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## Pre-Proto-Tupi-Guarani Main Clause Person-Marking\*

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### 1 INTRODUCTION

This paper surveys prior work in historical syntax in the Tupi-Guarani (TG) family, then proposes a new reconstruction of Pre-Proto-TG main clause grammar. Jensen (1990, 1998) surveys the person-marking patterns of the various synchronic TG languages and reconstructs the virtually universal TG hierarchical (inverse, according to D. Payne, 1994) verbal person-marking pattern to Proto-TG. Jensen (1998) suggests a five-stage scenario by which that person-marking pattern was generated historically. In her scenario, Pre-Proto-TG begins with an absolutive person-marking system, identical to the absolutive person-marking pattern found in most modern TG subordinate clauses, nominalizations and topicalized oblique constructions. As a specialist in the reconstruction of grammatical patterns, I disagree with Jensen's theoretical assumptions about the nature of historical change, and about appropriate methods for diagnosing relative age of grammatical systems. Drawing on principles well-known in the literature on grammaticalization

tion, I conclude that at no stage can we reconstruct a Pre-Proto-TG absolutive person-marking system. Rather, the modern hierarchical (inverse) system evolved from a pre-Proto-TG system that must have been originally more nominative. All the absolutive person-marking patterns in modern comparative TG grammar must be reconstructed to the grammar of nominalizations or other nonfinite inflections.

Schleicher (1998) offers a series of innovative proposals regarding Proto-TG and Pre-Proto-TG which have yet to be addressed in the published TG literature. He disagrees with Jensen both in the phonological forms that he reconstructs and in his reconstruction of the grammatical person-marking systems. I do not address his reconstruction in this paper, except to note that he disagrees with Jensen on bases other than those adduced here.

\* Special characters

Both special characters are vowels, and are done in IPA Times.

i = barred i       ' = schwa

I am not a specialist in TG linguistics, hence I do not take a stand on the differences between Schleicher and Jensen regarding their reconstructions of phonological form. Regardless of the actual phonological content of the Proto-TG morphological forms, the reconstruction of the grammatical system of person-marking is a logically distinct problem, which can be treated independently. In the interests of consistency, I have chosen to use Jensen's (1998) proto-forms. As specialists in individual TG languages (in personal communication) have endorsed Jensen's treatment of their data, and as Both Jensen and Schleicher agree that the same system reconstructs to Proto-TG, I take their reconstruction of the Proto-TG system as my point of departure.

This paper is organized as follows: Section 2 presents the methods by which the relative ages of modern morphosyntactic patterns can be determined, Section 3 presents the Proto-TG person-marking system, Section 4 discusses Jensen's 1998 internal reconstruction of the evolution of the Proto-TG system, Section 5 presents my alternative hypothesis, and section 6 discusses some implications of the new reconstruction.

## 2 METHODS

The comparative method is well documented as a means of reconstructing phonological systems and lexical items to proto-languages, but methods for reconstructing grammar are more recent, and as such less well-known. Much of the work on such methods has followed from recent advances in Grammaticalization Theory (cf. Heine et al 1991, Hopper and Traugott 1994, Bybee et al 1994, Harris and Campbell 1994, etc.). For a brief survey of this work, and in particular for a discussion of how it provides principles that can guide researchers in interpreting modern grammatical patterns so as to determine the type of change (reanalysis, analogical extension or contact-induced change) that has led to a given modern pattern, cf. Gildea (1998, ch. 3). The contributors to Gildea (ed. 2000) use these methods in a number of case-studies of comparative grammatical reconstruction in language families of the Americas. Further principles of internal reconstruction are provided in Givón (1979, 1995, and especially 2000), some of which are useful in determining relative ages of individual components found in a complex modern system.

In this section, I introduce the modern patterns of data that result from the three major (and perhaps the only) mechanisms by which new morphology is introduced into grammatical systems: reanalysis (2.1), analogical extension (2.2), and borrowing (2.3). I conclude the section with a list of the properties are generally associated with relatively older

morphology versus relatively younger morphology in a complex system (2.4).

### 2.1 REANALYSIS

Reanalysis is the process by which a given construction, with its attendant morphology and syntactic relations amongst separate components of the construction, is reinterpreted by the speakers into a new construction type. A common example of reanalysis is the creation of a progressive aspect from a locative construction (Heine et al 1991; Heine 1993, 1994; Bybee et al 1994; Gildea 1998).

In many languages worldwide, locative constructions of the type "Peter is at home" have been used to express verbal aspects ("Peter is at / in / on working" > "Peter is working"). In such cases, a verb in some nominalized form, such as a participle, a gerundial, or an infinitive ('work-ing'), takes the place of the noun phrase ('at home')... The use of the locative construction for a verbal aspect creates a form-meaning asymmetry, at least for some time; since the form "Peter is at / in / on working" is ambiguous, it may mean something like 'Peter is at his place of work' or else 'Peter is working.' ... The transition from locative construction to aspect marking leaves three types of morphological material behind: the erstwhile auxiliary ('be' in our example), the adposition ('at'), and the nominalization marker of the main verb ('-ing'). This means that there are three forms for marking one function only.

