

# Revisiting nominal tense

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Tonhauser (2007) and Thomas (2012) have analyzed the temporal marker *-kue* in Paraguayan Guarani and in Mbya Guarani as a piece of nominal inflection. Tonhauser (2007) focuses on uses of *-kue* on lexical nouns, as illustrated in (1), and proposed that *-kue* is a form of perfect aspect. By contrast, Thomas (2012) proposes an analysis of *-kue* as relative past tense that also accounts for its propositional uses, in which *-kue* is affixed to a nominalized proposition, as illustrated in (2):

- (1) A-echa mburuvicha-kue.  
A1.SG-see leader-KUE  
'I saw the ex-chief.'
- (2) Juan o-icha'ã Maria o-mba'apo-a-gue.  
Juan A3-think Maria A3-work-NMLZ-KUE  
'Juan thinks/thought that Maria was working.'

Both analyses have ignored a less frequent use of *-kue* that challenges its categorization as a nominal suffix. Indeed, *-kue* is also attested on stative and anti-causative predicates, with a variety of semantic effects that Dooley (2006) describes as 'reducing dynamicity.' In example (3), *-kue* turns the stage level stative predicate *poriau* ('to be poor') into an individual level predicate. In example and (4), *-kue* turns the anticausative predicate *piru* ('to dry') into an resultative modifier:

- (3) Ha'e va'e je i-poriau-kue porã'i nho.  
ANA REL EVID B3-sad-kue good-DIM however  
However, he was very sad. (Florentino 1977b)
- (4) Peteĩ Paraguai o-me'ẽ vaka r-o'o-kue piru-kue.  
one Paraguayan A3-give cow REL-meet-KUE dry-kue  
'A Paraguayan gave me dried meat.' (Florentino 1977a)

In this talk, I will discuss the categorization of these predicates, and I will argue that while predicates like *poriaukue* in (3) are better analyzed as verbs, predicates like *pirukue* in (4) are best analyzed as adjectives. I will then consider the implications of these data for the analysis of nominal tense in Mbya, focusing on two questions:

1. In the face of these apparent counter-examples, can we maintain the generalization that temporal markers in Mbya are nominal?
2. Can we extend the analysis of *-kue* as a relative past tense to its uses in (3) and (4), or should we posit that *-kue* is ambiguous between a tense and a marker of 'reduced dynamicity'?

## References

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- Florentino, Nelson. 1977b. Omenda ramo rai va'e okyje va'e reko oĩa = The fearful new husband. In Robert Dooley (ed.), *Mbyá guaraní collection*, The Archive of the Indigenous Languages of Latin America. [www.ailla.utexas.org](http://www.ailla.utexas.org). Media: text. Access restricted. Resource: GUN001R004.
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