The Object Nominalizing Prefix ni- in Panare and Across Cariban

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1 Introduction

The basic purpose of this paper is to describe the morphology and syntax which is associated with a nasal prefix in Panare (Carib). In its basic syntactic role, the prefix ni- derives a noun from a transitive verb stem which has already been inflected with verbal suffixes. The derived nominal refers to the patient of the action denoted by the verb (i.e. what would be the direct object in an active transitive sentence). A separate NP referring to the patient may optionally occur, but does not appear to form a surface constituent with the derived nominal. The agent of the action denoted by the verb must occur as a genitive NP or prefix immediately preceding the derived nominal, possessing it and thereby forming a complex NP. A second purpose of this paper is to argue that this same prefix has been reanalyzed in some environments as a main clause verbal inflection. A third purpose of this paper is to point out that this prefix is not a recent innovation, unique to Panare, but that it is found in a number of Cariban languages; in most languages it retains its historical status as an object nominalizer, but in at least one other language, Kuikuro, it has developed into a verbal inflection.

2 Nominal morphosyntax in Panare

In order to argue that a combination of the ni- prefix plus a verb equals a noun in Panare, I identify some salient morphosyntactic characteristics of nouns, first the morphosyntax internal to the noun phrase, then the morphosyntax of noun phrases as they relate to the predicate in main clauses.

2.1 Morphosyntax inside the noun phrase

Inside the noun phrase the morphosyntax of the genitive is particularly salient to the later discussion, so I present it first. The genitive construction in Panare consists of the genitive NP followed immediately by the possessed NP. Most possessed NPs are modified, usually by a lexically-determined possessive suffix (such as the -n 'POSS' suffix in 0a-f below). If the genitive is a full NP, primary stress in the possessed noun frequently -- but not always -- shifts to the left (accent shift indicated orthographically as ~NP Genitive (NPG)). First, second, and third person full NP genitives are illustrated in 0a-c with the lexical noun mata 'shoulder'. Note that the unmarked stress is always on the final syllable of the word, but that the full NP genitives pull the stress to the left. The genitive NP may be replaced by a genitive prefix on the possessed noun. First, second, and third person genitive prefixes are illustrated in 0d-f, respectively. Note that the zero prefix for first person (0d) also includes accent shift, even though there is no full NP genitive.²

(1) a. yâ-matan = yu 0^-mata-n 'my shoulder'
b. amén-matan = amén 0^-mata-n 'your shoulder'
c. Toman-matan = Toman 0^-máta-n 'Tom's shoulder'
d. mátan = 0^-mata-n 'my shoulder'
e. amatan = a-mata-n 'your shoulder'
f. yimatán = yi-mata-n 'his shoulder'

In addition to the morphology associated with the genitive construction, nouns may bear suffixes, two of which are particularly salient for this paper. The suffix -pe 'Adjectivalizer/adverbializer (AD)' derives a non-nominal constituent which can serve as the predicate of a copular verb. Unless it bears the -pe 'AD' suffix, a noun may not be the predicate of a fully finite copular verb.³ In normal speech, the vowel of the -pe suffix moves to the more neutral high central unrounded vowel i and the suffix itself seems to cliticize to the first consonant of the verbal copula which follows (cf the first line in 0).
(2) maejturu piwaj chu
maejturu-pe w-aj yu
teacher-AD 1-AUX 1SG
'I was like (acting the part of) a teacher.'

A second set of nominal morphology is formed by two particles which appear to be derived from historical pronouns. These particles, optional in virtually all elicitation situations, agree with the noun for animacy, either -(mɛn)'Inanimate (INAN)' or -(mɛnɛj) 'Animate (ANIM)'. Nouns in Panare are modified by other nouns in apposition rather than by a separate syntactic class of adjectives. Thus, the word tosen 'big' in (0) is actually a noun and not an adjective as the English translation might suggest. The nominal suffixes are exemplified in 0a-b:

(3) a. tosen-mɛn 'the big one (INAN)
b. tosen-ɛnɛj 'the big one (ANIM)'

In summary, the three morphological characteristics which identify nouns in Panare are: (1) it may be possessed, (2) it may bear the denominalizing suffix -pe in a predicate nominal clause, or (3) it may be a pronominal particle which agrees with it for animacy.

2.2 Case marking and word order of NPs in main clauses

Subject and direct object noun phrases in main clauses are unmarked morphologically, but they are subject to certain order restrictions. The possible word orders in elicitation are OVS, VSO, SOV, and SVO. In both elicitation and discourse, the subject almost always occurs postverbally; in elicitation the object is equally felicitous either before the verb or after the subject, but in discourse it is overwhelmingly after the subject. In the key morphosyntactic effect of word order variation, if a transitive direct object NP directly precedes the verb, a third person subject agreement prefix will be lost and primary accent in the verb will shift to the left (‘-NP Object (NPO) ‘). If a non-nominal (e.g. a noun bearing the suffix -pe) precedes the verb, the third person subject agreement prefix remains and stress does not shift in the verb. These two phenomena are illustrated in 0a-b. As seen in 0c, a non-nominal cannot trigger the loss of agreement prefix and accent shift, and as seen in 0d, a direct object NP cannot precede a verb which retains its agreement prefix and normal stress pattern.

(4) a. tosenmɛn pesyu'mayaj tikon pelotan
tosen-mɛn ɔ-^pesyu'ma-yaj tikon pelotan
large-INAN INV-NPO-hit-PAST child ball
'The child kicked the large ball.'

b. tosempe nipetyu'mayaj tikon pelotan
tosen-pe ni-petyu'ma-yaj tikon pelotan
large-AD 3-hit-PAST child ball
'The child kicked the large ball.'

c. *tosempe pesyu'mayaj tikon pelotan
tosen-pe ɔ-^pesyu'ma-yaj tikon pelotan
large-AD INV-NPO-hit-PAST child ball
(the child kicked the large ball)

d. *tosenmɛn nipetyu'mayaj tikon pelotan
tosen-mɛn ni-petyu'ma-yaj tikon pelotan
large-INAN 3-hit-PAST child ball
(the child kicked the large ball)
Nouns other than subject and direct object in main clauses bear postpositions. A representative example is the dative postposition *úva* 'DAT' marking the dative/recipient of the verb *utu* 'give' in (5):

(5)  
parae yuχaj  kén  Toman úva  
parae y-yuχ-yaj  kén  Toman úva  
knife INV-give-PAST AN:INV Thomas DAT  
'S/he gave a knife to Tom.'

I summarize section 2 as follows: if we have a constituent in a main clause in Panare and we want to know if it is a noun, we can apply the following morphological (i-iii) and syntactic (iv-v) tests:

(i) Can it be possessed?
(ii) Can it bear the -*pe* 'AD' suffix?
(iii) Can it bear either of the pronominal particles, -*(mē)n* 'INAN' or -*(mē)nēj* 'ANIM'?
(iv) Can it be a direct object in the main clause (i.e. can it trigger loss of subject agreement prefix and accent shift in the verb)?
(v) Can it bear postpositions?

In section 3 I demonstrate that a verb bearing the *ni-* prefix meets all of these criteria, and hence must be considered a noun.

3 The Object-Nominalizing Prefix *ni*-

The main features of the morphosyntax of the *ni-* nominalizer are described in this section: (1) it occurs only on transitive verbs, deriving a nominal which refers to the patient, and which is obligatorily possessed by the agent, of the action denoted by the verb; (2) the derived nominal takes nominal suffixes; (3) the derived nominal functions as an object relative clause; and (4) the derived nominal may bear any grammatical relation in the main clause, including direct object and dative/recipient. In short, the verb which bears the *ni-* prefix meets all of the syntactic criteria which define nouns in Panare.

3.1 Obligatory possession by the AGENT

The full set of possessive prefixes appears on the front of the transitive verb inflected with *ni-* agreeing with the AGENT of the action denoted by the verb. In 0a-c the genitive prefixes refer to the AGENT of the verb, first, second, and third person, respectively. In 0d-f the full NP genitive refers to the AGENT of the verb. Note that the third person genitive prefix in 0c and the first person pro-clitic in 0d are almost homophonous — only the accent shift associated with the 1SG clitic disambiguates the two.

(6)  
a.  
námē  
Ø^ni-amē  
1-O:NMLZR-buy  
'my bought one'

b.  
anipetųumajpē  
2-O:NMLZR-hit-PERF:INF  
'your hit one'

c.  
yanipetųumajpē  
3-O:NMLZR-hit-PERF:INF  
'his/her/its hit one'
d. yinipétyu'majpē
   yu -ni-petyú'ma-jpē
   1SG-NPG-O.NMLZR-hit-PERF:INF
   'my hit one'

c. amēn nipétyu'mayaanēj
   amēn -ni-petyú'ma-yaj-nēj
   2SG NPG-O.NMLZR-hit-PAST-ANIM
   'your hit one'

f. Toman nipétyu'majpē
   Toman -ni-petyú'ma-jpē
   Thomas NPG-O.NMLZR-hit-PERF:INF
   'Tom's hit one'

In 0 the example is not allowed when the AGENT occurs following the nominalized verb. As for all possessive constructions, if the genitive is to appear as a full NP, it must replace the agreement prefix before the possessed noun. It cannot occur elsewhere in the clause, and have the genitive prefix 'agree' with it.

(7) *yinipetyúmajpē Toman
    y-ni-petyúma-jpē Toman
    3-O. NMLZR-hit-PERF Thomas
    (Tom's hit one)

In 0a-b ni- is not allowed to nominalize an intransitive verb. This is a natural restriction, since ni- is an object nominalizer and intransitive verbs do not have direct objects.

