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On the Tense-Aspect system of Bolivian‑Chaco Guaraní
(preliminary version)

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1. Introduction *

This work originates out of two brief visits in Camiri, in the Bolivian Chaco. During the first, in early September 2002, I had the opportunity to exploit the kindness of Ñeka, a female speaker of the Ava dialect (approximately 35 years old). During the second visit, in late August 2004, I could work with her husband, a speaker of the Isoso dialect, approximately of the same age.[1] In what follows, I shall refer to my Ava and Isoseño informants as Ava- and, respectively, Is-informant.

The variety of Guaraní which is the object of this study is traditionally called "Chiriguano". Considering, however, that this word is felt as derogatory by the native

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*   I am very grateful to Wolf Dietrich, Roland Hemmauer and Manfred Ringmacher for their invaluable comments. I deeply acknowledge the patience and expertise they devoted to improving my work.

[1]   I am very grateful to both of them. Thanks to the generous and cooperative attitude of Elio Ortiz, the Is-informant, I also had the opportunity to subsequently check by email a number of delicate problems. It is worth mentioning that Elio is a remarkably cultivated person, with strong ethnographical interests, and very keen on any detail concerning his language and culture. He is the author of a booklet on traditional Guaraní culture (*Mbarea – Invitación*, Teko Guarani, Camiri, Bolivia [year of publication undeclared]), and has coedited together with Ivano Nasini (locally known as Iván; an Italian Franciscan father who has been living in the area for almost thirty years) the dictionary compiled in 1791 by Fray Pedro Leon de Santiago (cf. the bibliographical references).

Here follows a list of the abbreviations used in the paper: **A** = (temporal) anchor; **ASSERT** = assertive marker; **BCG** = Bolivian-Chaco Guaraní; **COMP.PAST** = compound past; **EMPH** = emphatic element; **EXCL** = exclusive; **FRUSTR** = frustrative; **FUT** = future; **GER** = gerund; **HAB** = habitual; **INCL** = inclusive; **IND.FUT** = indefinite future; **Is** = Isoseño dialect; **L** = (temporal) localizer; **LINK** = linking element; **MOD** = modalizer; **NOM** = nominalizer; **OBJ** = object; **PF** = perfect; **PG** = Paraguayan Guaraní; **POS** = possessive; **POSTP** = postposition; **PRET** = preterite; **PROSP** = prospective; **REFL** = reflexive; **REL** = relativizer; **RETR** = retrospective; **TAM** = tense-aspect-mood. **S**, **R**, **E** stand, of course, for the Reichenbachian notions of 'speech', 'reference' and 'event' (time).

speakers, I shall avoid it here.[2] My first choice for a substitute was Bolivian Guaraní, but Wolf Dietrich (p.c.) pointed out that this label could also apply to other varieties, most notably Guarayo. I am thus using, with his authoritative approval, the label 'Bolivian-Chaco Guaraní' (henceforth, **BCG**). The label 'Western Bolivian Guaraní', suggested in Brown [2005], is much less satisfactory. Until recently, this language lacked a name in the proper sense; native speakers used to refer to it through locutions such as *ñane ñee* 'our language' or *mbya ñee* 'the people's language' (where *mbya* designates the members of the community, as opposed to all other people, especially the white invaders). In what follows, I shall sometimes refer to Paraguayan Guaraní for comparison (abbreviated as **PG**).

The main dialects of BCG, according to the evidence I could gather (and also according to Meliá [1992: 34]), are the following: Ava, Isoseño and Simba. The first variety is spoken most of all to the North of Camiri, namely between Camiri and Santa Cruz de la Sierra; the second variety is spoken, roughly, in the region to the East of Camiri, along the river Parapetí and the Isoso marsh that stems from it; the Simba dialect is spoken in the area that lies South of Camiri, towards the Argentinian border.

2. The tense-aspect system of BCG according to Dietrich [1986]

My aim is to analyze the main features of the BCG tense-aspect system, using Comrie's [1976; 1985] approach as reference framework. I shall compare the data I gathered from my informants to the available literature. I feel the need to declare, at the outset, my gratefulness to the scholars who investigated the matter before me, most notably Wolf Dietrich and Bret Gustafson (the interested reader may also consult Rosbottom [1961]). As for PG, I mostly relied on Liuzzi [1987], by far the most comprehensive work, without neglecting Fernandez Guizetti [1969] and Dessaint [1996]. Although I shall occasionally depart from Dietrich's and Gustafson's descriptions, I am deeply aware of the tentative nature of my proposal. The differences might be due to a number of factors, most prominently (as it is often the case with

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[2]   According to Dietrich [1986], the term *Chiriguano* is based on two quechua words: *chiri* 'cold' and *wanu* 'excrement'. Less convincing [Manfred Ringmacher, p.c.] is the alternative interpretation, suggested by Combès & Saignes [1991] and also reported by Meliá [1992]: "mestizos, hijos de indias de otras naciones". Needless to say, in both cases the word expresses a derogatory view from the outside.

minority languages) the specific dialect spoken by the various informants. Needless to say, I am not in the position to establish a hierarchy whatsoever, in terms of prestige, among the different varieties of BCG, to the extent that such a hierarchy can be established for a barely standardized language.

Dietrich's [1986] scholarly written grammar offers an excellent starting point. The following two tables summarize his position with respect to verbal and nominal predicates, respectively. Verbal predicates will be considered first (sect. 2-8); nominal predicates will be addressed subsequently (sect. 9-11). For ease of the reader, underlining will indicate stress position in BCG words. Note that some TAM markers (such as Future "definido") behave as stress attractors, while others (such as Future "remoto") are absolutely inert in this respect.

As the tables make clear, BCG belongs to the Future/Non-Future type. The label 'indefinido' stands indeed, in Dietrich's terminology, for Non-Future. 'Angular' (a term borrowed from Coseriu) stands for 'progressive', while 'perfectivo' and 'destinativo' stand for 'retrospective' and 'prospective', in a sense to be clarified below (see sect. 9). As a matter of fact, the reason why the forms *a-ke̱-rä* and *che miäri̱-rä* appear in the left column rather than under the label 'tiempo futuro' is that they do not necessarily imply futurity, but mere prospectivity. Finally, 'resultativo' is reminiscent of 'perfect', although the latter notion has implications that are not entirely fulfilled by the BCG forms at stake.

A. Verbal predicates:

(a)ke '(I) sleep'	TIEMPO INDEFINIDO	TIEMPO FUTURO	
		DEFINIDO	REMOTO
ASPECTO NEUTRAL	*a̲-ke*	*a-ke̲-ta*	*a̲-ke-ne*
VISIÓN ANGULAR	*a̲-ke a̲-ï*	*a-ke̲-ta a̲-ï*	
ASPECTO PERFECTIVO	*a-ke̲-kwe*		
ASPECTO RESULTATIVO	*a̲-ke-ma*	*a-ke̲-ta-ma*	
ASPECTO DESTINATIVO	*a-ke̲-rä*		

B. Nominal predicates:

che miäri 'I speak' [3]	TIEMPO INDEFINIDO	TIEMPO FUTURO
ASPECTO NEUTRAL	*che miä̲ri*	*che miäri̲-ta*
VISIÓN ANGULAR	*che miä̲ri a̲-ï*	*che miäri̲-ta a̲-ï*
ASPECTO PERFECTIVO	*che miäri̲-gwe*	
ASPECTO RESULTATIVO	*che miä̲ri-ma*	*che miäri̲-ta-ma*
ASPECTO DESTINATIVO	*che miä̲ri̲-rä*	

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[3] Although Dietrich transcribed this word with nasalization, it was consistently indicated as non-nasal by all my sources, including the dictionaries quoted in the bibliographical references. Evidently, the variety of BCG studied by Dietrich differed in this respect. In the remainder of the paper, I shall trascribe this word as *miari*. Incidentally, if the contrast *miäri̲-gwe* vs. *ake̲-kwe* is due to nasalization, this would remind the PG phonetic rule that turns *-kwe* into *-ngwe* in nasal contexts. Note, however, that my informants invariably used the *-gwe* allomorph in all contexts. This possibly indicates that nasal harmony is not as vital in BCG (at least in the dialects of my informants) as in PG.

As for orthographic conventions, the following should be kept in mind: <y> stands for the central high vowel; two dots on a (stressed) vowel indicate nasalization, as it is often found in BCG texts. One should note that BCG is assumed to be, like PG, a nasal harmony language (despite the caution mentioned above); thus, when nasalization is marked on the stressed vowel, the whole word is nasalized, including its derivational and inflectional affixes, unless specific conditions should occur (see Dietrich [1976]). Since, however, I could not gather sufficient information as for phonological details, I cannot say how far BCG deviates from the general pattern of PG, where stressed vs. unstressed suffixes behave differently. The BCG equivalent of stressed suffixes would possibly be stress-attracting suffixes, as opposed to stress-inert ones. This matter should be addressed by future research.

Let us now start with the analysis. To begin with, it is useful to provide some essential information about the structure of BCG verb forms:

[1] a. *(che) a-karu* (1s 1s-eat) 'I am eating/ate (it)'

b. *(nde) re-jaeo* (2s 2s-cry) 'you are crying/cried'

c. *(hae) o-puka* (3 3-laugh) 'she/he/they is/are laughing / she/he/they laughed'

d. *(ñande) ja-guata* (1p.INCL. 1p.INCL.-walk) 'we (or: I) and you are walking/walked'

e. *(ore) ro-ke* (1p.EXCL. 1p.EXCL.-sleep) 'we (not you) are sleeping/slept'

f. *(pe) pe-japo* (2p 2p-do) 'you are doing/did (it)'.

The examples above illustrate the following:

-BCG is a *pro*-drop language, as far as verbal predicates are concerned: the subject pronoun needs not to be expressed, for the inflection on the verb form unequivocally indicates the relevant information. With nominal predicates, however, subject pronouns cannot be dispensed with (see sect. 9).

-Personal inflections are attached to the left side of the root.

-There is no independent third plural inflection; in what follows, thus, "3" stands for any third person, irrespective of gender and number. It is however possible to explicitly mark plurality by means of the lexeme *reta* (see example [19]).

-There is a distinction between 1p inclusive vs. 1p exclusive.

-Transitive verbs may include a 3 implicit direct object pronoun. It exceeds by far the goal of this paper to inquire into this matter: the interested reader should consult Jensen [1998] (cf. also fn. 5).

-As for stress, it normally falls on the root's penultimate syllable. This is typical of BCG, as opposed to PG. As a matter of fact, the very word Guaraní (nowadays used by BCG speakers with reference to their own language) is imported from the related language spoken in Paraguay. Since the prosodic domain is the word form, rather than

the root, prominence falls not infrequently on the inflection, as in [1e].[4] Despite the prevailing penult structure, stress may fall on the antepenult in words featuring stress-inert suffixes, as may be observed in some of the examples in tables A and B.

-Finally, it should be noted that the lexical entries for verbs, namely their base-form, are indicated by means of the 1s form, for in BCG there is no Infinitive, and indeed no non-finite form whatsoever. Conventionally, in the dictionaries the 1s marker is inserted within parentheses, in order to delimit the root. This is a useful solution, because there is a class of verbs in which a palatal glide is added to the person marker. For comparison, consider the following verbs, both meaning 'exist': *(a)ï, (ai)ko*.[5]

In what follows, I shall make use of a wide-spread convention: namely, capital initials will designate the tenses that are actually present in the language. I shall thus write <Perfect> when referring to this specific BCG tense, whereas I shall write <perfect> when referring to the homonymous notion in a broad sense. Needless to say, the grammatical labels used here are my own suggestions. They should be interpreted *cum grano salis*: as it will soon appear, the BCG Perfect presents many of the features of a true perfect tense, but it also departs from a prototypical perfect in some relevant respects.

3. Non-Future

The Non-Future – consistently with its name – may refer to both past and S-overlapping events. This is the least marked form; thus, whenever no specific label is mentioned in the glosses, the reader should assume that a Non-Future is at stake. Actually, in temporal clauses contextually referring to a future situation, the Non-Future may at first appear to convey future-referring capabilities, provided that the situation is viewed perfectively as in [2] (as for the aspectual properties of the Non-Future, see

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[4] Monosyllabic nouns transfer stress onto any preceding personal pronoun. As far as my understanding goes, this seems to be a fairly regular behavior. In the examples reported below, this may be observed in cases such as *ch̲e ru* (1s father) 'my father'.

[5] This glide is considered to originate form the incorporation of a direct object pronoun [Dietrich 1986, Jensen 1998]. This is no longer synchronically relevant, so that the glide is now occasionally indicated even in intransitive verbs, possibly as a result of an incorrect morphological parsing. As a matter of fact, *(ai)ko* should most likely be analyzed as *(a)iko* [Manfred Ringmacher and Roland Hemmauer, p.c.]. In this paper, I adopt in most cases the lexical choices of *N-R*, except for minor divergences proposed by my informants.

below). Note, however, that the adverb *pyareve* in [2a] binds the main clause's Future-marked event (*akaruta*), rather than the dependent clause's event. Indeed, the Non-Future *akaru* is not a possible alternative in the main clause, while, by contrast, the Future is ungrammatical in the dependent clause. This may be understood if one realizes that the dependent clause specifies the main clause's temporal localizazion, being itself temporally unspecified. Example [2b] confirms that the future localization of the events designated by means of the Non-Future is restricted to contexts where the event's localization is undetermined, or possibly interpreted as 'irrealis':[6]

[2]   a. *pyareve   re-ju / * re-ju-ta   re-väe   jave   che*
           tomorrow   2s-come / 2s-come-FUT 2s-arrive   when   1s

      * *a-karu /   a-karu-ta*
         1-eat /   1s-eat-FUT
      'tomorrow, when you come, I shall eat (it)'

      b. *a-äro-ta   o-u   regua*
         1s-wait-FUT 3-come   until
         'I shall wait until she/he/they come(s)'.

One may wonder whether stative verbs receive, with the Non-Future, the same temporal interpretation as dynamic predicates, namely ambiguously past- or present-referring (unless the specific meaning of the given verb suggests a preferred reading). According to my informants, some stative verbs tend to express, when considered out of context, present-time-reference. This is, for instance, the case for *puere*, which is actually a 'nominal predicate' (see sect. 9), roughly meaning 'power (N) / can (V)'. The opposite case, however, is also to be observed, as with *aikuaa* 'I know' or *aecha* 'I see', which out of context tend to elicit past-time-reference.[7] It is thus fair to say that both present- and past-time-reference are in principle available to all stative predicates; see

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[6] *(A)ju (a)väe* is a serial verb construction, frequently used to convey the meaning of 'come, arrive'. Actually, *(a)ju* alone is a possible alternative to express this concept, as some of the examples below will show. The first verb of serial constructions conjugates as appropriate, while the second verb is by default a corefering Non-Future form.

[7] Note that these two verbs are actionally ambiguous: in past perfective contexts, they elicit a dynamic reading ('get to know', 'spot'), rather than a stative one ('know', 'see'), obviously imperfective. Apparently, some speakers prefer past- as opposed to present-time-reference, because out of context they tend to interpret them perfectively.

for instance the nominal predicate *che pyat̲y̲ty* 'I (am/was) sad'. The ultimate basis of the preferred temporal interpretation seems to be based on pragmatic implicatures. Needless to say, permanent stative verbs add obvious restrictions as for temporal interpretation. Thus, e.g., the nominal predicate *hae i-puku* (3 3-tallness) 'she/he/they is/are tall' can be read as present- or past-referring, depending on whether the person(s) referred to is/are alive at speech time or not.

