Copula agreement and the stage-level/individual-level distinction in Washo

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Washo copulas come in two forms, one with a *k-* prefix and one without: *k'eʔi* 'it is', and *ʔeʔi* 'it is'. We discuss a possible morpho-syntactic explanation of the distribution of this prefix before ultimately settling on a semantic explanation. The presence of the *k-* prefix tracks individual-level copular predications, while its absence tracks stage-level copular predications. Evidence for this hypothesis comes from strategies of nominalization and relativization in Washo.

1   An agreement puzzle in Washo copula constructions

In Washo, a linguistic isolate of the Lake Tahoe region of California and Nevada, the pronominal agreement paradigm on the copula *eʔ* differs from the standard pronominal agreement paradigm. In the standard paradigm, pronominal subjects and objects appear as prefixes to the verb (Washo is an SOV language). The phonological shape of the prefixes depends on whether the verb stem is vowel-initial (1) or consonant-initial (2).

(1) a. *méːhu* **líːgiyi**
         meːhu **l-iːgi-yi**
         boy   1.SBJ-see-IPFV

         'I see the boy.'

     b. *méːhu* **míːgiyi**
         meːhu **m-iːgi-yi**
         boy   2.SBJ-see-IPFV

         'You see the boy.'

     c. *méːhu* **ʔíːgiyi**
         meːhu **ʔ-iːgi-yi**
         boy   3.SBJ-see-IPFV

         'S/he/it sees the boy.'

     d. **k'íːgiyi**
         k'-iːgi-yi
         3.UNEXPRESSED.OBJ/3.SBJ-see-IPFV

         'S/he/it sees it.'

(2) a. *síːsu* ***didámali***
         siːsu **di-damal-i**
         bird   1.SBJ-hear-IPFV

         'I hear the bird.'

     b. *síːsu* ***ʔumdámali***
         siːsu **ʔum-damal-i**
         bird   2.SBJ-hear-IPFV

         'You hear the bird.'

     c. *síːsu* ***dámali***
         siːsu ⊘-**damal-i**
         bird   (3.SBJ)-hear-IPFV

         'S/he/it hears the bird.'

     d. ***gadámali***
         ga-⊘**-damal-i**
         3.UNEXPRESSED.OBJ-(3.SBJ)-hear-IPFV

         'S/he/it hears it.'

However, there are two distinct agreement patterns for copula constructions. The first pattern (3) resembles the standard paradigm. The second pattern (4) is unique to the copula construction.

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(3) a. *mé:Luduŋ* **léʔi**
        me:Lu-duŋ **l-eʔ-i**
        old.man-like 1.SBJ-COP-IPFV

        'I am like an old man.'

(4) a. *mé:Lu* **Léʔi**
        me:Lu **L-eʔ-i**
        old.man 1-COP-IPFV

        'I am an old man.'

   b. *súkuduŋ* **méʔi**
        suku-duŋ **m-eʔ-i**
        dog-like 2.SBJ-COP-IPFV

        'You are like a dog.'

   b. *súkuʔ* **Méʔi**
        suku-ʔ **M-eʔ-i**
        dog 2-COP-IPFV

        'You are a dog.'

   c. *súkuduŋ* **ʔéʔi**
        suku-duŋ **ʔ-eʔ-i**
        dog-like 3.SBJ-COP-IPFV

        'He is like a dog.'

   c. *súkuʔ* **k'éʔi**
        suku-ʔ **k'-eʔ-i**
        dog K-3.SUBJ-COP-IPFV

        'He is a dog.'

In this paper, we propose to analyze the pronominal paradigm in (4) as the result of adding a *k-* prefix to the standard agreement paradigm. The voiceless resonants are assumed here to be the phonological reflexes of the fusion of *k-* with a modal-voiced resonant as illustrated in (5). Further evidence for these processes comes from the occasional pronunciation of word-initial voiceless resonants as clusters of *k* plus a modal voice resonant.[1] In what follows, we discuss a potential morpho-syntactic explanation of the distribution of this prefix in Section 2 before ultimately settling on a semantic explanation in Section 3. In particular, we argue that the presence of the *k-* prefix tracks individual-level copular predications, while its absence tracks stage-level copular predications. Evidence for this hypothesis comes from strategies of nominalization (Section 4) and relativization (Section 5) in Washo.