(8) a. *yúnétpē
    yu -ni-tē-jpē
    1SG NPG-O.NMLZR-go-PERF:INF
    (my gone one/my leaving)

b. *yuniĉiremujpē
    yu -ni-ĉirema-jpē
    1SG NPG-O.NMLZR-DETR-make.dance-PERF:INF
    (my danced one/my dancing)

3.2 Nominal suffixes

In addition to being obligatory possessed by the agent, verbs inflected with the ni- nominalizing prefix may also bear either of the nominal suffixes -pe 'AD' or -(mē)nēj 'ANIM'. In 0 the verb utu 'give' bears the ni- prefix and the verbal complement suffix -n 'COMP'. The derived nominal is possessed by the agent NP yu. As discussed above in §2.1, when a noun is the predicate NP of the verbal copula aj 'AUX', it must bear the nominalizing suffix -pe 'AD'; like all predicate nouns in this environment, the derived nominal yunutun 'my given (thing)' bears -pe.

(9) yunutunpi maj parae
    yu Ø-ni-utu-n-pe n-aj parae
    1SG GEN-O.NMLZR-give-COMP-AD 2/3-AUX knife
    The knife was what I gave.
    (lit. 'The knife was my given (thing).')
In 0 the derived nominal nipétyumañayaj 'your hit (one)' bears the reduced form -nêj 'ANIM' of the animate pronounal particle -(mê)nêj. The agent amen '2SG' possesses the nominalized verb. The copula in this clause, nêj 'ANIM:DIST', and the relativizer -nêj 'REL:ANIM' on the finite relative clause tiyanêj 'S/he who left' have exactly the same form as the animate pronounal particle. All three instances of nêj are agreeing for animacy with the same referent, who is simultaneously the subject of the main clause predicate nominal, the subject of the relativized verb 'go', and the object of the nominalized verb 'hit'.

(10) amên nipétyumañayaj nêj tiyanêj
amên ^-ni-petyuma-jaj-nêj nêj te-jaj-nêj
2SG,PP-O,NMLZR-hit-PAST-ANIM ANIM:DIST go-PAST-REL:ANIM
'S/he who left is the one who you hit.'
(lit. 'S/he who left is your hit (one).')

3.3 Bearing grammatical relations in main clauses

In this section I show the derived form operating in a number of syntactic environments which are reserved for nouns, namely those which bear grammatical relations in main clauses. It should be noted that the derived nominal may either stand alone as the head noun, bearing the grammatical relation directly (something like a headless relative clause in English) or it may serve as a noun which modifies another noun, in which case the grammatical relation is shared between the two.

First, consider the following examples of the nominalized verb as subject of both intransitive and transitive clauses. In 0, the main clause verb is intransitive, tiyaj 'he left'. The subject is the complex NP Toman nipétyumayanañaj 'Tom's hit one'. The leftward shift in primary stress (from petyuma to petyu'ma) indicates that the AGENT Toman is the genitive NP of the nominalized verb nipétyumayaj. The entire complex NP also bears the pronounal particle -nêj 'ANIM'.

(11) tiyaj Toman nipétyumayanañaj
tê-yaj Toman ^-ni-petyuma-jaj-nêj
go-PAST Thomas NPG-O,NMLZR-hit-PAST-ANIM
'The one who Tom hit left.'
(lit. 'Tom's hit one left.')

In 0 the direct object Toman precedes the main clause verb e'ka 'to bite', triggering the loss of subject agreement (shown also by the y- 'Inverse (INV) prefix, which occurs overtly only on vowel initial verbs). The subject of the main clause is the derived nominal yinamanejpe 'my made one'. The verb amanê 'create' bears the -jpe 'PERF:INF' verbal suffix, the ni- nominalizer, and is possessed by the first person pro-clitic yu- '1SG'.

(12) Toman ye'kayaj yinamanejpe
Toman y-e'ka-yaj yu ^-ni-amanê-jpe
Thomas INV-bite-PAST 1SG NPG-O,NMLZR-create-PERF:INF
'The one I made bit Tom.'
(lit. 'My hit (one) bit Tom.')

In a more significant test for nominal status, the verb bearing ni- also occurs as a preverbal direct object, triggering loss of the verbal agreement prefix and leftward accent shift in the main verb. In 0 the main verb inj 'eat.meat' (the third word in the clause) bears the suffix -te 'Nonspecific Transitive (NONSPEC.TY)', and is followed by the subject yutakon '1+2PL'. There are two NPs preceding the verb, kuchinê 'pig' and the nominalized verb yinipu'moipê 'my killed (one)'. The morphological alteration in the verb indicates that the NP which immediately precedes it, the derived nominal yinipu'moipê, is the direct object rather than the lexical noun kuchinê.
(13) kuchiné yipipú’moiŋé yAmniŋe yutakon
kuchiné yu-ni-p’uŋmo-jpē ~y-ini-fie yutakon
pig 1SG-O.NMLZR-kill-PERF:INF NPO-TRN-eat.meat-NONSPEC.T 1+2PL
'Ve're eating the pig that I killed.'
(lit. 'We're eating the pig my killed (one)').

Verbs bearing the ni- prefix may also bear postpositions, and thus serve as oblique arguments of main clauses. In 0 both the direct and indirect objects are derived nominals. The main clause subject is Toman and the verb is yu 'give', bearing the suffix -yaj 'PAST'. The direct object is unequivocally amën namanēŋpē 'your made (one)', as it occurs immediately preceding the verb and the verb loses its subject agreement prefix. The indirect object is the derived nominal vinamanēŋpē 'my made (one)', bearing the dative/recipient postposition uya 'DAT'.

(14) amēn namanēŋpē yujchaj Toman
amēn ~ni-amanē-jpē y-ujaŋjaj Toman
2SG NPG-O.NMLZR-create-PERF:INF INV-give-PAST Thomas

vinamanēŋpē uya
yu ~ni-amanē-jpē uya
1SG NPG-O.NMLZR-create-PERF:INF DAT

'Tom gave the one you made to the one I made.'
(lit. 'Tom gave your made (one) to my made (one).')

In 0 the main clause verb is witten '1SG-go', the subject is yu '1SG', and the location pata 'place/house' bears the goal/locative postposition yaka 'to'. The derived nominal amēn nyemevan 'your cleaned (thing)' comes at the end of the clause. It bears the reduced allomorph -n of the pronominal particle -(mēn) 'INAN', and is followed by the goal/locative postposition yaka 'to'.

(15) witten yu pata yaka
wī-ē-n yu pata yaka
1 -go-NONSPEC.I 1SG place to

amēn nyemevan yaka
amēn ~ni-yeme-yaj-mēn yaka
2SG NPG-O.NMLZR-clean-PAST-INAN to

'I'm gonna go to the house that you cleaned.'
lit. 'I'm gonna go to the house, to your cleaned (one).'

3.4 Restrictions on verbal suffixes with the ni- nominalizer
The preceding three sections demonstrate in a variety of ways that a verb which bears the ni- prefix is completely nominalized, and is a noun according to every syntactic test in Panare. One interesting aspect of this nominalizing prefix is that it may co-occur with a variety of verbal inflectional suffixes. In this section I discuss some of the verbal suffixes which co-occur on the verb stem with the ni- nominalizer, as well as some which are excluded. As described in Payne, Payne, and Gildea 1990, Panare verbs may bear both derivational and inflectional prefixes and suffixes. Derivational affixes combine with the verb root to form a verb stem, which is then inflected with both a tense/aspect suffix and a personal agreement prefix. The ni- nominalizing prefix occurs in place of the personal agreement prefixes, but its occurrence does not prevent the verb from taking a tense/aspect suffix -- in fact one of several different tense/aspect suffixes may co-occur with ni-. Thus, it appears that the verb takes half of its normal inflectional morphology, the tense/aspect suffix, and then the nominalizing prefix derives a noun from
this semi-inflected verb.

The verbal suffix which most commonly co-occurs with ni- in narrative text is -jpē 'Perfect:Inferential (PERF:INF)'. Four other tense/aspect suffixes co-occur with ni-: -n 'Complement (COMP)', -Ø 'COMP' (i.e. a zero suffix, a bare stem), -vaj 'PAST', and -i 'PAST.Interrogative (PAST.INTER)'. Nominal suffixes occur following the verbal tense/aspect suffix.

In 0 the verb ini- 'make' bears the ni- nominalizer and the verbal suffix jpe 'PERF:INF'; the AGENT kēn precedes the derived nominal, possessing it,n and thus forming one complex NP 'his made one'.

(16)  kēn _nimjpē  peraka
      kēn ^-ni-imi-jpē  peraka
      ANIM.INV NPG-O.NMLZR-make-PERF house
      The house is what he made.
      (lit. 'the house is his made (thing)')

Another verbal suffix which co-occurs with the ni- nominalizer is -n 'COMP'. This suffix occurs on verbs in complement clauses, with absolutive agreement prefixes which are derived historically from the possessive prefix set. When -n appears on intransitive verbs in main clauses, it functions as the marker of nonspecific aspect. At times -n also occurs on transitive verbs in main clauses, but it is still unclear whether such clauses are fully finite. When the ni- nominalizer and the -n verbal suffix co-occur, the resulting nominal refers to the PATIENT of an action which is expected to occur in the near to immediate future. In 0 the predicate nominal is karya 'good', followed by the reduced form -n of the pronoun nominal mēn 'INAN', here functioning as the copula.11 The inanimate nominal parae 'knife' is the subject of the predicate nominal and yinaamēn 'my one to buy' is in apposition, modifying parae. As the translation indicates, the nominalized verb functions as an object relative clause.

(17)  karyam parae yinaamēn
       karya-mēn parae yu ^-ni-amē-n
       good -INAN knife 1SG NPG-O.NMLZR-buy-COMP
       The knife that I'm gonna buy is good.
       (lit. 'The knife my (FUT) bought (thing) is good.')