The aspectual meaning of the Non-Future in its past-referring reading is definitely perfective. Nonetheless, the relatively frequent use of this tense in present-referring imperfective situations (see example [19] and discussion therein), proves that its overall aspectual characterization is ambiguous. Indeed, in present-referring contexts, the Non-Future is the only device able to express habituality (see example [8a], and sect. 8 below). It follows that this tense is underspecified from both the temporal (past / present) and the aspectual point of view (perfective / imperfective).

This conclusion is reinforced by the fact that the Non-Future plays the additional role of the unmarked verb form, temporally and aspectually unspecified. This is obviously an important function in a language with no infinitive like BCG. In this function, the Non-Future occurs in the second member of serial verb constructions (cf. fn. 6), or in peculiarly disjoint constructions, whereby the tense-aspect morph migrates to another element within the same clause, as in [6d, i], [8a], [9a], [10] and [11b].

4. Future tenses

When the temporal reference is explicitly localized in the future, the Non-Future tense may not be used (cf. [3a] and [4a]; see also [2a]). Example [5a] is different, for the temporal adverbial is ambiguous: it may receive both past and future interpretation; it is thus compatible, in the appropriate reading, with the Non-Future. Consider:

[3]   a. * *pyar̲e̲ve   a̲-ha k̲o̲o*[8] *k̲o̲ty*
          tomorrow 1s-go field   towards
          ['tomorrow I shall go to the fields']

   b. *pyar̲e̲ve   a-h̲a̲-ta   k̲o̲o   k̲o̲ty*
       tomorrow   1s-go-FUT   field towards

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8   The word *koo* refers to the specific environment where BCG people traditionally live.

       'tomorrow I shall go to the fields'   (factual)

    c. *pyar̲e̲ve*   *a̲-ha-ne*   *k̲o̲o*   *k̲o̲ty*
      tomorrow   1s-go-IND.FUT field   towards
      'tomorrow I shall possibly go to the fields'   (potential; archaic)

[4]   a. * *oipot̲a̲gwe*[9] *a̲ra* *rupi*   *a̲-ha k̲o̲o* *k̲o̲ty*
       undefined   day   POSTP   1s-go field towards
       ['some day I shall go to the fields'; this sentence is by contrast grammatical
      with a past-referring meaning]

    b. *oipot̲a̲gwe a̲ra* *rupi*   *a-h̲a̲-ta*   *k̲o̲o* *k̲o̲ty*
      undefined   day   POSTP   1s-go-FUT   field   towards
      'some day I shall go to the fields'   (factual)

    c. *oi-pot̲a̲-güe*   *a̲ra* *rupi*   *a̲-ha-ne*   *k̲o̲o* *k̲o̲ty*
      which-want-REL   day   POSTP   1s-go-IND.FUT field   towards
      'some day I shall possibly go to the fields'   (potential; archaic)

[5]   a. *ar̲e̲te i-a̲ra-pe*   *a̲-ha k̲o̲o* *k̲o̲ty*
      feast 3-day-at   1s-go field   towards
      'on the days of the great feast I went to the fields'

    b. *ar̲e̲te i-a̲ra-pe*   *a-h̲a̲-ta*   *k̲o̲o* *k̲o̲ty*
      feast 3-day-at   1s-go-FUT   field   towards
      'on the days of the great feast I shall go to the fields'   (factual)

    c. *ar̲e̲te i-a̲ra-pe*   *a̲-ha-ne*   *k̲o̲o* *k̲o̲ty*
      feast 3-day-at   1s-go-IND.FUT   field   towards
      'on the days of the great feast I shall possibly go to the fields(potent.; arch.).

BCG shows two Future forms. The unmarked one is based on the morph *-ta*, apparently connected with the verb *(ai)pota* 'to want' (Jensen [1998:536] posits **potár* as the source of the Tupí-Guaraní Future). The alternative form, based on the morph *-ne*, is called "Futuro Remoto" by Dietrich [1986]. According to my informants, however, the difference does not lie in the degree of temporal distance; rather, it lies in the fact that the *-ne* Future seems to suggest a strong degree of uncertainty, namely a nuance of potentiality. It thus enhances the modal feature 'irrealis', normally attached to future-time-referring tenses. The label "future hypothétique", used by Liuzzi (1987) with respect to the PG equivalent, seems thus more appropriate. Here this tense will be called Indefinite Future. According to the Ava-informant, this form is not used by the

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9   The word *oipotague* is semantically transparent. It may be parsed as: 3-want-REL; roughly, 'what(ever) one wants'. See sect. 11 for comments on the relativizer morpheme.

youngest generations (she insisted that she heard her grand-mother use it, but she would never do so). The Is-informant, on the contrary, considered it to be a possible option.

There is a further type of future-time-referring tense, that I suggest to call 'Relative Future' (see example [11a] and discussion therein). It may be used to express the idea that a future event will occur after a specified point in time, equally lying in the future. In addition to this, as I was told by the Is-informant, the adjunction of the adverb *kuri* to the Future may result in a sort of Remote Future, typically employed in uncommitted answers. For example, *aparavykyta kuri / ajapota kuri* mean something like 'I shall work / I shall do it (but I do not know when)'. Although this construction may look like a syntagmatic collocation, rather than a fully-fledged tense, it is worth mentioning it, considering its cross-linguistic relevance in the Tupí-Guaraní family. According to Liuzzi [1987: 114-124], in PG this adverb, which has no fixed place in the syntactic sequence, expresses an idea of 'near past'.[10] As Liuzzi concedes it, the notion of recentness may in such cases consist of a mere sense of psychological proximity. Some of the examples quoted by him seem indeed to suggest that the usage of *kuri* does not require strict temporal requirements. Despite this, *kuri* contrasts from its counterpart *va'ekwe*, which definitely suggests temporal distance [*ibid*. 124-137]. Equally, in Kaiwá, *kuri* is a marker of 'testimonial ("attested") recent Past' [Jensen 1998: 554]. Further data have been pointed out to me by Roland Hemmauer [p.c.]. In some Tupí-Guaraní languages, cognate forms of *kuri* can indeed be used as future markers, e.g. in Nheengatu, a creolized form of Tupinambá. In Tembé, however, *kuri* is translated as 'agora, presentemente, já, logo, neste momento, breve, brevemente' [Boudin 1978]. The common denominator of these meanings seems to be 'close to the moment of speech', i.e. present, (recent) past or (near) future. The usage pointed out by the Is-informant is, thus, in striking contrast with the ones reported with reference to other related languages. In any case, given the strictly adverbial nature of *kuri*, it would be inappropriate to consider it a fully-fledged tense, although this would not be altogether implausible in a language such as BCG, where the border between adverbial collocations and grammatical structures may be fuzzy (we shall see such examples in

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[10] Actually, even the Romano & Cattunar and *N-R* dictionaries, although devoted to BCG, translate *kuri* as 'luego, pronto' and 'pronto, prontito, después', respectively. The usage of *kuri* as a 'recent past'

the next section). The very fact that the Is-informant felt this to be a type of tense could hardly be ignored.

By contrast, one cannot accept the idea, suggested by the same informant, that – limited to 1s – there is yet another type of future-tense, with added pragmatic strength (as in *t̲a̲ha* 'I shall definitely go', *taj̲a̲po* 'I shall immediately do it' etc.). These are not variants of *ah̲a̲ta* and *ajap̲o̲ta*, but forms belonging to the paradigm of what Gustafson [1996: 86] calls "optative or imperative" mood, expressing a desire or order.[11] It is worth underlining that, according to both Gustafson and Dietrich [1986:110], this mood should only apply to nominal predicates (obviously, to the exclusion of the strictly stative ones; see sect. 9 for further details). The suggestion by the Is-informant indicates that this grammatical structure, at least in his variety, extends to verbs.

5. Perfect tenses

As a first approximation, the *-ma* morph seems to convey, by and large, the meaning of a 'perfect', whereby the event is viewed as completed at a certain 'reference time' R, explicitly or implicitly provided. I shall thus call Perfect the tense built on this morph, despite the qualifications reported below. In isolation, as in [6b], this tense carries the meaning of a true 'present perfect'. In fact, according to the prototypical behavior of fully-fledged perfect tenses, the event cannot be localized in the past, as shown in [6c], to be compared with [6a] ([6c] may receive an alternative interpretation, as detailed below). Note, however, that the *-ma* morph may also attach to the temporal adverb functioning as event time localizer (as in [6d]). In such cases, it roughly conveys the idea that the given event occurred / had already occurred by (i.e. before) the specified time interval. The perfectal reading of verb forms based on *-ma* is further confirmed by [6e], where again (as in [6c]) the Perfect is unavailable, due to the (vaguely) localizing adverb *ramo*. By contrast, this tense can be used in [6f], where no localizing adverb

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marker was already mentioned in the grammar of Paolo Restivo (1658-1740), based on work by Antonio Ruiz de Montoya [Restivo 1996].

[11] The paradigm of this mood differs from that of the Non-Future in few details: the preposing of *ta* to the 1s pronoun (*ta che j̲a̲po* or *taj̲a̲po*, as opposed to *(che) aj̲a̲po*) and the preposing of *t-* to the 1p exclusive pronoun (*tore roj̲a̲po*, as opposed to *(ore) roj̲a̲po*). In the case of nominal predicates, this extends to the 3 form as well (*tikir̲ï̲i* '(I wish that) she/he shuts up', as opposed to *ikir̲ï̲i* 'she/he is/was silent'). The optative's paradigm is similar but different in PG; cf. Liuzzi (1987:204 ff).

appears, except for the possible insertion of *añave*, which however (as in the English translation) localizes R rather than E. Note that [6f] is a 'current relevance' context, hence a prototypically perfectal context: significantly, in such cases the Perfect is usually preferred to the Non-Future. Of special interest are also examples such as [6g], in which the Perfect of the modal verb conveys the information that the subject is finally in the position to carry out the event. In BCG, these are fairly common sentences. In English, by contrast, a literal translation is impossible, while in Spanish it sounds clumsy (cf. ? *ahora he podido escribir*). Example [6h] shows once more, as [6c], that the BCG Perfect tense behaves, in the relevant contexts, as the English Present Perfect. As a matter of fact, it may be used with stative verbs, to convey the idea that the situation has been holding until S, and may easily continue beyond that point. Admittedly, however, [6i] is a more common and colloquial way to express the same idea, once again (as in [6d]) with the *-ma* morph added to the temporal adverb, rather than to the verb:

[6] a. *kar**u**mbo*[12] *a-j**a**po*
yesterday   1s-do
'yesterday I did (it)'

b. *a-j**a**po-ma*
1s-do-PF
'I have done (it) (now)'

c. [*] *kar**u**mbo   a-j**a**po-ma*
    yesterday   1s-do-PF
   i. [* 'yesterday I have done (it)']
   ii. 'yesterday I had done (it)'

d. *kar**u**mbo-ma   a-j**a**po*
yesterday- PF   1s-do
'I did (it) yesterday already

e. *che   k**y**se   kar**u**mbo a-mok**añ**y-v**ae**   a-v**a**ë r**a**mo ch**e**ro   k**u**pe-pe*
1   knife yesterday   1s-lose-REL   1s-find recently 1s   house back-POSTP
'A moment ago I found behind the house the knife that I lost yesterday'

f. *(añ**a**ve) a-v**a**ë-ma   che   k**y**se kar**u**mbo   a-mok**añ**y-v**ae***
(now)   1s-find-PF 1s   knife yesterday   1s-lose-REL
'I have now found the knife that I lost yesterday'

g. *añ**a**ve   ai-k**a**tu-ma a-mbaekuat**i**a*
now   1s-can-PF 1s-write

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[12] This is the Isoseño form of this word. In Ava, one would rather say *kar**u**mboe*. The *N-R* dictionary suggests *karamboe*.

'Now I am finally able to write'

h. *ai-ku<u>aa</u>-ma <u>Elio</u> mok<u>oi</u>   ar<u>a</u>sa-gu<u>i</u>ve*
   1-know-PF Elio two   year-since/for
   'I have known Elio for two years (now)

i. *mok<u>oi</u>   ar<u>a</u>sa-gu<u>i</u>ve-ma ai-ku<u>aa</u> <u>Elio</u>*[13]
   two   year-since/for-PF 1s-know Elio
   'I have known Elio for two years (now)'.

Given the temporally ambiguous nature of the Non-Future, on which the *-ma* form is based, one may reasonably expect that the adjunction of the *-ma* morph brings about two different meanings, depending on whether R (the reference time) lies in the present or in the past. This expectation is fulfilled. In addition to the 'present perfect' reading, to be observed e.g. in [6b, f], one can find the 'pluperfect' reading of [7a], obviously with respect to a past R. In fact, in [6c] the 'pluperfect' reading is the only one available. For the same reason, and quite unsurprisingly, the BCG Perfect cannot be employed (witness [7b]) in the sense of a 'future perfect' governed by a Present, unlike the Compound Past of most Romance languages. I conclude that the BCG Perfect has past-time-reference only, i.e. it is a deictically-oriented tense.[14]

[7] a. *r<u>e</u>-ju   re-v<u>ä</u>e   j<u>a</u>ve,   a-j<u>a</u>po-ma*

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[13] In the following example, where the temporal adverb is shaped differently (namely, without postposition), the meaning is past-oriented and strictly perfective:

[i] *mok<u>oi</u> ar<u>a</u>sa-ma ai-ku<u>aa</u>   <u>Elio</u>*
    two   year-PF 1-know   Elio
    Two years ago I got to know Elio'.

The use of the Perfect as in [6h] is called 'inclusive' by Bertinetto [1986a]. Although in most languages it does not extend to stative verbs, it could easily be used with activities, or with contextually detelicized telic predicates. See Squartini & Bertinetto [2000] for an illustration focusing on Portuguese. From the aspectual point of view, the 'inclusive' Perfect is a mixture of perfectivity and imperfectivity. English and Spanish show this aspectual hybridation morphologically, as in: *I have been working*, *he estado trabajando*.

[14] Liuzzi (1987: 211) quotes a PG sentence where the PF carries an 'imminent future' meaning:

[i] e-ha'arõ ja-ha,   ore   ro-ho-ma   avei
    IMP-wait 1p.INCL-go 1p.EXCL 1p.EXCL-go-PF   also
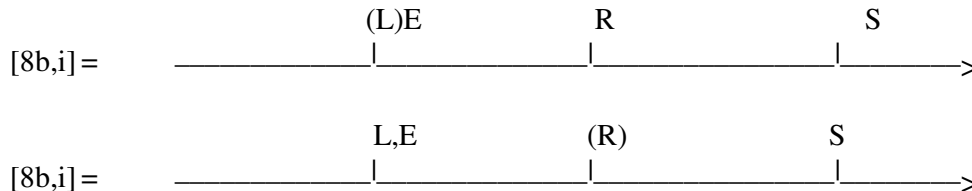   'Wait before we all go, we (EXCL) are also going' (lit.: we have gone).

