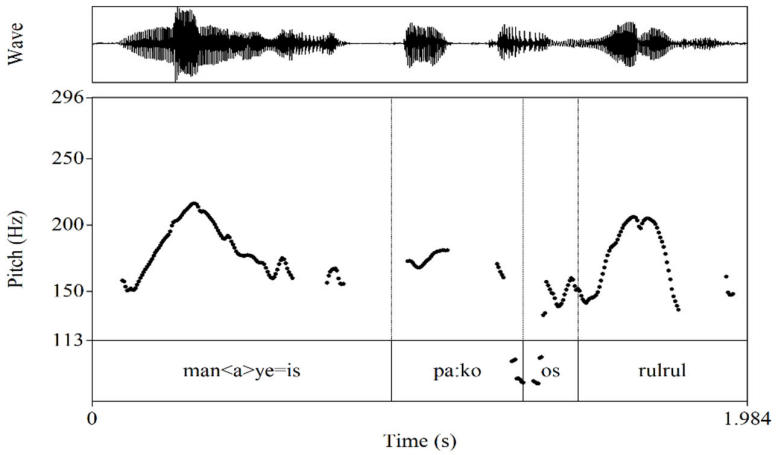

Figure 1: Prosodic contour of (1)/(9)

Having thus provided the necessary information on basic clauses, in the remainder of this paper I describe the two focus constructions.

3. The verbal RP

A defining feature of the two focus constructions is that they contain a "verbal RP", i.e. a referential phrase containing a verb instead of a noun (discussed in detail in Haude 2019b).[6] Verbs and nouns are not always overtly distinguishable in Movima: Apart from the direct/inverse morphology on transitive verbs, there is not much morphology that categorially differentiates between them. Still, there are several criteria that set them apart. One is that most nouns can be combined with an internally encliticized referential element (i.e. a bound pronoun or the article of an RP) encoding a possessor, while verbs can receive an internally encliticized element only if they are marked as transitive (i.e. as direct or inverse). However, this criterion is insufficient in that it only captures those nouns that can be possessed. Another, perhaps more helpful criterion is that verbal predicates receive the suffix *-wa* when embedded, while non-verbal predicates are marked differently (see 5.2 below). Furthermore, there are restrictions on the combinability with certain morphemes, e.g. the verbalizer *-tik* 'make' cannot occur on verbs.

The morphosyntactic properties of nouns and verbs inside an RP are identical, however. Transitive verbs are marked like possessed nouns: the internal argument (the agent in the case of a direct-marked, the patient in the case of an inverse-marked verb) is encoded like an adnominal possessor.

[6] I say "verbal RP" rather than "verbal argument" (Launey 2004) because Movima verbal RPs do not necessarily function as arguments: they can also occur as internal arguments or as obliques.

Consider (13) for a noun with a pronominal, and (14) for a noun with a lexical possessor; the latter example also shows that zero encoding can mark a first-person singular possessor.[7]

(13) *[us alwaj-a='ne]*
ART.M spouse-LV=3F
'her husband' [JGD_160808-Fundacion_1 322]

(14) *[us alwaj-a='nes ulchał=Ø]*
ART.M spouse-LV=ART.3F in-law=1SG
'my sister-in-law's husband' [EAO_In between 173]

RPs with an intransitive verb, by contrast (like *jo'yaj* in [17] below), are identical to RPs with nonpossessed nouns (like *os rulrul* in [9]) in that they are not combined with an internally cliticized referential element.

Because of these parallels of transitive and intransitive verbs with possessed and nonpossessed nouns, respectively, verbal RPs can be regarded as oriented participant nominalizations, comparable to a participle: The RP refers to a participant in the event denoted by the verb, and the verbal morphology specifies the participant's role in the event. When a transitive verb is marked as direct, the RP refers to the participant with the patient role. The phrase in (15) (extracted from [3]) can also be paraphrased as 'the dogs' encountered one' to illustrate the nominal character of the verb. When the verb is marked as inverse, as in (16) (extracted from [3] above), the RP refers to the participant with the agent role: 'my healer'. When the verb is intransitive, finally, the RP refers to the single participant, whichever its role in the event. The verb *jo'yaj* in (17) (extracted from [53] below) might therefore be paraphrased as 'the arriver'.

(15) *[os man<a>ye=is pa:ko]*
ART.N.PST encounter<DR>=ART.PL dog
'what the dogs had encountered'

(16) *[kus lawajes-kay=Ø]*
ART.M.AB heal-INV=1SG
'the one who healed me'

(17) *[us jo'yaj]*
ART.M arrive
'the one who arrived'

As is well known, many languages employ nominalization rather than dedicated relative clauses (see Lehmann 1984). As Schachter (1973: 42) puts it, "[b]oth syntactically and semantically, a relative construction appears to function as a kind of noun". In the same way in which a headed relative clause restricts the potential referential domain of its head noun, the content word of the Movima verbal RP restricts the potential referents of the RP. The Movima RP is therefore comparable to a "light-headed relative clause" (Citko 2004), the head being the article, to which the content word is subordinated (see Haude 2019b).

In comparison with a main-clause predicate, the content word inside the RP has special morphosyntactic properties. First of all, the word inside the RP can be antipassivized, which is not possible for main-clause predicates. On verbs, antipassivization occurs when the referent of the RP is an agent that is ranked higher or equal with respect to the patient in a hierarchy of person

[7] On alienable nouns, the first-person singular possessor is indexed by the element *=ł* before the noun, which is optional before inalienable nouns and transitive verbs.