(Heine, Claudi and Hünemeyer 1991:214-5)

The key properties of reanalysis are:

- Reanalysis is covert: there is no immediate change in actual utterances. Only later do changes come that show the items in the construction have taken on a new morphosyntactic relationship with each other. These changes are not a part of the reanalysis, but are later extensions that reveal the morphosyntactic consequences of the reanalysis.
- Reanalysis creates polysemy: the morphemes that occur in the reanalyzed construction take on new meanings/functions, while maintaining their etymologically prior meanings/functions in other constructions. For instance, English *-ing* is still a perfectly good nominalizer outside of the progressive construction (e.g. *I like dancing. Drinking can be fun. These boots were made for walking.*, etc.).

- Extension affects individual morphemes or syntactic patterns.

### 2.3 BORROWING

The third major mechanism for introducing new grammatical patterns or morphemes is borrowing. In cases of intensive language contact, fluent bilingual speakers may introduce patterns from one language into another. These patterns may include actual morphemes from the source language (e.g. the Portuguese complementizer *que* into Nheengatu), or speakers may simply press existing morphemes into service to form a parallel pattern in the borrowing language (the term *calque* is a label frequently associated with this process). The key properties of borrowing are:

- Borrowing causes overt changes in formal structure.
- Grammatical borrowing is usually accompanied by extensive lexical borrowing (cf. Thomason and Kaufman 1988).

### 2.4 INTERNAL RECONSTRUCTION: TYPICAL PROPERTIES OF OLDER MORPHOLOGY

Givón (2000.120-121) discusses a number of general principles of historical syntax that yield a list of predictions, among which I highlight the following:

- **Phonetic size:** The smaller a morpheme is, the older it is.
- **Semantic size:** The more generic, grammaticalized, or semantically opaque a morpheme is, the older it is.
- **Distance from stem:** All other things being equal, the closer a morpheme is to the stem/root of the word, the older it is.
- **Morpho-phonemic irregularity:** The more morpho-phonemically irregular or variable a morpheme is, the older it is.

The caveat "all other things being equal" is necessary because factors other than morpheme age can lead to any of these properties individually. But when they are all found together in the case of a specific morpheme, the burden of proof falls heavily on the analyst who intends to argue that the morpheme in question is relatively young. Further, very old morphemes can sometimes be found in innovative constructions, in which case the age of the morpheme in question is not a good indicator of the age of the overall

- Reanalysis affects entire constructions: e.g., the reanalysis that created the English progressive did not simply add one more inflection to the existing verbal paradigms, but rather it brought an entirely new system into main clause grammar. Instead of a simple inflected verb, it required a tensed auxiliary, dual marking of the verb (the preposition *on* and the suffix *-ing*), and an accusative case-marker *of* (*He is on building of a house.*).

Early cases of reanalysis can be difficult to identify, since one is always able to maintain a conservative analysis of the morphosyntax and simply suggest that the original grammar now supports a new function. Early in the reanalysis of the English Progressive, one can observe a shift in meaning from 'subject is physically located someplace where he is in the midst of doing something' to 'Subject is in the midst of doing something' without the locative sense (cf. the detailed discussion in Bybee et al 1994.136). Nonetheless, a **syntactic** analysis does not follow automatically from a **semantic** innovation. Before the changes later wrought by analogical extension, an analyst could have insisted that the nascent English progressive remained simply a nominalization placed in a prepositional phrase, which was then made the predicate of the copula and hence attributed some property to the subject of that copula.

### 2.2 EXTENSION

(analogical extension)

In contrast to reanalysis, extension makes explicit changes in the form of utterances, motivated by a condition of analogy between two utterance types. Changes brought about by extension affect only one part of a construction at a time, leaving the rest essentially unchanged. In our example of the English Progressive, speakers apparently drew an analogical connection between the new progressive and other main clauses, then changed the progressive to bring it more into alignment with other main clauses. First the predicate preposition *on* was reduced phonologically (*on* > 'n > ' > Ø-), then the accusative preposition *of* became optional and disappeared altogether. While the progressive did not become one more simple verbal inflection, two major morphemes that distinguished it from other main clauses were eliminated. Extension can also operate in the absence of construction reanalysis, as when person-markers inside an existing paradigm expand in semantic scope (e.g. a marker of A expands to mark Sa, and numerous other examples in Harris and Campbell 1994). The key properties of extension are:

- Extension causes overt changes in form.
- Extension is the mechanism that reveals prior reanalysis.

(contact-induced change)