One could employ here the label "immediate completion", coined by Ambrosini [1960/61] with respect to a somewhat similar usage of the Pluperfect II (traditionally called "trapassato remoto") in Ancient Italian. The imminent event is proposed as though it had just occurred, in order to suggest that it will inevitably take place. This use is available to BCG: *i-<u>o</u>a-ma* (3-leave-PF) 'it is already her/his/their time to leave'. It is obviously a metaphorical extension of the normal semantic possibilities displayed by this tense and is as such attested in several languages over the world. As for the notion of tense-aspect metaphors, cf. Bertinetto [1992].

    you-arrive 2s-arrive   when,   1s-do-PF
    'when you came,   I had (already) done (it)'

    b. * *pyar_eve*   *r_e-ju*   *re-v_ae*   *j_ave,*   *a-j_apo-ma*
       tomorrow 2s -arrive   2s-arrive   when,   1s-do-PF
       ['tomorrow, when you arrive, I shall have (already) done (it)'].

The pluperfect reading also emerges in examples such as [8b] and [9b], featuring a past-referring adverb (cf. also reading (ii) of [6c]). In both examples, the Perfect is contrasted with the Non-Future (cf. the (a) sentences), in order to emphasize the semantic difference. Example [8a] has two interpretations, in agreement with the ambiguous temporal nature of the Non-Future: it may be read as a perfective Past or as a 'habitual present'. Note that, as in [6d], the morph *-ma* may be adjoined to the temporal adverb in order to introduce a retrospective nuance. Example [8b] is also ambiguous, although in a different way, for it may convey the two classical interpretations of the pluperfect. To clarify, consider the following diagrams. Reading (i) is a prototypical case of Pluperfect, with explicit mention of R and no indication of the localization (L) of E. Reading (ii), by contrast, is an instance of the alternative interpretation, where R is presupposed and only recoverable through the linguistic or pragmatic context. In this case, the temporal adverbial indicates L, rather than R.[15]

[8]   a. *ndeimbove-_asy(-ma)*   *che*   *a-p_üa*
       early-very   1s   1s-get up
       i. 'I got up early'
       ii. 'I (usually) get up (already) early'

    b. *ndeimbove-_asy*   *che*   *a-p_üa-ma*
       early-very   1s   1s-get up-PF
    i. 'early (in the morning) [R] I was up, i.e. I had (already) got up [E]'
    ii. 'I had (already) got up early (in the morning) [L,E]'.

                  (L)E   R   S
[8b,i] =   ———————|——————————|————————————|———————>

                  L,E   (R)   S
[8b,i] =   ———————|——————————|————————————|———————>

---

[15] The theoretical justification for the difference between R and L is presented in Bertinetto [1986a; 1986b]. Summarizing briefly: R is a necessary ingredient of tenses conveying a perfectal interpretation, as indicated in fn. 18; L (temporal localizer of E) is a non-compulsory ingredient of purely perfective, namely aoristic, tenses. Although this contrast is differently expressed by different scholars, its role is often acknowledged in the specialized literature.

The examples in [9] are very similar, the only difference being that the event is explicitly localized in the past by means of *karumbo*, which plays the role of a 'temporal framework' adverbial, indicating a sort of coarse-grained localization. This excludes the 'habitual present' reading in [9a]. As for [9b], things are as in [8b], except for the explicit temporal frame:

[9] a. *kar<u>u</u>mbo(-ma)   che   a-p<u>ü</u>a   ndeimbove-<u>a</u>sy*
        yesterday   1s   1s-get up   early-very
        '(already) yesterday I got up very early'

    b. *kar<u>u</u>mbo   che   a-p<u>ü</u>a-ma   ndeimbove-<u>a</u>sy*
        yesterday   1s   1s-get up-PF   early-very
      i. 'yesterday, early (in the morning)[R]I was up, i.e. I had (already) got up [E]'
      ii. 'yesterday [R], I had (already) got up early (in the morning) [L,E]'.

An alternative way to convey the pluperfect meaning is to attach the *-ma* morph, as in [10], to the word *<u>o</u>-pa* 'to be complete' (a verb which can also be translated by the adjective 'all'). The main verb presents in such cases the default, Non-Future morphology. I suggest to call this construction 'Perfect II'. Note, however, that this is mostly restricted to telic verbs; with atelic ones, a terminative (hence, implicitly telic) nuance is forcefully added, as in *opama ojuv<u>a</u>nga* 'she/he/they had finished playing' (referring, for instance, to a specific match). When the terminative meaning is not easily available, as in (?)*opama ojaeo* 'she/he/they had finished crying', one needs the appropriate pragmatic context in order to rescue the sentence.[16]

[10]   *r<u>e</u>-ju   re-v<u>ä</u>e   j<u>a</u>ve,   <u>o</u>pa-ma a-j<u>a</u>po*
        you-arrive   2s-arrive   when,   all-PF   1s-do
        'when you came, I had (already) done (it)'.

With respect to a future R, namely to a 'future perfect' interpretation, the situation is more complex. In [11a], the *-ma* morph is attached to the Future, while [11b] presents the same morph sequence *-tama* ('FUTURE + PERFECT') as added to the adverb *opa* (similarly to [10]), while the main verb features the unmarked Non-Future

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16 This should not be confused with actual terminative periphrases of the type 'cease to V' / 'stop V-ing', quite obviously available to atelic verbs. The most common way to express this is by means of the verb *(a)poi* 'cease, stop, quit'. An alternative way to convey this meaning is by using the same root nominally, in the sense of 'cessation, stop', as in *a-jaeo poi-ma* 'I have/had ceased crying', where *-ma*

morphology.[17] According to my informants, the sentence that more likely corresponds to a 'future perfect' is [11b] rather than [11a], as one might have expected in terms of morphological compositionality. In the latter case, both informants insisted that at R, i.e. at the time of the future arrival of the person designated by the 2s pronoun, the event would not yet be completed. Apparently, [11a] means that, at the specified point in time, the subject will (already) be ready to perform the event. Thus, *ajapotama* is not a 'future perfect', but rather a kind of '(proximative) relative future'; namely, a tense that, preserving the deictic orientation of a true Future, is anchored to a further reference time, or rather (as I would prefer to call it in such a case) to a temporal anchor A.[18] It then seems to be a sort of 'Future-in-the-Future': a typologically fairly uncommon structure. Comrie (1985: 76) only quotes Latin forms such as *daturus erit* as example of it. I shall call 'Relative Future' this BCG tense. The following diagrams are an attempt at clarifying the contrast. The version corresponding to [11b] indicates the prototypical structure of the Future Perfect, indicating anteriority of E with respect to a future R. Note, incidentally, that the actual localization of E could also, in the appropriate context, lie before S; thus, the Future Perfect is not a deictic tense. The version corresponding to [11a], on the contrary, illustrates the structure of the Relative Future,

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attaches to the noun as a completive marker. There is also a synchronically unrelated adjectival meaning of *poi*, roughly corresponding to 'heavy, uncomfortable'.

[17] I shall not delve into the actual syntactic interpretation of *opa* in contexts such as [10] and [11b]. Suffice it to say that a predicative reading cannot be entirely ruled out, in which case the sequence should be interpreted as a serial verb construction (but see below for a possible objection). Indeed, in PG *o-pa* (limited to the 3 person) is considered to be a verb form meaning "c'est fini" [Liuzzi 1987: 253], from which a terminativity marker (-*pa*) has evolved. In BCG, however, I have not found traces of the latter marker (as also confirmed by Jensen [1998:537]). In PG, instead, -*pa* may also occur in combination with the Perfect marker, giving rise to the complex morph -*pama*, obviously reminiscent of *opama* in [10]. However, PG -*pama* is a marker of 'recent past', as in *rei-kuaa-pama* (2s-know-PAMA) 'tu viens de connaître' [ibid. 155].
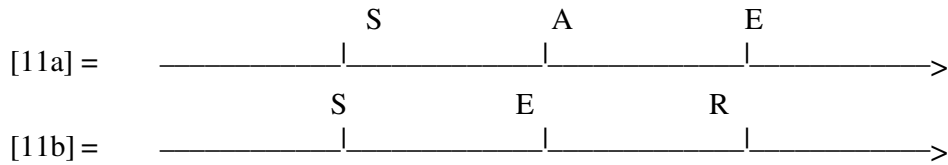One reason to exclude the synchronic interpretation of BCG *opa* as verb is the following. In this language, serial verb constructions always exhibit coreference between the person markers of both verbs of the series. This constraint, however, is not obeyed by *o-pama a-japo* in [10] and in [11b]. This form is thus likely to be, at most, a fossilized verbal construction.

[18] The reason for my preference is theory-internal. I restrict the use of the label R to an entity indicating a point in time BEFORE which (as opposed to AFTER which) the event occurred, such that the situation resulting from E may be regarded as still valid at R. This is the unifying feature for all perfect tenses, independently from the temporal information they convey (namely: 'past', 'present' or 'future' perfect). Quite obviously, this condition is not met with A, as the diagram of [11a] shows.

which is necessarily future-referring. In this case, the event E follows the anchor A, which is located at some future point in time:[19]

[11]   a. *pyar<u>e</u>ve   r<u>e</u>-ju   re-v<u>ä</u>e   j<u>a</u>ve,   o-jap<u>o</u>-ta-ma*
       tomorrow   2s -arrive2s-arrive   when,   3-do-FT-PF
       'tomorrow, when you arrive, she/he/they will already do (it)