(1 > 2 > 3), animacy (human > animate > inanimate), and discourse topicality (topical > less topical); in the case of a lower-ranking agent, the inverse is used (see [35], [42], [43], [46] below; Haude 2014). An RP with an antipassivized verb refers to the agent. On nouns, the antipassive indicates that the RP refers to the possessor of the noun's denotee (see [20]), but the motivation for using this construction with a noun is not entirely clear.

The antipassive with a verb is illustrated in (18). In (18a), the verb in the RP is marked as direct, which means that the RP refers to the patient. Example (18b) contains largely the same components; however, here the verb is preceded by the particle *kwey*. The effect of this particle is that the verb is now intransitive (the absence of a person enclitic does not mark singular first person, as it does on transitive verbs), and its single argument represents the agent; consequently, the RP with this verb refers to the agent. As can be seen in this example, the construction also allows for the patient, now demoted to oblique status, to be expressed within the RP (it may also remain unexpressed). For a more detailed discussion of this operation, see e.g. Haude (2019a).

(18a) *Kaw-ra* *[is* *ona-ka-ra-na=is* *bi:jaw].*
much-CLF.NTR ART.PL know-MLT-CLF.NTR-DR=ART.PL old
'What the old (ones) knew (was) A LOT.' [HRR_Erlan Rojas 234]

(18b) *Ka:w-e* *[is* *kwey* *ona-ra:-na* *n-as* *chonsinełł].*
much-CLF.person ART.PL ANTIP know-CLF.NTR-DR OBL-ART.N native_language
'(Those) who know the native language (are) MANY.' [HRR_Erlan Rojas 030]

That the antipassive cannot be applied to a main-clause predicate is shown in (19). Here, the predicate *joyałe*, a direct-marked transitive verb, is preceded by a particle *kwey*, but here the particle is not the antipassive marker. There is no detransitivization, as can be seen from the internal cliticization of the article belonging to the agent RP and by the absence of oblique marking on the patient RP. In fact, in combination with main clause (and also complement or adverbial, see Haude 2011) predicates, *kwey* is a tense morpheme indicating hodiernal past (Haude 2006: 511-512).

(19) *Kwey* *buka'* *joy-a-łe=kinos* *Etelvina* *[kis*
HOD DUR.MOV go-DR-CO=ART.F.AB Etelvina ART.PL.AB
mo'incho=sne] *buka'.*
manioc_flour=3F.AB DUR.MOV
'Today Etelvina was bringing her manioc flour.' [Dial. EA&AH 151]

The reason why there is no antipassive in main clauses is that the constructions in which it occurs must involve extraction, a process that is restricted to the external argument (see Haude 2019a). In the case of verbal RPs, for instance, the external argument is extracted from its position behind the predicate phrase, and the referential information is now expressed by the article that precedes the predicate.[8]

The "antipassive" marking of a noun, which creates an RP denoting the possessor, is shown in (20).[9]

(20) *ka=s* *rey* *rim<a>łe-wa=[us* *kaw* *pe:re].*
COP.NEG=DET EPIST sell<DR>-NMZ.EV=3M.AB ANTIP plantain
'(The first plantain that was ripe,) the plantain owner did not sell (it).'
[GBM Ganado 097]

[8] Extraction is also involved in the formation of headed relative clauses (see below) and pronominal clauses (see 5.2), whose predicate behaves exactly the same.
[9] Here, because of the nominalization, the RP is encoded like a possessor and its article is internally cliticized (see 5.2).

The second difference between a main-clause predicate and the content word in an RP shows up in negation. The content word in an RP is negated with the particle *loy*, after which intransitive predicates are nominalized, while transitive verbs are not (the same negation pattern occurs in complement and adverbial clauses; see Haude 2006: 473-474; Haude 2011). Compare the negated main-clause predicate in (21a), a transitive verb, with the same verb negated inside an RP in (21b). (On main-clause negation, see also 5.2.)

(21a) *Ka=s* *ona-ra-na-wa=is.*
COP.NEG=DET know-CLF.NTR-DR-NMZ.EVT=3PL.AB
'They don't know (it).' (Lit.: 'Their knowing [it] is not.') [ERM_140806_1 0532]

(21b) *Sot-ka-ra* *[os* *loy* *ona-ra-na=sne* *merek].*
other-MLT-CLF.NTR ART.N.PST NEG.SUB know-CLF.NTR-DR=3F.AB big
'What she does not know well is A LITTLE.' (I.e., there are some bits that she does not know well.) [LCC Cabildo_020907 236]

Examples of nouns negated with *loy* are very rare; (22) is one of them. (Like other intransitive predicates, nonpossessed nouns are nominalized in this construction.)

(22) *Ka=s* *rey* *ja'* *sal-na-wa=i* *[kos*
NEG=DET EPIST just look_for-NMZ.EVT=3PL ART.N.AB
loy *rey* *mowimaj-łe].*
NEG.SUB 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]

The position inside an RP, therefore, lends the word a syntactic status which is different from that of a main-clause predicate. Hence, a content word inside an RP can be regarded as a subordinate predicate. Its function is to restrict the choice of possible referents, similar to a relative clause.

Indeed, the predicate of a headed relative clause, which is introduced by the particle *di'*, behaves exactly in the same way. Consider the basic relative clause in (23), the antipassive in (24) (here, the variant *kaw* of the antipassive particle is used), and the negation in (25).

