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Where have all the verbs gone?

On verb stretching and semi-words in Indo-Aryan Palula

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ABSTRACT

The prevalence of complex predicates consisting of a verb component (verbalizer) and a non-verb component (host) is well-known from descriptions of languages in large parts of West and South Asia. Looking particularly at data from the hitherto less-studied Indo-Aryan Palula (Chitral Valley, Pakistan), we will explore their position within the total verb lexicon. Instead of regarding the verbalizers and hosts as building blocks that due to their respective properties license particular argument structures, as has been done in some previous descriptions, I propose that it is the construction as a whole, and its semantics, that assigns case and selects arguments. Rather than seeing a strict dichotomy between verbalizers (also called “light verbs”) used in complex predicates and the corresponding simple verbs, a few highly generic verbs (BECOME, DO, GIVE) seem to be exposed to a high degree of “stretching”. As such they stand as syntactic models – basic argument templates (BAT) – when forming novel complexes, sometimes involving host elements that lack a lexical identity of their own (hence semi-words) in the language as of today.

KEYWORDS

Palula, light verbs, complex predicates, basic argument templates, semi-words, verb stretching

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Where have all the verbs gone? On verb stretching and semi-words in Indo-Aryan Palula

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1 Introduction

In this paper I focus on complex predicates composed of two distinct lexical items, a verb and a non-verb component (whose lexical identity is an issue we will return to below). Examples from Indo-Aryan Palula of such CPs are *hamlá the* ‘attack’ (lit. ‘do/make attack’) as in (1), *široó the* ‘start’ (lit. ‘do/make start’) as in (2), and *milaáu bhe* ‘meet’ (lit. ‘become met’) as in (3).¹

- (1) *se ínçi mulaaseeb-á ĵhulí hamlá thíl-u*
DEF she-bear Mullah.Sahib-OB on attack(M) do.PFV-MSG
‘The she-bear attacked Mullah Sahib.’

- (2) *táal khatíl-ii pahúrta ba so tasū čaukeet-íi kráam*
ceiling cover.PFV-GN after PRT 3MSG.NOM 3SG.GN door.frame-GN work

široó tháan-u
start do.PRS-MSG

‘When the ceiling has been covered, he starts the work with the door frames.’

- (3) *ma áaĵ tas sangí baazóor-a milaáu bhíl-u*
1SG.NOM today 3SG.OB with bazaar-OB met become.PFV-MSG
‘I [male person] met him at the market today.’

We have no problem recognizing the construction as found in Urdu and other languages of the Indian subcontinent. The same lexical material of the non-verb elements (sometimes referred to as hosts), combined with certain verbs (variously referred to as verbalizers and light verbs) close in meaning to the Palula ones, are found in virtually all languages in South Asia, Indo-Aryan and non-Indo-Aryan alike (see Section 4). As a matter of fact, there are possibly no languages where this construction is not found at all. In (4)-(8) examples are given from some of the languages spoken in the vicinity of Palula.

¹ The (underlying) verb stem is used as citation form for Palula verbs in this paper.

(4) (Urdu)

hamaaree dušmanoo~ nee gaao~ par hamla kar diyaa
 our enemy.OB.PL ERG village.OB on attack do give.PFV.MSG
 ‘Our enemies attacked the village.’

(5) (Charsadda Pashto: Ahkam Ullah)

zmunɡ dušmanaano pə kəli hamla okra
 our enemy.OB.PL on village attack did.FSG

(6) (Gawri/Kalam Kohistani: Muhammad Zaman Sager)

muu~ dušmānānā lāām rā hamla kiir
 our enemies village on attack did

(7) (Torwali: Inam Ullah)

mhun dušmane ɡam zet hamla ki
 our enemies village on attack did

(8) (Khowar: Afsar Ali and Farid Ahmad)

ispa dušmanan deho sora hamla areni
 our enemies village on attack did

They are not altogether different from cognate-object constructions (Givón 2001: 165) in English, such as *give birth, pay attention, take pride in, have a rest, get along with, put an end to*, etc., where a verbal idea is being expressed jointly by the verb and another (non-verb) lexical item (Butt 2003: 1-2). However, such complex predicates are extremely abundant in Indo-Aryan languages, and most of these are semantically equivalent to simple verbs (rather than complex verbs) in European languages. They express a wide range of ideas, and, as previously pointed out (e.g. Gambhir 1993: 85), serve as a productive – or sometimes the only – way of incorporating loans into the verb lexicons.

1.1 *Problem(s) defined*

The problem arises when trying to define the syntactic status and lexical identity of the non-verb element in a complex predicate (CP). Likewise, we face a challenge when describing the particular verbs occurring in CPs: Are these verbs in any significant way different from most other verbs in the language? And if so, do these differences justify a distinct syntactic or lexical category to account for them? Following on that we want to be able to say what properties of CPs determine the argument structure of the whole clause and the case roles assigned to its arguments. Do they rest in: a) the verb component only, b) the non-verb component only, or, c) in both of them? Finally, we need to ask whether there is a descriptive need to differentiate between different types of CPs, or if we are better served by a unified account.

Most of these questions are far from new. They have been addressed in various ways (Butt 1995; 2003; Follie et al 2005; Gambhir 1993; Goldberg 2003; Haig 2002; Karimi-Doostan 2005;

Masica 1991: 368-369; 1993; Mohanan 1993; 1994; Verma 1993), both the phenomenon in a larger macro-area and as it occurs in Indo-Aryan (in the latter referred to as “conjunct verbs”, see Masica 1991: 326, or “denominative verbs”, see Schmidt 1999: 95-96), but my hope is that I will be able to approach the matter from a slightly different angle and suggest answers that lie somewhat outside of what has been presented in earlier works.

