

On word class and predication in Karuk*

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1 Introduction

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

- (1) a. ni-shxâar-eesh
1SG-go.fishing-FUT
'I'm going to go fishing.' Vina Smith (UCB2010-05-01)
- b. naa ni-xú-ti Herbert u-'aahkô-o-ti pa-táhpuus
1SG 1SG-think-DUR H. 3SG-set.fire.to-PL.ACT-DUR the-young.fir.tree
'I think Herbert is burning fir boughs.' Julia Starritt "Smoke" (WB90:2)
- (2) naa vúra yâamach-heesh
1SG INT pretty-FUT
'I'm going to be pretty' Imkyánvaan "Coyote Doctors a Girl" (JPH)

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*: yâamach-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)

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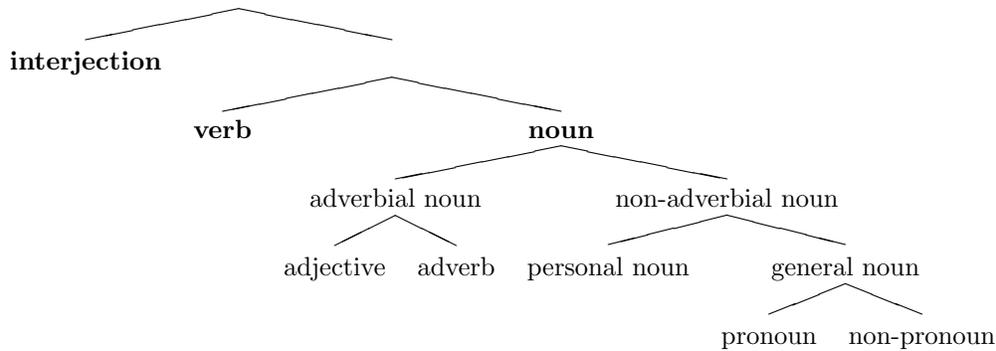
2 Background

- 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, \acute{V} , $\acute{V}V$, $\hat{V}V$)
 - 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)



- interjections (WB 250): outside any system of derivation or inflection, *ayukûi* ‘hello’, *hãa* ‘yes’
- verbs (WB 230): occurs with one or more verbal affixes, e.g. *ni-’áhoo* ‘I go’, *u-snúr-at* ‘It thundered’
- nouns (WB 600): can’t occur with verbal affix, may occur with nominal affix, may compound:
 - adjective: may occur with *-sa* plural, e.g. *yâamach-as* ‘pretty-PL’,
 - adverb: *ôok* ‘here’
 - personal noun: may occur with *-sa* plural, e.g. *ikxaréeyav-as* ‘spirit person-PL’
 - pronoun: no plural, no compounding, e.g. *núa* ‘I’
 - general noun: no plural, e.g. *tâhpuus* ‘fir bough’

(4)

	category	(basic) postverbal form	postnominal form
clitic	FUTURE	-avish (-eesh)	=heesh
	ANCIENT	-anik	=hanik
	NEGATION	-ara	=hara
	ANTERIOR	-aheen	=heen
	IRREALIS ¹	-ahaak	=haak
affix	PAST	-at	X
	DURATIVE	-tih	X

2.2 Macaulay's argument

Bright's postnominal forms are morphological complex; all contain verbalizing *-hi* (Macaulay 198:170-173)²

- (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- <i>hi</i> form
FUTURE	-avish > -eesh (SC)	-hi-avish > -havish (VD) > heesh (SC)
ANCIENT	-anik	-hi-anik > -hanik (VD)
NEGATION	-ara	-hi-ara > -hara (VD)
ANTERIOR	-aheen	-hi-aheen > -haheen (VD) > -heen (SC)
IRREALIS	-ahaak	-hi-ahaak > -hahaak (VD) > -haak (SC)

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 *yâamach*, why is there no agreement on the resulting verb?

- (6) Náa vúra yâamach-heesh
 1SG INT pretty-FUT
 'I'm going to be pretty' Imkyánvaan "Coyote Doctors a Girl" (JPH.157)
- (7) ni-shxâar-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-yâak-hara pa-'ôo-ku-kam
 NEG-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-húunta-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, ... (9b)
 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, ... (9a)
 MATERIAL wooden, silver, golden, ... (9c)

¹Bright 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).

²Bright and Macaulay both label *-hi* denominative. I call it a verbalizer to focus attention on the part of speech issue at hand.

