Monoclausal Copular Clauses: Their Structure and Case Assignment

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Copular clause, the 'Trojan Horse' for linguistic theory, has always proved troublesome whenever an attempt to describe its structure was made. The issue of structure is not only important in its own right but has consequences for the theory of structural Case assignment as well. The primary goal of this paper is to adopt a novel approach to account for the structure and case assignment in copular clauses. The secondary goal of this paper is to present the facts of copular constructions in Pashto; as, copular constructions in Pashto have so far remained unexplored from any perspective, be it traditional or generative. The new approach consists in proposing, a) a new divide of the copular clauses along the predicate nominal and predicate modifier dichotomy, b) new points of entry into the derivation for both the subject nominals and predicate nominals/ modifiers, c) a different small v unable to assign accusative case or host an agent nominal in its specifier, and d) a different case assignment/ checking mechanism for the predicate nominal. This mechanism is not only able to explain the structure and case assignment facts of Pashto monoclausal copular clauses but can also account for the monoclausal copular clauses of other languages.

Keywords: *monoclausal copular clause, argument structure, case assignment, predicate nominal, movement*

1 Introduction

This paper is about the structure and case assignment/ case checking in monoclausal copular clauses, as exemplified in (1-5):[1]

(1) *Peter* *doctor* *day.* Predicational
Peter.NOM doctor.NOM be.PRS.3SGM
'Peter is a/the doctor.'

(2) *Doctor* *Peter* *day.* Specificational
doctor.NOM Peter.NOM be.PRS.3SGM
'The doctor is Peter.'

(3) *Manɻa* *sra* *da.* Predicational
apple.NOM red be.PRS.3SGF
'An/the apple is red.'

(4) *Sra* *Manɻa* *da.* Specificational
red apple.NOM be.PRS.3SGF

[1] This study is intentionally limited to monoclausal copular constructions. Multiclausal copular constructions making use of one copula and one or more other verbs (e.g. What Harvey did next was wash himself thoroughly. (Mikkelsen 2011: 1805)) are avoided, as the author tentatively believes that in the presence of other verbs, the copula is unable to show its true character: an interesting topic that needs an extensive discussion in its own right but beyond the limits of this paper.

‘Red is the apple.’

(5) *Hagha saɻay da Mary roor day.* Identificational
that man.NOM GEN Mary brother.NOM be.PRS.3SGM
‘That man is Mary’s brother.’

The specific question is what are the grammatical mechanisms that can best describe the structure and case assignment/ checking[2] in Pashto monoclausal copular clauses? The more general question is, what implications does this have for the structure of copular constructions and case assignment cross-linguistically?

Copular clauses, because of their apparent noncompliance with the tenants of the linguistic theory, have often been referred to as the “Trojan horse” (Moro 1997: 255) for linguistic theory. Many efforts to explain their nature have been made, but nothing conclusive and all-embracing has come out yet. Typologically speaking, monoclausal copular clauses are divisible into three groups crosslinguistically: predicational (no. 1 and 3), specificational (no. 2 and 4), and identificational (no. 5). However, this study adds another dimension to this division (at least to predicational and specificational copular clauses): both predicational and specificational copular clauses themselves can be divided into two main groups: copular clauses which have a predicate nominal and copular clauses which have a predicate modifier but no predicate nominal.

Unlike the previous accounts, this study, in part influenced by the similarities between copular constructions and unaccusatives in Pashto, proposes, (a) a new starting point for both subject nominals and predicate nominals, (b) a different small v unable to assign/check case and host an agent specifier, (c) a different case assignment/ checking mechanism for the predicate nominal. For the assignment of structural case to subject nominal, it is proposed that agree in terms of phi-features between the functional head T and the subject results in nominative case on the subject. Thus, it is a continuation of the standard theory for the assignment of structural case: structural case is assigned as a result of feature(s) agree/ checking between a functional head (T, ʋ, n, and D) and the relevant nominal (Schütze 1997; Chomsky 2000, 2001, 2005, 2006; Carstens 2001; Bejar 2003; Tanaka 2005; Alexiadou & Anagnostopoulou 2006; Bobaljik & Branigan 2006; Richardson 2007; Legate 2008; Baker 2008, 2015; Baker & Vinokurova 2010; Masood 2014). The agree between T and the subject nominal results in valuation of the phi-features of T and they get visible on the copula verb. These changes are able to explain the structure of monoclausal copular constructions in Pashto and can have cross-linguistic consequences.

The paper is laid out as follows: Section 1 introduces the topic. Section 2 deals with the literature review. Section 3 gives details about data gathering and some additional facts about copular constructions in Pashto. Section 4 dilates in detail on the proposal. It has four sub-parts.

[2] For case assignment/ checking, the standard Chomskian notion of case checking is meant. According to this mechanism an agree relation establishes between a functional head (a probe) and a nominal (a goal) in terms of phi-features. Before the agree, the nominal has phi-features but its case feature is unvalued ; the phi-features of the functional head are unvalued. This agree results in valuing the phi-features of the functional head and in return the unvalued case of the nominal is also checked.

Section 5 gives practical derivations for the three types of copular constructions in the light of the proposed mechanism. Section 6 concludes the paper.

2 Literature review

In the generative literature, three approaches to the derivation/ structure of copular constructions are worth considering. The first approach is commonly referred to as the Small Clause (SC) approach. Here the subject and the predicate of the copular clause are treated as the two DPs of a small clause: $[_{DP = SC}\ [DP_s]\ [DP_p]]$ (Moro 1997: 56)

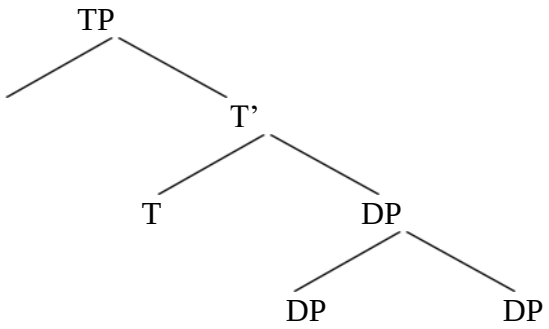


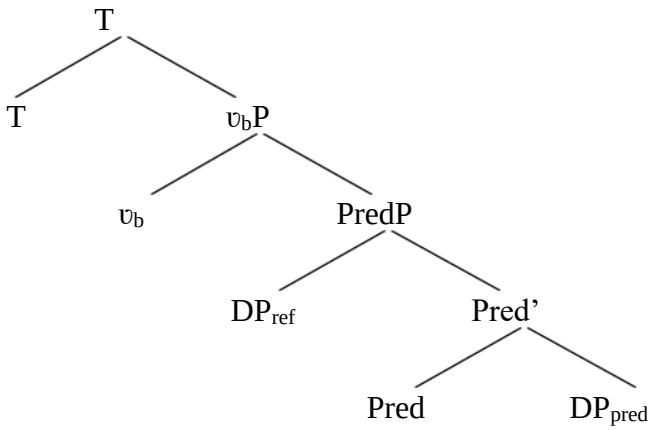
Figure 1: Moro's structure for a copular clause

The chief exponents of this approach have been Heggie (1988), Stowell (1995), Moro (1995, 1997, 2000), Lundin (2003), and Dikken (2006), to name only a few.