(5)

FIRST PERSON	SECOND PERSON	THIRD PERSON
k- + *l-* → *L-*	*k-* + *m-* → *M-*	*k-* + *ʔ-* → *k'-*

2 A syntactic solution

The task is therefore to explain the distribution and function of the morpheme *k-* in certain copula constructions. In this section, we explore a morphosyntactic explanation for the distribution and function of the *k-* morpheme: *k-* appears when the copula equates two NPs, and otherwise the regular agreement paradigm is used. Evidence from nominal predicates, nominalized verbal predicates, and internally-headed relative clauses supports this hypothesis.

First, with nominal predicates, the copula is prefixed with *k-* (6).

(6) *t'é:liwhu* *dókto* *k'éʔi*
     t'e:liwhu dokto k-ʔ-eʔ-i
     man doctor K-3.SBJ-COP-IPFV

     'The man is a doctor.'

Tense and aspect marking cannot appear on nouns in Washo; these features are expressed on the copula. Second, copular constructions involving nominalized verbal predicates require *k-*. Adjectival predications (*x is adj*) in Washo usually involve a verbal predicate (the "adjective") (8).

(7) *t'é:liwhu* *ʔilkáykayiʔi*
     t'e:liwhu ʔil-kaykay-iʔ-i
     man ATTR-tall-ATTR-IPFV

     'The man is tall.'

However, an alternative strategy for adjectival predications involves nominalizing the verbal adjective using a nominalizing prefix *de-/t'-*. In these nominalizations, the copula appears with the *k-* prefix (**??**).

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[1]A similar diachronic proposal for this paradigm is offered by Jacobsen (1977), though here we contend that this alternation is synchronically active in the copula agreement paradigm.

(8) *t'é:liwhu* **da***lkáykayiʔ*   *k'éʔi*
     t'e:liwhu **de-**ʔil-kaykay-iʔ   k-ʔ-eʔ-i
     man   NMLZ-ATTR-tall-ATTR   K-3.SBJ-COP-IPFV

     'The man is tall.'

As with regular NPs, tense and aspect marking falls only on the copula and not on the nominalized verbal predicate.

The *de-/t'-* strategy of nominalization applies to other verbal predicates (9), and the *k-* prefixed copula shows up with these predicates as well (10). In each case, the predicate does not take tense or aspect marking, but the copula does.

(9) *géwe*   *t'ánuŋa*   *ʔiʔiwé:si*
     gewe   t'anu-ŋa   ʔ-iʔiw-e:s-i
     coyote   person-NC   3.SBJ-eat-NEG-IPFV

     'The coyote didn't eat anybody.' / 'The coyote didn't eat a person.'

(10) *géwe*   *t'ánuŋa*   **t'***iʔiwé:s*   *k'éʔi*
     gewe   t'anu-ŋa   **t'-**iʔiw-e:s   k-ʔ-eʔ-i
     coyote   person-NC   NMLZ-eat-NEG   K-3.SBJ-COP-IPFV

     'Coyotes don't eat people.' / 'Coyotes are not people-eaters.'

Additional evidence for the morphosyntactic analysis of *k-* comes from internally-headed relative clauses (IHRCs). IHRCs in Washo are marked with the suffixes *-gi*, when used as the subject argument for the matrix predicate (11), or *-ge*, when used as the non-subject argument for the matrix predicate (12). These suffixes appear outside of all verbal inflection (including tense and aspect).