(23) *[is* *juyeni* *di'* *ona-ye:-na=Ø].*
ART.PL person REL know-CLF.person-DR=1SG
'(the) people I know' [ERM_140806_1 0130]

(24) *[is* *rey* *bispa* *di'* *kaw* *ona-ra:-na].*
ART.PL EPIST knowledgeable REL ANTIP know-CLF.NTR-DR
'(the) knowledgeable (ones) who know (it)' [ERM Sapo 020]

(25) *[kos* *juyeni* *di'* *loy* *ona-ye-na=i].*
ART.N.AB person REL NEG.SUB know-CLF.person-DR=3PL
'a person that they don't know' [HRR Erlan Rojas 127]

Since verbs in RPs have the same syntactic properties as nouns in the same position, they can be considered nominalized. The translation of verbal RPs as free relative clauses is the best way to render their meaning in a language like English.[10]

4. The nominal-predicate focus construction

Movima has no copula, and nominal predicates are formed simply by placing a noun in predicate position. The argument can then be expressed in the same way as with a verbal predicate: by an RP, by a bound pronoun, or not at all (see Haude 2018a). Example (26) illustrates three intransitive clauses with a pronominal enclitic in a row. The first two are have verbal intransitive predicates, but the third clause is headed by a noun, *rulrul* 'jaguar'.

(26) *Jayna* *pol<ka>ba:ba--as* *łat,* *potmo--as,*
DSC roll_around<MLT>--3N.AB EV get_up--3N.AB
jayna *rulrul--as.*
DSC jaguar--3N.AB
'Then it rolled around, it got up, then it (was a) jaguar.' [LYO_250808_2 231]

Example (27) shows that also a noun alone (here *rulrul*), without an accompanying argument expression, functions as a clausal predicate. (Particles like *ban* 'but' or *bo* 'because' at the beginning of a clause are common.)

(27) *Oso'* *[os* *tikoy-na=Ø],* *ban* *rulrul.*
DEM.N.PST ART.N.PST kill-DR=1SG but jaguar
'There was (something) I killed, but (it) was (a) jaguar (i.e., not a human).'
[PMP_HRR_etal_210908 166]

The focalizing function of the nominal predicate becomes apparent when a nominal predicate is combined with a verbal RP. The construction is represented schematically in (28) and illustrated in (29) (repeated from [2] above, with additional context in the translation).

(28) **Noun** [Article Verb phrase]$_{RP}$

(29) *Rulrul* *[is* *man<a>ye=as].*
jaguar ART.PL.PST encounter<DR>=3N.AB
'(There was one dog that really loved jaguars.) What it encountered was JAGUARS.'
[EAO_tigreyperro_150808 149]

What the speaker intends to say in (29) is that among all the wild animals that can be encountered during a hunt, this dog was particularly apt at finding jaguars. This sentence, therefore, answers the hypothetical question 'What (kind of) animals did the dogs encounter?' Its focus is on the class membership of the event participant specified by the RP (i.e. the patient of the direct-marked verb). Figure 2 shows that the focus effect is also reflected prosodically: The nominal predicate receives high pitch, while the verbal RP is prosodically nonprominent.

[10] Obviously, one might also regard any Movima content word as inherently predicative, so that all RPs, including nominal ones, could be analyzed as light-headed relative clauses (e.g. 'the jaguar' → 'the one that is a jaguar'; see Haude 2019b, and Launey 2004 on Classical Nahuatl; see also Haude 2009b, 2010 for an analysis of Movima as a language with basically nominal predication). However, in Movima, possessed nouns do not freely function as main-clause predicates (see below); so there may be at least a subclass of nouns whose function is not underlyingly predicative.

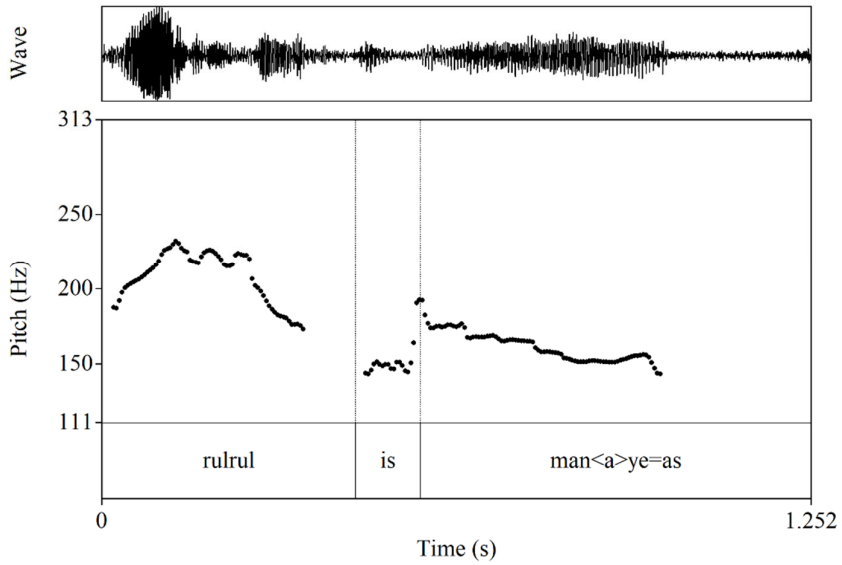

Figure 2: Prosodic contour of (29)

Example (30) shows that the nominal-predicate focus construction can be used to indicate a contrast. Here, the construction is followed by a negation. The English translation as a cleft follows the Spanish translation offered by a native speaker, given in parentheses below the example.