The second approach is referred to as the predicate phrase approach. The idea of predicate phrase came to the fore with the work of Bowers (1993, 2001), and was further expanded and developed by Eide (1996), Eide & Åfarli (1999), Åfarli & Eide (2000, 2001, 2003), Adger & Ramchand (2003), Baker (2003), and Mikkelsen (2005). Although, they differ in minor details, the main idea is the same in almost all of them. This whole approach is summed up in Mikkelsen (2005), where she opines that in the predicate phrase structure, Pred is a functional head, its specifier is the referential argument and the complement is the predicative argument (to borrow Lohndal (2006: 53) words). More importantly, she claims that the copula merges in a verb phrase above the PredP.

$[_{PredP}\ XP_{ref}[_{Pred'}\ Pred\ XP_{pred}]$ (2005: 167)

She says that the XP_{pred} can be an AP, PP, NP, DP, and VP, while the XP_{ref} is typically a DP.



(Mikkelsen 2005: 9)

Figure 2: Mikkelsen's structure for copular constructions based on predicate phrase approach

Lohndal (2006) presents the third approach. According to him, copula merges in the ordinary verb phrase; copulas should be treated as an ordinary verb is treated, without postulating a special structure for copular clauses. On the basis of his observations, he presents two structures for copular clauses: the first one for copular clauses in those languages where the nominal, in the predicate position, bears nominative Case, while the second one for those languages where the nominal, in the predicate part of the copular clause, shows accusative Case.

Copula version α: Nominative – Nominative: [$_{VP}$ [DP][V XP]
Copula version β: Nominative – Accusative : [$_{\upsilon P}$ [DP] [υ [$_{VP}$ V XP]]]

At first sight, this proposal seems attractive; however, the problem is really with the θ-roles assignment. Hale & Keyser (2002) say that all the semantic features are to be satisfied within the υP. Copula verbs, on the other hand, are believed to assign no θ-roles. Therefore, the introduction of copula in V creates the problem that it will have to assign the theta roles. Lohndal (2006: 58) presents a solution by postulating that copulas do assign theta-roles, and "however, beyond 'pure' θ-roles, we also have s-(emantic) selection. In some ways, these two are dealing with the same issue: a demand that some relational properties be satisfied". "Collapsing these notions makes it possible for us to say that θ-roles are labels for various kinds of semantic content: the thematic roles themselves, c-selection and s-selection" (Lohndal 2006: 59). Without going into the debate whether his 'collapsing' is convincing or not, if his idea is adopted then we would have to rethink all the other θ-roles and structures; in order to solve one issue, there is every likelihood that other already settled issues would sprout up.

For the small clause approach to copular clauses, the main objection relates to the fact that small clauses do not have verbs, while copulas have always been considered as a form of verb. Therefore, to consider a copular clause as a small clause, no doubt a very convenient solution, is somehow to divest a copular clause of its pivot: as verb is considered the most important element in a construction. Similarly, some aspects of the predicate phrase approach deserve criticism. The derivation for a predicate phrase along with υ and T does not has provision for V. At the same time, if looked closely at the suggested derivation, it is nothing but a modified version of the small clause approach. The small υ stays at its place as has T been in the SC approach, only a PredP has been substituted for small clause. Similarly, it seems more like an effort to suggest a mechanism that prevents the nominals from coming near to V or υ, to avoid the trouble of assigning θ-roles to the nominals. In addition, this treatment adds another functional layer PredP to the inventory of functional categories, thus going against the minimalist principle of economy, and on the other hand, this addition may or may not be a virtual conceptual necessity. The word predicative, also, seems a bit restricted when we consider the fact that in addition to predication, copular constructions can also be identificational and specificational in nature.

As far as Pashto is concerned, no attempt has been made to study its copular constructions, either traditionally or generatively. All that we have are a few cursory remarks in different Pashto grammar books (Raverty 1855; Roos-Keppel 1922; Penzl 1955; Shafeev 1964; Rashtheen 1994; Babrakzai 1999; Tegey & Robson 1996; Zayar 2005, to name a few) about the type of verb, but not anything about copular constructions or their intricacies. Therefore, the present study, instead

of using English or any other well-studied language as its subject language, uses Pashto to disseminate its details to a wider world community.

3 Data gathering and a few details about Pashto copular constructions

Data gathering for this study, in addition to gleaning details from grammar books and internet sources, included interviews/ discussions with native speakers of Pashto.[3] Different copular items with different surface manifestations were presented to the native speakers and their judgements about acceptability/ unacceptability were solicited.[4]

3.1 *A few details about Pashto copular constructions*

Monoclausal copular constructions can be found in Pashto. Higgins' (1979) analysis of English copular sentences and their classification into three types – predicational, specificational, and identificational – is equally applicable to such constructions in Pashto, though with the minor differences regarding omission of copulas (please refer to examples 1-5 for the three types of copular constructions in Pashto).

A variation is visible in meaning, in Pashto copular clauses when the order of words is changed. Bukhari (1984) gives the following three examples in Pashto (translations mine) to show the difference in meaning with respect to change in order of words:

(6) *Da* *maath* *laas* *day*. (Bukhari 1984: 52)
this broken hand be.PRS
'This is the broken hand'.

(7) *Da* *laas* *maath* *day.* (Bukhari 1984: 52)
this hand broken be.PRS
'This hand is broken.'

(8) *Maath* *laas* *da* *day.*[5] (Bukhari 1984: 52)
broken hand this be.PRS
'Broken hand is this'.