(11) *daʔmóʔmoʔ da*   *ʔéʔigi*   *p'imewaʔaš*
     daʔmoʔmoʔ da   ʔ-eʔ-i-gi   p'imewaʔ-aʔ-š
     woman   there 3.SBJ-COP-IPFV-SBJ.REL   go.out-AOR-SR

     'A woman who was there went outside'   Jacobsen (1981, 108)

(12) *t'é:liwhu*   *ʔišmiš***ge**   *lí:giyi*
     t'e:liwhu   ʔ-išm-i-š-**ge**   l-i:gi-i
     man   3.SBJ-sing-IPFV-SR-OBJ.REL   1.SBJ-see-IPFV

     'I saw the man who was singing.'

Based on data from anaphora and argument structure, Washo IHRCs have been argued to be nominalizations of entire clauses (Jacobsen (1981); Peachey (2006)). On these accounts, the suffixes *-gi* and *-ge* act as determiners picking out the "head noun" from the IHRC. This characterization supports the morphosyntactic hypothesis in conjunction with the observation that a *k-* prefixed copula (with tense and aspect marking) appears when the copula is the matrix verb of an IHRC (13).

(13) *lé:duŋ*   *duleʔéšigabi***gi**   *k'éʔle*
     le:-duŋ   duleʔ-eši-gab-i-**gi**   k'-eʔ-le
     1.PRO-like   hand-have-FUT-IPFV-SBJ.REL   3.UNEPX.OBJ-COP-redundant

     'They will have hands like me.'

Thus, in copular constructions with regular NPs, nominalized verbal predicates, and nominalized clauses, the copula is prefixed with *k-*. Since *k-* does not occur when one argument of the copula is not an NP (14), this suggests that *k-* appears when the arguments of a copula clause are both NPs. The prefix is thus related to argument selection. This explanation is supported by the existence of other Washo morphemes that regulate argument selection, like the causative morpheme *-ha*, which alters argument structure.

(14) a. *súkuʔ gárdina ʔéʔi*
      suku‌ʔ gardin-a ʔ-eʔ-i
      dog   garden-LOC 3.SBJ-COP-IPFV

      'The dog is in the garden.'

   b. *wáʔ léʔi*
      waʔ l-eʔ-i
      here 1.SBJ-COP-IPFV

      'I am here.'

However, we immediately encounter challenges to this generalization. First, we find the *k-* prefix in copular constructions whose arguments are not clearly both NPs. Source arguments (15a) and benefactive arguments (34) appear with postpositions, and there is no reason independent of the above generalization to consider these arguments NPs rather than PPs.

(15) a. *súkuʔ hada gárdinadi k'éʔi*
      sukuʔ hada gardin-adi k-ʔ-eʔ-i
      dog   here garden-from K-3.SBJ-COP-IPFV

      'The dog comes from the garden.'

   b. *wí:diʔ wá:laš tímlewe k'éʔi*
      wi:diʔ wa:laš tim-lewe k-ʔ-eʔ-i
      this   bread Tim-for K-3.SBJ-COP-IPFV

      'This bread is for Tim.'

Moreover, there is no other morphosyntactic motivation behind dividing Washo suffixes into an *-adi* and *-lewe* class, which require the *k-* prefix with copulas, and an *-a* and *-duŋ* class, which do not require the *k-* prefix with copulas. In the next session, we propose an alternative solution that is not similarly underinclusive.

3   A semantic solution: individual- vs. stage-level predicates

The semantic solution we propose is based on the distinction between individual-level versus stage-level predicates (Carlson (1977); Kratzer (1995)). An INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL predicate is one that is stative and names an essential, time-stable property of an individual. Two typical examples of individual-level predication are given in (16a) and (16b):

(16) a.   John knows French.

   b.   Mary is altruistic.

      Typically, these predicates are incompatible with locative modifiers, as in (17):

(17)   ??John knows French in Georgia.

A STAGE-LEVEL predicate is episodic in nature, and expresses an accidental or transitory property of an individual. Typical examples are shown in (18) and (19). Unlike individual-level predicates, stage-level predicates readily accept locative modifiers, as in (20).

(18)   John is speaking French.