(30) *Rulrul* *[os* *tikoy-na=Ø],* *ka=s* *rey*
jaguar ART.N.PST kill-DR=1SG COP.NEG=DET EPIST
tikoy<ak>-na=Ø *n-is* *juyeni.*
kill<IRR>-DR=1SG OBL-ART.PL person
'What I killed (was a) JAGUAR, I didn't kill a human (lit.: 'nothing of people'), you know.'
(Sp. '*Fue un tigre lo que maté, no maté nada de gente.*')
[PMP_HRR_etal_210908 165]

That the construction is a pragmatically marked alternative to a basic clause is shown by (31), which is a basic clause with a similar propositional content as (30). The surrounding context given in the translation indicates that here, no contrastive reading is involved; rather, the sentence answers the hypothetical question 'What did you do?'

(31) *Naykachin* *tikoy-na=Ø* *[os* *mimi:di].*
first kill-DR=1SG ART.N.PST snake
'(I took a whip.) First of all I killed the snake. (And after that, I beat the children because they hadn't looked after their little brother.)' [EAO_240807_vibora 100]

Since the verbal RP is the equivalent of a relative clause (see Section 3) and a nominal predicate alone can function as an equational clause, one might want to argue that the construction in (30) is a cleft. However, this analysis is hard to keep up. Most obviously, the syntactic structure of this construction is exactly parallel to that of a basic clause, only that the prototypical pragmatic functions of the lexical categories (the verb encoding the comment and the noun encoding the topic) are inverted. Furthermore, the nominal predicate is usually non-referential. The predicate function is largely reserved for nonpossessed, common nouns. In the whole corpus, there is only one single example each of a possessed noun and a proper noun as predicate with an argument enclitic, reproduced in (32) and (33), respectively. Since possessed and proper nouns usually refer to specific

entities, the difficulty to use them as predicates means that nominal predicates are not appropriate for forming specificational clauses (see Haude 2018a).

(32) *alwaj-a=us--k-isne.*
spouse-LV=3M.AB--OBV-3F.AB
'She (was) his wife.' [CVM_020906_1 382]

(33) *Katali:na--'ne.*
Katharina--3F
'She (is) Katharina.' [CVM_020906_1 024]

Rather than expressing a specificational relation between two referents, the nominal predicate attributes a class membership or property to the referent of the RP: In (30), for instance, it is the referent's property of being a jaguar, rather than a human, that is important, while it is common ground that something or someone was killed.

In addition, nouns in predicate function tend to favour a plural or mass reading. The plural reading of *rulrul* 'jaguars' in (29) is one sign of this. Example (34) shows a mass noun as predicate. What these examples indicate, again, is that a nonpossessed common noun alone does not refer to an entity, but characterizes an entity as being of a certain type or belonging to a certain class of entities (see also Haude 2009b, Himmelmann 2008).

(34) *łat* *buka'* *ke:so* *[is* *joy<a>łe=is].*
EV DUR.MOV cheese ART.PL go<DR>CO=3PL.AB
'What they were carrying was CHEESE.' [HRR_2009_tape1_B 022]

Apart from the partial restriction to non-possessed, common nouns, there is no further lexical restriction on content words to function as predicates. The sentence in (35) belongs to an explanation of how good clay for pottery is made. The speaker says that one mixes fish roe into the clay. After the fish roe is dried in the fire, one uses a gourd to take it out. No reference to any specific gourd is involved here, and neither is this a case of definite generic reference (cf. Section 5.1, example [46]). The noun simply denotes an object of a particular type.

(35) *Sapa'mo* *[kos* *way-kay-a=is].*
gourd ART.N.AB grab-INV-LV=3PL.AB
'What grabs it (or: what they are grabbed by) is a GOURD.' [CCT_120907_1 084]

In line with this, the category of nouns in Movima does not only include entity-denoting words (or rather, words that are intuitively interpreted as such), but also modifiers, numerals, and quantifiers, as illustrated in (36) (see also the quantifying predicates with *kaw-* 'much' in [18a] and [18b] above). While these are common predicates also in basic clauses, the focus reading arises from their combination with a verbal argument RP.

(36) *Sot-ra* *[as* *rey* *pet-na=is* *li:wro].*
other-CLF.NTR ART.N EPIST say-DR=ART.PL book
'What the books say (is) (something) DIFFERENT.' [ATL_230806 227]

In sum, the nominal-predicate focus construction is a simple predicational clause, which corresponds to Declerck's (1988: 55) characterization: "Predicational sentences … predicate something of the referent of the subject NP. In most cases this 'something' is a characteristic, a role, a function, or an indication of class membership." Similarly, den Dikken (2013: 36) characterizes

sentences with a relative clause as subject, which correspond to the kind of sentence we are dealing with here, as a "a garden-variety predicational copular sentence".

While being a simple clause, however, the Movima predicate-nominal focus construction is not "basic" in the sense described in Section 2. Its pragmatic markedness results, in part, from the predicative use of the noun. As Launey (2004: 50) describes it for a parallel pattern in Classical Nahuatl, which in his terms is an "omnipredicative" or "rheme-dominant" language: "the noun [in this construction, KH] is the center of information, the focus or, in the European tradition, the rheme, which leads us back to the first sense of Latin *praedicatum* or Greek *kategoroumenon*: that which is said about something or someone". Another crucial feature of the construction is the placement of the verb in the argument RP. It is, therefore, not the nominal predicate alone that triggers the focus effect, but the *inversion* of the prototypical association between lexical categories and syntactic-pragmatic functions, i.e. of the association of verbs with predication and of nouns with reference (see Croft 2003: 185).

Thus, the construction described here is a focus construction, but it does not have the syntactic complexity of a cleft. It is a simple intransitive predication with a nominal predicate and a verb in its subject RP.