The second complement form of the verb which occurs with the n- nominalizer is a bare stem, which Payne, Payne, and Gildea 1990 represent as a zero suffix. In the remainder of this paper I refer to suffixless verbs as bare stem verbs. In 0 the predicate nominal is again karya 'good'. The inanimate pronoun nominal particle mēn 'INAN' functions as the copula. The noun parae 'knife' is the subject of the predicate nominal. In apposition to parae is a finite relative clause derived from a predicate nominal (cf. Gildea 1989a, Payne, Payne, & Gildea 1990). The copula of this predicate nominal is the proximal auxiliary verb naj 'PROX.AUX'. The relative clause is marked by the relativizing suffix -siŋ 'Relativizer:Inanimate (REL.INAN)', which agrees for (in)animacy with the gapped subject of the predicate nominal, parae 'knife'. The predicate noun inside this relative clause is the nominalized verb nāmē 'that which I bought'. Thus, the relative clause is formed from a predicate nominal, where the predicate NP is itself a nominalized verb.

(18)  karya mēn parae nāmē naasin
       karya mēn parae Ø^-ni-amē-Ø naj-siŋ
       good DP.INAN knife 1-O.NMLZR-buy-COMP PROX.AUX-REL.INAN
       'The knife (that is the one) that I just bought is good.'
       (lit. 'The knife that is my (just) bought (thing) is good.')

The latter two verbal suffixes which co-occur with ni- differ significantly from the previous three: -jpē, -n, and -Ø have only recently begun to be used as main clause verbal suffixes, and even still they are ubiquitous as either nominalizers or subordinating verbal morphology; -vaj and -i are members of the
historically fully finite set of verbal inflections, which cannot occur in subordinate clauses without some kind of special subordinating morphology. These suffixes are also unusual comparatively; historically finite suffixes are not attested as co-occurring with the ni- prefix in any other Cariban language I have surveyed (cf. §5).

The clearest cases of the ni- nominalizer with -yaj come with first and second person agents. In a finite clause with a first person subject where the verb is inflected with -yaj, the subject agreement prefix t- '1' is required (cf. 0a).

(19) a. pata tyeme'yaj chu
    pata ^t-tyeme'-ya yu
    house NPO-1A-clean-PAST 1SG
    'I cleaned the place.'

In a finite relative clause in which the object is relativized (0b), the subject NP yu '1SG' precedes the relativized verb, which retains its standard agreement prefix t- '1', but which must bear the inanimate relativizing suffix -sin 'REL.INAN'.

b. yu tyeme'yaasin pata
   yu t-tyeme'-yaj-sin pata
   1SG 1A-clean-PAST-REL.INAN place
   'the place that I cleaned ...' (FINITE Relative Clause)

Essentially the same meaning may be expressed with a nominalized verb as in 0c: the subject NP yu '1SG' is now a genitive possessing the nominalized verb, which bears the ni- prefix and the -men 'INAN' suffix (in contrast to the t- '1' prefix and the -sin 'REL.INAN' suffix in 0b).\(^\text{12}\)

c. yunyeme'yaamen pata
   yu ^ni-yeme'-yaj-men pata
   ISG NPG-O.NMLZR-clean-PAST-INAN place
   'The place that I cleaned ...' (NOMINALIZED Relative Clause)
   (lit. The place my cleaned (thing)...')

The two disallowed sentences (0d-e) demonstrate that the -sin 'REL.INAN' suffix cannot be used with the nominalized verb, and that the -men 'INAN' nominal suffix cannot relativize a finite verb with a first person subject.

d. *yunyeme'yaas'in pata
e. *yu tyeme'yaamen pata

In a finite clause where the subject is second person and the verb bears the -yaj 'PAST' suffix (0a) the obligatory agreement prefix is m- '2'.

(20) a. yunuchaj amen apos kuya
    yu m-uj-yaj amen apos uya
    1SG 2A-give-PAST 2SG man DAT
    'You gave me to the man.'

In a finite relative clause (0b) a second person subject pronoun need not occur, such that the m- '2' prefix on the verb is the only reference to the agent. When the relativized object is animate, the animate relativizing suffix -neq 'REL.ANIM' occurs on the verb.
When the verb is nominalized (0c), the subject pronoun occurs as the genitive, possessing the derived nominal. Note that the only overt difference between the surface form of the relativized verb in 0b and the nominalized verb plus the nominal suffix in 0c is the choice of prefix: m- '2' for the finite verb and ni- 'O.NMLZR' for the nominalized verb.13

One potential source of confusion arises from the combination of the ni- nominalizing prefix with the -naj tense/aspect suffix: ni- is also the standard third person subject agreement prefix which occurs with -naj. Thus, there is very little morphological information to separate a finite relative clause with a fronted subject NP from a nominalized verb preceded (possessed) by the genitive agent. The distinction between the inanimate relativizing suffix -sin and the inanimate nominal suffix -men (seen in both 0 and 0 above) is not available, since when the subject of a finite relative clause is third person, the inanimate relativizing prefix is also -men 'REL:INAN'. An example of the potential confusion can be seen in the nearly identical sentences in 0a-b. In 0a the primary accent of the verb petyi'ma 'hit' shifts to the the left, indicating that a full NP genitive precedes a derived nominal. The glosses for ni- and -naj as nominal morphology are based on this one morphological distinction.
(21) a. tiyaj Tomannipétv’umayaanēj
tē-yaŋ Toman i^n-petyu’ma-yaj-nēj
go-PAST Thomas NPG-O.NMLZR-hit-PAST-ANIM
'The one Tom hit left.' (NOMINALIZED RC)
(lit. 'Tom’s hit (one) left.')

In 0b the lack of accent shift indicates that the preceding NP is not a genitive, and the analysis is hence that the preceding NP is the subject of a finite relative clause where the relativized NP is the missing object.

b. tiyaj Tomannipétv’umayaanēj
tē-yaŋ Toman ni-petyu’ma-yaj-nēj
go-PAST Thomas 3-hit-PAST-REL:ANIM
'The one Tom hit left.' (FINITE RC)

The other finite tense/aspect inflection which co-occurs with ni- is the past interrogative suffix -j 'PAST.INTER'. This particular use of the ni- prefix properly belongs in the next section, on the development of ni- into a verbal inflectional prefix. This is because ni- and -j only co-occur on main clause question verbs. For now I simply illustrate a case of the combination of ni- and -j in 0; I postpone further discussion of the overall syntax and function of the combination to the next section.

(22) nēj nঀnkii katya?
nēj ^ni-inki-i katya
who NPG-O.NMLZR-put.on-PAST.INTER loincloth
'Who put the loincloth (on the boy who was initiated)?'
(i.e. 'Who did the loincloth initiation?')

To conclude this section, I list the verbal suffixes which are specifically disallowed with the ni- prefix in elicitation:
(23) -nê "NONSPEC:T"
    -jpo "PERF:AGT"
    -scjpa "FUT"
    -sa' "PERF:VIS"
    -jîēpe "DESID"
    -mpēj "IMPREF:T"
    -nēpēj "IMPREF:1"

4 Use of ni- with main clause verbs

Of the 14 main clause verbal inflections listed in Payne, Payne, and Gildea 1990, 11 have been reanalyzed from historical nominalizers fairly recently. The path of grammaticalization was as follows: nominalized verbs first occurred in main clauses as complements of copulas, then the nominalized verb was reanalyzed as the main verb and the copula was reanalyzed as an auxiliary (cf Gildea 1989a-b, 1990b). When it occurs as the complement of a copula, a verb bearing the ni- nominalizer prefix also appears to have been reanalyzed synchronically as a main clause verb. However, since the morphosyntax associated with the other 11 is different from that associated with the ni- prefix, I cannot simply assert the reanalysis of ni- by analogy to them. In this section I argue for the reanalysis on both structural and functional grounds.

In predicate nominal constructions with a lexical noun as the predicate, the copula is required by virtually all consultants in elicitation, and in even in discourse there are very few examples of elided copulas. In constrast, when the copulas are reanalyzed as auxiliaries of main clause verbs, all but one consultant allowed them to be deleted in elicitation, and in discourse data many more examples occur without auxiliaries than with auxiliaries. Thus, a structural test which distinguishes between nouns in a predicate nominal construction and newly reanalyzed main verbs plus auxiliaries is whether the copula/auxiliary can be deleted. If it is difficult to delete, it is probably a copula, in which case the clause is a predicate nominal and the verbal affix is a nominalization; if the copula/auxiliary is easily deleted then it looks more like an auxiliary, in which case the clause is verbal and the verbal affix is reanalyzed as some sort of a tense/aspect/modality inflection.

The copula/auxiliary for verbs bearing the ni- prefix may be easily deleted, even by speakers who disallow copula deletion in predicate nominal clauses. In 0 the subject is cape 'coffee' and the predicate noun is yunamânépē 'my made (thing)'. The inanimate copula mên 'INAN' in 0 makes the sentence 'better' according to one consultant, but the same consultant continued to insist that 0 is a complete sentence, and that there is no semantic difference between the two (the active translations reflect that consultants translated both examples into active sentences in Spanish).

(24) yunamânépē cape
    yu Ø-n-mané-jpē cape
1SG GEN-NPG-O.NMLZR-make-PERF:INF coffee
    'I made coffee.'
    (lit. 'Coffee my made (thing).')

(25) yunamânépē mên cape
    yu ^-n -mané-jpē mên cape
1SG-PP-O.NMLZR-make-PERF COP coffee
    'I made coffee.'
    (lit. 'Coffee is my made (thing).')