- (11) Macaulay’s examples of non-copular clauses (p. 177)
- a. u-saamvároo-hi-tih
3SG-creek-VBLZ-DUR
‘There was a creek.’ Nettie Ruben “Coyote’s Journey” (WB1:47)
- b. u-’íinva-hi-ti
3SG-forest.fire-VBLZ-DUR
‘There was a forest fire.’ Julia Starritt “Coyote’s Journey” (WB4:30)

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

SEMANTIC CATEGORY	PROTOTYPICAL ENCODING	EXPECTED TO AGREE
EVENT (including actions, states, processes)	verb	yes
EXISTENTIALS ³	?	yes
LOCATION ⁴	adverb	no
PROPERTY (see (10))	adjective	no
CLASS + IDENTITY	noun	no

3.1 Eventive *-hi* forms

Predicted to agree and typically do:

- (13) vúra ník pa-nú-vyih-m-ahaak xasík vúra i-yuup-h-éesh
INT a.little NMLZ-1PL-go.PL-to-when then.FUT INT 2SG-eye-VBLZ-FUT
‘When we get there, then you can **open your eyes.**’ Nettie Reuben, “Coyote’s Homecoming” (WB2a:42)
- (14) chími u-púfaat-h-eesh.
soon 3SG-nothing-VBLZ-FUT
‘he feels like he’s going to **faint.**’ [TK 193.22]
- (15) pá-piish kun-ikyâa-ti uum xás tá kun-piish-ha
NMLZ-soaked.acorns 3PL-make-DUR 3SG then PERF 3PL-soaked.acorns-VBLZ
‘When they made pish, they **soaked acorns.**’ Julia Starritt, “Soaking Acorns” (WB75:1)
- (16) xás kári u-kôo-ha pa-’asiktávaan
then then 3SG-all-VBLZ the-woman
‘Then the woman (from Katimin) **quit.**’ Emily Donohue, “Professor Gifford’s Visit” (WB88:9)
- (17) chími u-thríha-h-eesh.
soon 3SG-flower(N)-VBLZ-FUT
‘it’s going to **blossom.**’ [TK 55.40]
- (18) xás vúra puxích tá kun-ímchax xás tá kun-ástuuk-ha
then INT very.much PERF 3PL-get.hot then PERF 3PL-sweat(N)-VBLZ
‘And it got very hot, and they **sweated.**’ Julia Starritt, “The Sweathouse” (WB76:15)

Note also:

- (19) xás tá kóo pa-’ir
then PERF all the-world.renewal.ceremony
‘Then the world renewal was over.’ Emily Donohue “The pikiawish at Katamin” (WB:22)
- (20) yáas u-kôo-hi-ti pa-’ir
then 3SG-all-VBLZ-DUR the-world-renewal.ceremony
‘Then the world renewal ended.’ Emily Donohue “The pikiawish at Katamin” (WB:24)

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

⁴In 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. *oók* ‘here’, *kaan* ‘there’, and *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**-spúka-hi-ti káan
EVI 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-'òok-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 **thakári-h-anik**.
EVI 3SG almost starved(?) -VBLZ-ANC
'Behold he was almost **starving**.' Imkyánvaan "Panther and his wives" (JPH)

- Physical

- (27) avans-áxiich **vâarama-h-eesh**
man-schild tall-VBLZ-FUT
'The boy will be **tall**.' (JC p. 215)

- Dimension

- (28) kári xas u-píip naa vúra **na-pman-anámáhach-hi-ti**
and then 3SG-say 1SG INT 1SG.POSS-mouth-small-VBLZ-DUR
'then he said I myself have a **small** mouth' Frank and Nettie Ruben "Bluejay, Medicine-Man (AF)

- Colour

- (29) chánchaaf-kunish-'ik-h-eesh, ikráram-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) Pimnanihtanákaanitc 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 **kúun-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 vúra **yâamach-h-eesh**
 1SG INT pretty-VBLZ-FUT
 ‘I’m going to be pretty’ Imkyánvaan, “Coyote Doctors a Girl” (JPH)

- Material

(34) Naa ithá-’iish ík vúra **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)

But some do:

(35) Ansáfriik 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**’

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

(37) a. t-**u**-p-ipihara-pa⁵
 PERF-3SG-IT-bony-VBLZ
 ‘He had **bones** in him already’ Imkyánvaan “Panther and his wives” (JPH)

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

3.5 Class and identity *-hi* forms

Predicted to not agree, and they don’t:

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

(39) Kóovura p-áchviiiv **Pe-ekxaréeyav-sa-h-anik**
 all the-bird the-spirit.person-PL-VBLZ-ANC
 ‘The birds were all lxxareyavs [i.e. **spirit people**]’ Imkyánvaan, “Coyote Doctors a Girl” (JPH)

(40) naa pu-pihnéefich-h-ara
 1SG NEG-coyote-VBLZ-NEG
 ‘I’m not **Coyote**.’ Julia Starritt “Coyote Steals Fire” (WB10:31)

⁵The 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:

(41)	SEMANTIC CATEGORY	PREDICTED TO AGREE	OBSERVED TO AGREE
	EVENT	yes	yes
	EXISTENTIALS	yes	yes
	LOCATION	no	sometimes
	PROPERTY	no	sometimes
	CLASS + IDENTITY	no	no

Outstanding questions for Macaulay’s analysis

1. Is the variation in agreement with property and locational *-hi* forms semantically conditioned?
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?

(42)	Pa-fúrax	úum pú-vaa	mu -síshaf- h -ara,	vaa uum mú-’aax	
	the-woodpecker.head	3SG NEG-3	3SG.POSS-semen-VBLZ-NEG 3	3.SG 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?

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