5. The cleft

The previous section has shown that inverting the syntactic positions of noun and verb in a clause serves to focus on a participant of the event evoked by the verb – or rather, to focus on the *properties* (i.e. characteristic, role, function, class membership) of this participant. This effect is slightly shifted when additionally, a free pronoun is placed before the nominal predicate. Before the present study, I had never paid attention to this construction, assuming that the free pronoun simply served to reinforce the predicative function of the noun. However, a closer examination reveals that the placement of the pronoun in initial position has significant syntactic and pragmatic effects, which can be described in terms of clefting. I first discuss the function of this construction (5.1) and then turn to the properties of the pronoun-noun combination that constitutes the matrix clause (5.2).

5.1. Functional properties of the cleft

The structure of the cleft is represented schematically in (37) and illustrated in (38) (repeated from [3] above).

(37) **Free pronoun** **Noun** [Article Verb phrase]$_{RP}$

(38) *Asko* *rulrul* *[os* *man<a>ye=is* *pa:ko],* *ma'a.*
PRO.3N.AB jaguar ART.N.PST encounter<DR>=ART.PL dog my_mother
'It was the/a JAGUAR (what) the dogs had encountered, madam.' [EAO Jaguar 085]

The context of this sentence is provided in (39). In this personal anecdote, the narrator, who was a young woman at the time, and her husband go hunting, but they do not find any animals. All of a sudden, however, the dogs start to run and bark, which is a clear sign that they have spotted an animal. With the cleft sentence rendered in boldface in (39), which is the translation of (38), the speaker points out that it was a jaguar that the dogs had found, and not any other animal. The sentence is a kind of meta information to the hearer, anticipating what the protagonist herself does not yet know at that moment in the story: She still believes that the animal is an anteater. Hence, this is a case of narrow focus: The cleft picks out one among several potential alternatives to the participant that might be the patient of the 'encounter' event, thereby answering a question like 'What animal did the dogs encounter?' Like the relative clause of clefts in other languages, the RP containing a

verb phrase expresses a presupposition, since the fact that the dogs are barking implies that they must have encountered a wild animal.

(39) ‘We hadn’t walked far when he saw the tracks of the jaguar. At that moment the dogs started running and barked, “*Wauwauwau!”* And then it screamed as well, it made “*Yeyeye!*” And then the jaguar fled. **It was a JAGUAR what the dogs had encountered, madam.** Then I said, “What may the dogs have encountered?”, I said to him. “It sounds like an anteater,” I said. Because it roared like an anteater.’ [EAO Jaguar 081-088]

The intonation contour of (38) is represented in Figure 3. As is characteristic of focus constructions cross-linguistically (and also of the nominal-predicate focus construction described in Section 4, see Figure 2), the focused noun receives high pitch, while the rest of the utterance is prosodically nonprominent.

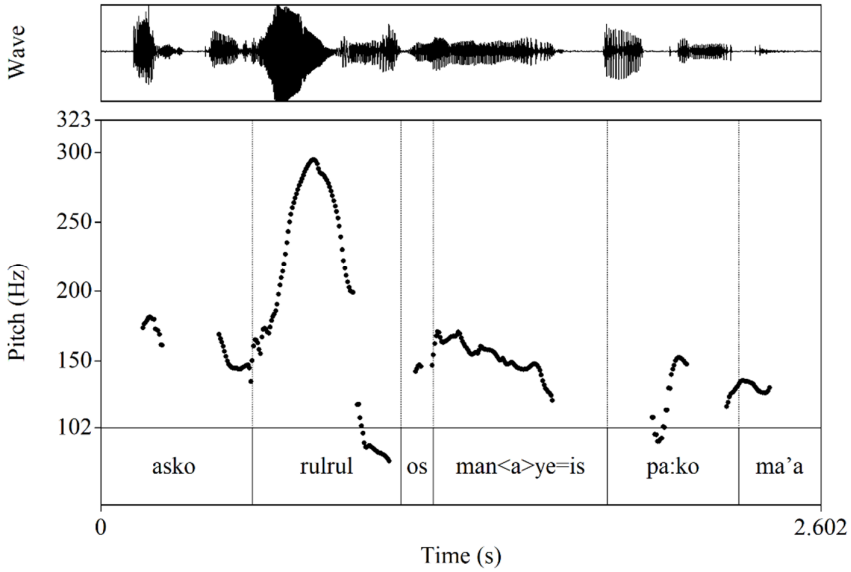

Figure 3: Prosodic contour of (38)

The continuation of the text passage in (39) is reproduced in (40). Here, the cleft is used to mark contrastive focus: The negation in the first sentence makes it clear that the animal in question is not an anteater, but a jaguar. (On the structure of the negated clause, see 5.2 below.)

(40)

Ka=s		*asko-niwa,*		*jankwa=us*		*jayna.*	
COP.NEG=DET		PRO.N.AB- VBZ:NMZ		said_thing=3M.AB		DSC	
Ban	*a’ko*	*rulrul*	*[as*	*kwey-na=is*	*pa:ko]*	*jayna,*	*jankwa=us.*
but	PRO.N	jaguar	ART.N	follow-DR=ART.PL	dog	DSC	said_thing=3M.AB

‘“It’s not that”, he said then. “It’s the/a JAGUAR the dogs are following now,” he said.’ [EAO Jaguar 089-090]

Thus, the cleft brings an event participant into focus, both in the sense of selecting from potential alternatives, as in (38), and in the sense of marking a contrast, as in (40). The RP, by contrast, contains presupposed information: In the present example, for instance, the behaviour of the dogs is a clear sign that they have encountered a wild animal.