In addition to change in meaning, as pointed to by Bukhari (1984), these constructions can be explained from structural perspective. In the first example, the copula '*day*' links *da* 'this' with *math laas* 'broken hand'. The second example is a bit tricky, as *da* 'this' here is not isolated; rather, it forms part of a bigger DP *da laas* 'this hand'. This *da laas* is linked by the copula *day*

[3] The author is also a native speaker of Pashto.
[4] Since, Pashto is spoken in a vast area, spreading over parts of Pakistan and Afghanistan, therefore, differences among the Pashtos of different areas are inevitable. Overall, Pashto is considered to have two main varieties: the Northern variety and the Southern variety. Since, the differences between the two varieties involve a few vocabulary items and production of a few sounds and do not involve Syntax, therefore, the difference between the two varieties are immaterial for this study.
[5] It is worth mentioning that Bukhari (1984) does not use the above examples with reference to copular constructions; rather, he uses them for general purposes with reference to word order in Pashto. I have made use of Bukhari's (1984) examples to suit our purposes.

with the adjective *math* 'broken'. In the third example, *math laas* 'broken hand' is moved to the left periphery of the clause, and the predicational clause of example no. 6 is turned into specificational one in (8). In (8), the copula joins *math laas* 'broken hand' with *da* 'this'. In the proposal Section and subsequent discussions, it is shown that a predicational copular clause changes into a specificational copular clause with the movement of predicational nominal or predicational adjective (as the case may be) to Spec FocP due to focus.

Omission of copula is not possible either in the main copular clause or in the embedded copular clause in Pashto. This is in contrast to English where it is possible to omit copula in predicational embedded clauses (Niimura 2007).

(9) Peter *(is) a doctor.

(10) I consider the winner (to be) a good runner. (Niimura 2007)

(11) I consider the winner *(to be) Mary. (Rothstein 1995)

(12) *Peter doctor *(day).* (Matrix Clause)
Peter doctor *(be.PRS.3SG)

(13) *Zə mahsosawum che Saleem bemar *(day).*(Embedded Clause)
I.NOM feel.PRS.1SG COMP Saleem ill *(be.PRS.3SG)

Depending on tense, person, number, and, (in some cases) gender, Pashto has different forms of 'be'. The different morphological forms of 'be' in the present tense are *yum*(1SG), *yo*(1PL), *yay*(2SG), *yai*(2PL), *day*(3SGM), *do*(3SGF), *de*(3PL), while in the past tense they are *wum*(1SG), *wo*(1PL), *way*(2SG), *wai*(2PL), *wə*(3SGM), *wa*(3SGF), *wi*(3PLM), and *way*(3PL.F). In addition, Tegey and Robson (1996) include *shum*, *sho*, *shay*, *shai*, *sha*, *she*, *she*, for present perfective, *shwum*, *shwo*, *shway*, *shwai*, *sho*, *shwa*, *shwal*, *shwala*, etc. for the past perfective, and an independent form *shtha*, in other morphological forms for 'be' in Pashto. However, in Pashto, all the forms of 'be' are not used in the formation of copular constructions; only, the so-called imperfective forms for the present tense such as *yum*, *day*, etc., the imperfective forms for the past tense such as *wum*, *wo*, etc., and the form *shtha* are used for forming copular sentences. The perfective forms for the present and the past tense are not used in forming copular constructions in Pashto.

Since, omission of copula and different forms of 'be' have no direct bearing on the current study, and will turn the discussion in another direction, therefore, they are not discussed/ analyzed further.

4 The proposal

Typologically, monoclausal copular constructions are divisible into three groups: predicational, specificational, and identificational. It is proposed that there is no great difference between predicational and specificational clauses when it comes to derivation: both have the same derivations, except that in the specificational constructions, an additional head (Foc) is involved. Moreover, for predicational and specificational copular clauses, it is proposed that each type itself can be divided into two types: clauses which have a predicate nominal and clauses which have a

predicate adjective. For both these types, it is proposed that their subject DP originates inside the VP, as it (the subject) is never an agent. For those clauses which have the so-called predicate nominal, the predicate nominal does not start as an argument; rather, it originates as an appositive phrase of the subject nominal inside the VP. In copular clauses where there are no predicate nominals but adjectives, the adjective starts as the modifier of the subject nominal in an adjective phrase inside the VP. The small v of copular clauses, like the small v of unaccusatives, is unable to assign case to the nominals in its c-command area. Adger (2004: 140), for unaccusatives, proposes a small v that is semantically vacuous and has no specifier. The same I adopt for copular clauses; hence, the small v in Pashto copular clauses does not assign accusative case, is semantically non-causal and "so does not have an Agent in its specifier." T merges with the vP to form T'. This is followed either by the movement of the subject nominal to Spec TP due to extended projection principle (EPP) or by an agree relation between T and the subject nominal while it is still inside the VP. I opt for the former option reasons for which will be given later. An agree relation in terms of phi-features establishes between the subject DP in Spec TP and the functional head T, resulting in checking the case for the subject DP as nominative and the valuation of the phi-features of T. Following the movement of the subject DP to Spec TP, there are two scenarios: in appositive phrase copular clause the predicate nominal stays behind stranded inside the VP while in adjective phrase copular clauses, the predicate adjective stays behind stranded inside the VP. Since, the stranded nominal (predicate nominal) needs case according to the Case Filter, therefore, the case to the stranded nominal is assigned through any of the three mechanisms: (a) it gets the case from T, as is the case with the appositive nominals in appositive phrases that they get the case of the main (anchor) nominal, but it is one of the least possible options as by the time case is assigned, the two parts of the appositive phrase are poles apart, one in Spec TP and the other inside the VP, or (b) through the mechanism of multiple case assignment, T can assign nominative case to both of them, though they may be away from one another, or (c) it does not get any structural case and instead gets the default case of the language concerned (which in the case of Pashto is nominative). Of the three options, my preference is for the last option, reasons for which will unfold as we proceed further.

4.1 *Affinity between copular clauses and unaccusatives*

An aspect of this proposal is that it presupposes an affinity between copular constructions and unaccusative constructions. Based on this affinity, it is proposed that like unaccusative constructions, the subject DP in copular constructions originates inside the VP. The close relation between copular constructions and unaccusatives in Pashto is assumed based on similarities between the two in terms of agreement, case-marking, and the previous relevant literature which treats copular constructions as intransitives.

First, take the case of parallelism in agreement between copular clauses and unaccusatives in Pashto. Being a split-ergative language, it has Nom-Acc case alignment in the present and future tenses, and Erg-Abs alignment in the past tense. The verb agrees with the subject in transitive and unergative constructions in the present and future tenses and agrees with the object in the past tense in both transitive and unergative constructions. However, in unaccusative constructions the verb agrees with the subject in all the three tenses:

Transitives

(14) *Thə* *pyalay*[6] *mathaway.* (Present Tense)
you.NOM cups.ACC break.PRS.2SG
'You are breaking (the) cups.'

(15) *Thə* *ba* *pyalay* *mathaway.* (Future Tense)
§you.NOM will.FUT cups.ACC break.PRS.2SG
'You will be breaking (the) cups.'

