Predication in Budai Rukai Cleft Sentences

This paper aims to analyze a type of cleft constructions of Budai Rukai (Austronesian, Taiwan) and argues that the morphosyntax of an overt copula and nominal root contributes to predication. As a predicate-initial language, Budai Rukai allows a flexible order among the post-predicate nominal arguments due to case marking. A declarative sentence like (1a) has a predicate-initial word order, in which the nominative case-marked agent follows the predicate. The agent can be positioned before the verb to receive a specificational interpretation, as in (1b). In recent works, sentences comparable to (1b) have been analyzed as cleft or pseudo-cleft sentences for some Austronesian languages, such as Malagasy, Seediq, and Tagalog (e.g., Aldridge 2002, 2014; Paul 2001; Potsdam 2006; Law 2005, 2007), as exemplified by (2). Notably, unlike English, these sentences do not have an overt copula. One goal of this paper is then to show that Rukai as an Austronesian language has a cleft construction with an overt copula.

(1)   a. tu-a-daane   ka   Takanaw.
           make-NF-house NOM Takanaw
           'Takanaw built a house.'
    b. Takanaw ka   tu-a-daane.
           Takanaw NOM make-NF-house
           'Takanaw is (the one) who built a house.'

(2)   a. I Sahondra no   nanapaka   ity   hazo ity.   (Malagasy, Paul 2001:ex.10a)
           Sahondra   DET PST.AT.cut this   tree   this
           (lit.) 'The one who cut this tree was Sahondra.
    b. Bulebun ka [b-n-ari   na   Ape]   (Seediq, Aldridge 2002:ex.60)
           banana Abs -Perf-buy Erg Ape
           'A banana is what Ape bought.'

The structure that can be used to place a focus on a nominal phrase contains *(ka)mani*, as in (3). What separates the constructions in (3) from (1b) is the appearance of a tense-marked predicate, as well as an exhaustive reading with presupposition. The sentences presuppose a house-building event, in a non-future or future time frame, and conveys that Takanaw is the only person who accomplished or will accomplish that event. While Rukai has grammatical nonfuture and future tenses, tense marking (*a-*: NF, nonfuture; *lri-*: FUT, future) allows the eventualities of identifying and house-making to receive independent temporal interpretations, as indicated in (a-d).

(3)   **A-mani**/lri-**kamani**   ka   Takanaw   ka   tu-a-daane/lri-tu-daane.
        NF-(KA)MANI/FUT-KAMANI NOM Takanaw   COMP   make-NF-house/FUT-make-house
    a. 'It is/was Takanaw who builds/built a house.'
    b. 'It is/was Takanaw who will build a house.'
    c. 'It will be Takanaw who builds/built a house.'
    d. 'It will be Takanaw who will build a house.'

The predicate *kamani* contains *ka*, which bears the same form as that of a nominative case marker, a definite determiner, a relativizer, and a complementizer in Rukai. In the current analysis, *ka* is considered as a copula which heads a verbal phrase. As (4) shows, *mani* is obligatory, and *ka* cannot be a predicate on its own.

(4)   *lri-ka   ka   Takanaw ka   lri-tu-daane.
        FUT-COP NOM Takanaw COMP FUT-make-house

The cleft-forming element *kamani* is analyzed as a morphosyntactic composite, consisting of *ka* and *mani* analytically. The further analysis builds on these observations: The copula *ka* appears in various predicational constructions like a general relator (cf. Den Dikken 2006), the indefinite root *mani* patterns similarly with interrogative-forming roots, and *kamani* patterns with demonstratives in Rukai both in form and function.

Based on a comparable pattern seen in the formation of interrogatives and indefinites with a set of indefinite roots, given in (5), *mani* in the predicate *(ka)mani* is analyzed as the generic indefinite root (INDF) which is not marked for a [human] feature. Thus, *mani* is referential in nature (cf. English *it* in Gundel 1977, Hedberg 2000). While *ka* is analyzed as an overt copula, it enables the indefinite root to be part of the predicate, which in turn can be tense-marked.

(5) Rukai indefinite roots and interrogatives

a.	***mani***	(generic)	***maimani***	'something'
a'.	*mane*	[-human]	*manemane*	'what (interrogative); something'
b.	*ani*	[+human]	*aniani*	'someone'
b'.	*ane*	[+human]	*aneane*	'who (interrogative); someone'

The comparison of *kamani* and demonstratives such as *kuini* 'that' is situated under the three-way split analysis for proforms proposed by Déchaine & Wiltschko (2002). It is argued that *kamani* is a predicate built out of an expression which bears nominal features. The [*kamani* + DP] structure as seen in (3), and (6), can be reduced to a predicational structure; *ka* is a predicate head, which takes a nominal root *mani* as its complement, as compared to *kuini* 'that' which is formed by combining the determiner *ku* and the third person proform *ini*. The nominal root *mani* contributes to the predicational phrase with a sense of identification, and *ka* changes the semantics of the nominal root into a property of identification (cf. Adger & Ramchand 2003). Under the analysis, the determiner-like morpheme *ka* does not project a DP structure but a predicate phrase, along the line of Bowers 1993.

Accordingly, it is argued that Rukai cleft sentences consist of a small clause which achieves minimal predication. *Kamani* has no DP syntax but only predicate syntax, and the analysis accounts for the following facts: The predicate appears in sentence-initial position, can be marked for tense, can attract pronominal clitics, and appears in infinitival embedded clauses such as (6).

(6) … la   [ka-mani   ka   Takanaw]$_{SC}$ …
     COMP   COP-INDF   NOM   Takanaw
     'Then it is Takanaw (that/who …)'

In the proposed layered structure, the nominal φP is headed by the feature-bearing *mani* and is a complement of a head which projects a predicational phrase, not a DP; φP can be a complement of a head which projects either a DP or a VP. This paper shows that Rukai has cleft sentences which need to be separated from pseudo-clefts, and it also indicates that Rukai is a language which provides evidence for syntax across nominal and verbal domains.

Selected References: Adger, David & Gillian Ramchand. 2003. Predication and equation. *Linguistic Inquiry* 34(3). 325–359. • Aldridge, E. (2002). Nominalization and wh-movement in Seediq and Tagalog. *Language and Linguistics*, *3*(2), 393-426. • Déchaine, Rose-Marie & Martina Wiltschko. 2002. Decomposing pronouns. *Linguistic Inquiry* 33(3). 409–442. • Den Dikken, M. (2006). *Relators and linkers: The syntax of predication, predicate inversion, and copulas* (Vol. 47). MIT press. • Paul, I. (2001). Concealed pseudo-clefts. *Lingua*, 111, 707–727.