PredP & Person in Kinande

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BACKGROUND. Predication is one of the most fundamental relations that exists in the grammar of a language. Nonetheless, its exact structure remains unclear. Stowell's (1981, 1983) work on non-verbal predication, as in (1), suggests *small clause* is the basic unit of predication, where SC is a projection of the predicate. However, the fact that a nominal predicate can have a possessor (2) argues against that view. If multiple specifiers are not allowed and if small clauses are projected directly from the predicate, it should not be possible for there to be a subject of predication when a nominal predicate has a possessor. This is an inaccurate prediction (3).

> (1) John considered [Roy an idiot].　　(2) [*her daughter's* enemy]
> (3) Ok: Kirsten considered [***Roy*** [*her daughter's* enemy]]

These and other considerations lead to the proposal that predication does not arise as a direct projection of the predicate. If, instead, predication is mediated by a functional head, then nothing prevents a possessed nominal from being predicated of a subject:

(4) [Roy [Pred^0 [her daughter's enemy]]]

Analyses of predication along these lines have been proposed by researchers such as Bowers (1993), Dechaine (1993), and den Dikken (2006). Specifically, Bowers proposes a dedicated functional projection for predication that he calls *PredPhrase*, headed by the functional category *Pred*.

(5) [$_{PREDP}$ ZP [$_{PRED}$ Pred [XP]]]

Matushansky & de Dreu (2009) call the existence of PredP into question. Specifically, they argue that Bantu languages provide no evidence in favor of its existence. I present here evidence from Bantu languages, and Kinande in particular, in support of PredP.

THE DATA. When Bantu languages are considered, and primary non-verbal predication is examined, a widespread phenomenon is for an invariant, non-tense-marked particle to occur in the present tense. An example of a language with such a strategy is Kinande, where the invariant particle "ni" mediates predication:

(6) a. Kambale **ni** mugalimu　　　　　　　b. Abantu **ni** bagalimu
　　　Kambale is 1teacher　　　　　　　　　2man　is 2teacher
　　　'Kambale is a teacher.'　　　　　　　　'The men are teachers.'

Invariant particles are not rare cross-linguistically in primary predication. However, they are not widely attested in secondary predication. Kinande is an exception, and invariant particles mediate predication in contexts of secondary predication:

(7) SMALL CLAUSE　　　　　　　　　　　　OBJECT DEPICTIVE
　　a.ngáconsidere Mariá *(**mó**) mwira　wage　　b. Kámbale mwálya enyamá　*(**mó**) mbísi
　　　1sg.consider 1Maria **MO** 1friend 1.my　　　Kambale 3sg.ate 9meat　**MO** 9raw
　　　'I consider Maria my friend.'　　　　　　　'Kambale ate the meat raw.'

DISCUSSION. The invariant particle found in primary predication is not restricted to present tense. It is also found in specificational predications in non-present tenses in Kinande. It is the lower element in the functional domain, and the copula is the higher tense-bearing element. This suggests that both tense and predicational domains are involved. Furthermore, the higher, tensed, element is not invariant, but instead agrees with the subject:

(8) a. ómwibí　**ni** Magúlu　　　　　　　　**PRESENT TENSE**
　　　aug-thief　is　Magulu
　　　'The thief is Magulu.'

　　b. ómwibí　á-bya *(í-**ni**)　Magúlu　　　　**PAST TENSE**
　　　aug-thief　3sg-was　NI　Magulu

The distribution of invariant particles in Kinande is exactly as predicted if small clauses are headed by a functional particle, rather than the predicate.

An asymmetry in person agreement and predication provides additional support for PredP. 1st and 2nd person subjects must use the agreeing verbal copula, rather than the invariant particle found with 3rd person subjects:

(9) a. ingyé *ni /ok: nyi-li   mugalímu   b. iyé *ok: ni* /*a-li   mugalímu
   I   *NI/   1sg-be 1teacher   he   NI /*3sg-be 1teacher
   'I am a teacher.'   'He is a teacher.'

ANALYSIS. Following Chomsky 2005, 2007, Miyagawa 2010, Richards 2010 (a.o.) φ and discourse features are introduced in the left periphery and can be/are inherited on a lower head, such as T.

- Observation: PRED cannot inherit φ features. It is well established that T does.
- Third person features are default. First and second person are not and in particular, they are associated with the speech act projections of the left edge in root contexts. Therefore, first and second, but not third person features are heritable and must be dealt with syntactically.
- PRED raises as a last resort to provide morphological support to the person features inherited by T. Third person, lacking features, cannot participate in the last resort movement to T to support person features. Third person PRED then remains low, within PredP.

Non-verbal predication involving focused subjects also reveal a 1st & 2nd person versus third person asymmetry:

- There are no possible agreeing copulas for 1st and 2nd person focused subjects of predication: there is simply the 1st or 2nd person pronoun and the predicate (10).
- 3rd person subjects no longer have an invariant particle in non-verbal predication constructions when they are focused. Now they have an agreeing form (11).

(10)   ingye (*nyi-li)   mugéni
    I   1st-be   1guest
   'I am the one who is a guest.'/'It is me who is a guest.'/*I am a guest.

(11)   a. Kambale/ iyondi   (*ni*)   *yo*   mugalímu
      1Kambale/ 1who   NI   3sg.FOC   1teacher
      'It is Kambale who is a teacher.' 'Who is it who is a teacher?'
       *'Kambale/who is a teacher.'

I follow Preminger's (2011) (a.o.'s) idea that agreement features such as person and number, etc. can probe separately from another. Moreover, I consider focus to be an agreement feature in Kinande (cf. Miyagawa's 2010 proposal that Kinande is a language where discourse features such as +/-focus play a role in governing the distribution of agreement). Further, I assume that *person*, related to speech act projections, is higher than focus.

- adapting Preminger 2011, the following configuration exists:
  $[\ldots [\ldots [_{\pi P} \pi^0 [_{FocP} Foc^0 [\ldots DP \ldots]]]\ldots]]$
  Focus intervenes between the probing person head and its goal and prevents successful AGREE. Failure of person probing in the presence of FOC^0 is only a problem for 1st and 2nd person given the assumption that there are no syntactically manifested 3rd person features.
- PRED raises to T to provide (abstract) morphological support for FOC^0+failed person agreement. The Kinande -specific "repair" for failed agreement with 1st and 2nd person forms is not to present the grammar with a potentially agreeing form, but with a null form instead (10).
- No intervention problem for 3rd person focused subjects, because only 1st and 2nd person involve syntactically relevant person features. Since focus is a feature in T (post-inheritance) in this construction, PRED raises to provide it with morphological support. Therefore, instead of an invariant form, as was found when PRED remained in PredP, a focus form appears (11).

EXTENSIONS. The extensive use of an invariant particle in primary and secondary non-verbal predications in Kinande, coupled with asymmetric behavior of 3rd person versus 1st and 2nd person, supports the idea that PredP is relevant to the syntax of Kinande. Moreover, the interaction of person and focus in copular constructions indicates that the canonical forms used for mediating predication are not available when focus of the subject is in play. This new paradigm involving copular clauses reveals another area of the grammar of Kinande that manifests anti-agreement.

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