(16) *Tha* *pyalay* *mathay* *kɻay.* (Past Tense)
you.ERG cups.ABS break do.PST.3PL.F
'You broke (the) cups.'

Unaccusatives

(17) *Thə* *prevazzay.*
you.NOM fall.PRS.2SG
'You are falling.'

(18) *Thə* *ba* *prevazzay.*
you.NOM will.FUT fall.PRS.2SG
'You will be falling.'

(19) *Thə* *prevathay.*
you.NOM fall.PST.2SG
'You fell.'

As can be seen in the examples above, the verb agrees with the second person singular pronoun in the present and future tenses in transitive constructions and agrees with the plural female object in the past tense. However, in the unaccusative constructions, the copular verb agrees with the second person singular in all the three tenses. Exactly, the same pattern of agreement is visible for copular constructions in Pashto: the copula always agrees with subject in all the three tenses:

(20) *Thə* *bemar* *yay.*
you.NOM ill be.PRS.2SG
'You are ill.'

(21) *Thə* *ba* *bemar* *way.*
you.NOM will.FUT ill be.PST.2SG
'You will be ill.'

(22) *Thə* *bemar* *way.*
you.NOM ill be.PST.2SG
'You were ill.'

(23) *Thə* *da* *Mary* *roor* *yay.*
you.NOM GEN Mary brother be.PRS.2SG

[6] In Pashto, only pronouns have visible case markings.

‘You are the brother of Mary.’

(24) *Thə* *ba* *da* *Mary* *roor* *way.*
you.NOM will.FUT GEN Mary brother be.PST.2SG
‘You will be the brother of Mary.’

(25) *Thə* *da* *Mary* *roor* *way.*
you.NOM GEN Mary brother be.PST.2SG
‘You were the brother of Mary.’

Second, take the case of parallelism in case-marking between copular clauses and unaccusatives in Pashto. In Pashto transitive and unergative constructions, there is Nom-Acc case alignment in the present and future tenses and Erg-Abs alignment in the past tense. However, unaccusatives in Pashto have the same nominative case marking in all the three tenses (please refer to examples no. 17-19). Exactly, the same case marking is visible in copular constructions in Pashto: the subject nominal invariably carries nominative case in all the three tenses (please refer to examples no. 20-25).

Third, there are a few accounts, which consider copulas as intransitives (Curnow 1999; Adger 2001; Bhatt & Homer 2018). Hence, these also point in the proposed direction.

4.2 *The ideas of predicate nominal as forming part of an appositive phrase and of predicate adjective as forming part of a modifier phrase*

The idea of predicate nominal as an appositive phrase is a new one; although, in the relevant literature, appositive phrase is sometimes considered as a form of copular construction[7] (Doron 1994; Cardoso & de Vries 2010): “an appositional construction is clearly predicational. Put more precisely, the secondary proposition involved constitutes an implicit copular clause in which the anchor represents the subject, and the apposition the predicate.” (Cardoso & de Vries 2010: 16). Exactly, the same idea is made use of to explain a copular clause rather than an appositive phrase in the proposal under discussion. It is proposed that the predicate nominal (which in fact may be a PP, a DP, an NP, or even a VP) is an appositive phrase along the subject DP. The idea of predicate nominal as an appositive phrase, additionally, stems from the fact that the predicate nominal is never involved in any sort of argumental action – an action where there is some doer or some receiver of that action. Instead, the predicate nominal in copular clause always tells something about the subject DP. To see this, consider the following examples:

(26) Emily is a carpenter.

(27) That’s my brother.
(Mikkelsen 2011: 1805)

[7] A clarification needs to be made at this stage that in all those accounts, appositive phrases are the main topic; hence, appositive phrases as copular constructions is discussed as one of the possibilities but copular constructions as an appositive phrases are not discussed. Moreover, in those accounts appositive phrase is structurally represented/ treated as a relative clause.

(28) Ann's teacher is Mr. Vengerov.

(29) John is his own cook.
(Cardoso & de Vries 2010: 17)

In the first example, the predicate nominal 'carpenter' tells about the profession of the subject. In the second example, the predicate nominal 'my brother' tells what the subject demonstrative pronoun 'that' is meant for. In the third example, Mr. Vengerov is the name of Ann's teacher. In the fourth example, the predicate nominal 'his own cook' tells about a feature of John – that he is his own cook.

The number/ person/ gender of predicate nominals cannot be different from that of the subject nominals; hence, pointing to their appositive nature. Suppose that in a copular construction, the number or gender or person of the predicate nominal is different from the subject nominal, then that construction is ungrammatical (as can be seen in examples no. 30-32 and 35-37 below). This again substantiates the point that the relation between the subject nominal and the predicate nominal is appositive in nature: in appositive phrases, the number/ gender/ person of the appositive nominal is in conformity with the main nominal (anchor nominal); otherwise, the phrase is grammatically unacceptable: 'Peter, his brother', '*Peter, his sister', 'Peter, his friend' and '*Peter, his friends'.

To elaborate this point further, an effort is made to change the number, gender, or person of the predicate nominal from the subject nominal; it results in ungrammatical constructions.

Copular constructions where the subject nominal is singular and predicate nominal is plural:

(30) **Thə da Mary roonɻa yay.*
you.NOM GEN Mary brothers be.PRS.2SG
Intended: 'You (singular) are the brothers of Mary.'

(31) **Thə ba da Mary roonɻa way.*
you.NOM will.FUT GEN Mary brothers be.PST.2SG
Intended: 'You (singular) will be the brothers of Mary.'

(32) **Thə da Mary roonɻa way.*
you.NOM GEN Mary brothers be.PST.2SG
Intended: 'You (singular) were the brothers of Mary.'

Even semantic agreement is not possible, if the subject and the predicate nominals differ:

(33) **Thaso da Mary roonɻa avo khwainday yai.*
you.(Suppose semantically SG) GEN Mary brothers and sisters be.PRS

(34) *Thaso da Mary roonɻa avo khwainday yai.*
you.NOM.PL GEN Mary brothers and sisters be.PRS.2PL
'You are Mary's brothers and sisters.'

Copular constructions where the subject nominal is plural and the object nominal is singular:[8]

(35) **Mong* *da* *Mary* *roor* *yo.*
we.NOM GEN Mary brother be.PRS.1PL
Intended: 'We are the brother of Mary.'

(36) **Mong* *ba* *da* *Mary* *roor* *wo.*
we.NOM will.FUT GEN Mary brother be.PST.1PL
Intended: 'We will be the brother of Mary.'

(37) **Mong* *da* *Mary* *roor* *wo.*
we.NOM GEN Mary brother be.PST.1PL
Intended: 'We were the brother of Mary.'