The functional argument begins with the active verbal translations which consultants give to such clauses as 0 and 0 above. This indicates that native speakers of Panare think of these clauses as roughly parallel to clauses with active verbs in Spanish. In addition, verbs bearing the ni- prefix occur in discourse to describe events, an eminently verbal property. These two facts argue for the probability that verbs bearing the ni- nominalizer may sometimes be best analyzed as main clause verbs. However, such
an argument begs a specific question: when and why would a Panare speaker nominalize a verb and then use the derived nominal as a verb? i.e. in what contexts is \( n^i \) used as verbal morphology and what is the motivation for doing so?

There are very few cases of \( n^i \) as a verbal inflection in narrative discourse, but what cases there are can all be identified with the same pragmatic context: information questions where the information in question is the identity of the agent (i.e. "whodoneit?" questions) and the answers to those questions. The sentences in 0b-c are taken from a narrative text to illustrate such an information question and answer pair. In 0b the bird children ask their mother the underlined information question \( \text{nèj nètuipè mèn?} \) 'Who gave (you) that?'. The only verbal element in this question clearly bears the \( n^i \) prefix with all its morphosyntax: the agent (the indefinite pronoun \( \text{nèj 'who'} \) precedes the verb and the patient NP \( \text{mèn 'INAN:INV'} \) occurs postverbally, with no case marking or other indication that it is connected syntactically to the verb (cf 0 above). In 0c the mother’s response is framed in the same morphosyntax: the only difference between 0b and 0c is that in 0c the agent NP \( e\text{'nàpa 'Panare'} \) replaces the question pronoun \( \text{nèj 'who'} \) used in 0b. (Since I contend that this use of \( n^i \) is no longer a nominalization, I now gloss \( n^i \) as 'AGENT:FOCUS (AGT:FOC)' and the accent shift \( ^\sim \) now indicates 'Noun Phrase Agent (NPA)').

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{(26) a. & yajkopa-ñe tukonken yanè uya} \\
& y-ajkopa-ñe tunko-inken yanè uya \\
& 3-asq-NONSPEC:T bird-child 3-mother DAT \\
& 'The bird children ask their mother' (MKW.61.11) \\
\text{b.} & \text{\"nèj nètuipè ______ mèn anè\"} \\
& \text{nèj ^\sim ni-utu-jpè mèn anè} \\
& \text{Ø-ka-ñe} \\
& \text{who NPA-AGT:FOC-give-PERF:INF INAN:INV mother TRN-say-NONSPEC:T} \\
& \text{\"Who gave (you) that, Mother?\" they say.' (MKW.61.12)} \\
\text{c.} & \text{\"e\text{'nàpa nètuipè ______ mèn Pekoro pe tiche\"}} \\
& \text{e\text{'nàpa ^\sim ni-utu-jpè mèn Pekoro pe t-iche} \\
& \text{Panare NPA-AGT:FOC-give-PERF:INF INAN:INV Pedro AD 3-name} \\
& \text{ka-ñe} \\
& \text{Ø-ka-ñe} \\
& \text{TRN-say-NONSPEC:T} \\
& \text{\"A Panare named Pedro gave it," she says.' (MKW.61.13)}
\end{align*}
\]

Note the characteristics of the verb plus \( n^i \) in 0b-c: the clauses are translated as active sentences and there is no copula/auxiliary to serve as the syntactic main clause verb if we assumed the verb plus \( n^i \) were actually a nominalized complement. The same morphological behavior is associated with the verb plus \( n^i \) in its verbal use as with the nominal uses attested above, but the syntax has changed significantly: there is no longer another verbal element in the clause to serve as the "real" verb. The only reasonable conclusion is that \( n^i \) has evolved to function as a main clause verbal inflection in a certain agent-focused construction, the agent information question. I will refer to subsequent clauses in which the main verb is inflected with \( n^i \) as '\( n^i \)-constructions'.

In elicitation, all agent information questions about past events follow the pattern of 0b; the same three overt suffixes which co-occur with the nominal use of \( n^i \) also occur in \( n^i \)-constructions, but the bare stem (i.e. \( ^\sim \) 'COMPO') is not attested in \( n^i \)-constructions. The verbal suffix \( \text{-jpè PERF:INF} \) is attested in 0b above, \( ^\sim \) 'COMP' in 0a, and \( -j/e \) 'PPERF:INTER' in 0b.
(27) a. něj nÂnkën  (mën) katya?
    něj ^ni-inkê-n  mën katya
    who NPA-AGT:FOC-put:on-COMP SPEC loincloth
    `Who's gonna put the loincloth (on the boy to be initiated)?'

b. něj nÂnkii  katya
    něj ^ni-inkê-i  katya
    něj NPA-AGT:FOC-put:on-PPERF:INTER loincloth
    `Who put the loincloth (on the boy who was initiated)?'

The only other example from narrative text comes from the same story. The husband of the mother bird finds the man who gave the gift and asks him the question in 0. Although the identity of the agent is expressed with the referential pronoun amën ‘2SG’ and the translation is phrased as a yes/no question, the speech act is actually that of an information question (i.e. English 'Are you the one who gave it?).

(28) amën nētu:jê  ka mën chi ñi mën  ñi?
    amën ^ni-utu:jê  ka mën chi ñi mën  ñi
    2SG NPA-AGT:FOC-give-PPERF:INF QP INAN:INV COP HES INAN:INV HES
    `Did you give it, uh, that?'

This use of the ni- construction for agent information questions makes a certain post-hoc pragmatic sense. Cross-linguistically (and in Panare) question pronouns are usually the first words in a sentence. However, in most main clauses in Panare the agent normally occurs postverbally. Two syntactic structures in Panare have an agent at the beginning of the clause: a predicate nominal clause with the predicate NP an agent possessing a ni- nominalized verb (i.e. a ni- construction) and clefts. The agent remains closely associated with the verb in a ni- construction, whereas clefts dislocate the agent from the clause, isolating it in front of the copula and leaving the rest of the predication in a relative clause after the copula. Since many historical nominalizations have already been reanalyzed as main clause verbs, an analogous reanalysis for the ni- prefix carries with it the added benefit of providing a less marked structure with a fronted agent.

The same verbal use of ni- is found in a recorded conversation between four Panare men. Speaker A has been telling a story from tribal oral tradition, in which a band of raiders attacked a Panare village while the men were away. He has just digressed from the main story line into a description of how the houses in the village are stuffed with kaemo, the meat eaten during initiation ceremonies. He describes the various animals which have been killed, and how the meat is hanging from the rafters, when speaker B interrupts with the questions in 0a-b. In 0a the agent in focus is e'ñapa ‘person/Panare’, followed by the verb wê `kill' bearing both the ni- prefix and the suffix -jpê `PPERF:INF'. The patient NP kën kaemo ‘that celebration meat' phonologically dislocated from the main verb, appears to be more of an afterthought. That speaker B is really interested in verifying the identity of the agent of wê 'kill' becomes apparent when he repeats the question in 0b with a clarification of the agent referent: yamase'la 'the ones destined to be killed'. In 0c Speaker A confirm's B's guess by simply restating B's question with statement intonation.

(29) a. B: E'ñapa niwê:jê,
    e'ñapa  ^ni-wê-jpê
    `Did the people (Panare) kill it, the meat,'
    (CNV.02.13a)
b. yamase'ňa niwéjé?
y-ama-se'ňa ^ni-wé-jpě
3-kill-O;NMLZR:FUT NPA-AGT:FOC-kill-PERF:INF
'did those who were (later to be) killed kill it?'
(CNV.02.13b)

c. A: Yamase'ňa niwéjé, kaimo.
y-ama-se'ňa ^ni-wé-jpě kaemo
3-kill-O;NMLZR:FUT NPA-AGT:FOC-kill-PERF:INF celebration:meat
'Those who were (later to be) killed killed it,
the celebration meat.' (CNV.02.14)

There is no question that the main topic of this sub-section of discourse is the meat, but the immediate focus of Speaker B's question is to verify the identity of the agent who hunted the meat, and to thereby link the digression about meat back into the main story line. The ni- construction is thus used as a tool to focus on the agent of a verb.

Since both clefts and ni- constructions place the agent first in a sentence, it is a reasonable hypothesis that the functions of the two constructions overlap in more domains than just agent information questions. Cross-linguistically, another much-attested function of clefts is to place one participant in contrastive focus or to mark a particularly salient topic (cf. Givón 1990, ch. 16, 17). The Panare ni- construction also seems to serve such a function for agents in discourse.

In order to illustrate the difference in structure between clefts and ni- constructions in Panare, consider the cleft agent information question in 0, produced later in the same conversation by Speaker D. The animate question pronoun nej 'who' occurs first, as the predicate noun of the copular verb aj 'AUX', here bearing the third person question prefix n- '3' and the distant past particle kę 'DIST:PAST'.

(30) D: ??nej nakę, ya'kamañeje amën wiya?
nej n-aj-kę y-a'kama-ñepe amën uya
who 3-AUX-DIST:PAST 3-tell-LQ:SEQ 2SG DAT
'Who was it, (the one that) told this to you?' (CNV.02.104)

This question was the beginning of a challenge to the way speaker A was telling a tribal legend. Speaker A replied that his grandmother had told him the story many times, whereupon speaker D asked if he had ever heard it from any other source as well, such as a shaman (i.e. a more prestigious, reliable source). After a bit of verbal sparring, A asserted that an illustrious line of ancestors had passed the story down to his grandmother, named the particular ancestor who had taught his grandmother the story, and asserted that his source was unimpeachable. The conversation is continued from this point in 0a-h. Note the cleft used by speaker D in 0e to verify that the only person who had personally told A the legend was his grandmother, then the ni- construction used by speaker A in 0f to respond.

