On word class and predication in Karuk*

Line Mikkelsen, UC Berkeley

GAIL, April 24, 2012

1 Introduction

Karuk, a polysynthetic language of Northwest California, exhibits verbal (1) and non-verbal (2) predication:\(^1\)

\[
\begin{align*}
(1) \quad & \text{a. ni-shx̂aar-eesh} \\
& 1\text{sg-go.fishing-FUT} \\
& \text{‘I’m going to go fishing.’} \\
& \text{Vina Smith (UCB2010-05-01)}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
& \text{b. naa ni-xú-ti} \\
& \text{Herbert u-’aahkó-o-ti} \\
& \text{pa-táhpúus} \\
& \text{1\text{sg} 3\text{sg-set.fire.to-pl.act-pl} the-young.fir.tree} \\
& \text{‘I think Herbert is burning fir boughs.’} \\
& \text{Julia Starritt “Smoke” (WB90:2)}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
(2) \quad & \text{naa ví́ra yáamach-heesh} \\
& 1\text{sg INT pretty-FUT} \\
& \text{‘I’m going to be pretty’} \\
& \text{Imkyánvaan “Coyote Doctors a Girl” (JPH)}
\end{align*}
\]

Both allow tense and aspect (TA) marking, but only verbs show agreement.

Bright (1957)

- certain TA markers are clitics → attach to predicates of any word class
- agreement morphemes are affixes → attach only to verbs.
- (1) is verbal predication; (2) is non-verbal predication

Macaulay (1989)

- (2) involves verbalizer -hi: yāamach-heech = /yamach-hi-eesh/
- verbal predication in both (1) and (2)
- no person agreement in (2) for semantic reasons

This talk:

- examine semantics of agreeing and non-agreeing predicates to test Macaulay’s claim
- Macaulay’s claim is largely supported, but it is theoretically and empirically puzzling
- place the Karuk pattern in a typological context (Stassen 1997)

*I am grateful to the Karuk elders Lucille Albers, Sonny Davis, Bud Smith and Vina Smith for working with the UC Berkeley Karuk study group and sharing their language with us. Much of the data for this presentation has been made available online as part of the Karuk Dictionary and Texts Project (http://linguistics.berkeley.edu/~karuk/index.php), a collaboration between the Karuk Tribe and at Survey of California and Other Indian Languages at UC Berkeley. I am grateful to Susan Gehr and Andrew Garrett for spearheading this effort and to the Karuk apprentices and UC Berkeley students who contributed recordings and processed texts for the data base, including Tamara Alexander, Nico Baier, Kayla Carpenter, Anna Curry, Erin Donnelley-Kuhns, Kouro Falati, Matt Faytak, Morgan Jacobs, Melanie Redeye, Clare Sandy, Tammy Stark and 16 other students in Linguistics 170, Spring 2012. Finally, I acknowledge financial support from NSF, award #1065620 Karuk [kyh] and Yurok [yur] syntax and text documentation

\(^1\) All examples are given in the orthography adopted by the Karuk tribe. I use the following abbreviations in the glosses: ANC = ancient tense, ANT = anterior tense, DIM = diminutive, DUR = durative, EVID = evidential, FUT = future, INAN = inanimate, INST = instrumental, INT = intensive, IRR = irrealis, IT = iterative, NEG = negation, NMLZ = nominalizer, PERF = perfect, PL = plural, PLACT = plural action, POSS = possessive, SG = singular, VBLZ = verbalizer. Where this information is available, examples are listed with the name of the Karuk speaker who supplied it and the narrative or elicitation session that it is part of. More information on data sources is provided in section 2.
2 Background

- The Karuk language
  - spoken along the middle course of the Klamath river in northwestern California
  - isolate within Hokan group
  - neighbours: Yurok (Algic), Shasta (also Hokan), Tolowa (Athabaskan), Hupa (Athabaskan)
  - 1800-2700 speakers at contact; currently around 6-12 native speakers and 20-50 second language speakers (3500 tribal members)

- Linguistic features:
  - vowel length (V vs. VV), accent (V, VV, ṣV, ũV, ũV)
  - polysynthetic, no noun incorporation, but highly developed set of directional suffixes (Macaulay 2005)
  - agglutinative; predominantly suffixing; productive compounding of nouns and adjectives
  - elaborate person marking on verbs (Macaulay 1992) and possessive marking on nouns
  - non-configurational syntax, tendency for [New/Contrast V Old]