1.2 Background: Palula

Palula is an Indo-Aryan language spoken by approximately 10,000 people in the Chitral Valley in northern Pakistan’s mountain region. Apart from my own research (see Liljegren 2008 for a grammatical description), this language has largely remained undocumented. The language samples presented in this paper are based on first-hand data, collected and analyzed in close collaboration with Palula-speaking language consultants during the period 1998-2009.² If not specifically noted (such as a B for the Biori Valley dialect), the examples are taken from the speech of the Ashret Valley, one of two main dialects.

Palula belongs to a group of speech varieties subsumed under the heading Shina, which in their turn are part of a cluster of Indo-Aryan languages traditionally referred to as “Dardic”, all spoken in a mountainous region in the extreme northwest of the subcontinent. “Dardic” is not an established genetic grouping, but for reasons of geographical proximity, some shared areal characteristics as well as some shared retentions, they are often – but controversially – lumped together under this term (see Bashir (2003: 822), Strand (2001: 258), and Zoller (2005: 10-11) for contemporary but differing views on classification and the use of terminology).³

According to local historical tradition, the ancestors of today’s Palula speakers migrated from the Chilas area in the main Indus Valley some fifteen generations ago and have since then not participated in any regular interaction with other Shina-speaking communities, resulting in an ever-increasing degree of linguistic divergence between Palula and the speech varieties within the main Shina belt. While Palula in its essence has retained many features common to Shina at large, and in some respects have retained features since lost in the other varieties, it has also been subject to important influences from languages in its present environment. Insofar as most features discussed in this paper are concerned, Pashto (Southeastern Iranian), Persian (Southwestern Iranian) and – in modern times – Urdu (Indo-Aryan), appear to have been the more influential donors.⁴

² Although several people have given assistance throughout a ten-year period, Naseem Haider (a language activist native of Ashret), who has been my main language consultant, deserves a special mention. The two of us have collaborated extensively since 2003, through the Forum for Language Initiatives (Islamabad), and I owe much of my insights into various aspects of Palula to him.

³ The major groups that feature in the “Dardic” cluster (Bashir 2003: 824-825) are the following, with examples of individual languages within parentheses: 1. Pashai, 2. Kunar Group (Gawarbat, Dameli), 3. Chitral Group (Khowar, Kalasha), 4. Kohistan Group (Gawri, Torwali), 5. Shina (Palula, Gilgiti, Kohistyō), 6. Kashmiri.

⁴ English may be added to this list, although English lexical material almost exclusively (at least until very recently) has been transmitted and “filtered” through Urdu or Pashto.

2 The verb lexicon in Palula

Although verbs form a major word class in most, if not all, of the world's languages, the way events are encoded varies a great deal. One effect of this is a dramatic variation in the number of verbs found in languages. While at one extreme, the main European languages, such as English, can boast 10,000 or more verbs, there are at the other extreme languages in other parts of the world with markedly different lexical structures that manage with minimal verbal systems of 10-40 simple verbs, as Kalam in Papua New Guinea (Viberg 1993: 347-8, 2006: 409), or in extreme cases with only a handful of verbs, as Jingulu in Australia (Baker 2003: 88-94). In the light of that we will try to discern whether Palula has a verb lexicon similar to European languages or should be included in the category of languages with minimal verbal systems, or at least be said to share some lexical characteristics of either one.

Regardless of the size of the verb lexicon, the twenty most frequent verbs in any one language tend to have some characteristics in common, and a number of basic meanings coded as verbs are bound to show up here (Viberg 2006: 209), such as GO, GIVE, TAKE, MAKE, SEE and SAY, verbs that Viberg (2006: 409) refers to as “nuclear”, covering the basic semantic notions of motion, possession, production, verbal communication and perception. Not all the twenty most frequent verbs of European languages are *nuclear* in the same sense and must therefore be defined as language- or area-specific. This is the case with BE and HAVE, the first one being the overall most frequent in almost all European languages, and the second a verb with few parallels outside Europe.⁵

A similar tendency can be seen when studying the twenty most frequently used verbs in Palula (Table 1). We find many nuclear verbs here, too, and as in European languages, an equivalent of BE tops the list by a wide margin.⁶ More interestingly, however, BE is immediately followed by two other high-frequency verbs: *bhe* ‘become’ and *the* ‘do, make’.

	Verb stem		% text occurrence
1	<i>hin</i>	‘be’	25.0
2	<i>bhe</i>	‘become’	8.2
3	<i>the</i>	‘do, make’	7.7
4	<i>be</i>	‘go’	5.5
5	<i>mané</i>	‘say’	5.0
6	<i>háans</i>	‘live, exist’	3.9
7	<i>de</i>	‘give’	3.6
8	<i>yhe</i>	‘come’	3.6
9	<i>thané</i>	‘call, say, name’	2.3
10	<i>whe</i>	‘get down’	1.8
11	<i>kha</i>	‘eat’	1.7

⁵ In English the modals *will*, *can*, *may*, *shall* and *must* are all among the twenty most frequent, and in many other European languages the modals CAN and MUST are found in this frequency range (Viberg 1993: 346-9).

⁶ The suppletive and defective verb *hin-* with its invariable Past tense form *de* is the Palula copula as well as an important auxiliary participating in the formation of a number of periphrastic tense-aspect categories.

12	<i>nikhé</i>	‘appear, get out’	1.4
13	<i>daçhé</i>	‘look’	1.2
14	<i>har</i>	‘take away’	1.1
15	<i>mhaaré</i>	‘kill’	1.1
16	<i>je</i>	‘hit, beat’	1.1
17	<i>urí</i>	‘let out, pour’	0.9
18	<i>bheš</i>	‘sit down’	0.9
19	<i>čhooré</i>	‘put’	0.8
20	<i>khoojá</i>	‘ask’	0.8
			77.7

Table 1: The 20 most frequent Palula verbs (drawn from 40 texts, only finite forms counted)

Moving on from this list, another striking observation we can make has to do with the relative textual verb occurrence within certain frequency ranges. Viberg (2006: 409) claims that the twenty most frequent verbs tend to cover close to fifty percent of the textual frequency in European languages. He compares that with the language Kalam in Papua New Guinea, with a total number of simple verbs around one hundred, of which fifteen verbs account for ninety percent of the total textual occurrence. As indicated in Table 2, Palula places itself between these two, with close to eighty percent (51.5% + 26.2%) accounted for by the twenty most frequent verbs. That makes it significantly different from the European type, but it is still quite different from languages with minimal verbal systems.