(31) a. D: ?pakino?
pake-no
before-NMLZR
'the one before (i.e. the ancestor)?' (CNV.02.122)

b. A: ya'kamañen kéj, aye,
y-a'kamañen kéj aye
3-tell:S;NMLZR AN:PROX yes
'(he) is the teller, yes,' (CNV.02.123)
The use of the ni- construction in 0f shows that it has uses beyond asking information questions and providing repetition-type answers. The question in 0e is in the form of a cleft, with the agent to the left of a copula and the verb in a nominalized form following the copula. The repetition-type response would be virtually the same sentence, except with the personal deixes altered due to change in speaker. However, instead of a cleft, the response takes the form of a ni- construction, focusing the agent, but not isolating it from the rest of the predicate.

As a nominalizer, ni- only occurs on transitive verbs, deriving a nominal which refers to the object of the verb. As seen above (section 3.1, example 0a-b) intransitive verbs cannot be nominalized with the ni- prefix. This is a natural restriction, since intransitive verbs have no direct object to serve as the referent of the derived nominal. However, a ni- construction as used in information questions does not create a nominal, nor does it particularly require the presence of a direct object -- the focus is on the agent NP. Thus, the natural restriction which holds for the nominalizing function of ni- does not hold for the verbal use of ni-.

Although I have found no examples in discourse data, in elicitation consultants also use the ni- prefix on intransitive verbs in agent information questions. The information questions posed below in 0a and 0a are created by putting the ni- prefix and the -P PPERF:INT suffix on intransitive verbs, which then take the preverbal agent NP ni- 'who'. The repetition-type answers in 0b and 0b simply replace the have the preverbal agent pronoun yi '1SG' followed by the same verb form.
(32) a. nēj népīi
    nēj ^ni-ēpī-i
    who NPA-AGT:FOC-comc-PPERF:INT
    'Who came?'

b. yu nē'yaj
   yu ^ni-ēpī-yaj
   1SG NPA-AGT:FOC-comc-PPERF1
   'I came' (i.e. 'I'm the one who came')

(33) a. nēj nichireemae?
    nēj ^ni-ch-ireema-e
    who NPA-AGT:FOC-DETR-feed-PPERF:INT
    'Who ate?'

b. yu nichireemayaj
   yu ^ni-ch-ireema-yaj
   1SG NPA-AGT:FOC-DETR-feed-PPERF1
   'I ate.' (i.e. 'I'm the one who ate')

In sum, the verbal use of ni- is clearly distinguishable from the nominalizing use in that: (i) it is the only verb in an active clause, frequently occurring even without an auxiliary; in contrast, a clause containing a derived nominal requires a predicate word (either a verb or copula). (ii) Focus is on the fronted agent in the verbal use of ni-, either as the information in question or as the referent in contrastive or topic focus; in contrast, the ni- nominalizer forms a relative clause focused on identifying the direct object of the verb. (iii) The verbal use of ni- may occur on intransitive verbs; in contrast, the derived nominal is restricted to transitive verb stems.

I hypothesize that the stages of (and motivations for) the historical development of the ni- construction are as follows: when the ni- prefix occurs on a verb, the agent NP (or pro-clitic) is required to precede that verb. In agent information questions, the structure of the ni- construction places the agent question pronoun in front of the verb, which is also the initial position in the clause. The answer to the information question then repeats the structure of the question, but replaces the preverbal question pronoun with a referential agent NP. Once the ni- construction becomes established as the structure used to ask transitive agent information questions, it is a small extension to use the same structure for intransitive agent questions. When the agent of a verb is in either contrastive focus or topic focus, it can appear clause initially by inflecting the verb with ni-.

Thus, the development of the ni- prefix from an object nominalizer to an agent focus construction is motivated by the syntax historically associated with the nominalizer, rather than by its inherent semantic value.

5 Cognates to the ni- nominalizer across Cariban languages

I review the properties of the ni- nominalizer in Panare before identifying cognates in sister Cariban languages: phonologically, it is an alveolar nasal consonant plus a high central unrounded oral vowel. It may take the allomorph n- (i.e. the nasal without the vowel) when preceding a vowel-initial stem. Morphologically, it occurs as a prefix on a transitive verb stem which is inflected with one of four verbal suffixes, deriving a nominal which refers to the PATIENT of the action denoted by the verb. Syntactically, the derived nominal is obligatorily possessed by the AGENT of the action denoted by the verb, as shown by either personal prefixes or by the preceding full NP. The complex NP formed by the derived nominal and its possessor may take additional nominal morphology in the form of postpositions, the non-referential suffix -pe 'AD', and/or pronominal particles. When the derived nominal occurs as the predicate noun in a predicate nominal construction, it has evolved into a verbal construction such that the ni- prefix is now an inflectional morpheme in the main verb and the copula is now an auxiliary. Functionally, the ni- nominalizing prefix serves to form a direct object relative clause, and the new ni-
verbal inflection is used both to ask and respond to information questions seeking the identity of an AGENT. The new verbal use of ni- may also have other functions, but they have not been identified as yet.

Using these phonological, morphological, syntactic, and functional properties as a heuristic, cognates to the ni- prefix of Panare have been easy to find in every Cariban language I have examined so far. The nasal phoneme, the basic morpho-syntax of the construction, and the relative clause function are the same in all the languages. Other functions associated with the construction vary, as do the suffixes which can co-occur with it. One factor which influences the functional differences is that Cariban languages vary in the degree to which a historically nominalized/subordinate verb form (a cognate set in all Cariban languages) is allowed to function as the sole predicate element in main clause syntax.

In Apalai (Koehn & Koehn 1986), Carib of Surinam (Hoff 1968), and Hixkaryana (Derbyshire 1985) main clauses are limited to 'finite' verbs (NOT a cognate set in all Carib languages), and constructions such as the ni- nominalizer are restricted to nominalized/subordinate clauses. In Panare, only three verb forms remain which are cognate to the 'finite' verbs of Hixkaryana, Apalai, and Carib of Surinam; other main clause verb forms are derived from the historically 'nominalized/subordinate' verb forms. In Macuxi and Kuikuaro, cognates to the 'finite' verb forms of other Cariban languages are completely lost; the only verb forms attested belong to the set of historically nominalized/subordinate verb forms. Nevertheless, in both Macuxi and Kuikuaro, the ni- nominalizer still functions to form an object relative clause, deriving a nominal which functions as a noun in main clause syntax. In Kuikuaro, the ni- nominalizer has also extended into main clause syntax marking 'interactive mood'.

The various stages of this development across Cariban languages are in need of further study. In a preliminary study (Gildea 1990) I characterize the direction of change as a move from an essentially nominative-accusative tense-based system of verbal morphology toward an ergative-absolutive aspect-based system, where the aspect suffixes are derived from what was historically nominalizer/subordinate morphology. The ni- nominalizer is an anomaly in the set of nominalizer/subordinate morphology in that the genitive prefixes which appear on the nominalized verb index the agent of transitive rather than the absolutive. At this point, I turn to a more in-depth look at the cross-Cariban data.

3.1 Carib of Surinam

Hoff 1968 describes a nasal prefix in Carib of Surinam which he labels the 'ni- category':

1) "This [ni-] category is only found with transitive verbs"
2) "...members of the ni- category are only found when directly connected syntactically with a word or word group preceding it (3.1.1). The difference is, however, that this word, or word group, does not refer to who or what undergoes the action, but to who or what performs it [i.e. it is preceded by the AGENT NP rather than the PATIENT NP — SG]. The ni- formation itself can refer both to the action and to the person or thing undergoing it." (p. #)

This 'ni- category' in Carib of Surinam is clearly cognate to the ni- nominalizer of Panare: it is a nasal prefix followed by a high, unrounded oral vowel; it has an allomorph n- which occurs preceding vowel initial verbs; it must be preceded by an NP referring to the AGENT of the action denoted by the verb; and it derives a noun which refers to -- along with the action -- the PATIENT of the action denoted by the verb. In 0b and c, the verb eita 'hear' bears the ni- prefix. The AGENT's of the action, 'makó 'children' and paya 'grandchildren' (bolded) precede the derived nominal. Each derived nominal bears the me 'PURPOSE' postposition (cognate to Panare -pe). These examples do not parallel the Panare examples functionally in that they appear to be action nominalizations rather than object nominalizations (i.e. it seems to stretch semantics too far to translate them into restrictive object relative clauses).
(34) Preceding nominal possessor in place of prefix:

a. cero waara irombo sikaasa
cero waara iiro-mbo s -kaapi-sa
this like this-former 1A-make -NDUR
'and now I tell them this way (as I did).' (8.37.5)

b. i'makó (n)etari me
*Ø-i'ma -ko n -eta-ri me
1-child-PL O.NMLZR-hear-POSS PURPOSE
'For my children to hear,' (8.38.1)
(In order to be what my children hear) (?)

c. paavá (n)etari me
Ø-paari -ya n -eta-ri me
1-grandchild-PL O.NMLZR-hear-POSS PURPOSE
'for my grandchildren to hear,' (8.38.2)
(In order to be what my grandchildren hear) (?)

d. koropo paxpopo ukuxtóome iiwaine
koropo Ø-paxpopo ukuti-topo -me i-wa-ne
tomorrow 1-passed.away know -INST/LOC.NMLZR-PURPOSE 3-DAT-PL
'that it may be known to them tomorrow when I am no longer here.' (8.38.3)

After examining all examples of the ni- prefix which appear in Hoff's extensive grammar and appended texts (a task made possible only by the excellent glossary/index of all Carib words which appear in the grammar), a further characterization of the 'ni- category' is possible. A restricted sub-group of verbal suffixes co-occur with the ni- prefix, all belonging to the set of nominalizing/subordinating morphology:

-Ø.  
-Ø  'POSS'
-xpo  'PERF'
-mbo  'former'
-xto  'NEG DESID'
xpo-to 'PERF-when'

CHECK p. # WHERE HOFF STATES THE POSSIBLE COMBINATIONS -- IS LIST EXHAUSTIVE?