The cleft construction can also be reversed, as in (41). Here, the verbal RP is fronted, which is a topicalizing mechanism, and followed by the matrix clause. As in the basic cleft, the prosodic prominence is on the noun (*bebetkwakwa=sne*).

(41) *[Os* *chonlo:maj* *tay<a>ko=is]* *asko*
ART.N.PST really burn<DR>=3PL.AB PRO.N.AB
be~bet-<kwa~>kwa=sne.
RED~BR.hide-<INAL~>ABS=3F.AB
'(Others said, they burned the woman, but no.) What they really burned (, it was) her HIDE.' (i.e., the hide that the jaguar-woman had taken off; when the villagers burned it, she died) [HRR_120808-tigregente 261-262]

Since the Movima article does not mark definiteness, it cannot be said with certainty whether an RP should be interpreted as definite or indefinite. An indefinite interpretation of *rulrul* 'jaguar' in (38) and (40) is adequate if one considers that the jaguar is newly introduced in the story; on the other hand, a definite interpretation is appropriate if one takes into account that the speaker had informed the hearer before that she was going to tell the story of how she saw a jaguar for the first time. Interestingly, the speaker who later translated the text with me used the definite article. This may be due to the fact that he had heard the complete recording before and hence knew what the text was about, or that he was aware that I already knew the topic of the story, and therefore considered the referent accessible. In any case, the definite article is only found in translations of clefts, but never in translations of the nominal-predicate focus construction described above.

The frequent use of the definite article in Spanish translations of the cleft may also be a reflection of the fact that the free pronoun in the Movima cleft is always referential, indicating inherent, spatial, and temporal properties of the referent (see Section 2). Consider (42) and(43), which involve human referents.

(42) *Usko* *senyor* *[kus* *lawajes-kay=Ø],* *jankwa=Ø.*
PRO.3M.AB sir ART.M.AB heal-INV=1SG said_thing=1SG
'He was the LORD, the (man who) healed me, I said.' (After a dream in which a stranger had healed her from her cough.) [EAO Sueño 183]

(43) *Bo* *isne,* *isne* *a:kay=Ø* *[isnos*
REAS PRO.3F.AB PRO.3F.AB older_sibling=1SG ART.N.PST
la' *chot* *vat-poj-kay-a=n* *di'* *Salta].*
REM HAB learn-CAUS-INV-LV=2 REL Salta
'Because she, she was my SISTER, the (woman who) always taught you, who (is) Salta.' [BHA_280706_1 005]

Also with modifiers, numerals, and quantifiers, the combination with a free pronoun leads to a referential and usually specific reading, a reading that is absent when these words are used as simple predicates (see Section 4 above). Compare the use of the word *sotra* 'other' or 'another one' in the cleft in (44) with its used in the nominal-predicate focus construction in (45), repeated from (36). In the cleft in (44), the context (in parentheses in the translation) makes it explicit that there is a specific event contrasted with the hearer's expectation. The sentence in (45), by contrast, is adequate for stating that whatever it may be the books say, it is not what one might think.

(44) *Bo* *asko* *sot-ra* *[as* *jiwa-kwa-na=a].*
REAS PRO.3N.AB other-CLF.NTR ART.N come-BEN-DR=3N
'(He said: It [i.e. the ghost that will appear to you] just wants to sleep with you! – No, I said to him.) Because it's (something) DIFFERENT for which it will come. (It wants to give me money so that I pray for it at mass.)' [GCM_290806_5 054]

(45) *Sot-ra* *[as* *rey* *pet-na=is* *li:wro].*
other-CLF.NTR ART.N EPIST say-DR=ART.PL book
'What the books say (is) (something) DIFFERENT.' [ATL_230806 227]

In other examples, the cleft is translated with a definite article, but involves a generic reading, as in (46) and (47). Here, no specific entity is referred to, but a particular type of entity that the speaker assumes the hearer is familiar with. In (46), the generic reference to 'the whip' is used to say that in former times, the landlords used to beat their workers. In (47), the speaker refers to 'the turtles' as a species, to which approaching bad weather is a sign that they can lay eggs in the sand because the rain will wash away their traces.

(46) *Asko* *chiko:te* *[os* *boko-kay-a=is].*
PRO.3N.AB whip ART.N.PST advise-INV-LV=3PL.AB
'It was the WHIP that educated them.' (Sp. '*Lo que los educaba era el chicote.*')
[HRR_081009_isbijaw 169]

(47) *Ban* *isko* *so:no* *[kis* *tij<a>choł-a=a].*
but PRO.3PL.AB turtle ART.PL.AB announce<DR>-LV=3N
'But it's the TURTLES (to which) it (i.e. the weather) announces (that it's time to lay eggs).' (Sp. '*Pero son las petas a las que anuncia.*') [ERM_150806 732]

However, example (48), partly repeated from (40) above, shows that definiteness cannot be the central factor. Here we are dealing with direct speech, and at least according to the way in which the events are presented in the story, the person speaking is pointing out for the first time that there is a jaguar. However, the speaker is referring to a specific animal, namely the one that the dogs had encountered (recall the context given in [39] above).