Frequency range (number of verbs)	% finite verb occurrence
1-5 (5)	51.5
6-20 (15)	26.2
21-40 (20)	10.0
41-138 (98)	12.3
All (138)	100.0

Table 2: Palula textual verb occurrences related to frequency ranges

Interestingly, half of the occurrences in text are accounted for by only the five topmost verbs, among them the two most productive verbs occurring in complex predicates, *bhe* ‘become’ and *the* ‘do, make’, with the other fifteen verbs in the “twenty list” comprising another quarter of all verbs. The following twenty verbs account for a tenth, while the remaining hundred or so verbs only represent twelve percent of the total number of verbs occurring in the text corpus. This does not mean that Palula has no more than 138 simple verbs,⁷ but it does suggest that the total number is likely to be in the hundreds rather than in the thousands, and that any verbs beyond these 138 are quite rare. It also suggests that the verbs *bhe-* ‘become’ and *the-* ‘do’ have a special status in the Palula verb

⁷ I have in fact elicited more or less complete paradigms for over 350 Palula verb stems.

lexicon: The way in which they are productively used as building blocks in the language compensates for the relatively small number of simple verbs.

3 Complex predicates in Palula

The Palula verb lexicon shares the ability associated with the “minimal type” (as discussed above) of encoding specialized events by means of complex predicates. Two common strategies world-wide (Viberg 1993: 348) are: (a) CP-formation by combining certain verbs with a noun or an adjective (often referred to as a light verb construction, Bowerman 2008: 163-165); and (b) CP-formation by combining two verbs (sometimes referred to as a serial-verb construction, Baker 2003: 227-230). Only the former strategy is well attested in Palula, where it is a productive and easily applicable strategy, especially for verbalizing culturally new concepts, and we find, perhaps not surprisingly, a substantial number of loan words (primarily from Urdu or Pashto) filling the so-called “host” slot of such complexes.⁸

3.1 Transitivity and grammatical relations in Palula

Before launching into a meaningful discussion of complex predicates, some crucial grammatical features of Palula need to be given a basic introduction. The relevant features are transitivity, case alignment and verb-agreement patterns.

Like Urdu, but unlike most other Shina varieties, Palula verb agreement is sensitive to the aspect expressed in the clause. While the inflected verb agrees (in person or in gender/number) with the intransitive and transitive subject alike (S and A, using Dixon’s (1994: 6) conventions) in all non-perfective tense-aspect-modality (TAM) categories, the verb always agrees (in gender/number) with the intransitive subject and the transitive object (S and O) in the perfective.⁹ Phrased another way, we can say that Palula shows accusative alignment in the non-perfective, as in example (9). Here the transitive verb *khyáanu* ‘is eating’ agrees with *so* ‘he’ (A). In the perfective, on the other hand, it displays ergative agreement, as in example (10). The intransitive verb *yhóolu* ‘came’ agrees with *karáaru* ‘leopard’ (S), while the transitive verb *khóola* ‘ate’ agrees with *kučúra* ‘dogs’ (O).

- (9) *so gíuli khyáan-u, wíi piláan-u*
he bread(FSG) eat.PRS-MSG water(MSG) drink.PRS-MSG
‘He is eating bread and drinking water.’
- (10) *karáaru yhóol-u, kučúra khóol-a thaní*
leopard(MSG) come.PFV-MSG dog.PL(M) eat.PFV-MPL QT
‘[She] said: “A leopard came and ate the dogs.”’

⁸ A unitary account of complex predicates of both types (as found in Urdu and some other South Asian languages and traditionally defined as “conjunct verbs” and “compound verbs”, respectively, Masica 1991: 326) is suggested by Butt (2003: 2).

⁹ Person agreement is limited to future and past imperfective (both non-perfective TAM categories), whereas gender/number agreement is applied to all other (participle-based) TAM categories.

As far as inflectional case is concerned, only the transitive subject (A) may receive non-nominative (i.e. ergative) case marking, and only in the perfective, i.e. exactly in those cases where we have ergative verb agreement (as described above).¹⁰ This case marking is exemplified by the *-a* added to *ḡaangúl* in (11). Nouns occurring as heads of any other core NPs (including direct objects), such as *ḡaangúl* in (12), are always coded in the nominative, as are also all heads of the A relation in the non-perfective.

- (11) *ḡaangul-á ma bhanḡóol-u*
 Jan.Gul-OB 1SG.NOM beat.PFV-MSG
 ‘Jan Gul beat me up.’
- (12) *ḡaangúl ba áak gáaḡ-u míiš de*
 Jan.Gul PRT IDEF big-MSG man be.PST
 ‘Jan Gul, however, was an old man.’

Pronominal case is slightly more complex (for a fuller treatment, see Liljegren 2008 (109-128, 258-259)), but suffice it to say that apart from an all-present pronominal contrast upheld between A and S in the perfective, the direct object (O) receives a differential (accusative) case marking, too.¹¹ The first person plural accusative case form *asaám*, as in (13), contrasts with the nominative *be* (1PL.NOM) as well as with the ergative *asím* (1PL.ERG).

- (13) *ninī dapáara asaám koó mhaarín*
 3PL.PROX.GN for 1PL.ACC some.NOM kill.3PL
 ‘Because of them some people may kill us.’