As can be seen from the two sets of examples above, any change in the person, number, or gender of the predicate nominal renders the construction ungrammatical; thus, pointing to a close relation between the subject nominal and the predicate nominal.

Now a question arises, what could be the initial structure of appositional phrase when it joins the derivation for copular clauses. One of the well-known analyses for appositive phrases has been the coordination analysis (Kraak & Klooster 1968; Quirk et al. 1985; Strum 1986; Koster 2000; Heringa 2007, 2010; O'Connor 2008; Cardoso & De Vries 2010). The idea behind coordination analysis is that the 'apposition' is structurally coordinated to the 'anchor'. Details apart of the different approaches, De Vries (2010: 1) gives the following structure for appositive phrase: [$_{CoP}$ [$_{DP}$ anchor] [Co [$_{DP}$ D[$_{CP}$ …..apposition]]]] where, CoP and DP represent a coordination phrase and a determiner phrase, respectively. The coordination phrase has an abstract coordinator, which is semantically specialized: it establishes an asymmetric relationship between the two DP conjuncts (see also Koster 2000). The details as to what could be the possible pathways to the formation of the CoP ([$_{CoP}$ [$_{DP}$ anchor] [Co [$_{DP}$ D[$_{CP}$ …..apposition]]]]) are avoided, as that has already been discussed in details in the literature on the nature of appositive phrase; and, an attempt to opt for any of the approaches that culminate in the formation of CoP above, would turn the discussion in an entirely different direction.The idea of predicate adjective as forming part of the modifier phrase

This brings us to the second kind of copular constructions in Pashto where the predicate portion hosts an adjective and not a nominal. For such copular clauses, it is proposed that the predicate adjective/ modifier originates with the subject nominal as its modifier inside the VP. This idea stems from the fact that the modifier is invariably related to the subject DP and tells about it in one way or another:

(38) *Erika* *wogay* *da.*
Erika.NOM hungry be.PRS.3SGF
'Erika is hungry.'

[8] Since the examples above involve second person pronouns, therefore, they are not repeated, as often in colloquial Pashto the second person pronouns are used in plural form for singular persons as a token of respect.

(i) *Thaso* *da* *Mary* *roor* *yai.*
you.2PL.NOM GEN Mary brother be.PRS.2PL
'You (plural) are the brother of Mary.'

(39) *Manɻa sra da.*
apple.NOM red be.PRS.3SGF
'(the) apple is red.'

Hence, when due to EPP the subject nominal moves to Spec TP, the adjective remains behind stranded inside the VP. Right now, at this stage of research, we are not in a position to say with certainty why the adjective portion of the DP remains behind, but tentatively it is proposed that it may have to do something with the structure of copula constructions: copula verbs are meant to link two entities. If the modifier moves along with the subject nominal, the copula verb would not have anything on its other side; hence, it would not be able to do its linking job.

4.3 *Case assignment*

For case assignment, like for structural purposes, monoclausal copular constructions are of two types: clauses that have predicate nominals and clauses that have predicate adjectives but no predicate nominals. First, consider case assignment in copular clauses that have both predicate nominals and subject nominals. For the assignment/checking of case to the subject nominal, it is proposed that it is checked as a result of φ-features agreement between T and the subject nominal when it is in Spec TP. Unlike transitive constructions where case to the internal argument is assigned because of v, in copular constructions subject nominal does not receive case from v when the subject nominal is inside the VP, due to the defective nature of v in Pashto copular constructions. That the idea of defective v is not an unusual one is borne by the fact that v in unaccusative constructions has been considered as defective (Chomsky 2001): unable to assign accusative case to the internal argument; hence, the name unaccusative. Further substantiation can be seen in the fact that though Pashto is a split-ergative language (where subject nominals in the present and future tenses bear nominative case and subject nominals in the past tense carry ergative case), yet, interestingly, in Pashto copular constructions the subject nominal bear nominative case in all the three tenses (please refer to examples no. 14-16 for transitive constructions and examples no. 20-25 for copular constructions).
However, for case assignment purposes, more challenging can be the case of the predicate nominal. While in transitive constructions the case of the object nominal is accusative in the present and the future tenses, and absolutive/ nominative in the past tense, the case of the predicate nominal, in copular constructions, is invariably nominative in Pashto. For the case of the object nominal in transitive constructions, please refer to examples no. 14-16. For the case of the predicate nominal, consider the following examples, which make excessive use of pronouns to make case marking visible on the object nominals (since in Pashto only pronouns have visible case marking):

(40) *Thə thə yay.*
you.NOM you.NOM be.PRS.2SG
'You are you.'

(41) **Thə tha yay.*
you.NOM you.ACC be.PRS.2SG
Intended: 'You are you(ACC)'.

(42) *Zə zə vum.*

I.NOM I.NOM be.PST.1SG
'I was I.'

(43) **Zə ma vum.*
I.NOM I.ACC be.PST.1SG
Intended: 'I was me.'

(44) *Hagha ba hagha wi.*
he.NOM will.FUT he.NOM be.3
'He will be he.'

(45) **Hagha ba haghə wi.*
he.NOM will.FUT he.ACC be.3
Intended: 'He will be him.'

As can be seen from the examples, the case of the predicate nominal is invariably nominative. As per Case Filter, the predicate nominal should carry case; however, at the same time, we see that the predicate nominal does not serve any argumental function. One solution could be the idea of case for appositive phrases. Generally, in an appositive phrase the predicate nominal has a reflection/ carries the case of the first (anchor) nominal. Thus, the predicate nominal, being part of the appositive phrase in the VP, could be proposed to carry the case of the main nominal i.e. nominative case. However, there is a problem with this proposal, as I have already proposed that by the time T checks the case of the subject nominal, it has already moved to Spec TP, leaving behind the predicate nominal inside the VP. Hence, this possibility is done away with. There are two further possibilities for the case assignment of the predicate nominal: either it has nominative case of the subject due to multiple case checking with T (since v in copular constructions is defective and cannot assign/ check any case) or it carries the default case of that particular language. In Pashto, since nominative is the default case, therefore, predicate nominals in Pashto copular constructions will carry nominative case.

At the present stage of research, it is not sure which of the two strategies a language resorts to to check/ assign the case of the predicate nominal. However, tentatively, I propose that a language resorts to default case instead of multiple case checking, due to the following reasons. Firstly, the predicate nominals do not play any argumental/ Θ-roles; hence, they cannot be expected to be assigned any structural case. Secondly, the idea of default case provides for the possibility of a different type of case on the predicate nominal than the one borne by the subject nominal. Suppose that in a language, the default case is accusative or dative, not nominative, then the predicate nominal in copular constructions in that language would bear accusative or dative case. However, such a luxury would not be available in multiple case assignment/ checking as in multiple case assignment both the subject nominal and the predicate nominal would carry the same nominative case; hence, the different case of the predicate nominal would not be explainable in a language if the predicate and the subject nominals carry different cases.

