1. INTRODUCTION

Amharic nonverbal predication gives rise to (at least) three somewhat related puzzles:

The present tense copula agrees with the subject in a nonstandard way:

(1) ɨne tamari n-ään
     I student is-3ms-1so
     *I am a student.

Explanation: the present tense copula is a backward raising verb (see Potsdam and Polinsky in press) that doesn't trigger the movement of the subject to [Spec, TP]

The case on the non-subject can be nominative or accusative, with a clear semantic effect:

(2) a. lijo-cc-u tamari-wočč-u/ Ethiopiaw-yan-u n-φ-aččāw
    child-PL-DEF student-PL-DEF/ Ethiopian-PL-DEF is-3msS-3PL
    The children are the students/the Ethiopians.

b. lijo-cc-u tamari-wočč-u-n/ Ethiopiaw-yan-u-n n-φ-aččāw
    child-PL-DEF student-PL-DEF-ACC/ Ethiopian-PL-DEF-ACC is-3msS-3pl
    The children are just like the students/the Ethiopians.

The "near-identity" reading suggests the presence of an additional piece of structure, which is responsible for the accusative case assignment, except...

SL predicates require accusative case marking and a nonstandard pattern of φ-agreement:

(3) a. ljo-očč-u rak’ut-aččāw-n mät’t-u
    children-DEF naked-3plGen-ACC come.PERF-3plS
    The children came naked.

b. *ljo-očč-u rak’ut-aččāw mät’t-u
    children-DEF naked-3plGen come.PERF-3plS

c. *ljo-očč-u rak’ut mät’t-u
    children-DEF naked come.PERF-3plS

Generalization: cross-linguistically, stage-level predication & comparison are often encoded by the same means -- but how is this done?

2. JACALTEC NEAR-IDENTITY

Pustet 2005:66-67: Jacaltec is supposed to be the only language where adjectival predicates can appear with a copula, while nominal predicates cannot:

(4) a. c’ul ix Craig 1977:23
    good CLF.she
    She is good/a good person.

b. c’ul ye ix Craig 1977:23
    good is CLF.she
    She is fine/in good health.

Acknowledgements: This research was generously supported by a grant from the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research – NWO (project number 276-70-013).
Craig 1977:24: unlike most adjectives, which can never combine with a copula, the adjectives expressing emotional and effective states, such as *tzalalal* 'happy', "require the copula *-eyi*":

(5) a. 

\[ \text{tzalalal/busc'ulal/akan c'ulal } *(\text{ye}) \text{ naj Craig 1977:24-25} \]

\[ \text{happy/sad/peace is CLF.he} \]

\[ \text{He is happy/sad/at peace.} \]

b. 

\[ \text{how/sac'an/isa } *(\text{ye}) \text{ naj Craig 1977:24-25} \]

\[ \text{violent/diligent/lazy is CLF.he} \]

\[ \text{He is violent/diligent/lazy.} \]

When occurring with nominals, *-eyi* "denotes the appearance or resemblance of one thing to something else" (Craig 1977:25):

(6) a. 

\[ \text{an ̈ ye te' cape Craig 1977:25} \]

\[ \text{medicine is CLF.the coffee} \]

\[ \text{The coffee tastes like medicine.} \]

Pustet 2005:67: "the semantic essence of *-eyi* could be captured in terms of the notion of non-innateness", or in other words, it is not really a copula.

Craig 1977 translates this copula as "to be in a certain way or condition". Interestingly, unlike the existential copula *ay*, which is sentence-initial and takes an absolutive subject marker, the manner copula *-eyi* is a second-position verb and takes an ergative subject marker. Neither of them is inflected for aspect.

### 3. RUSSIAN "INSTRUMENTAL OF COMPARISON"

Peškovskij 1956, see also Madariaga 2008: the instrumental case on Russian predicates arose historically from a secondary predicate denoting comparison or way of action (see Madariaga 2008 for the references and discussion of the same development in Old Church Slavonic):

(7) a. 

\[ \text{Otčego moj dux vampirom satanu poët i slavit? Peškovskij 1956} \]

\[ \text{why my spirit vampire-INST Satan-ACC sings and celebrates} \]

\[ \text{Why does my soul sing in honour of Satan like a vampire?} \]

b. 

\[ \text{Kрьть tecaaše rekami. OCS, Madariaga 2008} \]

\[ \text{blood-NOM.SG poured river-INST.PL} \]

\[ \text{Blood was pouring like a river.} \]

This use was first extended towards designative contexts (indication of professional quality):

note: "extended" is intended to entail that the comparative use didn't disappear; it very much still exists

(8) V\[ \text{vy že kogo xošcete igumenom[ь] imeti sobe…} \]

\[ \text{you PRT whom-ACC want abbot-INST have-INF self-DAT} \]

\[ \text{[he] whom you want to have as an abbot…} \]

\[ \ldots \text{eventually, with the copula (then becoming the regular predicative case):} \]

(9) Ta dva byla poslbьь u rize. 

\[ \text{DEM-NOM-DUAL two-NOM.DUAL be-PAST-DUAL ambassador-INST.SG in Riga-LOC} \]

\[ \text{Both were in Riga as ambassadors/in an embassy.} \]

Madariaga 2008 argues that this instrumental case is assigned by a null preposition:

(10) Juan y Luis estuvieron trabajando de médico-%(s) en Alemania. Madariaga 2008

\[ \text{Juan and Luis were-3.PL working of doctor-PL in Germany} \]

\[ \text{Juan and Luis worked as doctors in Germany.} \]

In this context, how incidental is it that comparative NPs in these languages are also bare?