- Documentation and data sources
  - CT Jeremiah Curtin unpublished field notes 1889
  - CM C. Hart Merriam unpublished field notes 1910-1921
  - JPH John Peabody Harrington Karok Texts (IJAL) 1930
  - AF Jaime de Angulo and Lucy Freeland Karok Texts (IJAL) 1931
  - TK John Peabody Harrington Tobacco among the Karok Indians 1932
  - WB William Bright The Karok Language (UC Press) 1957
  - UCB UC Berkeley faculty and students unpublished field notes 2010-2012

2.1 Bright on word classes and TA marking

(3)

```
interjection

verb noun

adverbal noun non-adverbal noun

adjective adverb personal noun general noun

pronoun non-pronoun
```

a. interjections (WB 250): outside any system of derivation or inflection, ayukii ‘hello’, hāa ‘yes’

b. verbs (WB 230): occurs with one or more verbal affixes, e.g. ni-’ahoo ‘I go’, u-snúr-at ‘It thundered’

c. nouns (WB 600): can’t occur with verbal affix, may occur with nominal affix, may compound:
   i. adjective: may occur with -sa plural, e.g. yāamach-as ‘pretty-PL’,
   ii. adverb: ḣok ‘here’
   iii. personal noun: may occur with -sa plural, e.g. ikzaréeyav-as ‘spirit person-PL’
   iv. pronoun: no plural, no compounding, e.g. náa ‘I’
   v. general noun: no plural, e.g. tāhpuus ‘fir bough’

(4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>category</th>
<th>(basic) postverbal form</th>
<th>postnominal form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>clitic</td>
<td>FUTURE -avish (-eesh)</td>
<td>=heesh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ANCIENT -anik</td>
<td>=hanik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NEGATION -ara</td>
<td>=hara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ANTERIOR -aheen</td>
<td>=heen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IRREALIS² -ahaak</td>
<td>=haak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>affix</td>
<td>PAST -at</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DURATIVE -tih</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.2 Macaulay’s argument

Bright’s postnominal forms are morphological complex; all contain verbalizing -hi (Macaulay 198:170-173)³

(5)a. Vowel Deletion (VD; cf. WB 353): deletes stem-final vowel before a vowel
b. Special Contraction (SC; cf. WB 322): contracts two vowels across v, y, or h (avi > ee, ahee > ee)
c. category (basic) postverbal form derivation of post- hi form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FUTURE</th>
<th>ANCENT</th>
<th>NEGATION</th>
<th>ANTERIOR</th>
<th>IRREALIS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-avish &gt; -eesh (SC)</td>
<td>-anik</td>
<td>-hi-anik &gt; -hanik (VD)</td>
<td>-hi-aheen &gt; -haheen (VD) &gt; -heen (SC)</td>
<td>-ahaak &gt; -hahaak (VD) &gt; -haak (SC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-eesh (SC)</td>
<td>-hanik (VD)</td>
<td>-hara (VD)</td>
<td>-heen (SC)</td>
<td>-haak (SC)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All 7 TAM markers are affixes; no series of mysterious h-initial allomorphs of -avish, -anik, -ara, -aheen and -ahaak.

3 The agreement puzzle

If (6) involves verbalization of yåamach, why is there no agreement on the resulting verb?

(6) Náa vára yåamach-heesh  
1sg INT pretty-FUT  
‘I’m going to be pretty’  
Imkýánvaan “Coyote Doctors a Girl” (JPH.157)

(7) ni-shxåar-eesh  
1sg-go.fishing-FUT  
‘I’m going to go fishing.’  
Vina Smith (UCB2010-05-01)

Macaulay’s conjecture (pp. 174-178):

(8) Copular clauses don’t display agreement for semantic reasons.
   a. When verbalized nominals occur in copular clauses, they will not exhibit agreement.
   b. When verbalized nominals occur in non-copular clauses, they will exhibit agreement.

What’s a copular clause?