Transitivity is a feature of individual Palula verb stems. There is a strict distinction between intransitive and transitive verb stems, which means that a particular Palula verb triggers, almost without exception, either an ergative or an accusative alignment. Labile verbs (transitivity-wise) are very rare in the language. There is, on the other hand, a fairly productive valence-changing morphology, as illustrated in (14) and (15) with the transitive *nuuḡ-á* ‘turn s.t.’ (PFV *nuuḡóol*) derived from the intransitive *núuḡ* ‘turn’ (PFV *nuuḡíl*).

- (14) *xu bhílam ma nuuḡíl-i hín-i*
 but of.fear 1SG.NOM turn(ITR).PFV-F be.PRS-F
 ‘But because of fear I have turned back.’
- (15) *ghaš-í ba ghúuru nuuḡóol-u*
 catch-CV PRT horse turn(TR).PFV-MSG
 ‘Holding it he turned the horse around.’

¹⁰ Most nouns have an oblique case form (used as ergative or locative marker and in postpositional phrases), but in one of the declensions there is no oblique form different from the nominative.

¹¹ This is not the case for 1SG and 2SG, for which NOM and ACC have fused historically.

Apart from the fundamental subcategorization of verbs into transitive and intransitive, there is another distinction to be made between fully saturated intransitive/transitive verbs and intransitive/transitive verbs with an oblique object, the latter exemplified with *yarí* ‘peak’ in (16). Since verbs in Palula do not license double objects, such an oblique object usually needs to be coded by a postposition, here *the*, to set it apart from the direct object. While the oblique object tends to be inanimate, that is by no means always the case, as will become evident in our continued discussion of complex predicates.

- (16) *se yar-í the asím tas phedóol-u*
 DEF peak-OB to 1PL.ERG 3SG.ACC bring.PFV-MSG
 ‘We brought him to that peak.’

3.2 *Complex predicate composition in Palula*

While there is a small group of verbs that can participate in the more conventionalized complex predicates in Palula, the two inflected verbs, *bhe* ‘become’ and *the* ‘do, make’, displayed in (1)–(3), are by far the most common. As we also saw, these two are some of the overall most frequent verbs in the language. As for transitivity, *bhe* is lexically intransitive, as can be seen in (17), whereas *the*, as in (18), is transitive, the latter triggering ergative alignment (i.e. verb agreement in feminine singular with the direct object *jang* ‘fight’) and case assignment (the oblique form *tíi* of the third person singular and not the nominative *so*) in the perfective.

- (17) *jang široó bhíl-i*
 fight(F) start become.PFV-F
 ‘A fight broke out.’

- (18) *índi yhayí tíi jang široó thíl-i*
 here come.CV 3SG.OB fight(F) start do.PFV-F
 ‘When he had come here he started a fight.’

As for the non-verb component (NVC) it can either be a noun, an adjective or a lexical item that, for one reason or another, cannot be easily defined as either one of the two. A number of frequently occurring CPs are displayed in Table 3.

Verb	Gloss	NVC	Approx gloss	Probable origin/parallels ¹²	CP	Gloss		
<i>bhe</i>	'become'	<i>angaá</i>	'conscious'	Cf. Prs <i>āgāh</i> 'knowing, informed'	<i>angaá bhe</i>	'wake up, remember'		
		<i>ašáq</i>	'in love'	Ar <i>ʾišq</i> 'excessive love'	<i>ašáq bhe</i>	'fall in love'		
		<i>bač</i>	'safe'	Cf. H <i>bač</i> - 'be saved, escape'	<i>bač bhe</i>	'escape'		
		<i>čhub</i>	NO IND MEAN		<i>čhub bhe</i>	'ride, sit up'		
		<i>dup</i>	'deep, drowned'	OIA <i>*dubb</i> 'sink'	<i>dup bhe</i>	'drown'		
		<i>milaáu</i>	'met, meeting'	Cf. H <i>mīlāp</i> 'union, meeting'	<i>milaáu bhe</i>	'meet'		
		<i>óol</i>	NO IND MEAN		<i>óol bhe</i>	'guard'		
		<i>paidóo</i>	'born'	Prs <i>paidā</i> 'born, created'	<i>paidóo bhe</i>	'arise, be born'		
		<i>rawaán</i>	'move'	Prs <i>rawān</i> 'going, moving'	<i>rawaán bhe</i>	'get going'		
		<i>ráal</i>	'elevated, high'	OIA <i>*uparalla</i> - 'upper'	<i>ráal b</i>	'rise'		
		<i>sáaz</i>	'well'	Prs <i>sabz</i> 'fresh, good, healthy'	<i>sáaz bhe</i>	'recover'		
		<i>široó</i>	'started'	Ar <i>šurū</i> 'beginning'	<i>široó bhe</i>	'begin'		
		<i>šúum</i>	NO IND MEAN		<i>šúum bhe</i>	'defeat'		
		<i>tang</i>	'narrow'	Cf. Prs <i>tang</i> 'confined, tight'	<i>tang bhe</i>	'suffer, feel upset'		
		<i>teér</i>	'passed'	Psh <i>ter</i> 'passed, lapsed'	<i>teér bhe</i>	'pass'		
		<i>ting</i>	NO IND MEAN		<i>ting bhe</i>	'challenge, stand'		
		<i>xox</i>	'liking'	Psh <i>xwax</i> 'pleased, attractive'	<i>xox bhe</i>	'like'		
		<i>yaád</i>	'remembrance'	Prs <i>yād</i> 'memory, recollection'	<i>yaád bhe</i>	'remember'		
		<i>the</i>	'do/make'	<i>baát</i>	NO IND MEAN	Cf. <i>baát</i> 'stone' < OIA <i>*varta</i>	<i>baát the</i>	'sharpen'
				<i>bač</i>	'safe'	Cf. H <i>bač</i> - 'be saved, escape'	<i>bač the</i>	'save'
<i>bhootū</i>	'plowing'			OIA <i>*upōpta</i> 'sown'	<i>bhootū the</i>	'plough'		
<i>dóo</i>	NO IND MEAN			Cf. <i>dóok</i> 'back' < OIA <i>*dhākka</i>	<i>dóo the</i>	'carry (on back)'		
<i>hamlá</i>	'attack'			Ar(Prs) <i>hamla</i> 'attack, assault'	<i>hamlá the</i>	'attack'		
<i>hawaalá</i>	'handover'			Ar(Prs) <i>hawāla</i> 'custody, care'	<i>hawaalá the</i>	'hand over'		
<i>hiĵrát</i>	'migration'			Ar(Prs) <i>hiĵrat</i> 'departure, flight'	<i>hiĵrát the</i>	'migrate'		
<i>ibaadát</i>	'worship'			Ar(Prs) <i>ʾibādat</i> 'religious service'	<i>ibaadát the</i>	'worship'		
<i>inkaár</i>	'refusal'			Ar <i>inkār</i> 'denial, refusal'	<i>inkaár the</i>	'refuse'		
<i>ĵamá</i>	'collection'			Ar(H) <i>ĵama</i> 'collection, sum total'	<i>ĵamá the</i>	'gather, collect'		
<i>ĵargá</i>	'council'			Psh <i>ĵirgah</i> 'assembly, council'	<i>ĵarga the</i>	'consult'		
<i>ĵhaní</i>	'marriage'			OIA <i>ĵāni</i> 'woman, wife'	<i>ĵhaní the</i>	'marry'		
<i>káaṇ</i>	'ear'			OIA <i>kārṇa</i> 'ear'	<i>káaṇ the</i>	'listen, give heed'		
<i>kráam</i>	'work'			OIA <i>kārman</i> 'act, work'	<i>kráam the</i>	'work'		
<i>madád</i>	'help'			Ar <i>madad</i> 'help, assistance'	<i>madád the</i>	'help'		
<i>muqaabilá</i>	'contest'			Ar(Prs) <i>muqābala</i> 'contest, facing'	<i>muqaabilá the</i>	'compete'		

