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3. Crucial issues in non-verbal predication: A questionnaire

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As stated at the end of the introductory chapter, in sketching the main issues relevant to the present topic, we made a conscious effort to adopt a theory-neutral position. Our aim was to define a set of descriptive concepts able to capture the diversity of non-verbal predication structures in the world's languages.

Here we offer, for practical purposes, a kind of condensed summary. The following list of questions should ideally be considered for a systematic account of non-verbal predication in any given language or language family. There may be further issues to consider, but the ones itemized here appear to us as the most relevant ones. The contributors to this collection were invited to adopt this list as a source of inspiration, also in the hope to obtain an organic collection of studies.

The research questions are organized into five sets, respectively concerning:

- (1) the word classes involved
- (2) the syntactic types
- (3) the semantic types
- (4) locational and possessive structures
- (5) finally, a number of morphosyntactic issues.

1. *Non-verbal predication and word classes*

- 1.1. Does the language/family have a morphosyntactic class of adjectives, and if so, does their predicative behavior distinguish them from verbs?

- 1.2. If in the language/family the predicative behavior of adjectives is distinct from that of verbs, is it also distinct from the predicative behavior of nouns, and if so, to what extent?
- 1.3. Does the language/family distinguish between contingent and permanent attributive function of non-verbal predicates? Is the distinction restricted to specific word classes, e.g. adjectives?
- 1.4. In the language/family, is adverbial predication limited to locational predication? More generally, which types of adverbial predication are allowed?
- 1.5. Does the language/family exclude or constrain the usage of a specific word class in predicative position (for instance, excluding certain types of adverb)?

2. Syntactic types of non-verbal predicative construction

- 2.1. Which construction type(s) can be found in the language/family?
- 2.2. If two or three construction types are in competition, what is their respective distribution? In particular, if the juxtaposition construction is attested in the language/family, what are the factors that condition its use?
- 2.3. If the language/family adopts the copula construction, does it have different types of copula, and what are their respective functions?
- 2.4. If the language/family has copula elements, can one trace back their historical origin?
- 2.5. If the language/family adopts the predicative inflection construction, which precise kind of predicative inflection does it have? Is it possible to trace back its historical origin?

3. Semantic types of non-verbal predication

- 3.1. Does the language/family distinguish between the way in which proper inclusion and identity predication are expressed?

- 3.2. How does the specificity parameter interact with the various non-verbal predication types?
- 3.3. How do the parameters of information structure and constituent order interact with the various non-verbal predication types?
- 3.4. In the language/family, do ostensive clauses involve a dedicated ostensive marker? If so, is it possible to trace back its historical origin? If not, what is the strategy found in the language/family to express ostension?

4. *Locational and possessive structures*

- 4.1. In the language/family, are inverse-locational clauses systematically distinguished from plain-locational clauses, and if so, which kind of ILP-construction is used?
- 4.2. In the language/family, is the construction used for ILP available to express other “existential” meanings (in particular, pure existence, especially with reference to non-localizable entities)?
- 4.3. What is the strategy used in the language/family to express plain-possessive predication? Is it related in some way or another to locational predication?
- 4.4. Does the language/family express inverse-possessive predication by means of a construction in which the predicate phrase is (the reduced form of) an adnominal possession construction, or in any other way?
- 4.5. In the language/family, which construction type is used for quantification? Is it used more or less systematically to avoid existential constructions with a “noun + quantitative modifier” in the role of figure or possessive constructions with a “noun + quantitative modifier” in the role of possessee?

5. *Morphosyntactic issues*

- 5.1. In the given language/family, do nominal predicates show functive flagging or some other kind of overt flagging?
- 5.2. In the language/family, is nominal predication characterized by a particular use of discourse marking elements such as assertion markers or focus markers?
- 5.3. Is the argument of a non-verbal predication coded like the argument of semantically monovalent verbs, or does it exhibit a different kind of coding?
- 5.4. Does the language/family have different negation strategies in non-verbal predication, possibly limited to a particular subtype thereof?
- 5.5. How does the parameter of illocutionary force interact with the various non-verbal predication types?
- 5.6. How does the coding of the various non-verbal predication types interact with the insertion of clauses as elements of complex constructions (as illustrated in Section 5.5)?
- 5.7. Which nominal features are preserved in predicative nouns? Consider in particular number, gender/noun-class, and the possibility of having determiner (article/demonstrative), possession, adjectival modification, numerical specification.
- 5.8. If the language/family has adjectives, which features are preserved in predicative adjectives? Consider in particular number and gender/noun-class.
- 5.9. Which verbal features are acquired by non-verbal predicative elements (nouns, adjectives, adverbials, quantifiers)? Consider in particular person agreement and the various TAM features available in the given language/family.
- 5.10. Are the copula elements in the language/family in any way related to the category of auxiliary (e.g., by having the same phonetic expression, despite functional difference)?

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