(9) Macaulay’s examples of copular clauses (p. 176):
   a. pu-yåak-hara pa-’oo-ku-kam  
   3SG-good.place-NEG the-here-to-side  
   ‘This side is a bad place.’  
   Julia Starritt “Coyote Marries His Own Daughter” (WB16:33)
   b. pa-’áraar pa-hliunta-haak  
   the-person NMLZ-peculiar-Irr  
   ‘when a person was peculiar’  
   (WB p. 143)
   c. pa-mú-saanva furax-múrax  
   the-3SG.poss-clothes woodpecker.head-entirely  
   ‘Her clothes were nothing but woodpecker heads.’  
   Lottie Beck “The Perils of Weasel” (WB18:73)

In Stassen’s (1997:13, 168) semantic typology of intransitive predication these are PROPERTY-CONCEPT PREDICATES:

(10) HUMAN PROPENSITY hungry, happy, sad, angry, cruel, proud, . . .  
PHYSICAL hard, soft, smooth, heavy, light, hot, cold, sweet, . . .  
DIMENSION big, small, long, short, wide, narrow, thick, thin, . . .  
COLOUR black, white, red, . . .  
AGE new, old, young, fresh, . . .  
FORM round, straight, . . .  
VALUE good, bad, important, nice, . . .  
MATERIAL wooden, silver, golden, . . .

²Bright describes -ahaak as a temporal marker, but Peltola (2008) demonstrates that it only occurs in irrealis contexts and I have therefore labelled it an irrealis marker here. The table itself is inspired by Macaulay (1989:169).
³Bright and Macaulay both label -hi denominative. I call it a verbalizer to focus attention on the part of speech issue at hand.
Macaulay’s examples of non-copular clauses (p. 177)

a. \textit{u-saamv\’ aroo-hi-tih}  
\textit{3SG-creek-vblz-dur} 
‘There was a creek.’  
Nettie Ruben “Coyote’s Journey” (WB1:47)

b. \textit{u-\text{`}iinva-hi-ti}  
\textit{3SG-forest.fire-vblz-dur} 
‘There was a forest fire.’  
Julia Starritt “Coyote’s Journey” (WB4:30)

Recasting Macaulay’s conjecture within Stassen’s typology of intransitive predication:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVENT (including actions, states, processes)</th>
<th>PROTOTYPICAL ENCODING</th>
<th>EXPECTED TO AGREE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXISTENTIALS(^{\text{4}})</td>
<td>verb</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCATION(^{\text{5}})</td>
<td>adverb</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROPERTY (see (10))</td>
<td>adjective</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLASS + IDENTITY</td>
<td>noun</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.1 Eventive -hi forms

Predicted to agree and typically do:

(13) \textit{vúra ník pa-nú-vyiil-m-ahaak vásiik vúra i-ynup-h-éesh}  
\textit{INT a.little NMLZ-1PL-go.PL-to-when then.FUT INT 2SG-eye-vblz-fut} 
‘When we get there, then you can \textbf{open your eyes}.’  
Nettie Reuben, “Coyote’s Homecoming” (WB2a:42)

(14) \textit{chími u-púfaat-h-eesh.}  
\textit{soon 3SG-nothing-vblz-fut} 
‘he feels like he’s going to \textbf{faint}.’  
[TK 193.22]

(15) \textit{pá-piish kun-ikyäa-ti um xás tá kun-písh-ha}  
\textit{NMLZ-soaked.acorns 3PL-make-dur 3SG then PERF 3PL-soaked.acorns-vblz} 
‘When they made pish, they \textbf{soaked acorns}.’  
Julia Starritt, “Soaking Acorns” (WB75:1)

(16) \textit{xás kári u-köö-ha pa-\text{`}asiktávaan}  
\textit{then 3SG-all-vblz-the-woman} 
‘Then the woman (from Katimin) \textbf{quit}.’  
Emily Donohue, “Professor Gifford’s Visit” (WB88:9)

(17) \textit{chími u-thriha-h-eesh.}  
\textit{soon 3SG-flower(N)-vblz-fut} 
‘it’s going to \textbf{blossom}.’  
[TK 55.40]

(18) \textit{xás vúra puxich tá kun-\text{`}ímchax xás tá kun-\text{`}ástuuk-ha}  
\textit{then INT very.much PERF 3PL-get.hot then PERF 3PL-sweat(N)-vblz} 
‘And it got very hot, and they \textbf{sweated}.’  
Julia Starritt, “The Sweathouse” (WB76:15)