This preference for the default case assignment also explains our proposal that T assigns/ checks the case of the subject nominal outside the VP, when it has moved to Spec TP due to EPP. Although, this scheme for case assignment entails that the subject nominal is at a higher point in the derivation than the case checking head T. This is against the standard configuration for case assignment where the nominal (the goal) is in the c-command domain of the case checking head (the probe) and the probe searches for its goal probing downwards (Chomsky 2001). However,

during the last two decades, there emerged other accounts which advocate that the goal may c-command the probe and the probe may search upwards (Rezac 2004; Bobaljik 2006; Baker 2010). These accounts show that there is a possibility of our suggested mechanism for case checking.

Alongside the standard theory of Chomsky (2001) for case assignment/ checking, the configurational method of case assignment has also been very popular among syntacticians. At this stage, a question arises: whether the configurational method of case assignment can explain case assignment in copular clauses in Pashto in a better way or not. In configurational/ dependent case assignment, the case of the second nominal is dependent on the case of the first nominal in a clause. Hence, if the case of the subject nominal is nominative then there is expectancy that the case of the object nominal (or the predicate nominal in case of copular constructions) would be a marked one. However, in Pashto, the case of both the subject nominal and the predicate nominal are nominative; hence, the dependent case mechanism cannot convincingly explain case assignment facts in Pashto copular clauses, unlike the languages where the cases of the subject and the predicate nominals are different.

4.4 *An account for the problems associated with Θ-roles assignment*

Hale & Keyser (2002) propose that all the semantic features are to be satisfied within the υP. However, about copular clauses, in one way or another, it is believed that their copular verbs do not assign θ-roles, as at the most they link two entities. Hence, they create a sort of dilemma for the linguistic theory: their incorporation within υP would require them to assign θ-roles. The small clause (SC) approach to copular clause, therefore, altogether dispenses with the υP, while the predicate phrase approach merges the copula above a phrase called predicate phrase. Unlike the previous accounts, this account proposes that the copular verb assigns theme/patient role to the subject DP inside the VP. This proposal is encouraged by the idea that if a single subject nominal in an unergative or in an unaccusative construction can have a θ-role, similarly a single subject nominal in a copular construction can have a theme/ patient role; as, all the time the subject is the target of description, identification, specification, etc. So, if in an unaccusative we could have 'the tree is falling', in a copular clause we could have 'the tree is green'; in both the cases, 'falling' and 'green' tell us something about 'the tree'.

About the predicate nominal, this account proposes that it has no theta role. This proposal is based on two grounds. Chomsky (1981: 36) says about Θ-criterion that, "Each argument bears one and only one θ-role, and each θ-role is assigned to one and only one argument". This clearly requires that for a nominal to get a Θ-role, it needs to be an argument. Since the predicate nominal in copular clauses is not involved in any sort of action either as an actor or as a receiver, therefore, it cannot be a true argument. Since, it is not an argument, therefore, it does not carry any theta-role. This idea that the predicate nominal has no theta-role is added to by the fact that, as per our proposal, the predicate nominal is only the appositive portion of the subject DP; hence, if it is supposed to carry any sort of theta-role, it cannot have any other different theta role, from the one carried by the subject DP.

5 Explanation of the three types of copular constructions in the light of the proposed mechanism

The mechanism proposed above has the advantage that it can explain the various surface manifestations of all types of copular clauses as having started either from the merge of V and an appositive phrase or from the merge of V and a modifier phrase. The examples given in the introduction are reproduced below, along with their new typology and derivation, to show the adequateness of the mechanism proposed:

(46) *Manɻa sra da.* Predicational (with a predicate adjective)
apple.NOM red be.PRS.3SGF
'An/the apple is red.'

(47) *Sra Manɻa da.* Specificational (with a predicate adjective)
red Apple.NOM be.PRS.3SGF
'Red is the apple.'

(48) *Peter doctor day.* Predicational (with a predicate nominal)
Peter.NOM doctor.NOM be.PRS.3SGM
'Peter is a/the doctor.'

(49) *Doctor Peter day.* Specificational(with a predicate nominal)
doctor.NOM Peter.NOM be.PRS.3SGM
'The doctor is Peter.'

(50) *Hagha saɻay da Mary roor day.* Identificational
that man.NOM GEN Mary brother.NOM be.PRS.3SGM
'That man is Mary's brother.'

The first example is a predicational copular clause with a predicate adjective. It does not have a predicate nominal. An AP *sra manɻa* 'red apple' merges with V to form a VP. A defective small v, lacking the capacity to check accusative case and to host an agent as its specifier, merges with the VP under hierarchy of projection principle to form a small vP. T merges with the vP to form T'. Due to EPP the nominal *manɻa* moves to Spec TP to form TP, leaving behind the adjective stranded inside the VP. The < > symbol used in the derivation below and the subsequent derivations stands for movement of the items inside it. An agree establishes between T and the subject nominal in Spec TP, resulting in valuation of phi-features of T and checking the case of the subject nominal as nominative. The valued phi-features of T get visible on the copula as *da* 3SGF. An empty functional head C merges with TP to form CP.

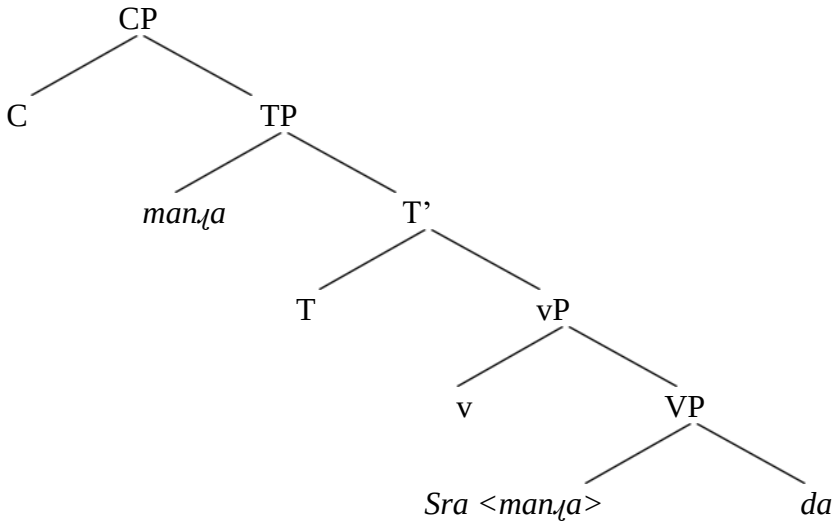


Figure 3: Derivation for *Manɻa sra da.*

The second example is that of a specificational copular clause with a predicate adjective but no predicate nominal. Though, specificational copular clause looks different from the predicational copular clause; however, according to our mechanism it has the same starting point, as is that of the predicational copular clause. The only difference between the two is during the last stage of the derivation: while in predicational copular clause with predicate adjective, an empty C merges with TP to complete CP, in specificational copular clause with predicate adjective, a functional head focus 'Foc' merges with TP to form Foc'. Due to focus, the predicate adjective moves to Spec FocP and thus the surface structure of the copular clause '*sra manɻa da*' obtains.