(19)   Mary is available.

(20)   John is speaking French in Georgia.

Our proposal is that the distinction in the copula forms in Washo, namely the presence or absence of *k-*, tracks the individual- versus stage-level distinction. That the form of the copula should be implicated in such a distinction has cross-linguistic validity. For instance, this distinction has been argued to govern the choice of copula in Spanish (*ser* vs. *estar*) and in other languages such as Odia Mahapatra (2003) (though Maienborn (2005) ultimately argues that the i-/s-level distinction is not quite right for the Spanish data and offers an alternative analysis). Our proposal is summarized in (21):

(21)   **Washo copula hypothesis:**

a.   presence of *k-* → individual-level predication

b.   absence of *k-* → stage-level predication

This hypothesis is supported by the contrasts in (22) and (23). In (22), the predicate 'from Reno' is an individual-level property; Tim's being from Reno is a time-stable property of his. In this case, only the *k*-marked copula is grammatical. By contrast in (23), the predicate 'in Reno' is a stage-level property; Tim's being in Reno is a temporary property of his. In this case, the *k*-marked copula is ungrammatical. In both cases, the copula is connecting an individual, Tim, to a property expressed by a PP, showing that the choice of copula form is not a syntactic matter. Furthermore, (23b) shows that the *k*-marked copula is incompatible with a locative argument, following the pattern observed by Kratzer (1995).

(22)   a.   *tím   rínuwašilew   k'éʔi*
             tim   rinu-wašilew   k-ʔ-eʔ-i
             Tim   Reno-from   K-3.SBJ-COP-IPFV

             'Tim is from Reno'

       b.   **tím   rínuwašilew   ʔéʔi*
             tim   rinu-wašilew   ʔ-eʔ-i
             Tim   Reno-from   3.SBJ-COP-IPFV

             'Tim is from Reno'

(23)   a.   *tím   rínuya   ʔéʔi*
             tim   rinu-a   ʔ-eʔ-i
             Tim   Reno-LOC   3.SBJ-COP-IPFV

             'Tim is in Reno'

       b.   *tím   rínuya   k'éʔi*
             tim   rinu-ya   k-ʔ-eʔ-i
             Tim   Reno-LOC   K-3.SBJ-COP-IPFV

             'Tim is in Reno'

As expected under an analysis making an appeal to the individual- versus stage-level distinction, the *k*-marked copula corresponds with a stative interpretation of a predicate. In (24), a verbal form is used for an episodic interpretation of the predicate 'be drunk', while the use of a nominalized form results in a stative, generic interpretation, and only the *k*-marked copula is allowed.

(24)   a.   *daʔmóʔmoʔ   meléʔyɨgi*
             daʔmoʔmoʔ   meleʔyɨg-i
             woman   drunk-IPFV

             'The woman is drunk.'

       b.   *daʔmóʔmoʔ   demeléʔyɨgiʔ   k'éʔi*
             daʔmoʔmoʔ   de-meleʔyɨg-iʔ   k-ʔ-eʔ-i
             woman   NMLZ-drunk-ATTR   K-3.SBJ-COP-IPFV

             'The woman is a drunkard'

c. *daʔmóʔmoʔ demeléʔyɨgiʔ ʔéʔi*
   daʔmoʔmoʔ de-meleʔyɨg-iʔ ʔ-eʔ-i
   woman NMLZ-drunk-ATTR 3.SBJ-COP-IPFV

   Intended: 'The woman is a drunkard'

We get a similar contrast with the predicates 'warm' or 'hot', in this case being predicated of the sun, an entity that clearly has the time-stable property of being hot. Note, however, that the speaker's comments in (25) are still suggestive of the individual- versus stage-level distinction that we are proposing. When *yak'aš* 'warm' appears as a finite verb form, the interpretation is episodic, about the current weather conditions, while the nominalized form with the *k*-marked copula describe a more essential property of the sun as a hot entity. Note as well in (26) that the sentence with the temporal modifier *ʔloːt* 'yesterday' resists co-occurrence with the *k*-marked copula. If our analysis is correct, then the anomaly of (26b) derives from the clash between the time-stable interpretation of the predicate (as indicated by the use of the *k*-marked copula) and the episodic interpretation required by the temporal modifier.