    b. *pyar<u>e</u>ve   r<u>e</u>-ju   re-v<u>ä</u>e   j<u>a</u>ve,   op<u>a</u>-ta-ma   a-j<u>a</u>po*
       tomorrow   2s -arrive2s-arrive   when,   all--PF   1s-do
       'tomorrow, when you arrive, I shall have (already) done (it)'.

```
                          S            A            E
[11a] =    ──────────────|────────────|────────────|─────────>
                          S            E            R
[11b] =    ──────────────|────────────|────────────|─────────>
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Although Gustafson [1995: 66] explicitly speaks of "completive aspect" with respect to the *-ma* morph, his glosses rather suggest what I would like to designate as an 'adverbial' reading of this formative (e.g., *ajuk<u>a</u>tama* 'I already killed', *ajuk<u>a</u>tama* 'I shall already kill'). This is certainly appropriate with respect to the Relative Future (*ajuk<u>a</u>tama*), as noted above, but not with the Perfect (*aj<u>u</u>kama*), since the BCG Perfect seems to work as a genuine 'perfect' aspect in the relevant contexts (cf. [6b, f] and [7]). Nevertheless, the behavior of the Relative Future shows that the 'adverbial' reading cannot be dispensed with. One should best analyze this as a case of incomplete grammaticalization, where the relevant morph partly preserves its original adverbial meaning.

Let us recapitulate. The *-ma* morph may instantiate:

(i)   a purely 'adverbial' meaning (close to the sense of Eng. *already*) in structures such as those in [11a]; this is even more evident in cases where *-ma* attaches to temporal adverbs, as in [6d], [6i] and [9a];

(ii) a sort of 'perfectal' meaning (with further actional implications) when *-ma* adjoins to the adverb *opa* as in [10], possibly in combination with the Future morph as in [11b];

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[19] As with the Future (see sect. 4), the adverb *kuri* may be added to the Relative Future, conveying an idea of distant and uncommitted future.

(iii) a true 'present / past perfect' meaning when it directly adjoins to the verb root. (Note that in structures such as those in [11] *-ma* attaches to another TAM morph, rather than to the root.)

One may easily regard these three situations as three steps in grammaticalization. The semantics of *-ma* cannot thus be regarded as entirely compositional.[20] The different readings attached to this morph, however, may ultimately be reduced to unity, if one observes that it invariably conveys a meaning of retrospectivity: be it an instance of the perfect aspect, or an 'adverbial' reading expressing anteriority with respect to the expected E localization.

6. Future-in-the-Past

Examples [12a-b] show that the default way to express the 'future-in-the-past' is by means of the Future. BCG appears thus to be a 'no-sequence-of-tense' language. Note that in [12b] the frustrative marker *tëi* adds a modal nuance of uncertainty. In order to convey the idea that a future-in-the-past situation was (for all evidence available to the speaker) completed at a point in time preceding S, as it is the case in [12c-d], the *-ma* morph has to be used. This suffix may thus also convey the idea of a 'future-perfect-in-the-past'; besides, example [12c] confirms that the Perfect is definitely 'past-oriented'. By contrast, the Future shows a much larger degree of flexibility: in its 'future-in-the-past' usage it may designate an S-preceding E, still preserving a prospective orientation with respect to a relevant temporal anchor A situated in the past. Example [12d] has approximately the same meaning as [12c], thanks to the use of a deverbal noun,

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[20] Further proof of the incomplete grammaticalization of *-ma* lies in the fact that the Relative Future provides a counterexample to a universal, tendency first proposed by Jakobson [1957] and subsequently reemphasized by Bybee [1985]: namely, that aspectual morphemes tend to sit closer to the root than the temporal ones. Apparently, the grammaticalization of the *-ma* morph as an aspectual (namely, perfectal) marker started at a relatively late stage in the history of BCG. Alternatively, adopting a suggestion by Bhat [1999], one might consider this as an argument to support the claim that BCG is a 'tense-prominent' language, rather than an 'aspect-prominent' one. See sect. 12 fror some remarks on the matter.

That compositionality is, in any case, a well-established feature in Tupí-Guaraní languages, is proved by PG data such as the following, reported in Liuzzi [1987: 272]: *ko'ë* 'c'est l'aube', *ko'ë-mba* 'la marche de l'aube vers le jour est finie', *ko'ë-mba-ta* 'la marche de l'aube vers le jour sera finie', *ko'ë-mba-ta-ma* 'la marche de l'aube vers le jour sera bientôt finie', *ko'ë-mba-ta-ma-kuri* 'la marche de l'aube vers le jour était sur le point de finir', *ko'ë-mba-ta-ma-kuri-hina* 'la marche de l'aube vers le jour était en train de finir bientôt'.

combined with the 'adverbial' interpretation of *-ma* adjoined to a temporal locution. A possible paraphrasis might roughly sound like: 'Elio's arrival was going to occur, and indeed occurred, yesterday, namely earlier than expected'.[21]

[12] a. *Elio h̲e̲i ch̲e̲-ve karu̲mbo o-u̲-ta o-vä̲e̲ aña̲ve*
     Elio say.3s 1s-POSTP yesterday 3-come-FUT 3-arrive today
     'yesterday Elio told me that he would come today'

   b. *Elio h̲e̲i ch̲e̲-ve sem̲a̲na oasa-va̲e̲-pe o-u̲-ta tëi*
     Elio say.3s 1s-POSTP week past-REL-POSTP 3-come-FUT FRUSTR
     o-vä̲e̲ karu̲mbo
     3-arrive yesterday
     'last week Elio told me that he would have possibly come yesterday'

   c. *Elio h̲e̲i ch̲e̲-ve sem̲a̲na oasa-va̲e̲-pe o-u̲-a-ma o-vä̲e̲*
     Elio say.3s 1s-POSTP week past-REL-POSTP 3-come-NOM-PF 3-arrive
     karu̲mbo
     yesterday
     'last week Elio told me that he would have (definitely) come by yesterday'

   d. *Elio h̲e̲i ch̲e̲-ve sem̲a̲na oasa-va̲e̲-pe karu̲mbo-ma*
     Elio say.3s 1s-POSTP week past-REL-POSTP yesterday-PF
     i-vä̲e̲-a
     3-arrive-NOM
     'last week Elio told me that as of yesterday he would have (definitely) come'
     [lit. 'his coming already yesterday'].

Further modalizations may be added by the 'frustrative', e.g. suggesting (as in [12b]) that the event might not (or did not) actually take place. In [13a-b], this morpheme, in combination with the Future, adds a nuance of potentiality, close to the meaning of a conditional. Example [13c] exhibits what appears to be the same morph *-rä* as the one expressing Prospective Stage with nouns (see sect. 9). The combination of the Future marker *-ta* and *-rä* brings about a markedly modal reading. BCG is, like Tupí-Guaraní languages in general, quite rich in particles with modal import. Needless to say, much

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[21] *Hei* is the 3 person of the irregular verb *(ha)e* 'say'. *Ou* is the 3 person of the irregular verb *(a)ju* 'come', here again used in a serial verb construction. In the Perfect, the vowel /a/ is added to the end of this irregular root, as in [12c].

work needs to be done in this area. Some hints are contained in Dietrich and Gustafson's grammars.[22]

[13] a. *che   a-j<u>u</u>-ta   t<ë>i*
         1s   1s-come-FUT   FRUSTR
         'I had to come/should have come (but did not)'

     b. *Ñeka hei   Elio-pe   hae o-u-ta   t<ë>i*
         Ñeka say.3s Elio-POSTP   3   3-come-FUT FRUSTR
         'Ñeka said to Elio that he had to come/should come'

     c. *che   m<e>mby o-k<e>-ta-rä?*
         1s   son   3-sleep-FUT-EPIST
         'my son will possibly sleep' / 'is it possible that my son will sleep?'.

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[22] As for PG, Liuzzi [1987: 217-223] quotes the formative *va'erã*, which exhibits a markedly modal meaning, ranging from deontic to potential.

7. Progressive aspect

BCG presents an explicit morphological device to express the notion of progressivity. It consists of a serial verb construction, in which the conjugated main verb is followed by the Non-Future (i.e., the unmarked tense) of one out of two verbs of existence. According to the Ava-informant, one of these, namely *(a)ï*, indicates the notion of present progressive, while *(ai)ko* is used to express the idea of past progressive. For the Is-informant, however, as well as for the Simba informants interviewed by Gustafson, this is not the case: both forms of the progressive may be read as either present or past progressive.[23] Actually, the Ava-informant appeared to accept this usage in some instances (cf. [18c], where *aï* is interpreted as past progressive). Note, however, that even for the Is-informant the two constructions were not exactly alike. The *äi*-periphrasis was used by this speaker, independently of temporal reference, with respect to the 'focalized' reading of the progressive (as defined in Bertinetto et al. [2000]), whereas the *aiko*-periphrasis was only used in the 'durative' reading, whereby the reference interval should not be viewed as a point in time.[24] Consider the following examples:[25]

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[23] The PG progressive auxiliary *(a)ina* [Liuzzi 1987: 251-2], is evidently related to BCG *(a)ï*. Interestingly, in one of the examples quoted by Liuzzi this construction applies to a stative verb: *a-ime a-ina en audiencia* (1s-be 1s-exist in session) 'I am sitting in court'.

[24] By 'focalized' progressive, I mean those progressive constructions that express the notion of an event viewed as going on at a single point in time (conventionally called 'focalization point'). The focalization point may be overtly expressed in the sentence, or else it may be implicit in the context, and thus presupposed. Needless to say, the focalization point does not exhaustively localize the event; it simply indicates a point in time overlapping the progressive event, while the actual duration of the latter remains indeterminate. A prototypical example of focalized progressive could be: *At 5 o' clock, John was cooking*.

By 'durative' progressive, I mean instead the progressive constructions evaluated with respect to a time interval. Here again, the actual duration of the event remains indeterminate. Even when a durative temporal adverbial is in the sentence, this does not delimit the event; rather, it merely yields a vantage point from which the situation is to be observed. As a prototypical example, consider: *Last Thursday, between 3 and 4, John was lecturing*. In this case, the lecturing could have lasted for a portion of the designated interval, or else it could have lasted longer: the duration of the event is totally indeterminate.

[25] According to Gustafson's [1995: 66] grammar, based on the Simba dialect, another way to express the progressive aspect is by means of the serial construction based on the verb *(a)noi* 'to have / keep'; e.g. *aecha anoi* 'I am seeing'. This version of the progressive periphrasis is however not common in Ava. As for the Is-informant, he did not agree to consider it as an instance of the progressive, and suggested instead, for the example at hand, the Spanish paraphrasis 'tengo en vista'. Admittedly, however, he provided a purely progressive interpretation with respect to another sentence: *okau ñoguinoi*

[14] a. *a-japo   a-ï*
        1s-do (it)   1s-exist
        Ava: 'I am doing (it)'
        Is.: 'I am/was doing (it)'

      b. *karumbo   Elio   ou   jave a-paravyky   vyteri   ai-ko*
         yesterday   Elio   came   when 1s-work   still   1s-exist
         Ava: 'yesterday, when Elio came, I was still working'
         Is.: ??

      c. *karumbo   Elio   o-paravyky oi-ko   ramboeve che   a-ke   ai-ko*
         yesterday   Elio   3-work   3-exist   while   1   1s-sleep 1s-exist
         Ava, *Is.*: 'yesterday, while Elio was working, I was sleeping'

      d. *karumbo   a-paravyky   ai-ko   ndeimbove guive   kaaru   regua*
         yesterday   1s-work   1s-exist early   since   night   until
         Ava, *Is.*: 'yesterday I was working from morning to night'.

Example [14a] is understood as focalized by both speakers, but it should only be read as present progressive according to the Ava-informant. According to the Is-informant, instead, both temporal readings are possible. As for [14b-d], they are all instances of past progressive, since they feature the past-localizing adverb *karumbo*. Note, however, that [14b], which (due to context constraints) implies the 'focalized' reading, is only accessible to the Ava-dialect; [14c-d], instead, are only compatible with a durative interpretation. Both were accordingly accepted by the two speakers. Note that in [14c] the progressive periphrasis appears in both clauses. As a further demonstration of the divergence between the two dialects considered in this paper, note that if *aiko* appeared in [14a], the Ava-informant would have a focalized past progressive reading ('I was doing (it)'), whereas the Is-informant would have a durative present/past progressive reading ('I am/was (always) sleeping').

In addition, the progressive may be interpreted, in the appropriate context, in the 'inclusive' reading, which combines, so to say, the perfectal and the progressive view. This is shown in [15a]. The difference between [14d] and [15a] may be approximately paraphrased by means of the following Spanish locutions: *estuve trabajando* /1s.be.PRET + work.GER/ 'I was working' (*scil.*, in the durative progressive reading) vs. *he estado trabajando* /1s.be.COMPOUND.PAST + work.GER/ 'I have been working (*scil.*, until now)'. Example [15b], which was however rejected by the Is-informant, shows

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'está/estan tomando chicha' (for the special declination of this form, involving the morph *ñogui-*, cf. Dietrich 1986).

that the *aiko*-periphrasis, at least in the Ava-dialect, may also express the idea of an 'inclusive past perfect progressive'. If, by contrast, *(a)ï* is added to the Perfect, as in [15c-d], the resulting form may carry, again in the Ava-dialect, the (obviously 'inclusive') meaning of a 'present perfect progressive'. Note, however, that the Is-informant once again rejected this interpretation; his reading of *-ma* in [15d] was purely adverbial. His suggestions as for the 'inclusive' reading were *opa-ete ara-ma a-ke* for [15c] (/all-INTENSIFIER day-PF 1-slept/ 'I already slept the whole day'), and *ojaeo oiko* for [15d]. Thus, the Ava-dialect apparently has two ways to express the notion of 'inclusive present progressive' (cf. [15a] and [15c-d]), whereas the Is-dialect only presents the first option:

[15] a. *a-paravyky   ai-ko   ndeimbove guive   hekuae   ä-i*
          1s-work   1s-exist early   since   always 1s-exist
          Ava, *Is.*: 'I have been working (until now) since the morning'

      b. *a-ke   ai-ko   opa-ete hokuae   ara   o-ju   o-väe   regua*
          1s-sleep 1s-exist all-very that   day   3-came   3-arrive until
          Ava: 'I had been sleeping the whole day, until he came'
          Is.: ??

      c. *a-ke-ma   a-ï   opa-ete kuae   ara*
          1s-sleep-PF 1s-exist all-very this   day
          Ava: 'I have been sleeping the whole day'
          Is.: ??

      d. *o-jaeo-ma   o-ï*
          3-cry-PF   3-exist
          Ava: 'she/he/they has/have been crying'
          Is.: 'she/he/they is/was/are/were already crying'.

BCG expresses the notion of 'future progressive' by combining a progressive marker (apparently only *(a)ï*) with the Future, as in:

[16] *kuae kaaru   re-ju   re-väe   jave   hekuaeño a-paravyky-ta a-ï*
       this night   2s-arrive 2s-arrive when   still-EMPH 1s-work-FT   1s-exist
       Ava, *Is.*: 'tonight, when you arrive, I shall still be working'.

With achievements, the availability of the progressive meaning undergoes some restrictions. With some verbs, the Non-Future is unlikely to take on the present-referring (progressive) interpretation, as [17a] illustrates. Unsurprisingly, the

progressive periphrasis appears to be problematic in such cases, as [17b] shows, whereas the Perfect in [17c] offers a standard instance of 'current relevance' reading:

[17] a. *michi-ӓe   o-je-ak̲y̲o   i̲-u*
         smallness-NOM 3-REFL-break   3-leg
         Ava, Is.: 'the child broke his leg' [* 'is breaking']

      b. * *michi-ӓe   o-je-ak̲y̲o   o̲-ï   i̲-u*
           smallness-NOM   3-REFL-break   3-exist   3-leg
           ['the child is breaking his leg']

      c. *michi-ӓe   o-je-ak̲y̲o-ma   i̲-u*
         smallness-NOM 3-REFL-break-PF   3-leg
         Ava, Is.: 'the child has broken his leg'.

The restriction observed in [17a, b], however, has ultimately to do with pragmatic motivations, since other achievement predicates allow the progressive construction:

[18] a. *fl̲o̲ta o̲-ë   o̲-ï   aramo-e̲te*
         bus   3-leave 3-exist   just-very
         Ava,Is.: 'the bus is leaving right now [scil., in the immediate future]'

      b. *a̲-ju   ja̲ve   fl̲o̲ta o̲-ë   oi-ko*
         1s-come   when   bus   3-leave 3-exist
         Ava: 'when I came, the bus was leaving'
         Is.: ??

      c. *t̲embi-kuat̲ia   a-ñok̲e̲nda   a̲-ï   ramboe̲ve   o̲-u   a-ñe-monge̲ta*[26]