(11) a. Le téléphone portable est apparu comme objet de luxe. French
    the phone mobile is appeared as object of luxury
    
    Cell phones appeared as objects of luxury.

b. Juan está trabajando como médico en un hospital. Spanish
    
    Juan be-PRES-3SG working as doctor in a hospital
    
    Juan is working as a doctor in a hospital.

c. Deze kamer is in gebruik als opslagplaats. Dutch, de Swart, Winter and Zwarts 2007
    
    this room is in use as storage room
    
    This room is in use as a storage room.

Frequent claim (Emonds 1985, Aarts 1992, Bowers 1993, Eide and Åfarli 1999, den Dikken 2006): in small clause complements like (12) as is the lexicalization of Pred°:

(12) a. She regards this hypothesis as silly. English
    
    They take him for a fool.
    
    Marelj and Matushansky 2010: no, it most probably isn't (see also Starke 1995)

4. **DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

The fact that languages often use the same morphosyntactic means for adverbs and (a subset of secondary) predicates is unlikely to be incidental (see Himmelmann and Schultze-Berndt 2005, and in particular van der Auwera and Malchukov 2005):

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 13.18** The long and instrumental forms of the Russian adjective

(13) **Russian**: AP/NP predicates usually bear instrumental, which also derives some adverbs

a. Yana sčitaet Marka svoim vragom. ECM
    
    Yana-NOM considers Mark-ACC self’s enemy-INST
    
    Yana considers Mark her enemy.

b. Alik streloj pomčalsja domoj. half-transparent adverbial
    
    Alik-NOM arrow-INSTR PRF-rush-PAST-MSG homewards
    
    Alik rushed home like an arrow (very fast).
c. Tolik kubar'om skatilsja po lestnice.  idiomatic adverbial
   Tolik-NOM peg top-INST PRF-roll-PAST-MSG over stairs
   Tolik fell down the stairs head over heels.

d. Edik peškom došël do stancii.  adverbial
   Edik-NOM on foot. INST PRF-walk-PAST-MSG till station
   Edik reached the station on foot.

So for Russian instrumental we really need a slightly more detailed map:

---

Welsh is like Russian (with some caveats regarding predicate fronting):

(14) **Welsh**: the same marker introduces predicates and converts adjectives to adverbs

a. Rydw i'n ystyried [Siôn yn niwsans].  ECM, Zaring 1996
   am I+PROG consider John PRED nuisance
   I consider John a nuisance.

b. Dw i'n licio cwrw yn oer.  depictive
   be-1SG I+PROG like beer PRED cold
   I like beer cold.

c. Oedden nhw 'n ffyrnig yn achlysurol.  adverb, Jones 2009
   be.IMPF.3PL they PRED fierce in occasional
   They were occasionally fierce.

And Hungarian isn't:

(15) **Hungarian**, de Groot 2008: the same case is used for adverbs and depictives

a. Tamás szép-en énekel.  manner
   Tom beautiful-SPE sings
   Tom sings beautifully.

b. Mari nyers-en ette meg a hal-at.  depictive
   Mary raw-SPE ate ASP the fish-ACC
   Mary ate the fish raw.

c. Péter mérges-en ment el.  ambiguous or vague (like German or Dutch)
   Peter angry-SPE went away
   Peter left angrily.

While the semantic connection is more or less clear, the syntactic one isn't.

Jacaltec and Amharic provide evidence for a finer-grained differentiation, linking stage-level predication with comparison. And Jacaltec uses a **verbal copula** for this.
A formal link between depictives and adverbs requires a way of representing the semantics of an adverb as a predication on the subject (for manner adverbials, at least).

A potential syntactic link comes from the derivation of a verb in DM (Hale and Keyser 2002, Arad 2003, Doron 2003, Ramchand 2008; cf. Borer 2005), where the verbalizing head v may modify the final state provided by the complement of a change-of-state verb (16a) or impose a manner on an activity event (16b):

(16) a. voice
   v
   \open \hspace{2cm} \hspace{2cm} b. voice
   v \hspace{2cm} \hammer
   DP/SC   DP/SC

In a sense, (16a) the root acts as a depictive and in (16b), as an adverb.

A potential semantic connection may come from the agentive be (Lakoff 1970, Partee 1977, Dowty 1979, Rothstein 2000):

(17) a. Roger is being rude.
   b. Roger rudely refused to answer.

Does the agentive be function as a secondary predicate?

Finally, since some depictives might be derived from extraposed reduced relative clauses (see Pereltsvaig 2007, Rozhnova in progress) and others from absolute constructions, agreement in case vs. case-marking might follow.

To be continued...

5. Bibliography

Rozhnova, Masha. in progress. Small clause and relative clause analysis of depictives in Russian. Ms., Utrecht University.