¹² The information under *Probable origin/parallels* is only included in order to give some suggestions as to relatedness (marked cf.) and likely source languages. In many cases it is obviously very difficult to say with any certainty by which route a word came to be used in Palula, or even whether it is a loan or an item inherited from an earlier stage of Indo-Aryan, such as OIA. For most lexical material of ultimately Arabic origin we can safely assume that it was mediated through one of the more immediate languages of wider communication in the region, thus partly reflecting the use such words already would have acquired in those languages. Ar(Prs) should be read as: corresponding to Persian form of Arabic origin word.

	<i>nimóos</i>	'prayer'	Prs <i>namāz</i> '(Muslim) prayer'	<i>nimóos the</i>	'pray (ritual prayers)'	
	<i>phóom</i>	NO IND MEAN		<i>phóom the</i>	'take care of'	
	<i>qisá</i>	'story'	Ar(Prs) <i>qissa</i> 'tale, story'	<i>qisá the</i>	'tell'	
	<i>ráal</i>	'elevated, high'	OIA * <i>uparalla-</i> 'upper'	<i>ráal the</i>	'raise'	
	<i>sáaz</i>	'well'	Prs <i>sabz</i> 'fresh, good,	<i>sáaz the</i>	'build, repair'	
	<i>široó</i>	'started'	Ar <i>šurū</i> 'beginning'	<i>široó the</i>	'start'	
	<i>šišóo</i>	'game'		<i>šišóo the</i>	'play'	
	<i>šuwéeli</i>	'goodness'		<i>šuwéeli the</i>	'treat well'	
	<i>šúug</i>	'affection'	Cf. Gaw <i>šūk</i> 'love, desire'	<i>šúug the</i>	'show affection'	
	<i>táma</i>	'expectation'		<i>táma the</i>	'expect, wait eagerly'	
	<i>tang</i>	'narrow'	Cf. Prs <i>tang</i> 'confined, tight'	<i>tang the</i>	'oppress, trouble'	
	<i>toóp</i>	'leap'		<i>toóp the</i>	'jump'	
	<i>xox</i>	'liking'	Psh <i>xwax</i> 'pleased, attractive'	<i>xox the</i>	'choose'	
	<i>yaád</i>	'remembrance'	Prs <i>yād</i> 'memory, recollection'	<i>yaád the</i>	'recall'	
<i>de</i>	'give/fall'	<i>baát</i>	'word, talk'	OIA <i>vārttā</i> 'business, tidings'	<i>baát de</i>	'tell, talk'
		<i>čéyi</i>	'cry'	Psh <i>čiy</i> 'noise'	<i>čéyi de</i>	'scream'
		<i>daawát</i>	'invitation'	Ar(Prs) <i>da'wat</i> 'invitation, feast'	<i>daawát de</i>	'invite'
		<i>dhreég</i>	NO IND MEAN	OIA <i>dairghá</i> 'length'	<i>dhreég de</i>	'lie down'
		<i>ḍhoó</i>	NO IND MEAN		<i>ḍhoó de</i>	'appear, come across'
		<i>géeli</i>	NO IND MEAN		<i>géeli de</i>	'accuse, make unhappy'
		<i>haát</i>	'hand'	OIA <i>hásta</i> 'hand'	<i>haát de</i>	'touch'
		<i>húkum</i>	'order'	Ar <i>ḥukm</i> 'order, decree'	<i>húkum de</i>	'order'
		<i>káanga</i>	NO IND MEAN	Cf. <i>kéengi</i> 'comb' < OIA	<i>káanga de</i>	'comb'
		<i>kháaḍ</i>	NO IND MEAN	Čf. <i>kháaṭu</i> 'lid'	<i>kháaḍ de</i>	'cover'
		<i>póo</i>	NO IND MEAN	OIA <i>páda-</i> 'foot'	<i>póo de</i>	'step on'
		<i>rhoó</i>	'song, recitation'	Cf. Gaw <i>rō</i> 'song, poem'	<i>rhoó de</i>	'sing, recite'
		<i>šúug</i>	'affection'	Cf. Gaw <i>šūk</i> 'love, desire'	<i>šúug de</i>	'feel affection'
<i>ḍhak</i>	'touch'	<i>jár</i>	'fever'	OIA <i>ḡvará</i> 'fever'	<i>jár ḍhak</i>	'have a fever'
<i>je</i>	'hit, beat'	<i>bhéengi</i>	'swimming'		<i>bhéengi je</i>	'swim'
<i>jháan</i>	'know'	<i>šóo</i>	'good'	OIA <i>śubha</i> 'bright, good'	<i>šóo jháan</i>	'be fond of, like'
<i>šač</i>	'rise'	<i>šid</i>	'coldness'	OIA <i>šitá</i> 'cold'	<i>šid šač</i>	'feel cold'
<i>be</i>	'go'	<i>nūndram</i>	'sleep OB'	OIA <i>nidrā́</i> 'sleep (N)'	<i>nūndram be</i>	'fall asleep'
<i>yhe</i>	'come'	<i>nūndra</i>	'sleep'	OIA <i>nidrā́</i> 'sleep (N)'	<i>nūndra yhe</i>	'feel sleepy'