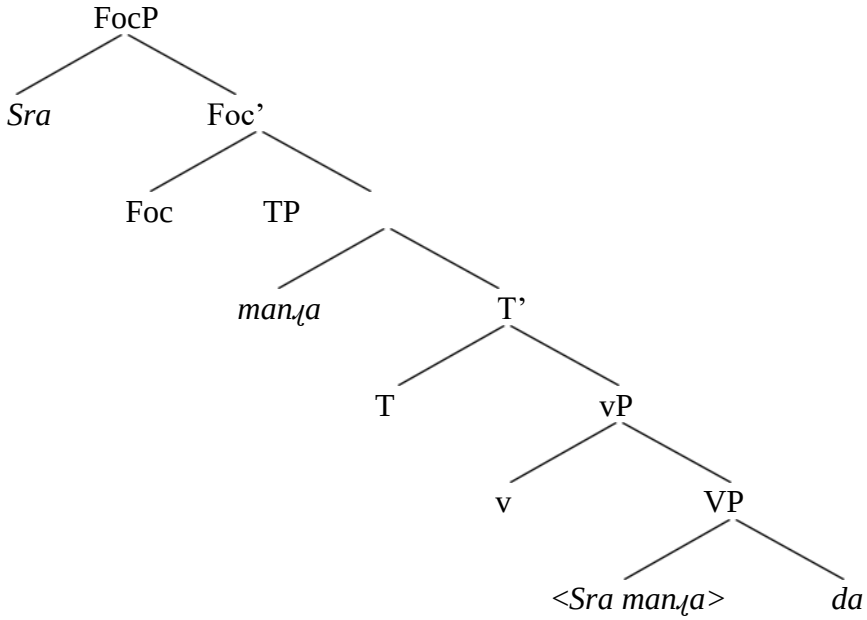


Figure 4: Derivation for *sra manɻa da.*

The third example is a predicational copular clause with both subject and predicate nominals. Here, *Peter* and *doctor* start as an appositive phrase [$_{CoP}$ [$_{DP}$ *Peter*] [Co [$_{DP}$ *doctor*]]]. This

appositive phrase merges with V to form a VP. A small v merges with the VP through hierarchy of projection principle to form a small vP. Since v is defective, unable to check accusative case or host an agent in Spec vP, therefore, the case of the nominals remains unchecked inside the VP. T merges with the vP to form T'. Due to extended projection principle, the subject DP forming part of the appositive phrase moves to Spec TP, leaving the predicate nominal stranded behind inside the VP. Since the case of the subject DP in Spec TP has not been checked yet; therefore, there is an agree in terms of φ-features of person, number and gender between T, acting as a probe, and the subject nominal, serving as a goal. This agree results in valuing T as 3rd person singular male 3SGM and checking the case of the subject DP as nominative. In the morphological component, the 3rd person singular male of T gets visible on the copula as *day*. An empty functional head C merges with TP to form CP. The predicate nominal adopts the default case, which is nominative in Pashto.

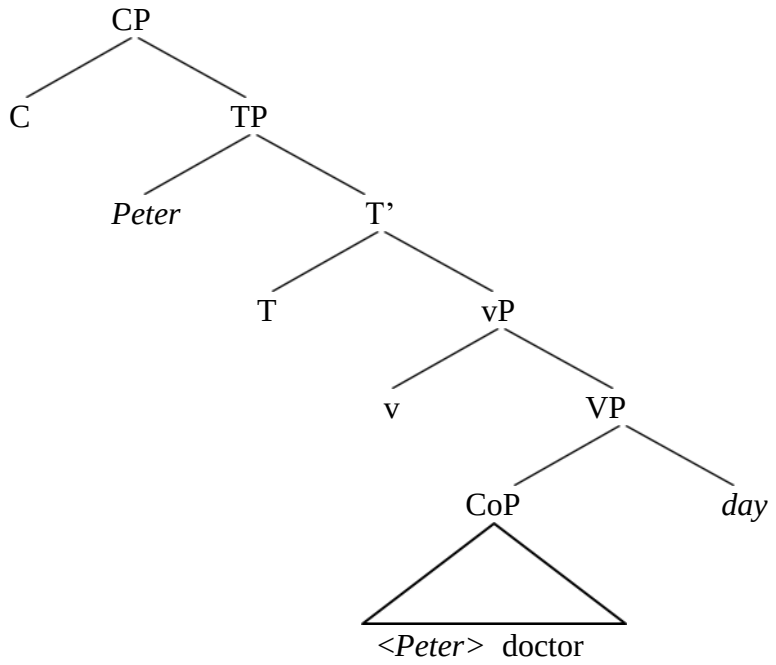


Figure 5: Derivation for *Peter doctor day.*

The fourth example is that of a specificational copular clause with a predicate nominal. The derivation for such clauses is the same as is the case with predicational copular clauses with predicate nominal, except that in the last stage, instead of merge of an empty C, a functional head 'Foc' merges with TP. Due to focus,[9] the predicate nominal moves to Spec FocP and thus the surface structure of specificational copular clause '*doctor Peter day*' obtains.