(25) a. *díːbe yák'aši*
    diːbe yak'aš-i
    sun warm-IPFV

    'The sun is warm.'
    Speaker's comment: "It's like a comment on the day... like me walking outside and saying the sun is warm."

   b. *díːbe dayák'aš k'éʔi*
    diːbe de-yak'aš k-ʔ-eʔ-i
    sun NMLZ-warm K-3-COP-IPFV

    'The sun is hot.'
    Speaker comment: "You're just saying the sun is hot."

(26) a. *ʔlóːt díːbe yásaŋ šémuʔaygi*
    ʔloːt diːbe yasaŋ šemu-ayʔ-i
    yesterday sun hot very-INT.PST-IPFV

    'The sun was very hot yesterday.'

   b. **ʔlóːt díːbe dayásaŋ šému k'éʔaygi*
    ʔloːt diːbe de-yasaŋ šemu k-ʔ-eʔ-ayʔ-i
    yesterday sun NMLZ-hot very K-3.COP-INT.PST-IPFV

    Intended: 'The sun was very hot yesterday.'

The proposed analysis also accounts for the distinction in interpretation discussed above with respect to *-duŋ* 'like' predicates. In (27a), an episodic event is being described, where the boy is doing something at utterance time that makes him like Obama in some respect. By contrast in (27b), a more permanent property is being expressed with the *k*-marked copula. In this case, a consultant suggests that a likely interpretation is that the boy is like Obama in physical appearance, indeed a less transitory and more permanent property.

(27) a. *méːhu obámaduŋ ʔéʔi*
    meːhu obama-duŋ ʔ-eʔ-i
    boy Obama-like 3.SBJ-COP-IPFV

    'The boy is (acting) like Obama.'

   b. *méːhu obámaduŋ t'éʔ k'éʔi*
    meːhu obama-duŋ t'-eʔ k-ʔ-eʔ-i
    boy obama-like AG.NMLZ-COP K-3.SBJ-COP-IPFV

    'The boy is like Obama (in physical appearance).'

The proposed semantic analysis based on the individual- versus stage-level distinction is superior to a syntactic account based on the morphosyntactic category of the predicate in accounting for the data. Nevertheless, nominal predicates appear to always co-occur with the *k*-marked copula. In the next two sections, we explore nominalizations and internally-headed relative clauses in order to gain an understanding of the semantics of these elements and why they pattern as individual-level predicates with respect to the form of the copula they occur with.

4   Nominalizations as i-level predicates

We first take a look at the semantics of nominalizations created from verbal predicates by means of the prefix *de-/t'-*. We find that in many cases the interpretation of such nominalizations is one of agent nominalization. That is, the nominal created names the agent of the type of event named by the verb. The following examples come to us from Jacobsen (1964):

(28) a. *t'ánu   deyúliha*
          t'anu   **de-**yuli-ha
          person   AG.NMLZ-die-CAUS

          'person killer'

      b. *t'ánu   t'émluʔ*
          t'anu   **t'-**emlu
          person   AG.NMLZ-eat

          'man-eater'

      c. *dahak'áːk'iʔ*
          de-hak'aːk'iʔ
          AG.NMLZ-tell.a.lie

          'person who tells lies / liar'

      d. *deMúʔuš*
          de-Mu-iʔiš
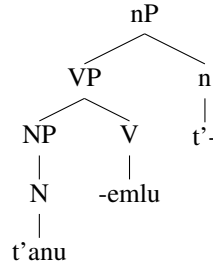   AG.NMLZ-run-forward

          'runner'