Table 3: Examples of complex predicates in Palula

Gaw=Gawri/Kalam Kohistani (fr. Baart 1997), H=Hindustani (fr. Platts 1884), OIA=Old Indo-Aryan (fr. Turner 1966), Prs=Persian (fr. Platts 1884), Ar= Arabic (fr. Platts 1884), Psh=Pashto (fr. Raverty 1982 [1901])

For those CPs whose NVC is clearly identified as a noun, it is also an argument of the verb. This is obvious from the ergative verb agreement displayed with the NVC. In (19), *toóp* is the direct object with which the verb agrees in gender/number.

- (19) *eendáa maní ba íñç-a kaṭamuš-á dúši toóp thúil-i hín-i*
 like.this say.CV PRT bear-OB Katamosh-OB toward leap(F) do.PFV-F be.PRS-F
 ‘Having said that, the bear jumped toward Katamosh.’

In many CPs, the NVC is clearly adjectival, such as *tang* in (20), and is thus not treated as an argument of the verb.

- (20) *thú aní zangal-í buṭheé tang thúil-a hín-a*
 2SG.GN PROX forest-OB all narrow do.PFV-MPL be.PRS-MPL
 ‘You have troubled all [living beings] in this forest.’

Many complexes of the latter type have parallel constructions consisting of NVC+DO and NVC+BECOME in which the NVC remains the same (cf. *tang the* ‘trouble, oppress, make miserable, upset’ as in (20) and *tang bhe* ‘suffer, feel upset’ as in (21)). Often (but not without exception) the semantic relationship between these two is straightforward.

- (21) *bakáara húluk-a tang bhéen-im*
 flock heat-OB narrow become.PRS-FPL
 ‘The flock [of sheep and goats] suffers in the heat.’

An identical situation is found in many other languages in the region, most importantly in the donor languages of wider communication. Sometimes the very same elements are found as NVCs in those languages, combined with DO and BECOME (or BE). Some illustrative examples of such correspondences between Palula, Pashto and Urdu are given in Table 4.¹³

Verb	Palula	Pashto (PFV in parentheses)	Urdu	
BECOME	<i>paidóo bhe</i>	<i>paidaa kedəl</i>	<i>paidaa honaa</i>	‘arise, be born’
DO	<i>paidóo the</i>	<i>paidaa kawəl</i>	<i>paidaa karnaa</i>	‘produce, create’
BECOME	<i>široó bhe</i>	<i>šoro kedəl</i>	<i>šuruu honaa</i>	‘begin’
DO	<i>široó the</i>	<i>šoro kawəl</i>	<i>šuruu karnaa</i>	‘start’
BECOME	<i>tang bhe</i>	<i>tang-edəl (tang šwəl)</i>	<i>tang honaa</i>	‘suffer, feel upset’
DO	<i>tang the</i>	<i>tang-awəl (tang kṛəl)</i>	<i>tang karnaa</i>	‘oppress, trouble’
BECOME	<i>jamá bhe</i>	<i>ĵama kedəl</i>	<i>ĵama honaa</i>	‘assemble, gather (ITR)’
DO	<i>jamá the</i>	<i>ĵama kawəl</i>	<i>ĵama karnaa</i>	‘collect, gather (TR)’
BECOME	<i>teér bhe</i>	<i>ter-edəl (ter šwəl)</i>	--	‘pass (away)’
DO	<i>teér the</i>	<i>ter-awəl (ter kṛəl)</i>	--	‘pass (over), spend’
BECOME	<i>xox bhe</i>	<i>xwax-edəl (xwax šwəl)</i>	--	‘take one’s fancy, like’
DO	<i>xox the</i>	<i>xwax-awəl (xwax kṛəl)</i>	--	‘choose, charm’

¹³ The glossing of the complexes is approximate at best and is not taking into account any minor differences in semantics or usage that may be at hand between these languages. It should also be noted that some of the Pashto predicates show a higher degree of NVC-and-verb fusion in some of its tenses (Lorenz 1979: 86-88) as compared with Palula and Urdu.