None of the temporal/modal (i.e. finite verbal) suffixes appears in the list of those which co-occur with ni-, and neither does any other nominalizer (e.g. -no 'SUBJ.NMLZR', -no 'GEN.NMLZR', etc.). These facts parallel those of Panare in two ways: first, only a restricted set of suffixes is documented as co-occurring with the ni- nominalizer, and second, the suffix which most frequently co-occurs with the ni- nominalizer in Panare, -jpe 'PERF:INF', is cognate to Carib -xpo 'PERF', which is most frequently observed co-occurring with the ni- prefix in Carib. The parallel does not hold entirely in that none of the suffixes which co-occur with the Carib ni- prefix is a member of the finite set of verbal suffixes (cf. Panare -yai 'PAST', -j 'PPERP:INTER').
A second parallel to Panare is also observed in texts, although Hoff does not describe it in the grammar: the AGENT need not be expressed as a full NP, but may simply be indexed with a genitive prefix on the derived nominal. In 0b the verb *imo 'break' bears the prefix ni- 'O.NMLZR' and the suffix -xpo 'PERF'. When there is neither a preceding NP nor an overt personal prefix, the zero prefix indicates 1SG possessor. Thus, the ni- construction functions as a restrictive object relative clause: Ø-ni'móópo 'the one that I broke' (lit. 'the one of my breaking').

(35) First person possessor prefix Ø-:

a. "ataamurú enuru meneeya
t-aantuúsí -ří oonu-ří m-eene-ya -
2-grandfather-POSS eye -POSS 2-see -NDUR-QUES
"Have you seen your grandfather's eye,' (6.324.1)

b. Ø-ni'móópo ro xkuru mooro
Ø-n -imo -xpo ro xkuru mooro
1-O.NMLZR-break-PERF indeed beforehand that

ataamur(u) enuru"
a-taantuúsí -ří oonu-ří
2-grandfather-POSS eye -POSS

'your grandfather's eye that was broken by me??' (6.324.2)
(lit. 'my broken (one) your grandfather's eye?)

In 0b the verb *aro 'take' bears the ni- prefix and the -xpo suffix, but this time the personal possessive prefix a- '2' appears. The entire construction again functions as a restrictive object relative clause anaaróópo 'who you took' (lit. 'the one of your taking').

(36) Second person possessor prefix a-:

a. "(e)neckó" kifáno moxko piýei.
egene-ko kifá-wiika:no moxko piýei
3 -say -NDUR.3 3.ANIM shaman
"Look," the shaman said,' (6.322.1)

b. "moosé anaaróópo(o) oomiyááko pooko kooro,
moose a-n -aaro-xpo oomiyako pooko kooro
this.ANIM 2-O.NMLZR-take-PERF young.woman with please
"'having anything to do with this girl who was carried off
by you' (6.322.2)
(lit. 'with this your carried off (one) girl...')
c. erom(e) erom(e) erom(e) erom(e) ayaixkéeko
  erome erome erome erome ay-wei -kept-ko
  now now now now 2-become-CESS-IMP
  'at this, this, this, this moment you must stop.'
  (6.322.3)

In 0b the verb paato 'cross' bears the ni- prefix, the -ri POSS' suffix, and the i- '3' personal possessive prefix. In addition, the derived nominal bears the plural suffix -ko 'PL', referring to the possessor (cf. Hoff 1968, p. 248 for discussion of combining possession and plural morphology). Again, the ni-construction functions as a restrictive object relative clause, iniipáatoriiko 'the one that they crossed' (lit. 'the one of their crossing').

(37)  Third-person possessor prefix i-:

a. yąsíipe waati moor(o) ixporíiri :ne ma,
  yąsikúrře waati mooro ixporíiri :ne ma
  depth -ADJ is not that creek really 3.COP
  'It was not deep,' (7.87)

b. iniipáatoriiko
  i-n -paato-ri -ko
  3-O.NMLZR-cross-POSE-PL
  'the creek that they crossed.' (7.87.1)
  (lit. 'The creek was not deep, their crossed one. ')

It is clear that this ni-category in Carib of Surinam corresponds almost exactly to the ni-nominalizer in Panare--they are identical in form and morphosyntax, and they are both used to form restrictive relative clauses on the object of the verb bearing the ni-prefix. However, in Panare the ni-nominalizer may appear as the sole verb in apparently indicative main clauses, while in Carib of Surinam the ni-category appears only in subordinate constructions.

3.2 Apalai

Koehn and Koehn (1987 p. 91) describe a combination of nominalizing morphology as follows: '-ny...-ry [is] Object resulting from an action. This occurs with transitive stems only. The -ny-is preceded by possessor person markers.' They then offer 0 as an example. The stem mero 'write' is sandwiched between a ny- 'NOMLZR' prefix and a -ry 'NOMLZR' suffix. The agent is expressed as the first person genitive prefix y- preceding the derived nominal.

(38)  y-ny -mero -ry
  1-NOMLZR-write-NOMLZR
  'the thing I am writing' (K&K's 309, p. 91)

Koehn & Koehn (p. 92) discuss a second suffix, -hypyyry 'NOMLZR+PAST', which also co-occurs with the ny-prefix, deriving an 'Object resulting from a past action'. This suffix breaks down etymologically into two suffixes, -hpy 'PAST' + -ry 'NOMLZR'. Apalai -hpy is cognate to Panare -jpe 'Perfect:Inferential' and Carib of Surinam -xpe 'PERF', neither Panare nor Carib of Surinam add an additional nominalizer/possessive suffix to a nominal derived with the ni-object nominalizer. In 0 -hypyyry co-occurs with ny-on the verb stem mero 'write' and the resulting nominal is possessed by the second person genitive prefix o-.
(39) o-ny  -mero -hpyry
2-NOMLZR-write-NOMLZR+PAST
'the thing you have written' (K&K's 310, p. 92)

Although Koehn & Koehn do not give any full sentence examples in the relevant section of their grammar sketch, there is one clear example elsewhere in which a -ny- prefix is mis-glossed as third-person agreement. That example is reproduced in 0, with the original gloss by Koehn and Koehn.

(40) ku -akuoh -ko tam, t -yka-se
2S1O-take across-IMP grandfather NF-say-CMPL

mokyro, kuto n-akuoty -hpyry
that one frog 3-take across-NOMLZR+PAST

"Take me across the water, Grandfather," said the one whom the frog had taken across."
(K&K's 217, p. 75)

This must actually be the -ny- nominalizer, since the suffix -hpyry does not take agreement prefixes (K&K p. 91), and even if it did, ni- '3' is only prefixed to finite verb forms. That this is, in fact, the -ny- nominalizer is also clear from the syntax and function of the construction: the AGENT NP precedes/possesses the nominalized verb, creating an object relative clause.

In summary, the -ny- object nominalizer in Apalai is clearly cognate to the Panare and Carib of Surinam ni- and ni- object nominalizers: the phonetic form is nearly identical, the syntax associated with the prefix is identical, and the restricted set of suffixes which co-occurs with the prefix includes -hpyry, cognate to the most common suffix attested in both Panare (-jpê) and Carib of Surinam (-xpo).

3.3 Hixkaryana

Derbyshire (1985) devotes only one sentence to a construction -ni--ni- 'object resulting from action'. In this construction he states that 'the direct object... is the central part of the derivation, and the possessor prefixes in this (unique transitive) case mark the subject of the action.' The example he gives is reproduced below in 0.

(41) Manawasi hona Waraka 0-ni -nyake-ni -ri uhutwehe
Manaus to Waraka 3-O.NOMLZR-send -ACTION.NOMLZR-POSS 1-know-him
'I know the one whom Waraka sent to Manaus.' (D's 65b, p.49)
(lit. 'I know Waraka's whom Manaus (one)').

Although there are no further examples, in Appendix F 'Derivational morphology: noun' (pp. 232, 233) the following suffixes are listed as co-occurring with the -ni- 'object resulting from action' prefix:

- ni-ri  'PRESENT'
- hito-ri  'NEG'
- thi-ri  'PAST'
- hito-ri tho  'NEG PAST'

Hixkaryana is similar to Apalai in that the ni- object nominalizing prefix always co-occurs with the -ri suffix (Koehn & Koehn call it another nominalizer and Derbyshire calls it a possessive suffix, but the form is cognate and is clearly serving the same purpose in both languages).

In sum, Hixkaryana is the fourth Cariban language which has essentially the same prefix: phonetically an alveolar nasal followed by a high, central, unrounded vowel, morphologically a verbal prefix which derives a nominal referring to the object of the verb, syntactically the derived nominal possessed by the agent of the verb, and functionally an object relative clause.
3.4 Makushi

For Makushi, Nuesa Carson (1982 p. 126) lists ni- as the object relative pronoun in a restrictive relative clause. In restrictive clauses ni- 'whom, that' indicates that the object of the embedded clause is coreferential with the subject of the main clause. Non-restrictive clauses are unmarked for object.

With no further explanation, Carson offers two examples, reproduced below as 0 and 0. In 0 the main clause verb is wuthHH-pi 'went'. The main clause subject appears to be a complex NP containing both the noun pemónkón 'man' and the relative clause uneramápi 'whom I saw'. The ni- prefix is underlined in the original; I have bolded the entire relative clause to highlight the perfect correspondence to the ni- nominalizers of other Cariban languages. The main clause differs in 0, but the morpho-syntax of the relative clause is identical.

(42) pemónkón u -ni -eramá-pi wuthHH-pH wHt-tá
     man 1S-REL-see -PERF go -PERF home-DIR
     'The man whom I saw went home.' (NC p. 126)

(43) seni aponó i -ni -kúnekká-pi morí
     DEM seat 3S-REL-make -PERF good
     'This seat that he made is good.'