Note also:

(19) \textit{xás tá kóó pa-\text{`}ir}  
\textit{then PERF all the-world.renewal.ceremony} 
‘Then the world renewal was over.’  
Emily Donohue “The pikiawish at Katamin” (WB82:22)

(20) \textit{yáás u-kóó-hi-ti pa-\text{`}ir}  
\textit{then 3SG-all-vblz-dur the-world-renewal.ceremony} 
‘Then the world renewal ended.’  
Emily Donohue “The pikiawish at Katamin” (WB82:24)

\(^{3}\)Existentials are not part of Stassen’s typology and arguably do not involve predication at all. I include them here because Macaulay explicitly mentions them.

\(^{4}\)In Karuk, location is typically expressed by a series of dedicated posture verbs (WB p. 113-114), which all exhibit agreement. However, certain locative adverbs, e.g. \textit{\`odk ‘here’}, \textit{kaan ‘there’}, and \textit{hooy ‘where’}, may function as predicates without an accompanying posture verb (cf. Stassen’s (1997:238) ‘small world parameter’) and those are the ones referenced in the table.
3.2 Existential -hi forms

Predicted to agree, and the few additional examples I have found do:

(21) yánava u-spíka-hi-ti kán
evid 3SG-gold-VBLZ-DUR there
‘Behold, there was gold there.’ Benonie Harrie “How I Found Gold” (AF)

But other types of quantificational predicates don’t agree:

(22) kumateech yáv-h-eesh, táay-h-eesh
later good-VBLZ-FUT much-VBLZ-FUT
‘It is going to be a big time tonight, there will be lots of people.’ Imkyánvaan “Coyote Gives a War Dance” (JPH)

3.3 Locative -hi forms

Predicated to not agree, and most don’t:

(23) úum káan-h-eesh
3SG there-VBLZ-FUT
‘He will be there.’ (JC p. 218)

(24) xáat naa pu-’óok-h-ara
may 1SG NEG-here-VBLZ-NEG
‘no matter if I am not here’ JPH1b Yas, ”How Buzzard Became Bald” (1930)

But some do:

(25) yuras-chíshiih ávah-kam úum u-káan-h-eesh
ocean-dog on-top 3SG 3SG-there-VBLZ-FUT
‘He will be on the horse.’ (JC p. 218)

3.4 Property -hi forms

Predicted to not agree, and most don’t:

- Human propensity

(26) Yakún úum xaas thakáari-h-anik.
evid 3SG almost starved(?)-VBLZ-ANC
‘Behold he was almost starving.’ Imkyánvaan “Panther and his wives” (JPH)

- Physical

(27) avans-áxiich váarama-h-eesh
man-schild tall-VBLZ-FUT
‘The boy will be tall.’ (JC p. 215)

- Dimension

(28) ta túupit-sas pa-mú-tiiv
perf little-PL the-3SG.POSS-ear
‘They were already little ones, his ears.’ Yaas “How Grizzly Bear Got his Ears Burnt Off” (JPH)

- Colour

(29) cháñchaaf-kunish-’ik-h-eesh, ikráam-kunish-’ik-h-eesh
foam-like-must-VBLZ-FUT night-like-must-VBLZ-FUT
“May it be white” “May it be black” Imkyánvaan “Coyote Doctors a Girl” (JPH)
• Age

(30) Pimnanítanákaanítc uum *afishan-ich-h-anik*
Mourning Dove 3SG young-man-DIM-VBLZ-ANC
‘Mourning Dove was a young man.’ Afriitc “Mourning Dove Gambles away his Grandmother’s Dress” (JPH)

• Form

(31) mi-vásih *kúum-h-eesh*
2SG-back(N) crooked-VBLZ-FUT
‘Your back will get crooked’ Imkyánvaan “Panther and his wives” (JPH)

• Value

(32) *pu-yav-h-ara* pa-’ávansa
NEG-good-VBLZ-NEG the-man
‘He is a bad man.’ (CM, p. 70)

(33) Náa vára *yáamach-h-eesh*
1SG INT pretty-VBLZ-FUT
‘I’m going to be pretty’ Imkyánvaan, “Coyote Doctors a Girl” (JPH)