BECOME	<i>xalóos bhe</i>	<i>xalaas-edəl (xalaas šwəl)</i>	--	'be set free, escape'
DO	<i>xalóos the</i>	<i>xalaas-awəl (xalaas kṛəl)</i>	--	'release'

Table 4: Examples of parallel complex predicates in Palula, Pashto and Urdu

Although a great deal of CPs conform to the aforementioned patterns and it seems to be how most newly acquired CPs can be described, they do not capture the entire phenomenon, at least not at first glance. Most importantly, a number of NVCs are nouns (at least historically or in the source language in case of borrowing), but still do not show the expected agreement pattern. Instead, another NP in the clause appears to be the direct object as far as syntax is concerned. In (22), for instance, the NVC *yaád* is not treated as the direct object in Palula, although it is a noun in Persian, the ultimate source of this borrowed element.

- (22) *míi tas yaád thíil-u*
 1SG.GN 3SG.ACC memory do.PFV-MSG
 'I remembered him [i.e. recollected having seen or met him].'

The NVC in (23) should be compared to the masculine noun *káaṅ* 'ear', which in all likelihood is its historical source. The direct object in this clause, however, is the feminine noun *baát* 'word, speech, talking'. Here, we are probably witnessing a language-internal relexicalization, perhaps aided by or modeled on a semantically and compositionally similar construction in a language of wider communication.

- (23) *jamjaá baačaa tasíi baát káaṅ na thíil-i*
 Jamja king 3SG.GN word(F) NVC='ear' NEG do.PFV-F
 'King Jamja didn't heed his [the prophet's] words.'

Two other, in this respect, similar CPs (listed in Table 3) are *ḍóo the* 'carry (on one's back)' and *baát the* 'sharpen [e.g. a knife]', where in all likelihood *ḍóo* is related to the noun *ḍóok* 'back', and *baát* to the noun *báat* 'stone'.¹⁴ In neither complex is the NVC treated as the direct object. (See examples (44) and (45) for example sentences with these CPs.)

The picture becomes even more diverse when we include CPs with other verbs. The most common verb participating in CPs after *bhe* 'become' and *the* 'do' is *de* 'give', see Table 3. Interestingly, we have some CPs with *de* that has an NVC that is treated as a direct object, such as *géeli* in (24), including verb agreement in gender but without being synchronically transparent. Such an NVC does not occur outside of this construction, and speakers of the language seem to be unable to gloss it independently.¹⁵

¹⁴ The two words *báat* and *baát* differ in pitch-accent, a phonemic contrast described in Liljegren & Haider (2009).

¹⁵ As pointed out by one of the reviewers, this may be a calque (probably of some age, as the connection is obscured by an umlaut and a slight semantic shift) of Urdu *gaalii denaa* 'to abuse, scold'.

- (24) *tū máa-the géeli dít-i*
 3SG.OB 1SG.NOM-to NVC give.PFV-F
 ‘He accused me [i.e. reminded me of my faults].’

In some such cases, as with *póo* in (25), we can trace the NVC to an earlier stage of the language (*páda-* ‘foot’ in Old Indo-Aryan, Turner 1966: 8056), where it really had full noun status, but obviously it does not exist in the modern-day language as a lexical item with independent reference.¹⁶

- (25) *yáḡdam tū áa ḡhandrayí ḡhulí póo dít-i*
 suddenly 3SG.OB IDEF snake.OB on NVC give.PFV-F
 ‘Suddenly he stepped on a snake.’

In many other cases, as in examples (26) and (27), whether or not the NVC is part of the argument structure, it is indeed difficult to exactly define the word lexically, an issue we will have reason to return to shortly.

- (26) *iṅ ba kaṭamuš-á the óol bhíi*
 bear PRT Katamosh-OB to NVC become.3SG
 ‘The bear, however, will [stay and] guard Katamosh.’

- (27) *eesé xalk-ūm the bíiḡ-i ziaát phóom thūi de*
 REM people-OB.PL to many-F much NVC do.3SG PST
 ‘He was taking very good care of such people.’

Although a full treatment of CPs in Palula, and a deeper understanding of their history, needs to include an analysis of complexes with verbs other than *bhe* and *the*, due to lack of space and time, I will focus almost exclusively on CPs with *bhe* and *the* in the remaining sections.

3.3 *Complex predicate categorization*

Several scholars have already identified two distinct structural types of CPs depending on the syntactic status of the NVC, more specifically whether or not the NVC plays the role of the direct object or not. Although Haig (2002) largely restricts his discussion to noun+verb CPs, I will use his terminology and refer to these two as non-incorporating and incorporating CPs, respectively, regardless of the lexical identity of the NVC. While the present analysis is built on Palula data and the CP composition in that particular language, I believe the following has a bearing on categorizing CPs in Indo-Aryan at large.

The non-incorporating CPs are those for which the NVC is considered part of the argument structure (as in examples (19) and (24)-(25) above). All non-incorporating CPs are transitive, and

¹⁶ The only word in current use for ‘foot, leg’ is *khur*. However, cf. *naalpoó* ‘barefoot’.

syntactically the NVC is the direct object of clauses headed by such CPs. No additional direct object can occur in those clauses. However, there are a few important subtypes, depending on the number of other possible participants in the events verbalized by non-incorporating CPs and how these are treated syntactically (again, I follow Haig (2002: 29) rather closely): a) saturated CPs, b) oblique complement CPs (Haig calls this type adpositional complement CPs), and c) possessor complement CPs.

Here it will be necessary to introduce the concept of “verb stretching” that I will be using throughout the rest of this article. Rather than seeing verbs as having an entirely fixed or lexically predefined argument structure, it is more helpful to identify argument structure constructions that a certain verb may be semantically compatible with and therefore picked out for. As more than one verb can fit into a particular construction of this sort, it is, likewise, not uncommon for a particular verb to appear in more than one construction. For example (from Goldberg 1995: 11), the word *kick*, can be used in no less than eight different argument structures: *she kicked the wall, she kicked him black and blue, she kicked the football into the stadium, she kicked at the football, she kicked his foot against the chair, she kicked him the football, the horse kicked, she kicked her way out of the operating room.* Although this can be applied in a less elaborate way for many verbs, some verbs are obviously more flexible than others and are susceptible to a higher degree of “stretching”, i.e. are or have become applicable to a wider range of arguments. These seem to be high-frequency verbs with a very generic semantics (Goldberg 2006: 77-79), and there is certainly no accident that some of those verbs are extensively used in complex predicates of the type discussed here.