Although Carson describes the nasal prefix as an object relative pronoun, it is certainly identical in form and morphosyntax to the object nominalizers seen above. The perfective suffix -pi which co-occurs with the prefix in these examples is cognate with Panare -ipé 'PERF', Carib of Surinam -xpo 'PERF', and Apalai -hýy 'PAST'. The personal prefix refers to the AGENT where in all other constructions in Makushi it refers to either the absolutive or the possessor (verb agreement and possessive prefixes are homophonous in Makushi).

3.5 Kuikúro

Kuikúro and Makushi are unlike the first four Cariban languages discussed here in that they have no cognates to the finite verbal inflections; finite verbs in Makushi and Kuikúro are cognate to nominalized/subordinate verbs in Carib, Apalai, and Hixkuryana, and to the mixed main clause/subordinate verbs in Panare. Most historically nominalized verb forms occur as main clause verbs in Makushi and Kuikúro; the Kuikúro cognate to the ni- nominalizer is no exception. Franchetto (to appear) describes a nasal 'de-ergative' prefix:

...de-ergativization applies to inherently transitive verbs and results in the verb agreeing with the actor or agent of the event described by the verb. De-ergativization is formally marked by the verbal prefix n- or g- [g = ñ. SG]; the prefixed verb occurs immediately after the unmarked subject. The [de-ergative--SG] prefix can be considered a general object marker or an object agreement marker... the PATIENT associated with a de-ergativized verb does not appear in an oblique case, and retains all other syntactic properties of transitive PATIENTs.

Among the less important functions which Franchetto lists for the de-ergative prefix is that of forming object relative clauses. She gives one example, reproduced here as 0. The relative clause appears at the end of the main clause, with all the rest of the clause between it and the noun it modifies. The verb of the relative clause is ame 'take'. It bears the perfective nominalizer suffix -pára 'PERF', followed by the plural suffix -ko 'PL'. The g- 'DERG' prefix comes between the verb stem and the second person possessive prefix g- '2', which agrees with the agent. Franchetto points out that 0 "could be translated literally as 'you will bring your taken water.'"
(44) tugá i gi -nám -igo e-heke-ni a-g -ame -pára-ko
    water bring-PUNC-FUT 2-ERG -PL 2-DERG-take-PERF-PL
    'You will bring the water that you will take.

The morphosyntax is unmistakable: the nasal prefix corresponds to the ni-/ni-/ni- found in other Cariban languages; the suffix -pára is etymologically -pá 'PERF' + -râ 'POSS' cf. Apalai hypy-ry
'PAST+NOMLZR', Makushi -pi 'PAST', Panare -jípe 'PERF:INF', and Carib -xpo 'PERF'); the possessive prefix refers to the AGENT.

Franchetto describes how the Derg prefix is required in all pragmatically marked constructions in which the direct object is questioned, and also how it functions as a main clause 'interactive mood' marker. Theories of historical change will have to account for the extension of the relatively simple ni-object nominalizer into all of these functional areas.

4 Discussion

The object nominalizing prefix in Panare has many properties which make it unique in the language: it is a nominalizing prefix where all others are suffixes, it replaces the verb agreement prefixes, it is the only nominalized/subordinate construction in Panare which is possessed by the AGENT. Across Carib, a cognate prefix exists which is unique in each language because of exactly these properties. Franchetto 1989 speculates that the ge 'DERG' prefix arose from the Proto Cariban third person agreement prefix for finite verbs. D. Payne (pc) speculates that it may be derived from an indefinite pronoun. Either way, the form and function of the ni- prefix goes back at least to Proto Cariban and perhaps is even older.

The Panare ni- is not only unique among Panare affixes, but it is also unique among the other Cariban ni- object nominalizers: it may co-occur with two members of the set of finite verbal suffixes, -vaj 'PAST' and -j 'PPERF:INTER' and it may occur on intransitive verbs. In other Cariban languages, all suffixes which co-occur with ni- are taken from the set of historically nominalizing/subordinating suffixes and ni- only occurs on transitive stems.

NOTES

1. Research for this paper was conducted in Caicara de Orinoco, Estado Bolivar, Venezuela from October to December, 1988, and from January to March, 1990, under the auspices of the Universidad Católica de Táchira in Venezuela and the Linguistics Department of the University of Oregon. Support for this research came from NSF grant number BNS-8609304, the American Philosophical Society, and the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research. With gratitude I acknowledge the Panare language consultants who spent much time and energy teaching me: Pragedes Salas, Miguel Castillo, Victor Segunda, Rafael Moncada, Manuel Castro, and Rafael Argote. Also, I owe a tremendous general debt to Doris and Tom Payne for giving me the opportunity to work with them on Panare, for taking the time to talk through the many issues that come up in working on a real language, and on this paper I owe a specific debt to Doris for much fruitful discussion, much of which came in the seminar on Cariban and Tupi-Guarani languages which she taught in the Spring of 1989.

2. This description lack a great deal of richness, both in prefix variation for vowel initial possessed noun and in suffix variation for different lexical items. Since all verbs bearing the ni- prefix become consonant initial nouns of the same lexical class, such variation does not concern us here. See Payne, Payne, and Gildea 1990 chapters 3 and 4c for a fuller description of possession.

3. Note that unmarked NPs may be the predicate noun when the copula is nonverbal or inflected with a less than fully finite suffix, cf Gildea 1989a,c.
4. In addition to marking nouns which modify other nouns, it is possible that these suffixes also create predicate nominal relative clauses (i.e. 'the one who/which is big'), and perhaps they function in discourse to mark focused constituents. Although a full analysis of the semantic and pragmatic functions of these particles has not yet been done, for some further detail see Payne, Payne, and Gildea, 1990.

5. cf Payne, Payne, & Gildea 1990, chapter 4

6. I do not ascribe to theories of language which derive nominalizations from active main clauses by movement rules, etc. However, I label ni- an object nominalizer rather than a patient nominalizer. I do this for two reasons: first, the ni- prefix only forms nominalizations on patients which are objects of transitive verbs, but not on patients which are subjects of (unaccusative) intransitive verbs. Second, some theories of semantic case consider the syntactic subject of a verb like English 'see' to be a semantic patient. In Panare, like English, the experiencer/patient of 'see' is a syntactic subject. When the ni- prefix occurs on the verb 'see' in Panare, the resultant NP is possessed by the experiencer/patient and refers to the thing seen, what would be the syntactic direct object in a main clause. Hence, the label which most economically describes the function of the ni- prefix is one which identifies the referent of the derived nominal with the direct object of an active clause.

7. In this example and those which follow, the primary translation I give is that of an English finite relative clause. I do this because (i) the construction is consistently translated by language consultants into a Spanish finite relative clause, (ii) in these examples it always seems to function as a restrictive relative clause, and (iii) since English lacks a true object nominalizer, literal translations sound stilted and unnatural.

8. It was only with great reluctance that I finally separated out these three uses of nej (as well as a fourth, the animate information question pronoun) from each other into separate syntactic categories. They are transparently all derived from the same historical pronoun, and even now their similarity is far greater than the distinctions between them. However, the classes of constructions with which they occur are synchronically different, and the function of each one within its own construction is different enough that I felt compelled to treat each as a separate morpheme. cf Payne, Payne, & Gildea 1990 for some further discussion of this homophony, and cf Gildea 1990 linking the copular use of nej to a historical demonstrative pronoun.

9. The morphosyntax of main clause verbs which bear non-past-perfective suffixes such as -xe is not exactly the same as that of the main clause verbs described above. However, for the purposes of defining whether a preverbal NP is the direct object or not, the facts are virtually identical and this same syntactic test holds. The only differences are that the prefix which is replaced is an object agreement prefix rather than a subject agreement prefix, and the y- which occurs on vowel initial verbs can no longer be labeled an inverse, hence it now bears the relatively empty label 'Transitive (TRN)', as a marker of transitive verb stems. cf Payne, Payne and Gildea for extensive discussion.

10. This somewhat unnatural sentence was elicited only to test the syntax associated with these nominalizations. My consultant took a moment to inform me that neither he nor I were capable of creating anything animate before he produced this example.

11. Marie-Claude Matei-Müller (pc) suggests that the variation between the two reduced forms of ni'n 'INAN', -n and -m, is meaningful. She has not yet elaborated on what the difference is, and as I have no data which reflect on the question, I gloss them identically in this paper.
12. My language consultants were uncertain about a semantic distinction between finite relative clauses and nominalizations if the same verbal suffix -yaj 'PAST' appears in both. Miguel Castillo suggested that the nominalization was more in the past ('más pasado') and the finite relative clause was more recent ('ahorita'). Further study, probably of conversational discourse, is needed to distinguish the context in which one strategy would be preferred over the other.

13. Two more differences would arise with a slightly different combination of morphosyntactic operators: if the relativized direct object were inanimate, the relativizing suffix would no longer be homophonous with the nominal suffix (cf 0b), and if the verb were longer than one syllable, accent shift would mark that the AGENT NP was a full NP genitive rather than a preverbal subject.

14. T. Payne 1989 describes a verb suffix -ňepe which functions in narrative discourse to form a medial clause, usually indicating an action which immediately follows the main clause action, but which is carried out by a different subject than the main clause action. Payne treats -ňepe as a single suffix, an unanalyzable whole. While that may be the best synchronic analysis, the etymology of -ňepe is transparently from the combination of the subject nominalizer -ňe 'S.NMLZR' and the adverbializer -pe 'AD'. The use of -ňepe in 0 seems to be a rare synchronic combination of the two separate suffixes.


16. cf. Gildea 1989a-b, 1990 for two case studies and cross-linguistic comparison of this historical change in the Cariban language family.