         NOM-write   1s-close   1s-exist   while   3-come   1s-REFL-speak
         Ava, Is.: 'while I was closing the book, an idea occurred to me'.

It should be underscored that the expression of the progressive aspect in BCG does not necessarily require explicit morphological marking. The simple usage of the Non-Future, due to its aspectually underspecified character, may suffice to convey the notion of a Present Progressive in the relevant context. Thus, BCG instantiates a type of language where the aspectual notion 'progressive' needs not to be morphologically manifested, as in Romance languages as opposed to English. The BCG progressive marker may easily be dispensed with for reasons of economy, whenever the situational context is sufficiently unambiguous. Thus, the following sentences may turn out synonymous, although they need not be so in all instances:

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[26] The word for 'idea' is actually a verbal form with the meaning of 'to speak to oneself', and as such has to be declined according to the person who gets the idea.

[19] a. *kägui   hou   reta*
         chicha   3.drink   PLURAL
         'they are drinking/drank chicha'[27]

      b. *kägui   hou   o-ï   reta*
         chicha   3.drink   3-exist   PLURAL
         'they are drinking chicha'.

Ultimately, the usage of the progressive periphrasis seems to be governed by pragmatic principles of economy. For instance, the follow-up question to a statement like: *Aparavyky aï* 'I am working', would most likely be: *Mbaera reparavyky?* 'why are you working? (lit. 'why do you work'), without the progressive auxiliary *reï*. Note, however, that the answer to: *Mbae ojapo oï nde memby?*[28] 'what is your son doing?' would most probably be the progressive periphrasis: *Ojuvanga oï* 'he is playing', for the answer conveys new information. Without *oï*, the answer would sound rather abrupt or non-cooperative.

8. Habitual aspect

When the iterative occurrence of the event is lexically specified, or recoverable from the context, the Non-Future suffices to indicate a generic/habitual situation overlapping S, as illustrated in [20] and [21a]. This confirms the flexible aspectual nature of this tense. Past habituality needs however to be explicitly marked, as shown in [21b]:

[20]   *pe   pe-ñovaë   hae-ndive   ñavo   hae   i-j-apu-mai*
         you.p 2p-meet   3-POSTP   whenever   3   3-LINK-lie-EMPH
         'whenever you meet her/him/they, she/he/they tell(s) lies'

[21] a. *o-a   kia   kuae yvykua-pe   jave ñavo   o-pë   i-u*
         3-fall somebody this   well- POSTP   when everytime 3-break   3-leg
         'whenever somebody falls into this well, he breaks his leg'

      b. *kuae yvykua-pe   kia   o-a-se   ñavo*
         this   well- POSTP   somebody 3-fall-PAST.HAB everytime
         o-pë(-se)   jepi   i-u
         3-break(-PAST.HAB) usually   3-leg
         'whenever somebody fell into this well, he usually broke his leg'.

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[27] *Chicha* is the Spanish word for the local maize-based alcoholic drink made by women. The ritualized nature of chicha drinking is shown by the fact that there exists a specific verb to denote this type of event. Thus, [15a] could be equivalently rendered as: *Okau reta*.

[28] *Memby* designates the son or the daughter of a woman.

Further observations concerning the usage of the past habitual marker will be discussed in sect. 10, with respect to nominal predicates. It is worth noting that habituality may also be expressed periphrastically. The Is-informant indicated the following example (to be compared with [37]): *Che ru imbaerasy pota jae* 'my father gets continually ill', where *pota* is the same root to be found in the verb meaning 'to want'.[29]

9. Nominal vs. verbal predicates

As is typical of Tupí-Guaraní languages, BCG presents hints of an active / inactive split in its lexical lot [Klimov 1987; Seki 1990; Velázquez-Castillo 2002].[30] An important feature of this dichotomy lies in the absence (or rarity) of lexemes presenting a purely adjectival character [Dietrich 2000],[31] and in the very large presence of nominal predicates, i.e. lexical entries that can behave both as nouns and as predicative elements, depending on the context. Since, however, the 'predicative' reading may often translate into an adjectival reading, as in *pöra* 'beauty / (be) beautiful', the lack of true adjectives is ultimately compensated for.

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[29] The BCG past habituality marker does not seem to have cognates in PG. In this language, habituality is expressed by *-mi* or *-jepi*. According to Liuzzi [1987: 264-266], the latter element suggests strict regularity of occurrences, which is not required by the former. As for the temporal value, these elements, especially *-mi*, can be combined with any tense. In addition, they may combine with non-verbal lexemes, as it is also the case for *-se* (see examples [33, 40] and fn. 40, 41). Judging from the examples reported in Liuzzi, it appears that *-mi* is more integrated into the verbal morphology, while *-jepi* appears to have preserved a more adverbial status.

[30] Velázquez-Castillo [2002] suggests that the organizing principle in PG semantics is the divide source / locative, rather than agent / patient. I am not entirely persuaded by her analysis, although she presents some convincing arguments. My general impression is that the attempt to reduce to unity all the syntactic behaviors of modern PG looks like an impossible task. The syntax of this language appears to me as a partly degenerated active / inactive system; to the extent, of course, that any language known to us actually illustrates a perfect example of such a system (or of any typologically relevant system).
Ringmacher [1988] expresses reservations as to the positioning of PG within the active / inactive type. Although I agree with much of what he writes, I believe BCG (which is structurally very similar to PG) finds its typological collocation there. I do agree with this author, however, on the fact that one should not assume that verbal and nominal predicates converge in the single category 'verb'. As the discussion in this paragraph will show, the categorial boundary between verbs proper and nominal predicates plays an important role in the BCG structural type. The notion 'active / inactive type', broadly considered, does not presuppose the existence of a single predicative category.

[31] Barreiro Saguier & Dessaint [1983] grant the existence of adjectives in PG, but I believe Dietrich has suggested very convincing arguments to the contrary.

Actually, things are more complex than that, as Dietrich [1977; 1986; 2001] extensively argues. If one had to judge things with Indo-European spectacles (something that is both politically and methodologically incorrect), these predicates would often turn out to have a threefold character, for they can translate into nouns, adjectives or verbs. The limitation seems to derive from attrition with the Indo-European equivalents, so that in quite a number of cases it might appear that one of these possibilities is lacking. Consider the following cases:

		NOUN-LIKE	ADJECTIVE-LIKE (stative)	VERB-LIKE (dynamic)
[22]	a. *pyau*	novelty	(be) new	-
	b. *gwasu*	bigness	(be) big	-
	c. *kavi*	goodness	(be) good, fine	-
	d. *michi*	smallness	(be) little	-
	e. *tï*	whiteness	(be) white	-
[23]	a. *hoky*	sprout	-	to sprout
	b. *miari*	speech	-	to speak

In fact, in order to express the meaning corresponding to 'renew', one has to use, instead of [22a], the expression (actually, a serial-predicate construction): *a-je-mbo pyau* /1-REFL-make novelty/ 'I make myself new'. This, however, is not the ultimate truth. Even predicates like the ones in [22] may be conjugated as true verbs, as shown by: *tuicha* 'big, grown-up', *che tuicha-ta* 'I shall be grown-up', *che tuicha-ma* 'I have become grown-up'. Consequently, for the BCG speakers, the words in [22-23] are exactly alike in their predicative function. Where does then lie the difference? I suggest that the difference is ultimately to be sought in the actional nature of the predicates (where 'actionality' stands for what other scholars call 'Aktionsart'). The predicates in [22] have a fully stative character, as opposed to the dynamic character of those in [23], at least in their verb-like interpretation. This has important typological consequences, for it suggests that the notion 'inactive' is scalar. There are indeed different degrees of 'inactiveness' among nominal predicates, as one can intuitively gather by simply comparing Eng. *beauty* vs. *speech*. This is no wonder, for the notion 'activeness' is also scalar, in an equally intuitive sense (compare: *sleep*, *wait* vs. *work*, *run*). In the case at

hand, this implies that the formally neat divide between active (verbal) and inactive (nominal) predicates, commonly attributed to Proto-Tupí-Guaraní, is nowadays further modulated (at least in BCG) by a finer, semantically-based category-internal dichotomy, contrasting dynamic vs. stative predicates. This is particularly evident in those nominal predicates which admit all three possibilities, so that one and the same predicate may take on both a strictly stative and a dynamic reading, as in:

		NOUN-LIKE	ADJECTIVE-LIKE (stative)	VERB-LIKE (dynamic)
[24]	a. *apu*	lie	(be) a liar	to lie
	b. *kirɨ̈i*	silence	(be) silent	to shut up
	c. *pochy*	anger, badness	(be) enraged, bad	to get angry
	d. *kyra*	fatness	(be) fat	to get fat
	e. *mbaerasy*[32]	illness	(be) ill	to get ill

The dynamic character is strikingly evident in cases such as: *Ne kirɨ̈i!* 'shut up!', which is (semantically, if not morphologically) an imperative. The above items should thus be understood as instances of actional hybridism, essentially similar to those to be observed (to a greater or lesser extent) in virtually any language, as the following English examples demonstrate:

[25]   a. *be nasty* permanent stative (cf. *John is a nasty boy*)
            contingent stative (cf. *John is being nasty, today*)

   b. *connect* achievement (cf. *I am soon going to connect myself to the internet*)
            permanent stat. (cf. *the bridge connects the two sides of the river*)

   c. *run*   activity (cf. *John ran for a long time*)
            accomplishment (cf. *John ran home*)

   d. *smoke*   activity (cf. *John is smoking in the garden*)
            accomplishment (cf. *John is smoking a cigar*)
            permanent stative (cf. *John smokes* = 'John is a smoker')

   e. *draw*   activity (cf. *John painted peacefully*)
            accomplishment (cf. *John painted a portrait*)
            permanent stative (cf. *John paints* = 'John is a *painter*').

Whatever the case, from the point of view of the BCG speaker, the different actional interpretations shown in [22-24] are barely perceptible, just as the English speaker does

not immediately perceive the latent ambiguity of the items in [25]. One and the same sequence gets its appropriate reading depending on the situational context, as illustrated below, but it is hardly perceived as ambiguous by the native speakers, unless they make use of their metalinguistic capacity, possibly through comparison with Spanish:

[26] a. *che pu<u>e</u>re*   'my possibility', 'I am/was able', 'I can/could'

b. *h<u>o</u>ky* (3 sprout) 'her/his/its/their sprout', 'it is/was a sprout (or: they are/were sprouts)', 'it is sprouting/it sprouted (or: they are sprouting / they sprouted)'

[27] a. *kw<u>ae</u> t<u>a</u>pe i-p<u>u</u>ku*
       this   path   3-length
       'this path is/was long'

b. *kw<u>ae</u> t<u>a</u>pe i-p<u>u</u>ku   j<u>ae</u>*
   this   path   3-length much
   'this path is/was very long' / 'the length of this path is/was considerable'

[28] a. *kw<u>ae</u> ñab<u>a</u>mba h<u>ü</u>*
       this   dog   3-blackness
       'this dog is/was black'

b. *kw<u>ae</u> ñab<u>a</u>mba h<u>ü</u>   j<u>ae</u>*
   this   dog   3-blackness much
   'this dog is/was very black' / 'the blackness of this dog is/was considerable'.

Some of these nominals may develop a secondary figurate meaning, as in:

[29] a. *iju* 'yellowness / yellow'

b. *hokw<u>ae</u> michiäe   h<u>o</u>ba iju*
   that   child-NOM face   yellow
   'that boy's face is/was pale', 'the pale color of that boy's face'.

As the preceding examples show, the declension of nominal predicates differs from that of verbs proper, for (with the exception of the 3 marker) they do not add any person inflection to the left of the root. This is in fact the most obvious feature that differentiates nominal from verbal predicates.[33]

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[32] *Mbaer<u>a</u>sy* is actually decomposable into *mbae-r<u>a</u>sy* /GENERALIZER-pain/ (lit.: 'pain everywhere in the body'), i.e. 'illness'.

[33] See Jensen [1998] for an overview of the pronominal systems of Tupí-Guaraní languages. The 3 marker of nominal predicates, to be seen e.g. in [27], is called "relational marker" by Seki [1990], who sets it apart from the rest of the pronominal series. Indeed, the BCG *i-* marker diverges from the other person markers used in nominal predicates, for the latter normally coincide with the subject

Another feature that characterizes nominal predicates, as opposed to verbal ones, is the fact that they may take on suffixes conveying the idea that there was (-*gwe*)[34] or there will be (-*rä*), a different stage of the given entity, to the effect that it did/will look different from what it looks at the relevant temporal anchor A (if indeed it still, or already, exists at that point). It is important to realize that this does not imply deictic, but rather anaphorical orientation. The notion 'future house', for instance, may apply to a house that was envisaged as future at some past time, and that does no more exist now. This is a feature that BCG shares with several other native American languages. Now, the important point is that not only nominal predicates (as in [30b]), but nouns proper (as in [30a]) are liable to be so marked. On the contrary, these markers are not available to verbs. Thus, although the adjunction of temporal markers is (in general terms) a verbal feature, rather than a nominal one, the behavior exemplified in [30] shows that BCG nominal predicates share, in this respect, some similarity with true nouns rather than with verbs.[35] Note that in the variety described by Dietrich, who carried out his fieldwork with emigrant communities in the North of Argentina, these markers are also used with verbal predicates, as shown in table A above. This must be a regional feature, for Sergio Liuzzi [p.c.] confirms that forms such as *ake̲-kwe* and *ake̲-rä*, unknown to PG, are attested in his native dialect, spoken in the northern Argentinian province of Corrientes. Interestingly, as pointed out by Manfred Ringmacher (p.c.), the retrospective form *ake-kwe* is reminiscent of the PG past form *ake va'ekue*. My BCG

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pronouns' series (see [1]). In Kamaiurá, a genetically related language spoken in the Amazonian region, nominal predicates select a special person markers' series, also used in prototypical cases to mark the direct object argument. It is worth noting that the BCG relational marker takes the form *h-* in a specific class of words presenting initial consonant alternation (cf. [26b] and [28]). See Dietrich [1986: 108, 117] for details.

[34] According to both Dietrich [1986] and Gustafson [1995], this suffix alternates with *-kwe*. Dietrich [p.c.] suggests that *-gwe* occurs in nasal contexts; my informants, however, constantly used the *-gwe* variant (see also fn. 3).

[35] The presence of retrospective- and prospective-stage nominal markers has been pointed out as a typical feature demonstrating the bleaching of the noun / verb boundary in natural languages, often with specific reference to the native American ones. See for instance Schachter [1985]. The actual relevance of this fact, however, has been exaggerated. Although languages like BCG undoubtedly present a perfectly grammaticalized usage of these markers, this would not be enough to substantiate any radical claim. Such morphological devices exist in virtually every language (consider, e.g., *ex-husband*), although with a lexically constraint distribution, which is in itself an important limitation, as noted by Nordlinger & Sadler [2004]. Since the matter is far too complex to be extensively dealt with here, I shall limit myself to the few observations put forth at the end of this section and in sect. 12. For a very condensed presentation of this issue, suggesting the existence of a sort of continuum from the

informants, in any case, rejected the use of the temporal stage markers *-gwe* and *-rä* with verbal predicates, and indeed Gustafson [1995] does not mention this possibility. As we shall see in sect. 11, when *-gwe* and *-rä* are attached to verbal roots, they bring about an altogether different meaning, acting as nominalizing devices.

[30] a. *me* 'husband' *me-gwe* 'former husband' *me-rä* 'future husband, fiancé'

   b. *pe kyrëy*   (2p desire)   'your desire, 'you desire/desired'