(48) *Ban* *a'ko* *rulrul* *[as* *kwey-na=is* *pa:ko* jayna], jankwa=us.
but PRO.3N jaguar ART.N follow-DR=ART.PL dog DSC said_thing=3M.AB
'It's a JAGUAR the dogs are chasing now, he said.' [EAO Jaguar 089-090]

It seems that the free pronoun in this construction implies either specific (though not necessarily definite) or generic reference. This supports the analysis of the construction as a cleft, since according to some approaches, clefts are necessarily "specificational" (see Declerck 1988): The relative clause provides the value (here, the fact that something is being chased) for the variable expressed in the matrix clause (here, the jaguar), and the variable is a member of a list of possible alternatives (here, a jaguar, an anteater, or some other wild animal).

5.2. The matrix clause of the cleft

The matrix clause of the Movima cleft is an intransitive, equational clause, which can also occur independently. I will here refer to this construction as "pronominal clause" (see Haude 2018a for a more detailed analysis). In (49), the pronominal clause in bold-face is an answer to a question. (The pattern of the first, negated pronominal clause will be discussed below.)

(49) *Che* *jankwa=us* *usko,* *ka=s* *rey*
and said_thing=3M.AB PRO.3M.AB COP.NEG=DET EPIST
a'ko-niwa *bana:ma,* *jankwa=us.*
PRO.3N-VBZ:NMZ anteater said_thing=3M.AB
– *Jayłe* *ełeła=a?* – *A'ko* *rulrul,* jankwa=us.
then what_is=3N.AB PRO.3N jaguar said_thing=3M.AB
'And he, he said, "It's not (an) anteater", he said. – "Then what is it?" – "It's (a) JAGUAR", he said.' [EAO_tigreyperro_150808 031-032]

As was mentioned above, the pronominal clause is much more appropriate for forming an identificational clause, in which the nominal predicate has a specific referent, than a nominal predicate. This is illustrated with a proper noun in (50) and a possessed noun in (51).

(50) *Jina:nak* *u'ko* *Ernan.*
perhaps PRO.3M Ernan
'Perhaps he (i.e. the man approaching at a distance) is Ernan.' [EAO Cbba 171]

(51) *I'ne* *alwaj-a=u.*
PRO.3F spouse-LV=3M
'She is his wife.' [ERM_150806 800]

Clefts with a possessed noun and a proper noun, respectively, are shown in (52) and (53).

(52) *Ka=s* *jayna* *ten<a>panłe:-wa=Ø* *[os*
COP.NEG=DET DSC be_able_to<DR>-NMZ=1SG ART.N.PST
way-na:-wa=Ø *[os* *tochik]].* *Asko* *ja'*
grab-DR-NMZ=1SG ART.N.PST small PRO.3N.AB just
ma:ma=as *[os* *way-na=Ø],* *jo:jo'.*
mother_of=3N.AB ART.N.PST grab-DR=1SG yes
'I couldn't grab the small one. It was only ITS MOTHER that I grabbed.' [EGA_Cazando 080]

(53) *U'ko* *Ro:ke* *łat* *[us* *jo'yaj].*
PRO.3M Roque EV ART.M arrive
'It's ROQUE, you see, the (one who) arrived.' [ERM_150806 776]

On the structural side, there is quite a fundamental difference between the pronominal clause and a nominal predicate: Its syntactic predicate is the pronoun (see Haude 2018a). Evidence comes from negation (as well as from other embedded structures, like complement and adverbial clauses, which have the form of RPs; see [52]). Main-clause negation, already present in several examples above, is formed with a negative copula, *ka*, to which the determiner morpheme *=s* (identical with the final element of the article) is attached. The negated predicate is nominalized. Verbal predicates are nominalized with the suffix *-wa*; nominal predicates are either reduplicated, or they receive the suffix *-łe*. Nominalized verbs and nouns are marked as possessed, i.e. also intransitive predicates are combined with an encliticized internal argument. A negated verbal clause is shown in (54) with the verb *kayni* 'die', nominalized with the suffix *-wa*. Reduplication of a nominal predicate is shown in

(55), and suffixation with *-łe* is shown in (56) (where a verbal RP occurs in topic position before the predicate, not discussed here).[11]

(54) *Ban* *ka=s* *kayni-wa=us.*
but COP.NEG=DET die-NMZ:EV=3M.AB
'But he didn't die.' (Lit.: 'His dying was not.') [EAO_240807_vibora 139]

(55) *Jayna* *ka=s* *mo:to-to<da~>da=a.*
DSC COP.NEG=DET motorbike-piece<NMZ.ST~>=3N
'Now it is not a broken motorbike anymore.' (Lit.: 'Its being a broken motorbike is not anymore,' i.e., it has been repaired.) [EAO Moto 006]

(56) *[kos* *jayna* *dok-pa:to]* *ka=s* *mowi:maj-łe=as*
ART.N.AB DSC put_on-CLF.shoe COP.NEG=DET Movima-NMZ.ST=3N.AB
'Someone who wears shoes is not a Movima.' (Lit.: 'Someone who wears shoes, his/her being Movima is not.') [HRR_081009_isbijaw 106]

When a pronominal clause is embedded, it is the pronoun, not the content word that is nominalized. Like other function words, the pronoun is nominalized with the suffix *-niwa*, probably a fossilized combination of the verbalizer *-ni* and the verbal nominalizing suffix *-wa*. This is shown in (57), extracted from (49) above. Nominalized pronouns are not marked as possessed (presumably because they would be coreferential with the possessor; see Haude [2018a] for more details). Just to give a fuller picture, example (58) features a pronominal clause functioning as a complement clause, as well as a negated free pronoun occurring on its own.