17. The following examples are taken from Hoff's texts, 1SG (0b) and 2SG (0b) from The Abducted Girl, p. 324; 3SG (0b) from Chicken Father, p. 328; and preceding possessor NP (0b,c) from The Descent at Iraçoubo, p. 335.

18. The Apalai phoneme /y/ is a high, central, unrounded vowel, corresponding to Panare /i/. The Apalai suffix -ry is cognate to the Carib of Surinam -r̥ and Hixkaryana -r̥. This suffix marks the possessed form of most nouns and is also the most common nominalizer, creating nominalizations which are then possessed by the subject of an intransitive verb and the object of a transitive verb (i.e. the absolutive). In Panare the -r̥ possessive and nominalizing suffix has been lost. The suffix which has taken over both the syntactic slot and the function of Proto Cariban -r̥ in Panare is -n (seen earlier as the verbal suffix 'COMP').
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The development of a subject focus construction from an object nominalizer in Panare (Cariban)

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(1) Panare Main Clauses: the prototype

a. Verbal prefixes agree with the absolutive for person

\[\emptyset/\emptyset\bar\]  1
a-  2
y-  3

witēn yu  'I'm gonna go'
\[\emptyset\text{-u-tē-n} yu\]
1-INTR-go-T/A

otēn amēn  'You're gonna go.'
a-u-tē-n
2-

yutēn kēj kēn  'S/He is gonna go.'
y-u-tē-n
3-

pētyumañe kēy̱u kēn  'S/He is gonna hit me'
\[\emptyset\text{-pētyūma-ñe}\]
1-hit-T/A

apētyumañe kēj kēn amān  'S/He is gonna hit you'
a-pētyūma-ñe
2-hit-T/A

ypētyumañe kēj kēn apoj  'S/He is gonna hit the man.'
y-pētyūma-ñe
3-hit-T/A

b. Absolutive prefixes alternate with a preverbal NP

kēn witējpe  'S/He left / has gone.'
kēn u-tē-jpē
3.ANIM.INV INTR-go-T/A

amēn pētyumañe kēj kēn  'S/He is gonna hit you.'
amēn ^-pētyūma-ñe
2SG PO-hit-T/A

arakon pētyumañe yu  'I'm gonna hit the monkey.'
arakon ^-pētyūma-ñe
monkey PO-hit-T/A
c. The verb may be followed by an optional auxiliary which agrees with nominative for animacy and person

\[ \text{yiköšćę mān pārae} \quad 'The knife is gonna cut it.' \]
\[ \text{3.INAN} \]

\[ \text{ayiköšćę nāj aŋoj} \quad 'The man cut you.' \]
\[ \text{3.ANIM} \]

\[ \text{yuçaša mēn pārae} \quad 'The knife has fallen.' \]
\[ \text{3.INAN} \]

\[ \text{yuwaša κēj aŋoj} \quad 'The man dives in.' \]
\[ \text{3.ANIM} \]

d. Word Order:

Intransitive: AGR-V (AUX) S (1a) vastly preferred

\[ S-V \quad (1b) \quad \text{almost unattested} \]

Transitive: AGR-V (AUX) A O (1a) preferred

\[ O-V (AUX) A \quad (1b) \quad \text{easily elicited} \]

(2) The Subject focus clause:

a. The absolutive verbal prefixes described above now agree with the transitive agent for person

\[ \text{anipetypūmaŋpē} \quad 'you hit (it)' \]
\[ a-ni-petypūmaŋpē \]
\[ 2-SUBJ.FOC-hit-T/A \]

\[ yinipetypūmaŋpē \quad 'S/He hit (it)' \]
\[ 3- \]

b. The prefix may be replaced by the agent/subject noun phrase

\[ \text{kēn nūmpē peraka} \quad 'S/He made the house.' \]
\[ \text{kēn n-imu-ŋpē peraka} \]
\[ \text{3.ANIM.INV SUBJ.FOC-make-PERF house} \]

\[ nēj nēpū? \quad 'Who came?' \]
\[ nēj n-ēpi-i \]
\[ \text{who SUBJ.FOC-come-T/A} \]

\[ yu nēyaj \quad 'I came' \]
\[ yu n-ēpi-ŋaj \]
\[ \text{ISG SUBJ.FOC-come-T/A} \]

c. Optional auxiliary agrees with the patient

\[ \text{yunamāŋpē mēn cape} \quad 'I made coffee.' \]
\[ \text{3.INAN} \]

d. Word Order
Intransitive: S-V (2b) Extremely rare
*AGR-V (AUX) (S) Not attested

Transitive: AGR-V (AUX) (P) (2a) Rare
A-V (AUX) (P) (2b/c) Fairly common

(3) Problems with possible synchronic analyses of the Subject Focus clause:

a. Passive: (1) Agent is demoted to Direct Object?
   (2) Agent is obligatory
   (3) Patient is optional
   (4) Focus is on agent -- opposite function from passive

b. Cleft: (1) Clefts isolate one NP from a sentence, this does not
   (2) True clefts are attested in Panare:

   ¿anoj pin ka y'akamañe, amén wuya?
   a-noj pi-mën ka y'aka-mañe amén uya
   2-grandmother dead-3.INAN QP 3-tell-S:NMILZR 2SG DAT
   'Your (dead) grandmother is the one that told it, to you?'(CNV.02.125)
   (lit. 'It's teller, to you, was your dead grandmother?')

c. Inverse: (1) Not obligatory with 1st & 2nd person -- not related to
   person at all.

(4) Interlude: A case study of a Nominalization developing into a verb: -ing

a. Early uses of -ing/-unge: only as an action nominalizer
   (Visser 1966)

   'false scheauwunget and dredfule offerunges' (1225)
   'a great coming of angels' (1350)

b. In the midst of the change to a main clause verb (Visser 1966)

   'He was in the forest an hununghe' (1470)
   '...whyle the turnement was adoynghe' (1470)
   'He is building of a house' (1414)
   'I am doynghe of my nedynges' (1475)

c. Modern English: either noun or verb, sometimes both

   'At the end, there was a final balancing of accounts.'
   'I was balancing accounts yesterday when the IRS called.
   'Her balancing my account helped me get through the audit.'

Main point: since the predicate nominal construction allows a "slot" for a predicate noun, a nominalized verb can be placed in that slot. The nominalized verb is thus in position to be reanalyzed as the main verb of a sentence, with the copula ('to be') reanalyzed as the less central auxiliary.

(5) Modern Panare clauses: subject and object nominalizations become verbs

a. Subject and Object nominalizers in English:
I am **his employer** (i.e. I employ him -- GEN = PAT)

I am **his employee.** (i.e. He employs me -- GEN = AGT)

b. The Panare subject nominalizer `-ë` becomes a verb

(i) `-ë` as subject nominalizer

yutëñ oj chamañë
y-u-të-n oj y-ama-ñë
3-INTR-go-T/A beer GEN-make **SUBJ,NMLZR**
`The beer makers left.`

(ii) `-ë` as main clause verbal aspect

yajkopañë tukonken yanë úya
y-a-jkopañë tunko-inken y-anë uya
3-ask-T/A bird-child 3-mother **DAT**
`The bird children ask their mother` (MKW.61.11)

Salient Points:
- Genitive prefix becomes object (absolutive)
- Copula (to be) becomes auxiliary (agreeing with subject)
- Subject of predicate nominal becomes subject of new main clause
- Action nominalizer followed this same path

c. The Panare object nominalizer `nə` becomes a verb

(i) As object nominalizer

wëtëñ yu pata yaka
Ø-u-të-n yu pata yaka
1-INTR-go-T/A 1SG place to

amëñ nyëmeyan yaka
amëñ `n-yëme-yañ-mëñ yaka
2SG NPG **OBJ,NMLZR** clean-PAST-INAN to

'I'm gonna go to the house that you cleaned.'
(lit. 'I'm gonna go to the house, your cleanse'

(ii) As main clause verb:

"nëj nêtuipë mën anë" kañe
nëj `n-ni-utu-ipë mën anë Ø-ka-ñë
who NPA-AGT:FOC-give-PERF:INF 3.INAN mother TRN-say-T/A

"Who gave (you) (that), Mother?" they say.' (MKW.61.12)

"eñëpëpë nêtuipë mën Pekoro pe tiche"
eñëpëpë `n-ni-utu-ipë mën Pekoro pe t-iche
Panare NPA-AGT:FOC-give-PERF:INF 3.INAN Pedro AD 3-name
"A Panare named Pedro gave (it)," (MKW.61.13)

Salient Points:

- Genitive prefixes become AGENT agreement
- Copula agrees with PATIENT of verb for person/animacy

(6) Word order as the motivation for evolution.

a. First word in a sentence is the cross-linguistic focus position

   When the agent is the referent in focus, speakers will use available mechanisms to utter the agent NP first.

b. The predicate nominal clause places the predicate noun first

   [Pred NP] [COP] [Subject NP]

   katya men mu  'It is a/the loincloth'
   loincloth 3.INAN 3.INAN.DIST.VIS

c. The predicate nominal clause is the frame for grammaticalization, where possessed nominalized verbs occur in the predicate noun slot and are reanalyzed as main clause verbs.

d. The object nominalizing prefix n- derives a noun which refers to the PATIENT of the original verb, and which is preceded (possessed) by the AGENT of the original verb.

c. When the derived nominal and its agent possessor occur in the predicate noun slot, the agent becomes the first word in the sentence.

   [[AGT] OBJECT:NMLZTN] [COP] [Subject NP]

   AGT  Verb  (AUX)
   nêj nAnkén  (mën) katya?
   nêj ~n-inkè-n mën katya
   who NPA-AGT:FOC-puton-T/A 3.INAN loincloth

   'Who's gonna put on the loincloth (on the boy to be initiated)?'

f. After the construction is completely grammaticalized for questions (and answers), it extends from transitive to intransitive verbs.