      pe kyrëy-gwe (2p desire-RETR.STAGE)   'your past desire'
      pe kyrëy-rä   (2p desire-PROSP.STAGE) 'your future desire'.

Another striking parallel with nouns proper, in contradistinction to verbs, is that nominal predicates may be preceded by two identical personal pronouns, yielding phrases like the ones below. Actually, the two pronouns are not exactly identical, for the second one is unstressed (unless it receives stress by the following monosyllabic noun) and may therefore undergo nasalization in the appropriate contexts. This enables any noun (as in [31a-b] and [32a]), not only nominal predicates (as in [31c]), to get a predicative value, similar to what one may obtain in other languages with the help of copular verbs like 'be' or 'have'. It should be remarked that BCG presents other means to express possession, as illustrated in [32b-c]. The quasi-predicative use of personal pronouns is thus not an obligatory choice, but an independently existing device. Note also that the predicative reading may also be conveyed by the simple occurrence of a single person marker.

[31] a'.   *che ro* (1s house) 'my house'
      a''. *(che) che ro kavi* (1s 1s house goodness) 'my house is good', 'I have a
            good house'
            (NB: in order to obtain a past-referring reading, the morph *-gwe* should best
               be added to the noun *ro*; the same applies to [31b'']. Actually, this merely
            depends on pragmatic reasons, for the notion of 'former-X' is in other
            contexts perfectly available with both present- and past-reference)

      b'.   *che rembiu* (1s 1s food) 'my food'
      b''. *(che) che rembiu katu* (1s 1s food goodness/richness) 'my food is
            good/rich', 'I have abundant food'

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sharpest to the weakest noun / verb divide, cf. Lehmann [1999] and Sasse [2001]. For a theoretically advanced discussion, see issue 9,3 (2005) of *Linguistic Typology*.

c'.   *nde pyau* (2s novelty) 'your novelty', 'you are/were new (also: young)'

c".   *nde nde pyau vyteri* (2s 2s novelty still) 'you are/were still new'

[32] a. *(che) che   mandu*
      1s   1s   mandu
      'I have a mandu'[36]

b. *nde   re-noi   mandu*
   2s   2s- keep   mandu
   'you have/had a mandu'

c. *nde   re-noi-se   mandu*
   2s   2s-keep-PAST.HAB   mandu
   'you used to have a mandu'.

This construction receives different interpretations in different contexts, depending on pragmatic factors. In [31a-b] it may stand for a possession relation; in [31c], however, it apparently indicates a condition, just as in *hae i-kangy* /3 3-tiredness/ 'she/he/they is/are/was/were tired'. In [31a", b"], both readings are possible. Whatever the case, these different interpretations are a mere side-effect of the translation into a different language; for the native speaker, they all instantiate one and the same construction.

On top of this, any BCG 'pure' noun has a potential for developing, at least at the metaphorical level, an actual predicative meaning, which can possibly lexicalize. The following example shows a denominal verb obtained by morphological 'zero' conversion. It is interesting to note that, in the reading suggested, this nominal predicate has a dynamic, rather than a stative meaning, although the noun from which it comes is a prototypical one, designating a set of physical referents:[37]

[33] a. anguja 'mouse'

b. anguja-*gwe* (mouse-RETR.STAGE) 'former mouse'

c. anguja-rä (mouse-PROSP.STAGE) 'future mouse' / '(the) to be mouse'

d. che anguja (I mouse) 'I behave/behaved like a mouse'

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36 *Mandu* is the traditional dress of Guaraní women, usually translated as *tipoi* in Spanish texts.

37 Example [33] was provided by the Ava-informant as an example of latent productivity. The Is-informant was at first reluctant to accept it, but finally accepted it on the analogy with *aguara* 'fox', which has indeed acquired an equivalent metaphorical meaning, also reported in the dictionaries (cf. *che aguara* 'I behave like a fox', 'I am proud like a fox', 'I behave like a pícaro'). See also the noun *mandu* in its conventionalized, metonymic meaning, as shown in [40], and most notably in [46a]. It is worth quoting, in this context, a PG sentence such as *xe ha'e kuña-ta-ha* /1s say girl-FUT-that/ 'I say that it will be a girl/female' [Liuzzi 1987: 199], where the future marker is attached to a noun root.

e. che anguja-ta (I mouse-FUT) 'I shall behave like a mouse'

f. che anguja-se (I mouse-PAST.HAB) 'I used to behave like a mouse'

g. che anguja a-ï (I mouse 1s-exist) 'I am behaving like a mouse'

h. che anguja-ma (I mouse-PF) 'I have behaved like a mouse'.

As we shall see in the next section, all the tense-aspect markers shown in [33d-h], and indeed almost all tense-aspect markers, are also (and *a fortiori*) available to nominal predicates. This makes the functional difference between verbal and nominal elements (both 'pure' nouns and nominal predicates) rather subtle. It is indeed worth noting that many roots may ambiguously appear – with the appropriate morphological affixes – as either verbs or nouns. An example of this kind is to be found in the root *väe* 'arrive', that appears in several sentences quoted in this paper as a member of the serial construction *(a)ju (a)väe* 'come, arrive' (see, e.g., [2a]), but may also be used as a noun, as in [12d]. Similar examples abound, and go both directions, with predominantly verbal roots taking on nominal affixes (e.g., *i-oa-ma* /3-leave-PF/ 'it is already her/his/their leaving(-time)', *ndei i-oa-pe* /NEG 3-leave-POSTP/ 'she/he/they is/are/was/were not in her/his/their leaving') and vice versa (e.g., *i-ara-ma* /3-day-PF/ 'it is already time' or the examples in [33d-h]). BCG is thus no exception to the general tendency of native American languages to downgrade the contrast between nouns and verbs.

Nevertheless, in BCG these two word classes are not identical on all counts.[38] Even restricting the comparison to verbal and nominal predicates (to the exclusion of true nouns), the dichotomy rests quite firmly on the following facts:

(i) Morphologically, verbs and nominal predicates select different person markers. This is known to be a prototypical feature of active / inactive languages. In BCG, verbs always attach a specialized affix to the left side (as shown in [1]), while nominal

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38   A robust reason to defend the noun / verb divide on formal grounds is suggested by Ringmacher [1988: 152-153]. Although his argument is based on PG data, it easily extends to BCG. Ringmacher points out that the ambivalent use of verbal and nominal roots is not truly bidirectional, as the preceding discussion might suggest. The asymmetry consists in the fact that verb roots may easily drop their dedicated person affixes (see point (i) above) and take on the outer appearance of a true noun, while nominal predicates cannot normally get the prototypically verbal person markers, despite extreme cases such as [33].

predicates are necessarily accompanied by the series of personal pronouns that may redundantly appear as subject pronouns with verbs (see again [1]), except for the 3 marker (see fn. 33).

(ii) Semantically, and again consistently with the active / inactive type, verbs tend to have a dynamic character, whereas nouns proper tend to be strictly inactive, and nominal predicates often present a stative character. The latter dichotomy, however, should not be overstated, for one may occasionally find stative verbs on the one side, and 'dynamic' nominal predicates on the other side, as shown in [23-24]. The morphological dichotomy between verbs and nominal predicates is thus modulated, rather than directly mirrored, by the semantically-based divide 'stative vs. dynamic', which appears to be partly independent. Nevertheless, the constantly available argumental behavior of all nominal predicates ensures a definitely larger degree of flexibility, as compared with verbs proper.

As for the contrast between true nouns and verbs, the tense-aspect domain offers a fairly effective discrimination criterion, so far neglected to my knowledge. It turns out, in fact, that 'pure' nouns (as opposed to nominal predicates) differ from predicates (both nominal and verbal) in terms of temporal orientation. While the default temporal value of predicatively used roots is 'non-future', the default nouns' temporal orientation is 'present'. This explains why, in order to designate a retrospective or prospective stage of a referential argument, one has to add explicit morphs (-*gwe* and -*rä*, respectively).[39] With both nominal and verbal predicates, on the contrary, the absence of any explicit temporal marker (cf. the Non-Future tense) gives rise by default to present- or past-time-reference readings, as appropriate. In the summarizing table D, devoted to nominal predicates (cf. sect. 12), this crucial contrast is indicated by the divide between the left hand-side of the table, referring to the 'predicative' usage of nominal predicates, and the right hand-side ('inactive' stages), referring to their argumental, i.e. 'purely nominal' interpretation.

The various Tupí-Guaraní languages may differently mark the contrast between 'pure' nouns and nominal predicates. Kamaiurá, for instance, allows two complementary sets of affixes to sit on either word class (case affixes as opposed to nominalizers).

[39] I would like to underline that what is at stake here is the default temporal value, rather than deictic temporal interpretation. By 'present-orientation', therefore, one should understand 'overlapping the current temporal anchor' A, rather than 'overlapping S'.

10. Nominal predicates and tense-aspectual values

Nominal predicates tend by and large to have the same tense-aspect paradigm as verbs proper, sharing in most cases the same morphological markers. We already had a glimpse of this in the preceding section. In the examples that follow, [34a] shows the Present Progressive marker, while [34b], [35b], [36b] and [37b] show the Past Habitual tense, with either permanent-attitudinal or purely temporary-habitual meaning, depending on the semantic properties of the given verb.[40] Of special interest is the fact that the Ava-informant gave an alternative version for [36b], according to which the past habitual marker -*se* was attached to the modifier (*kav̲i̲se*), rather than to the predicate (*iñe̲e*). This might be interpreted as a sign of agglutinating structure. Some tense-aspect morphs seem to have in their scope, in terms of syntactic behovior (at least potentially, or at least for some speakers), the whole predicative structure, rather than the mere verb.[41] As for [35c], it is another example of the Retrospective Stage

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[40] By 'attitudinality', one should understand the most extreme type of habituality, where the repeated event is viewed as strongly characterizing the given individual or situation. This is typically to be observed when eventive predicates are contextually turned into purely stative ones [Bertinetto 1986a; 1997; Lenci 1995]. Consider, for instance: *John smokes*, meaning that he is a heavy smoker. It is important to observe that attitudinality creates a bridge between habituality (prototypically eventive) and pure stativity. In this connection, Velázquez-Castillo [2002] mentions an interesting contrast in PG, relating to the alternative use of the same root as a purely verbal or as a nominal predicate: *a-'yta* 'I swim / swam' vs. *che-'yta* 'I am a swimmer, *a-karu* 'I eat / ate' vs. *che-karu* 'I am a glutton'.

It is worth pointing out that although the morph -*se* indicates, in normal situations, past habituality, it may occasionally receive a present-referring interpretation by pragmatic inference. Consider the following examples, put forth by the Is-informant (the Spanish translations are his own suggestions): *i-mandu̲-se* 'le gusta mucho tener mandu' (lit., 'she habitually wore the mandu'), *i-jaeo̲-se* 'el llorón' (lit., he/she used to cry). The conventionalization of these semantic extensions proves their pragmatic basis.

[41] The Is-informant did not accept the alternative version of [36b]. Nevertheless, under my insistence, he came out with similar alternatives for other sentences, such as [37b] (*i-mbaera̲sy jae̲-se*) and [39a] (*i-pu̲ku jae̲-se*). Besides, he produced the following sentence, supposedly uttered by a woman, where -*ta* migrates from the verb to its argument:

[i]   a-je̲mbo   kuimba̲e-ta
             1s-do   male/man-FUT
             'I shall make myself a male/man'.

This proves that the migration of TAM morphs is not at all ungrammatical for this speaker. Similar observations could possibly be made about *o̲pa-ma* in [10], as well as *ndeimbove̲asy-ma* in [8a], *karu̲mbo-ma* in [9a], and *op̲ata-ma* in [11b], although in all but the first example the perfectal meaning of -*ma* may fade into a purely 'adverbial' reading, as suggested above.

construction available to nominal predicates (just as to nouns proper) in their argumental usage. Example [38a] shows that the root-form of nominal predicates may in itself, in the relevant contexts, convey the present habitual meaning (as for past habituality, the *-se* morph is apparently mandatory, as in [38b]). Finally, [38c] is ambiguous, oscillating between the attitudinal and the contingent reading (the latter being present-referring only, for otherwise the morph *-se* should be used):

[34] a. *(hae) i-j-apu o-ï* (3 3-LINKING-lie 3-exist) 'she/he/they is/are telling lies' (for the Is-informant also: '…was/were telling lies')

   b. *(hae) i-j-apu-se* (3 3- LINKING-lie-PAST.HAB) 'she/he/they used to tell lies'

[35] a. *che   kyra* (1s fatness)   'I am/was fat'

   b. *che   kyra-se* (1s fatness-PAST.HAB) 'I used to get fat' (temporary habitual); 'I was fat' (attitudinal)

   c. *che   kyra-gwe* (1s fatness-PAST) 'my past fatness'

[36] a. *che   ru   i-ñee   kavi*
      1s   father   3-word   good
      'My father speaks/spoke well'

This sort of behavior was even more wide-spread in former stages of BCG. In Leon de Santiago's dictionary [p. 53] one finds the examples in [i-ii], where the (a) and (b) versions apparently mean the same:

[i]   a. a-mongeta   Tüpa nde   rehe
            1s-pray   God 2s   for
        b. a-Tüpa   mongeta nde   rehe
            1s-God   pray   2s   for
            'I pray God for you'
[ii]   a. Tüpa e-mongeta   che   rehe!
            God IUSS-pray   1s   for
        b. e-Tüpa   mongeta che   rehe!
            IUSS-God pray   1s   for
            'Pray God for me!'.

This is ostensibly a form of object incorporation. Similar structures are now felt as obsolete:

[iii]   a. a-mboete Tüpa
            1s-honor God
            'I honor God'
        b. ??? a-Tüpa   mboete
              1s-God   honor.

The relatively free morph displacements shown above are typologically quite interesting. They point to a sort of substantially free compositionality, whereby some grammatical formatives may migrate from one lexical support to another, within the same predicative structure. This is somewhat reminiscent of an isolating language behavior, rather than of agglutination in the strict sense. Perhaps, this points to an intermediate level between agglutination and isolation. 'Free agglutination' might be a suitable label.

b. *che   ru-gwe   i-ñee-se   kavi*
 1s   father-former   3-word-PAST.HAB good
 'My father used to speak well'   (attitudinal)

[37] a. *che   ru   i-mbaerasy   jae*
 1s   father   3-illness   much
 'my father is/was very sick'

b. *che   ru   i-mbaerasy-se   jae*
 1s   father   3-sickness-PAST.HAB much
 'my father used to get very much sick / sick quite often' (temporary habit.)

c. *karamboe jave che   ru   i-mbaerasy-se   jae   oi-ko*
 long.time   when 1s   father   3-sickness-PAST.HAB much   3-exist
 Is.: 'For a long time, my father was very ill'   (temporary habit.)

[38] a. *che   mbaerasy   kägui   hau   jave ñavo*
 1s   sickness   chicha   1s.drink when each time
 'each time I drink chicha, I get sick'   (attitudinal)

b. *che   mbaerasy-se   kägui   hau   jave ñavo*
 1s   sickness-PAST.HAB   chicha   1s.drink when each time
 'each time I drank chicha, I got sick'   (temporary habit.)

c. *che   ru   i-mbaerasy   avei   hae-ramo   che   pyatyty*
 1s   father   3-sickness   continually   this-because   1s   sadness
 i. 'my father is/was all the time sick, therefore I am/was worried' (attitudinal)
 ii. 'my father gets sick all the time, therefore I am worried' (temporary habit.).