While the nominalization prefix attaches directly to the verb, there is evidence that the scope of nominalization is (at least) the VP. First, a transitive verb still takes its direct object argument before nominalization is applied, as in (28a) and (28b). Second, other functional categories such as tense and aspect that are higher in the clause and affixed to finite verb forms do not appear within the nominalization. One exception is negation *-eːs*, as seen in (10), which poses a problem for this generalization. We see two possible ways around this issue. Since negation is a suffix, it must attach to a verbal host. Interestingly, it does not seem possible to attach negation directly on the copula, meaning that the negation must appear on the nominalized verb stem in order to meet its morphophonological requirements. Alternatively, it may be the case that there are two negation suffixes *-eːs*, one that is a clausal negation which occurs higher up in the clausal structure, and one that is a constituent negation that can attach lower directly on the nominalized constituent.[2] We leave this interesting question to further research. In any case, going forward we will assume that the *de-/t'-* nominalizer targets the VP. However, we point out one more complication to this generalization, namely that the causative suffix *-ha* can appear under the scope of the nominalization, as in (28a). This suggests that the locus of nominalization may be slightly higher up in the structure than VP (Harley (2008)).

This characterization of agent nominalization as VP nominalization fits nicely into the cross-linguistic picture. In particular, Baker and Vinokurova (2009) have proposed that agent nominalizations in Mapudungun (Araucanan; Chile and Argentina) and Sakha (Turkic; Russia) are also VP nominalizations. They propose that the VP nominalizer is a nominal analog to the little v head in introducing an agent. The difference between the two is that while v creates an argument position to be saturated by an individual, the nominalizing head n also has the function of abstracting over the agent position. The semantic contribution of n also includes a generic operator over events, as well as the operator ∩, which creates kind-denoting individuals from nominal predicates (Chierchia (1985, 1998)).

Following Baker and Vinokurova (2009), we propose the following syntactic structure for agent nominalizations (29), and a preliminary semantics of the nominalizer *de-/t'-* in (30), which applies to a predicate of events P, the semantic type we assume for the VP. The interpretation of the nominalized form *t'anu t'-emlu* 'man eater' is given in (31).

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[2]Thanks to Barbara Partee for this suggestion.

(29)

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                              nP
                           /      \
                        VP          n
                      /    \        |
                    NP      V       t'-
                    |       |
                    N     -emlu
                    |
                  t'anu
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(30) $[\![\, \text{de-/t'-} \,]\!] = \lambda P^{\cap}_{\langle \epsilon, t \rangle} \lambda x. \, \text{Gen}_e[P(e) \wedge \text{agent}(e, x)]$ [3]

(31) $[\![\, \text{t'anu t'-emlu} \,]\!] =^{\cap} \lambda x. \, \text{Gen}_e[\text{eat}(e) \wedge \text{theme}(e, \text{person}) \wedge \text{agent}(e, x)]$

In prose, (31) means something like "the kind of thing that is the agent of a generic event of eating a person." This indeed seems to be the right interpretation of this nominalization.[4] However, we note that the *de-/t'-* nominalizer also attaches to verbs that aren't normally associated with agents, for example (32). While this sentence is translated by speakers as 'The man is tall', given our current analysis of nominalization, a possible alternative translation might be something like 'The man is a tall one.'

(32) *t'é:liwhu dalkáykayiʔ   k'éʔi*
      t'e:liwhu de-ʔil-kaykay-iʔ   k-ʔ-eʔ-i
      man   AG.NMLZ-ATTR-tall-ATTR K-3.SBJ-COP-IPFV

      'The man is tall.' (Possibly: 'The man is a tall one.')

To account for these cases, we can generalize the notion of agent nominalization to one of "external role nominalization." Our revised denotation for the nominalizer *de-/t'-* is given in (33), where the agent role position has been generalized to any external role.