[9] For economy purposes, the derivation is not expanded beyond FocP, though technically speaking it has a few more layers (Rizzi 1997)

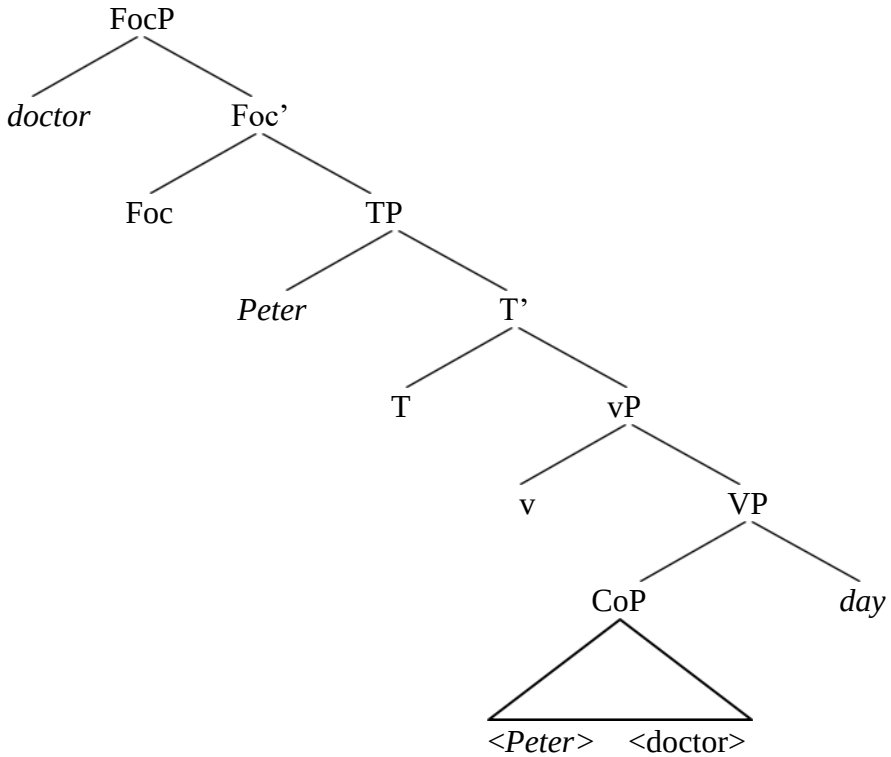
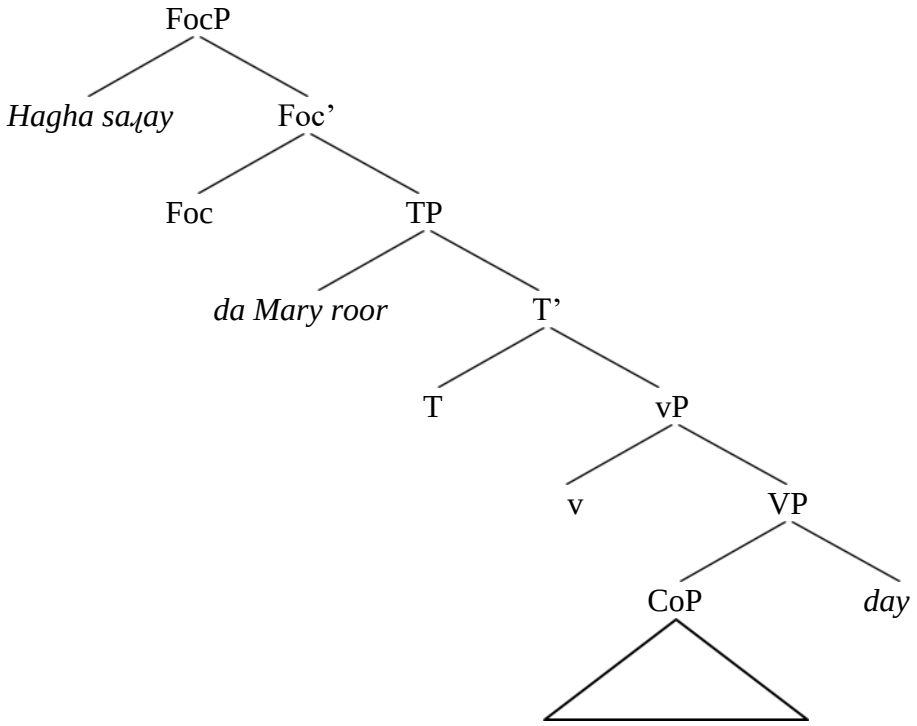


Figure 6: Derivation for *doctor Peter day.*

The fifth example is an identificational copular clause. Here again, like the predicational and the specificational constructions, the subject *da Mary roor* and the predicate nominal *hagha saɻay* originate as a big appositive phrase '*da Mary roor, hagha saɻay'* (CoP = [$_{CoP}$ [$_{DP}$ *da Mary roor*] [Co [$_{DP}$ *hagha saɻay*]]]. It is important to note that in the part *da Mary roor* 'Mary's brother', *da Mary* has already a genitive case and only the case of the *roor* 'brother' is to be checked in the derivation. This appositive phrase merges with V to form a VP. Due to hierarchy of projection principle, v merges with the VP to form vP. Since v is defective (Chomsky 2001); therefore, it is unable to check the case of the subject DP inside the VP. T merges with vP to form T'. Due to EPP the subject DP *da Mary roor* moves to Spec TP.T checks the case of the subject DP after having established an agree relation with the subject nominal in terms of φ-features. Due to this agree, the phi-features of T are valued as 3rd person singular 3SG and the case of the subject DP is checked as nominative. A functional head Foc merges with TP to form Foc'. The predicate nominal *hagha saɻay* moves to Spec FocP, due to focus, to form FocP.



<*da Mary*[GEN] *roor*[uCase]> <*hagha saɻay*>

Figure 7: Derivation for *Hagha saɻay da Mary roor day.*

6 Conclusion

In this study, an effort was made to account for the structure and case checking in monoclausal copular constructions, using Pashto as our subject language. It was shown that the division of copular clauses into three types was also applicable to Pashto. At the same time, it was shown that for structural analysis, predicational and specificational copular clauses themselves could better be divided into two groups: one having the predicate nominal and the other having predicate modifier but no predicate nominal. Unlike the previous accounts, this study proposed, a) a new starting point for both subject nominals and predicate nominals, b) a different small v unable to assign/check case and host an agent specifier, c) a different case assignment/ checking mechanism for the predicate nominal. For case assignment to the subject nominal the standard theory of case assignment was made use of: phi-features agreement between a functional head and a nominal results in checking the case of that nominal. For the case of the predicate nominal, it was proposed to adopt the default case of the concerned language. All this mechanism was able to explain the structure and case in Pashto monoclausal copular clauses, with implications for cross-linguistic application as well. The only limitation of the study was that multiclausal copular constructions making use of one copula and one or more other verbs were avoided, as the author tentatively believes that in the presence of other verbs, the copula is unable to show its true character: an interesting topic that needs an extensive discussion but beyond the limits of this paper.

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Abbreviations

1 = first person 2 = second person 3 = third person ABS = absolut
ACC = accusative COMP = complementizer ERG = ergative F = feminine
FOC = focus FUT = future GEN = genitive M = masculine NOM
= nominative PL = plural PRS = present PST = past

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