In [38c], according to the Is-informant, the Past Habitual marker *-se* cannot attach to the nominal predicate for reasons of redundancy (due to the presence of *avei*). This morph may nevertheless attach itself – with attitudinal reading – to permanent stative nominals, as in [39]. Note that, without *-se*, the latter example would be present-referring, as with all permanent statives. With such predicates, on the contrary (and unsurprisingly), the *öi* progressive periphrasis sounds definitely ungrammatical (witness [39b]). By contrast, *-se* can even attach to strongly permanent stative nominals, like those based on a 'pure' noun, as in [40b]. As for the difference between [40b] with Past Habitual *-se*, and [40c] with Retrospective Stage *-gwe*, it consists in the fact that, in the former case, the intended person is presumably dead (otherwise, there would be little sense in using a past-referring tense), whereas in the latter case the condition referred to is presently over, although the intended person may still be alive (as, e.g., in the case of a woman who lost, for some reason, her status as Guaraní). The fact that *-se* may appear in permanent stative situations ultimately shows that, in the relevant cases, this marker has attained the status of a truly imperfective device, rather than being a mere indicator

of habitual iterativity. In this respect, -se reminds the Romance Imperfect, except, of course, for the fact that the latter has an even larger range of meanings (including, e.g., past progressive).[42]

[39] a. *che   kyvy*[43] *i-puku-se   jae*
         1s   brother   3-tallness-HAB.PAST much
         'my brother was very tall'

      b. * *che   kyvy   i-puku   o-ï*
          1s   brother 3-tallness   3-exist
         ['my brother is being tall']

[40] a. *Che-sy   i-mandu-vae*[44]
         1s-mother   3-mandu-REL
         'my mother (who) is Guaraní'
         (lit.: my mother wears the traditional dress, hence she belongs to the community)

      b. *Che-sy   i-mandu-se-vae*
         1s-mother   3-mandu-PAST.HAB-REL
         'my mother (who) was Guaraní'

      c. *Che-sy   i-mandu-gwe-vae*
         1s-mother   3-mandu-RETR.STAGE-REL
         'my mother (who) was Guaraní' (scil.: this condition is now over).

Despite their stative inclinations, nominal predicates may take on the progressive marker. Examples [41a] and [42a] show that the Progressive is definitely possible to such predicates, provided they have a contingent (i.e. non-permanent) stative meaning. (Note that the absence of *oï* in [41a] would possibly bring about a past-referring, dynamic reading: 'my father got sick'.) It is worth underlining that although [41a] may convey, at least in the Ava-dialect, a strictly dynamic reading ('my father is getting

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42 Consider:

   [i] a. A quel tempo,   Gigi   andava   a scuola   in moto   (temporary habitual)
           At that time,   Gigi go.IMPERFECT   to school with motorbycicle
           'At that time, Gigi used to go to school with a motorbycicle'
       b. Gigi   era   alto   (attitudinal)
           Gigi   be.IMPERFECT   tall
           'Gigi was tall'
   c. Sorpresi   Gigi   mentre   dormiva   (progressive)
   catch-1s.PAST   Gigi   while   sleep-3s.IMPERFECT
   'I caught Gigi as he was sleeping'.

43 *Kyvy* indicates, in the fairly intricated kinship terminalogy of traditional Guaraní culture, the 'brother of a woman'.

44 Without the relativizer *-vae*, the most obvious reading of [40a] would be: 'The mandu of my mother'.

sick'), this is not necessarily the case. As the translation indicates, a purely static-durative reading is possible, provided the situation is conceived of as temporary. This shows that the progressive may be used, with these predicates, to simply emphasize the contingent nature of the designated condition, rather than to suggest a truly dynamic process. By contrast, according to the Is-informant, a sentence like *Añave che pyatyty aï* – 'at present, I feel sad' – would sound less appropriate without the progressive marker *aï*, due to the strict focalization induced by the adverb (as to the notion 'focalization', see fn. 24). The situation here described also applies to the *aiko* periphrasis illustrated in [41b-e] and [42c-d], where again the contrast between the two dialects is quite striking, in terms of both temporal and aspectual interpretation. As for the latter dimension, consider the different readings of the progressive Perfect in [41c], or the fact that the focalized reading of [41b] is only possible for the Ava-informant. Example [41e] is remarkable, for it shows that the progressive periphrasis may dissolve into a form of mere imperfectivity. Thus, the progressive periphrasis seems to converge with the *-se* morph in the role of expressing pure imperfectivity with stative predicates. The difference seems to lie in the fact that *-se* may fulfill this task even with permanent statives (cf., by contrast, [39b]). On the contrary, those nominal predicates that may most naturally get a dynamic reading, such as *miari* in [43], are quite obviously used in the truly focalized reading. It will not go unnoticed that the latter predicates may activate the progressive reading even in their root-form (as in [43a]), just as this happens with the Non-Future of verbal predicates (cf. [19]):

[41] a. *che   ru   i-mbaerasy   o-ï*
1s   father   3-sickness   3-exist
Ava: 'my father is sick (scil. temporarily)' / '…is getting sick'
Is.: 'my father is/was sick (scil. temporarily)'

   b. *che   ru   i-mbaerasy   oi-ko*
1s   father 3-sickness   3-exist
Ava: 'my father was sick (scil., temporarily)' / '…was getting sick'
Is.: 'my father is/was always sick', '... keeps/kept getting sick'

   c. *che   ru   i-mbaerasy-ma   oi-ko*
1s   father 3-sickness-PF   3-exist
Ava: 'my father has/had been sick (scil., until and including R)'
Is.: 'my father has/had already been sick',

    d. *che̱ ru i-mbaera̱sy o̱i-ko mo̱köi a̱ra*
       1s   father   3-sickness   3-exist   two   days
       Ava, *Is.*: 'my father was sick for two days'

    e. *che̱ ru i-mbaera̱sy ñoma̱i o̱i-ko ha̱e-ra̱mo o-ma̱no*
       1s   father   3-sickness   always   3-exist   this-because 3-die
       Ava, *Is.*: 'my father was always sick, and because of that he died'

[42] a. *(aña̱ve) che mbaera̱sy a̱-ï*
       (now)   1s   sickness   1s-exist
       Ava, *Is.*: 'I am (presently) sick' / 'I am getting sick'

    b. *re̱-ju ja̱ve che pyaty̱ty a̱-ï*
       you-arrive   when   1s   sadness   1s-exist
       Ava: 'when you arrive, I am (always) sad'
       Is.: 'when you arrive/arrived, I am/was sad'

    c. *sema̱na-ete̱i che mbaera̱sy a̱i-ko*
       week-very   1s   sickness   1s-exist
       Ava, *Is.*: 'last week I was sick'

    d. *re̱-ju ja̱ve che pyaty̱ty a̱i-ko*
       you-arrive   when   1s   sadness   1s-exist
       Ava: 'when you arrived, I was sad'
       Is.: 'when you arrive/arrived, I am/was sad'

[43] a. *nde miari* (2s speech) 'you are speaking/spoke'

    b. *nde miari re̱-ï*
       2s speech   2s-exist
       Ava: 'you are speaking'
       Is.: 'you are/were speaking'

    c. *nde miari rei-ko*
       2s speech   2s-exist
       Ava: 'you were speaking'
       Is.: 'you are/were always speaking'.

Exception made for specific incompatibilities – such as the disallowed combination of permanent statives and the progressive periphrases – nominal predicates are to be found with virtually all BCG tenses. The only exception is the Indefinite Future. This proves that nominal predicates are definitely endowed with predicative status. Consider the following examples. Note that the Future is accessible not only to the most dynamic nominal predicates, as in [44a], but to definitely static ones, as in [45a]. With the latter predicates, however (not to speak of permanent stative ones), the Future Progressive sounds predictably odd (cf. [45b] as opposed to [44b]). Example [46] shows that nominal predicates can also be used in the Perfect; in fact, this is even true of 'pure' nouns, as in [46a], provided they have developed a conventionalized meaning. Finally,

[47] shows that the relevant nominal predicates may select the Perfect II and the Future Perfect:

[44] a. *a-ju   ja̲ve   Ñe̲ka   i-miari̲-ta*
      1s-arrive when   Ñeka   3-speak-FUT
      'when I arrive, Ñeka will talk'

    b. *a-ju   ja̲ve   Ñe̲ka   i-miari̲-ta   o-ï*
      1s-arrive when   Ñeka   3-speak-FUT   3-EXIST
      'when I arrive, Ñeka will be talking'

[45] a. *Elio o̲-ë   ja̲ve   Ñe̲ka   i-pyatyty̲-ta*
      Elio   3-leave   when   Ñeka   3-sadness-FUT
      'when Elio leaves, Ñeka will get sad'

    b. ?? *Elio o̲-ë   ja̲ve   Ñe̲ka   i-pyatyty̲-ta   o-ï*
      Elio   3-leave   when   Ñeka   3-sadness-FUT 3-EXIST
      ['when Elio leaves, Ñeka will be sad']

[46] a. *Che̲-sy   i-ma̲ndu-ma*
      1s-mother   3-mandu-PF
      'my mother has become Guaraní' (scil., she has lately changed her status)

    b. *re̲-ju   ja̲ve   che   mbaera̲sy-ma*
      you-arrive   when   1s   sickness-PF
      'when you arrived, I was (already) sick/I had (already) got sick'

[47] a. *re̲-ju   re-väe   jave, Elio   opa-ma i-miari*
      2-arrive 2-find   when Elio   all-PF   3-speech
      'when you came, Elio had (already) spoken'

    b. *re̲-ju   re-väe   jave, che   opa-ta-ma che miari*
      2-arrive 2-find   when 1   all-FT-PF   1 speech
      'when you come, I shall have already spoken'.

11. Nominalizations (relative constructions) and temporal reference

As noted above, and contrary to Dietrich [1986], the Retrospective and Prospective Stage markers for nominals (*-gwe/-kwe* and *-rä*, respectively) are not used by Ava and Isoseño speakers with verbs, and may be used with nominal predicates only to the extent that these function as nouns proper (see above examples [30] and [33b-c]). Evidently, the variety of BCG described by Dietrich relates to a different, possibly more conservative, dialect. The *-gwe* morph, however, may also be found with a distinct temporal meaning in nominalizations, namely in past-referring deverbal relative constructions. These may occur not only with nominal predicates, i.e. with the kind of

predicates most similar to 'pure' nouns (cf. [48b] and [49b]), but also with verbs, both stative (cf. [50] and [51b]) and dynamic ones (cf. [52b] and [53]). Note that this structure, as reported in Nordlinger & Sadler [2004: 781], are intrinsically ambiguous: *che ro-gwe* may mean either 'my thing that used to be a house (e.g. it has burned down)' or 'the house that used to be mine (but now belongs to somebody else)'. Example [48c] shows that the morph *-rä* fulfills a similar function in future-referring relative constructions, but apparently only with nominal predicates (Gustafson [1995]. Of some interest are the contrasts in [54]: in *a-paravyky-gwe*, the root behaves like a verb – witness the person affix – while in *paravyky-gwe* it behaves like a noun, confirming the fundamental flexibility of BCG in adapting its lexical roots to different syntactic functions.

[48] a. *che kyra* (1s fatness) 'my fatness', 'I am / was fat'
che miari (1s speech) 'my speech', 'I am speaking / spoke'

b. *che kyra-gwe* (1s fatness-RETR.STAGE) 'my past fatness'
che miari-gwe (1s speech-RETR.STAGE) 'my past speech', 'what I said'

c. *che kyra-rä* (1s fatness-PROSP.STAGE) 'my future fatness'
che miari-rä (1s speech-PROSP.STAGE)'my future speech', 'what I shall say'

[49] a. *(hae) i-j-apu* (3 3- LINK-lie) 'her/his/their lie', 'she/he/they is /are telling lies / told lies'

b. *(hae) i-j-apu-gwe* (3 3- LINK-lie-PAST.REL)
'the one who told lies', 'the lie that one told'

[50] *nde   re-noi-gwe   mandu*
2s   2s-keep-PAST.REL mandu
'the mandu that you once had'

[51] a. *a-echa* (1s-see) '1s am seeing / saw'
a-endu (1s-hear) '1s am hearing / heard'

b. *a-echa-gwe* (1s-see-PAST.REL) 'what I saw'
a-endu-gwe (1s-hear-PAST.REL) 'what I heard'

[52] a. *che a-karu* (1s 1s-eat) 'I am eating / ate'

b. *che a-karu-gwe* (1s 1s-eat-PAST.REL) 'what I ate'

[53] *kuae che-u-ko   o-je-akyo-gwe*
this   1s-leg-EMPH   3-REFL-break-PAST.REL
'this is the leg of mine that broke (and is now OK)'

[54]　a.　*che a-paravyky* (1s 1s-work) 'I am working / worked'

　　　b.　*che a-paravyky-gwe* (1s 1s-work-PAST.REL) 'what I did', 'my work [resultative meaning]'

　　　c.　*che paravyky-gwe* (1s work-PAST.REL) 'the work that I did', 'what my work was'.

In the examples above, the suffix -*gwe* appears in most cases to be object-oriented: it designates the event's product, shaping it as a syntactic argument ready to be inserted in a larger predicative framework. This presupposes, of course, that the verb (or the predicative rendering of the nominal) is transitive. With intransitive verbs, provided there is a 3 subject pronoun, the nominalized form may be subject-oriented (as in [49b], but not in [54b], which presents the 1s marker). The alternative object-oriented rendering is, however, possible even in [49b].[45]

The examples in [55] present, for comparison, the most usual type of nominalization, obtained by means of the relativizer -*vae*. This is to be found in present-referring contexts or in temporally neutral ones, where the event is possibly localized by explicit temporal adverbs (as in [55e]). Note that in [55b-c] the subject-oriented reading is depleted by the absence of the 3 marker; by contrast, *i-tuicha-vae* could also mean 'the one who is big'. It is worth mentioning the use of -*vae* combined with the Future marker -*ta*, as in [56], which essentially converges with [48c]. Finally, two relativizers may be stacked, as in [57] (to be compared with [49b]; cf. Dietrich [1986:125-126] as for the combination *vae-rä*):

[55]　a.　*(hae) i-j-apu-vae* (3- LINK-lie-REL) 'the one(s) who tell(s) lies', 'the lie that one is telling / tells'

　　　b.　*tuicha-vae* (bigness-REL) 'what is big'

　　　c.　*oasa-vae* (event-REL) 'what is happening'

　　　d.　*che miari-vae* (1s speech-REL) 'my speech', 'what I say'

　　　e.　*arakae oasa-vae* (long.time event-REL) 'what happened long time ago'

[56]　a.　*o-echa-ta-vae* (3-see-FUT-REL) 'the one(s) who will see', 'what one will see'

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[45] Despite the English translation ('to tell lies'), *apu* is to be regarded as an intransitive predicate. A more exact rendering would be: 'what one said as a lie'. In Yuki, another Tupí-Guaraní language of Bolivia, there are distinct nominalizers for the subject and the patient, and still another one for circumstantial nominalization [Villafañe 2004].

    b. *o-endu̱-ta-vae̱* (3-hear-FUT-REL) 'the one(s) who will hear', 'what one will hear'

    c. *o-japo̱-ta-vae* (3-do-FUT-REL) 'the one(s) who will do', 'what one will do'

    d. *hou̱-ta-vae̱* (3.eat-FUT-REL) 'the one(s) who will eat', 'what one will eat'

    d. *o-paravyky̱-ta-vae̱* (3-work-FUT-REL) 'the one(s) who will work', 'the work that one will do'

[57]   *(hae) i-j-apu̱-gwe-vae̱* (3 3- LINK-lie-PAST.REL-REL) 'the lie that one said'.

A number of the examples presented in this section stem from Gustafson [1995: 99-101], relating to the Simba dialect, and were confirmed by my informants (Ava- and Is-dialects). They thus seem to occur in all BCG variants. As a final remark, it is worth calling attention to the combination of the suffixes *-gwe* and *-ma*, as in the following example. In this case, the notion of current result seems to be superposed to the product of the nominalization process:

[58]   *che a-karu̱-gwe-ma* (1s 1s-eat-PAST.REL-PF) 'what I have eaten (now)'
        o-karu̱-gwe-ma (3-eat- PAST.REL-PF) 'the one(s) who have just eaten', 'what one has just eaten'.

12. Overview of the BCG tense-aspect system.

In the two following tables, the structural interpretation of BCG tenses is made explicit with respect to both the temporal (rows) and the aspectual dimension (columns). This accounts for the multiple presence of the same labels, as underlined by the recurring diacritics (⁺ * ° °°). Although this is not the standard way of presenting the data, it has the advantage to show where temporal or aspectual underspecification lies. BCG tenses are by no means exceptional in showing a certain degree of ambiguity, as it is often the case with natural languages. Needless to say, the table shows the range of possible uses, rather than the prototypical ones. For instance, in its textual usage, the Non-Future is in most cases perfective; however, it may also be used in contexts expressing present habituality or progressivity. The abbreviation Is. stands, as before, for the Isoso dialect. Table C refers to verbs, while table D is devoted to nominal predicates; see tables A and B for comparison.

C. Verbal predicates:

   Ex.: *(a)japo*   'I do'

	PERFECTIVE		IMPERFECTIVE
	AORISTIC	PERFECT	
PRESENT-REFERRING	Non-Future **+** *a-j<u>a</u>po*	Perfect ***** *a-j<u>a</u>po-ma*	Non-Future **+** *a-j<u>a</u>po* Aï-Progressive °° *a-japo <u>a</u>-ï* (*Ava* & Is.: focalized) AIKO-Progressive ° *a-j<u>a</u>po <u>ai</u>-ko* (only Is.: durative)
PAST-REFERRING	Non-Future **+** *a-j<u>a</u>po*	Perfect ***** *a-j<u>a</u>po-ma* Perfect II **§** *<u>o</u>pa-ma a-j<u>a</u>po*	Aï-Progressive °° *a-j<u>a</u>po <u>a</u>-ï* (only Is.: focalized) AIKO-Progressive ° *a-j<u>a</u>po <u>ai</u>-ko* (*Ava*: focal./durat.; Is.: durat.) Past Habitual *a-jap<u>o</u>-se*
FUTURE-REFERRING	Future *a-jap<u>o</u>-ta* Indefinite Future *a-j<u>a</u>po-ne* Relative Future *a-jap<u>o</u>-ta-ma*	Future Perfect *<u>o</u>pa-ta-ma a-j<u>a</u>po*	Future Progressive *a-jap<u>o</u>-ta <u>a</u>-ï*

Some observations are in order.