(33) $[\![\, \text{de-/t'-} \,]\!] = \lambda P^{\cap}_{\langle \epsilon, t \rangle} \lambda x. \, \text{Gen}_e[P(e) \wedge \theta_{ext}(e, x)]$

This characterization of nominalization explains why nominal predicates pattern as individual-level predicates for the purposes of predicting the form of the copula they occur with. As argued by Chierchia (1995), individual-level predicates are inherently generic, and he proposes the use of a generic operator in the composition of individual-level predication. Under our analysis, the semantics of the /de-/t'/ nominalizer in Washo includes a generic operator over events. This means that the subject of a copula clause with a nominalized predicate is interpreted as holding an external role relation to a generic event of the type named by the verb stem. As argued by Chierchia (1995), this type of generic quantification corresponds with the time-stability that is associated with individual-level properties. Thus, we have arrived at an explanation as to why nominalized predicates behave like individual-level predicates in Washo and occur with a *k*-marked copula.

5   IHRCs and clefting

As explained above, IHRCs in Washo are marked with the suffixes *-gi* (when used as the subject argument for matrix predicate) or *-ge* (when used as a non-subject argument for matrix predicate). When the matrix predicate is a copula, the copula appears with the *k-* prefix. Moreover, with IHRCs, the copula appears to have only one argument (34).

(34) a. *ʔíšgelu   hésgeʔ   t'éʔiʔ   píteliʔ   k'éʔigi   k'eʔi*
          ʔišgelu   hesgeʔ   t'eʔiʔ   piteliʔ   k-ʔ-eʔ-i-gi   k-ʔ-eʔ-i
          therefore two   kinds   lizard   K-3.SBJ-COP-IPFV-SBJ.REL   K-3.SBJ-COP-IPFV

      'Therefore there are two kinds of lizards.'

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[3] '∩' is an operation that creates a kind-denoting individual based on a corresponding predicate Chierchia (1985, 1998)

[4] The application of the nominalizer *de-/t'-* creates a kind-denoting individual of type e. When these nominalizations occur in copula sentences, we assume that the $^{\cup}$ operator shifts the nominal into a predicate of type $\langle e, t \rangle$ Chierchia (1998).

b. *léːduŋ   duleʔéšigabigi*   *k'éʔle*
  leː-duŋ duleʔ-eši-gab-i-gi   k'-eʔ-le
  1-like   hand-have-FUT-IPFV-SBJ.REL   3.UNEPX.OBJ-COP-redundant

'They will have hands like me.'

This pattern is perplexing given the two-argument copular constructions observed earlier. Moreover, copular constructions with one argument are cross-linguistically rare (Mikkelsen (To appear)). Less rare, however, are pseudoclefts (35a) and so-called "truncated clefts" (35b) formed with copulas.

(35) a.   What I bought for Harvey was big.

      b.   It is Boston that we see underneath us.

In the case of truncated clefts, furthermore, the subject 'it' is usually interpreted deictically (Mikkelsen (2007)).
     Given Washo's common pro-drop strategy, we suggest that copular constructions containing IHRCs are, in fact, truncated clefts. A paraphrase for the recovered 'it' in examples like (34) is most perspicuously rendered as "it is the case that...", and this interpretation is bolstered by the occurrence of these copular constructions in "just-so" stories about the way the world is.[5] If this paraphrase is correct, the i-level interpretation is immediately apparent: statements about the way the world is are fundamentally stative and permanent. Furthermore, while it is beyond the scope of this paper to explore the syntax of Washo cleft structures, Washo is not unique in having copular clefts that are sensitive to the individual/stage-level distinction: Haitian creole is also sensitive to this distinction (Lefebvre (1989)).

6   Conclusion

     Washo presents a puzzle in its pronominal paradigm with respect to certain copular constructions. The best explanation of this puzzle is that these copular constructions are in fact individual-level predications, and Washo has a morpheme *k-* that transforms a stage-level copula into an individual-level copula. While the precise semantic machinery packed into *k-* is left to future work, evidence from nominalizations and IHRCs supports the individual-level interpretation of *k-* prefixed copular constructions.

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[5]Though perhaps this might be a strategy of the speaker distancing herself from the event, with the use of the copula taking on an evidential function.

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