• Material

(34) Náa ithá-‘iish ík vára *furax-múrax-h-eesh*
1SG all-flesh must INT woodpecker.head-VBLZ-FUT
“I am going to be scarlet-downed all over” Imkyánvaan, “Coyote Doctors a Girl” (JPH)

wood-sit-INST-VBLZ-ANC INT wood just-VBLZ-ANC the-3PL-sit-INST
‘They were wooden seats, their seats were made of wood.’ [TK 96.16]

But some do:

(36) Ansáfiítk va-’ára mi-yaffus t-u-‘áas-ha
A. 3SG.POSS-person 2SG.POSS PERF-3SG-wet-VBLZ
“Weitchpec person your dress it is getting wet”

(37) u-’ahváara-hi-ti
3SG-hollow.tree-VBLZ-DUR
‘It is hollow.’ Benonie Harrie “Three Adventures” (AF)

(38) a. t-u-p-ípihar-a-pa,
PERF-3SG-IT-bony-VBLZ
‘He had bones in him already’ Imkyánvaan “Panther and his wives” (JPH)

b. kúna chámúxich uum vára ípihar
in.addition sucker 3SG INT bony
‘But Sucker is bony.’ Mamie Offield “Eel and Sucker” (WB37:6)

(39) kári xas u-pip̄ ná vára *na-pman-anamáhach-hi-ti*
and then 3SG-say 1SG INT 1SG-mouth-small-VBLZ-DUR
‘then he said I myself have a small mouth’ Frank and Nettie Ruben “Bluejay, Medicine-Man (AF)

3.5 Class and identity -hi forms

Predicted to not agree, and they don’t:

(40) vaa kári kári áraar-as-h-anik
3 still person-PL-VBLZ-ANC
‘They were still people’ Afriitc “Mourning Dove Gambles away his Grandmother’s Dress” (JPH)

The verbalizer -hi has the allomorph -pa in forms that contain the iterative prefix (WB p. 85).
4 Conclusion

Macaulay’s conjecture is largely, but not completely, supported by available data:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEMANTIC CATEGORY</th>
<th>PREDICTED TO AGREE</th>
<th>OBSERVED TO AGREE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EVENT</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXISTENTIALS</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCATION</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROPERTY</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLASS + IDENTITY</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Outstanding questions for Macaulay’s analysis

1. Is the variation in agreement with property and locational -hi forms semantically conditioned?
   (cf. Mithun (2008) on Pomo speakers’ use of active-stative alternation for semantic purposes)

2. If Karuk agreement is in general semantically determined, why would that be?

   Aspectual categories, and the possibilities of marking them formally on predicates, appear to be firmly tied up with the prototypical semantic content of the lexical items in each predicate category. As such, these aspectual marking are opposed to other types of formal marking such as PNG [person, number, gender; LM]-agreement and negation. *There is nothing in the semantics of predicates like ‘walk’, ‘tall’, or ‘priest’ which demands them to have person-marking or, conversely, blocks them from having that marking.*
   Stassen (1997:53)

3. If non-agreeing -hi forms are verbs, why do they allow possessive marking?

   (44) Pa-ľurax ńum pú-vaa mu-síshaf-h-ara, vaań uum mú-aax
   the-woodpecker.head 3SG NEG-3 3SG.Poss-semen-VBLZ-NEG 3.3G 3SG.Poss-blood
   the woodpecker scarlet is not his semen, it is his blood (JPH, fn. p. 157)

   Are they nouns at one end and verbs at the other?

4. Why is -hi (or its word-final form -ha) only present in the context of TA suffixes and/or agreement?

   (45) fim yámach You’re beautiful.
   2SG pretty
   Vina Smith (UCB2010-09-13)

   (46) Náa víra yáamach-h-eesh
   1SG INT pretty-VBLZ-FUT
   ‘I’m going to be pretty’
   Imkyánvaan, “Coyote Doctors a Girl” (JPH)

5. Does it make sense to say that várahanik is a verb in (47)?

   wood-sit-INST-VBLZ-ANC INT  wood just-VBLZ-ANC the-3PL-sit-INST
   ‘They were wooden seats, their seats were made of wood.’
   [TK 96.16]
References