-Contrary to Liuzzi's [1987: 274] conclusion (relating however to PG), I propose that BCG tends to be (adopting Bhat's [1999] terminology) a tense-prominent language, rather than an aspect-prominent one. The main hints to this lie in the aspectual underspecification of the Non-Future and in the imperfect grammaticalization of the progressive periphrases, as shown by the different interpretations provided by the two informants. Another hint lies in the incomplete marking of habituality, considering that present habituality is taken care of by the ø-marked Non-Future. Finally, the partially

non-compositional semantic behavior of the Perfect marker (-*ma*) suggests a later and incomplete grammaticalization of this morpheme (see fn. 20). Note, however, that the present proposal does not deny the possibility for BCG to be a mood-prominent language, an idea to which also Liuzzi [p. 271] alluded in relation to PG. The language is in fact rich in particles and words with modal import.[46] At the present stage of my knowledge, I cannot go into the matter. This should be the topic of a dedicated research.

-Needless to say, the Non-Future and the Perfect also exhibit a fair degree of temporal underspecification, for they may be used in both present- and past-referring contexts. This feature, however, belongs to the very architecture of the BCG's TAM system, and is no typological idiosyncrasy. It can be observed in quite a lot of languages over the world. More puzzling is the fact that the Non-Future may be used in relation to an indefinite temporal localization, even when this refers to some indefinite future time (see example [2]); thus, it may marginally exhibit, at least vaguely and implicitly, future-time-reference (not shown in the table). But note that the Non-Future is the least characterized tense in the BCG system, since it may be used, in the relevant syntactic constructions, as a default tense with no temporal or aspectual specification whatsoever. It is thus fair to say that, although not totally underspecified, it is nonetheless the least specified BCG tense.

-The Future may also be used in the function of 'future-in-the-past'; in that case, it is merely prospective, rather than future-referring in the proper sense (cf. example [12a]). This too is not shown in the table, since the latter only exhibits the fundamental deictic temporal dimensions.

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[46] Just to have a glimpse of this, consider the following sentences (and remember the examples quoted in sect. 6):

[i]   *aramu-ete kaaru̱-ma-rä?*
              now-very   night-PF-MOD
              'has it really got night?

    [ii]   *ndeimbove-a̱sy   che   a-püa-rä̱gue të̈i*
            early-very   1s   1s-get up-MOD   FRUSTR
            'very early (today) I should have got up' / 'I should have been awake'

In the first case, the morph *rä*, homophonous with the Prospective Stage morph and with the 'future relativizer' (and, conceivably, etimologically related to both), expresses a kind of epistemic meaning. In [ii], by contrast, the sequence of what appear to me as two modal markers (-*rä̱gue të̈i*) conveys a counterfactual meaning. Similar modal values, often expressing evidentiality nuances, are cited by Liuzzi for PG [1987: 127ff, 144ff] for PG.

-Note finally that the Perfect II is only available to telic verbs or to verbs contextually reanalyzed as telic (cf. example [10]).

D. Nominal predicates:

Ex.: *che miari*   'I speak'

	PERFECTIVE		IMPERFECTIVE	INACTIVE STAGES
	AORISTIC	PERFECT		
PRESENT-REFERRING	Non-Future + *che miari*	Perfect * *che miari-ma*	Non-Future + *che miari* AÏ-Progress. °° *che miari a-ï* (*Ava* & Is.: focal.) AIKO-Progress. ° *che miari ai-ko* (only Is.: durative)	Present Stage *che miari*
PAST-REFERRING	Non-Future + *che miari*	Perfect * *che miari-ma* Perfect II *che opa-ma miari* 47	AÏ-Progress. °° *che miari a-ï* (only Is.: focal.) AIKO-Progress. ° *che miari ai-ko* (*Ava*: focal./durat.; Is.: durative) Past Habitual *che miäri-se*	Retrospective Stage *che miari-gwe*
FUTURE-REFERRING	Future *che miari-ta* Relative Future *che miari-ta-ma*	Future Perfect *che opa-ta-ma miari*	Future Progress. *che miari-ta a-ï*	Prospective Stage *che miari-rä*

The following observations refer to nominal predicates, and presuppose whatever has been noted in the comment to table C with respect to the general architecture of the tense system:

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47 *Opama miari*, without personal pronoun, would mean: 'the speech has (already) ended' (as opposed to *opama imiari* 'she/he/they has/have (already) spoken').

- The Future Indefinite is not used with nominal predicates, as also confirmed by Dietrich [1986] (see table B).

- The column to the right (Inactive Stage) applies to the root in its purely nominal, namely argumental (as opposed to predicative) interpretation. The markers of Retrospective and Prospective Stage attach, in this specific function, not only to nominal predicates but to nouns proper. This explains the double line separating this column from the rest of the table. This purely nominal temporal function should not be confused with the nominalization / relativization function discussed in sect. 11, which is also available to verbs. Since the same formatives *-gwe* and *-rä* serve both functions, one should best consider this as a case of homonymy (neglecting any possible etymological connection).

13. Typological considerations.

The last remark reinforces the argument of the conclusion in sect. 9, where it has been suggested that BCG presents a fundamental contrast between the two major word classes, although some evidence might suggest the contrary. To recapitulate the main conclusion: whilst predicatively used roots have the default temporal value 'non-future', argumentally used roots have the default value 'present'. Note, in this connection, that nominal TAM marking (here called 'stage') is, in both PG and BCG, ternary rather than binary. Namely: **'**retrospective / present / prospective', as opposed to the binary divide 'future / non-future', which provides the basis for the verbal system.[48] But once the noun / verb contrast has been solidly assessed, on both morphological and semantic grounds, one should carefully explore the width of this divide. One should not forget that BCG is genetically and areally connected with languages presenting an overall tendency towards merging of the two major word classes, although admittedly in no case known to me the boundary is completely annihilated (see also Mithun [1999]).

The proposal I would like to advance is that BCG shows signs of the 'omni-predicative' arrangement, that has been pointed out, e.g., for Classical Nahuatl by

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[48] Nordlinger & Sadler [2004: 789] also claim that the PG nominal TAM system is ternary, but they neglect the 'present' and include instead the 'irrealis future', alongside the 'future' and the 'past'. I

Launey [1994; 2004], and which extends to several other native American languages (e.g., the Salish languages). In order to develop this argument, one needs to go beyond the undoubtedly attractive property of BCG, consisting in the latent possibility of attaching nominal affixes to verbal roots or (with more severe limitations) verbal affixes to nominal roots, as discussed in sect. 9. This is certainly suggestive of a global predicative vocation of all lexical roots, specially considering that verbal affixes may even attach to adverbs, as shown in several examples above. Nevertheless, I would like to claim that this is not the core of the problem. Let us proceed by steps.

The first step is provided by the following examples. Examples [59-60] feature BCG materials, whereas example [61] is based on Sateré-Mawé illustrations presented in February 2005 by Sérgio Meira at the Münster Tupí-Guaraní linguistics conference. This shows that BCG shares features with other genetically related languages:

[59] a. *mbya ñee*   (Guaraní-men word) 'the Guaraní people's language'
     b. *mbya i-ñee*   (Guaraní-men 3-word) 'the Guaraní people have a language', 'the Guaraní speak/spoke'

[60] a. *che ru kyse*   (1 father hat) 'my father's knife'
     b. *che ru i-kyse*   (1 father 3-hat) 'my father has a knife'

[61] a. *María potpap*   (María work) 'María's work'
     b. *María i-potpap*   (María 3-work) 'María is working'.

The (a) examples exhibit an attributive relation, which is in itself a predicative-like relation, although it does not exhaust a propositional predicative act. The (b) examples, by contrast, exhibit a self-sufficient, propositional predication. This might suggest, *prima facie*, that the 'relational' marker added in the (b) examples (see fn. 33) is what we need in order to turn a purely relational predication into a fully-fledged propositional predication.

Let us now consider step two, which might be illustrated by examples like [26a] and [31a"], repeated here as [62a-b], alongside a further example for comparison with the latter one:

[62] a. *che puere*   (1 possibility) 'my possibility' or 'I am/was able', 'I can/could'

believe, however, that the 'irrealis future' (which has no relevance for BCG) is a mere subdivision in the 'future' domain, rather than a temporal dimension of its own.

    b. *(che) che ro kavi* (1s 1s house goodness) 'I have a good house'

    c *che ro i-kavi*   (1s house 3-goodness) 'my house is good'.

Example (a) admits both types of predicative structure, relational and propositional. Example (b) instead, due to its semantics, only expresses the second kind of predicative structure. As it happens, with person markers of the appropriate type (the so-called 'inactive' series), a propositional predication may emerge without the help of any dedicated predicative marker. This is in itself no wonder, for we know that this series of person markers may obtain the same result as the relational marker *-i*, which shows up in third-person noun-based predicates.

Note, however, that the person marker in [62a] fulfills both types of predicative relations; namely, it plays two quite different roles. This leads us to the third step. Suppose that we now re-write the above examples by inserting, following standard practice, the latent 'zero' morphemes that are covertly present in their structure. This move is licensed by the fact that the Non-Future is an obvious instance of ø-marked structure. For instance, *a-ke* 'I sleep/slept' stands as *a-ke-ø* vis-à-vis *a-ke-ta* 'I shall sleep' or *a-ke-ma* 'I have slept'. On a similar vein, we are entitled to interpret *me* 'husband' as *me-ø* vis-à-vis *me-gwe* 'former husband' or *me-rä* 'husband to be / fiancée'. Let us re-write accordingly:

  [59'] a. *mbya-ø ñee-ø*
       b. *mbya-ø i-ñee-ø*

  [60'] a. *che ru kyse-ø*
       b. *che ru i-kyse-ø*

  [61'] a. *María potpap-ø*
       b. *María i-potpap-ø*

  [62'] a. *che puere-ø*
       b. *(che) che ro-ø kavi-ø*
       c *che ro-ø i-kavi-ø*.

It is now clear that, e.g., *mbya-ø ñee-ø* contains two hidden TAM morphemes, corresponding to the present-referring value of the two nouns. This phrase is indeed about the present-language of the present-Guaraní-people. This allows one piece of the hidden predicative structure to emerge, although the actual relational predication remains covert. In order to make the latter emerge, we can add a further latent

morpheme Ø', as in: *mbya-ø Ø' ñee-ø* (admittedly, the position of this predicative marker in the syntactic sequence is purely tentative). Similarly, one could re-write *che ro-ø kavi-ø* as *che Ø" ro-ø Ø' kavi-ø*, where Ø' is interpreted as above (relational, i.e. phrasal, predication) while Ø" stands for the propositional predication. A possible, and obviously clumsy, paraphrasis for *che Ø" ro-ø Ø' kavi-ø* could be: "the presently-existing-goodness of the presently-existing-house stands in predicative relation with me" (or, in more abstract terms: "there is a propositional predicative relation between me and the presently-existing-house, while the latter holds an attributive predicative relation with presently-existing-goodness").[49] By contrast, *che ro-ø i-kavi-ø* should simply re-write as *che Ø' ro-ø i-kavi-ø* because of its more overt syntactic structure. In this case, the 'zero' morpheme Ø" has no need to be expressed, due to the presence of the so-called 'relational marker' *i-*, absorbing the propositional predicative value. Equally, *che ru-ø i-kyse-ø* should re-write as *che Ø' ru i-kyse-ø*. If these moves are correct, then the two readings of *che puere-ø* should respectively re-write as *che Ø' puere-ø* and *che Ø" puere-ø*.

Where does all this lead us to? In order to understand this, consider first the following Cayuga example, taken from Lazard [1999] but originally stemming from Sasse [1988]:

[63] a. k-ha't-á:the̩-hs
         1SG-throat-dry-PRES
         'I am thirsty'

    b. h-até:tse'-s
       3SG-cure-PRES
       'He cures / physician-shaman'.

As several scholars have claimed, in languages like Cayuga virtually all lexical items, except function words, exhibit 'verbal' affixes. The word for physician-shaman, for instance, which is a fully-fledged noun in most languages, is morphologically shaped like a predicative phrase. In other words, these languages present a fairly elaborated morphosyntactic structure, in which the basic propositional predicative

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49 Needless to say,'presently-existing-goodness' is, here, a clumsy locution for the notion: 'atemporal goodness'.

relation hierarchically dominates a number of (overtly expressed) more local predicative relations. If we make abstraction from surface differences, it immediately becomes clear that there is a family resemblance between the structure in [63] and those obtained by re-writing the hidden predicative structure of BCG phrases. The latter are not that much remote, after all, from the omni-predicative organization displayed in Classical Nahuatl sentences, as suggested by Launey [1994; 2004]. In the following two sentences, taken from the latter work, the predicative function is alternatively expressed by a root which, in Indoeuropean languages, would be rigidly considered as a noun or as a verb, respectively: Crucially, however, both words are morphologically shaped as predicates:

[64] a. Ka ϕ_i-ī-ikniw   in ϕ_i-ki-nōca
          ASSERT 3-3POS-friend   DET   3-3OBJ-call
          'It is his friend that calls him' (literally: '* The calls-him is his friend')

   b. Ka ϕ_i-ki-nōca in ϕ_i-ī-ikniw
          ASSERT 3-3OBJ-call DET   3-3POS-friend
          'His friend calls him'.

Needless to say, I am fully aware of the Ockam razor's argument, urging us to skip any unnecessary postulation. But the point is that the 'zero' morphemes advocated above are not arbitrary, for, as Launey points out, they alternate with fully explicit ones (compare *ø-ki-nōca* with *ni-k-nōca* 'I call him', *ti-k-nōca* 'you call him'). It is a sheer fact of Classical Nahuatl morphology that the 3 subject marker has no overt expression, and that there is no overt copula. Something similar holds for BCG. On the one hand, the postulation of a 'zero' morpheme to express Present Stage is plainly licensed by the very morphological asset of the language at hand, which only has overt markers for Retrospective and Prospective Stage. On the other hand, we need two different predicative morphemes (here marked as Ø' and Ø") to express the alternative syntactic readings of [62a]. In fact, these predicative relations are in most natural languages differently expressed and, very often, both overtly expressed. In Italian, for instance, one finds *blu del cielo* 'blue (color) of the sky' and *il cielo è blu* 'the sky is blue'. In English, however, one may find *sky Ø blue* in the former case, where the attributive predication is left implicit, vis-à-vis *the sky is blue*, where the copula absorbs the predicative role. This means that in English the word *blue* receives two different word class interpretations, as noun and as predicate, respectively.

I conclude, then, that despite any BCG evidence, suggesting the existence of a substantial divide between nouns and verbs, this language includes some feature that reminds us of the so-called omni-predicative language type, so wide-spread within native American languages. One might thus consider BCG as a possible link, obviously not the only one, between the latter type and the purely mono-predicative type, exhibited (among others) by Indoeuropean languages, where no more than one word in each sentence carries 'verbal' features. This is, in my view, a well-come result for at least two reasons. First, because it casts a bridge between two otherwise too abruptly divaricated types. Second, and most importantly, because we do need such a bridge, considering that formal semantics (by way of the predicate calculus) has definitely gone the omni-predicative path, claiming that a proposition consists of a number of hierarchically arranged predicative layers. If that is really the 'deep' structure of human languages, any proposal that bridges the gap between mono-predicativity and omni-predicativity should, in principle, be highly desirable.

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