(57) *Ka=s* *rey* *a'ko-niwa* *bana:ma.*
COP.NEG=DET EPIST PRO.3N-VBZ:NMZ anteater
'It's not an anteater.' [EAO_tigreyperro_150808 031]

(58) *Che* *rey* *inła* *kem<a:>ye=Ø* *[os*
and EPIST PRO.1SG assume<DR>=1SG ART.N.PST
asko-niwa *bana:ma],* *che* *rey*
PRO.3N.AB-VBZ:NMZ anteater and EPIST
di' *ka=s* *asko-niwa.*
HYP COP.NEG=DET PRO.3N.AB-VBZ:NMZ
'And I assumed it was a Giant Anteater, and apparently it wasn't.'
[EAO_tigreyperro_150808 027-028]

Since nominalization applies to the predicate of an embedded construction, the fact that in the pronominal clause the pronoun is nominalized, while the content word is not, is a sign that the pronoun is not just a fronted argument expression: Syntactically, it is the predicate of the construction. Another piece of evidence for the predicate status of the free pronoun is that it can occur as a predicate of its own, like the negated form in (58); in that case, however, the pronoun receives prosodic prominence (shown by high pitch), which it does not when cooccurring with a content word.

How can it be explained that the pronoun is the predicate, while the content word bears the assertive function of the utterance and is also the prosodically prominent element of the clause? The

[11] Verbal nominalization is glossed as 'event nominalization (NMZ.EV)' and nominal nominalization is glossed as 'state nominalization (NMZ.ST)'. This convention is based on the hypothesis proposed in Haude (2011) that the nominalizing morpheme is not triggered by the lexical base, but that it indicates whether the resulting word denotes an event or a state.

construction can be understood if one analyzes the free pronoun as a copula. It is well-known that personal pronouns can diachronically develop into copulas (and vice versa; see Katz 1996; Stassen 1997: 77-85, among others), and the Movima sentence-initial free pronoun may represent an intermediate stage in this development. Analyzing the pronoun as an (emergent) copula makes it possible to analyze the following noun (or verb, see Haude 2018b) as the predicate of the construction. In this way, the syntactic structure corresponds with the pragmatic function of the noun of expressing an assertion. (Note, in addition, that the content word following the pronoun has the same characteristics of non-finiteness as the predicate of a relative clause, showing that also the pronominal clause has a complex internal structure; see Haude 2018a.).

Summing up, unlike the predicate-nominal focus construction, whose focus interpretation is achieved by placing the noun in the focus (or comment/rheme) position and the verb in the topic (or theme) position of the clause, the construction with the initial free pronoun is structurally complex. The nominal-predicate construction has the structure of a simple clause: 'X (is the one who) is/does Y'. The construction with the pronoun, by contrast, is syntactically complex and contains an additional (semantically redundant) pronoun that is absent from the corresponding basic clause. It has a biclausal structure, which can roughly be paraphrased as: 'He/she/it is X (, the one) who does Y.'

6. Conclusion

Movima has two syntactic focus constructions, which on first sight look very similar. They both contain a nominal predicate and a verbal argument RP, i.e. an RP that contains a subordinated verbal clause specifying the referent. One of these constructions is a simple intransitive clause. Its pragmatic markedness stems from the fact that the prototypical association of the information-structural categories comment (predicate) and topic (argument) with the lexical categories verb and noun, respectively, is inverted. As a result, the comment is a characterization of the participant involved in a given event, and not, as in a basic (verbal) clause, a description of the event in which a given participant is involved.

The other focus construction seems to differ from the former only in that the nominal predicate is accompanied by a free pronoun. However, this construction is syntactically complex, since the combination of the pronoun and the noun creates an equational clause, whose nominal predicate is further specified by the verbal argument RP. I suggest that the presence of the pronoun leads to a referential (specific or generic) interpretation of the focused participant. Therefore, this construction can be analyzed as a cleft: Not only does it have a biclausal structure, it also conveys a specificational reading, which is often taken as a central criterion for defining cleft constructions (see, for instance, Declerck 1988: 149). Unlike the syntactically simple nominal-predicate construction, the construction with the free pronoun *identifies* the topic entity instead of just characterizing it: The pronoun, which also functions as a copula, is fully referential, the noun characterizes the referent, and the verbal RP expresses the situation in which the referent of the pronoun is involved.

Based on their use in discourse, the functional contrast between the two constructions can be understood as corresponding to categories that are well-established in the literature: The difference between predication and specification (Declerck 1988), or between predicate focus and argument focus (Lambrecht 1994). In Lambrecht's (2001: 485) terms, the predicate (or "unmarked") focus has the function of "predicating a property relative to a given topic (… also called 'topic-comment' or 'categorical' function)". The argument focus, in contrast, has the function of "identifying or specifying an argument in a presupposed open proposition (… also called 'focus-presupposition,' 'specificational,' 'identificational,' or 'contrastive' function)".

It is the latter function that is (or can be) expressed by a cleft in many languages (Lambrecht 2001: 485), while the former is expressed by a simple predication. As was shown in this paper, the nominal-predicate focus construction is a simple predicate focus, while the construction with the free pronoun has an internally complex, biclausal structure, and corresponds to the pragmatic function of argument focus.

All that said, it seems obvious that the terminology established in the literature on clefts can be misleading for an omnipredicative language like Movima, where the focused "argument" is, in fact, the predicate. Similarly, what is commonly labelled "cleft clause" (e.g. Hartmann and Veenstra 2013, Hedberg 2000), is in fact the subordinate predicate that occurs inside the argument *phrase* (the RP) in Movima. This shows that clefts can come in many different shapes, and the theoretical and typological research on clefts needs to take into account more data from lesser-known languages in order to arrive at a universally applicable framework.

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