Returning to the subclassification of non-incorporating CPs, saturated CPs express what can be termed semantically intransitive propositions. They normally involve only one participant coded by the syntactic agent subject, whereas the syntactic object refers to an event or an action. The CP *hijrát the* ‘migrate’, exemplified in (28), is a saturated CP.

- (28) *tíi taayúu hijrát thúil-i*
 3SG.OB from.there migration(F) do.PFV-F
 ‘He migrated from there.’ (B)

Oblique complement CPs occur with another argument in addition to the agent subject. Depending on the individual CP, this additional argument is coded as a particular non-nominative complement, usually as a postpositional phrase, such as *kaafiraanóom sangí* in (29). This oblique complement is often the semantic patient (usually human), whereas the syntactic direct object (i.e. the NVC), again, refers to an event. Other examples of oblique complement CPs are *phóom the* ‘take care of’ with *the* ‘to’ coding the additional argument (*xalkúm the* in example (27) above) and *hamlá the* with the postpositional argument headed by *jhulí* ‘on’ (see example (1) above).

- (29) *so aní [kaafir-aan-óom sangí] madád tháan-u*
 3MSG.NOM PROX infidel-PL-OB with help do.PRS-MSG
 ‘He’s helping these infidels.’

Possessor complement CPs also have an additional argument but one which is coded as a possessive of the NVC, such as *xudáyü* ‘God’s’ in example (30). These, however, seem to be less stable in Palula,

and some CPs alternate between possessor coding and oblique coding of their complement (cf. (31) with (29)).¹⁷

(30) *sirf áak [xudá-yü] ibaadát tha*
 only one God-GN worship do.IMP.SG
 ‘You shall worship one God only!’

(31) *áak maaldaár miiš-a [yariib-aan-úm-ii] madád thiił-i*
 IDEF wealthy man-OB poor-PL-OB-GN help do.PFV-F
 ‘A wealthy man helped the poor.’

Incorporating CPs are those where the NVC does not have argument status in the clause. While some scholars make an additional distinction between CPs with noun-NVCs and adjective-NVCs, the more relevant classification is the one where the differentiation between NVCs *with* argument status and NVCs *without* argument status is taken as the main diagnostics, regardless of the “independent” lexical status of this component. The reason for this will become even more obvious when we discuss the lexical identity of the NVC (see section 4). Incorporating CPs are formed with *bhe* (as in (32)), *the* (as in (33)), as well as with *de* (as in (34)). See (17)-(18), (20)-(23) and (26) for other examples of incorporating CPs.

(32) *tu ba jaangul-á the bi na ɽing bhil-u-(w)ee*
 2SG.NOM PRT Jan.Gul-OB to also NEG NVC become.PFV-MSG-Q
 ‘So you couldn’t even face Jan Gul?’

(33) *tii šiiti áak máakar šúka meewá jamá the bheš-ı*
 3SG.OB inside IDEF monkey dry.MPL fruit collection do.CV sit-CV
heensıl-u de
 stay.PFV-MSG PST
 ‘Inside [the cave] a monkey was sitting with dry fruit that he had collected.’

(34) *mii anı kéengi ghin-ı teenfi déeri káanga dıt-i*
 1SG.GN PROX comb take-CV REFL beard(F) NVC give.PFV-F
 ‘I took this comb and combed my beard.’

This goes back on an even more fundamental split between what I call two “basic argument templates”, that is basic syntactic structures (or particular verb-argument configurations, Du Bois 2003: 42) on which most clauses involving a CP seem to have been modeled, particularly the more productive ones. The first *basic argument template* (from here on simply BAT) is the combination of NVC and DO, as exemplified in (35), where NVC is an abstract noun denoting an activity carried out by the only participant (Part1), here the transitive subject:

¹⁷ A detailed study, however, may very well conclude that such “alternations” contribute to semantic nuancing.

- (35) *ak buzrúg teenüi ghoosť-á maᅇᅇa-yí nimáas thüi de*
 IDEF pious.man REFL house-OB veranda-OB prayer do.3SG PST
 ‘A pious man was praying on the veranda of his house.’ (B)

Often such CPs have a semantics of “carry out, perform NVC”, where NVC is an abstract noun denoting an *activity* carried out by the transitive subject:

Part₁ NVC_{activity} DO (*BAT 1*)

All CPs modeled this way are non-incorporating CPs. Perhaps the CPs belonging to the saturated subtype (as exemplified in (28) and (35)) can be seen as the more basic or “trivial” case, whereas the oblique complement and possessor complement subtypes, as seen in (29) and (30), respectively, represent further “stretching” of the particular verb, involving a second participant (Part2):

Part₁ on/with/to-Part₂ NVC_{activity} DO (*stretched BAT 1*)
 Part₁ Part₂’s NVC_{activity} DO (*stretched BAT 1*)

The second BAT is the combination of NVC and BECOME. Essentially NVC+BECOME combinations are – trivially one might say – examples of adjectival predication, such as the one in (36), with an approximate semantics of “becoming/being NVC”, where NVC is the *property* of the intransitive subject.

- (36) *dhuumüi paidóo bhül-i hün-i oóra ghoosť-á the yhéel-i hün-i*
 smoke(F) born become.PFV-F be.PRS-F this.here house-OB to come.PFV-F be.PRS-F
 ‘Smoke has arisen and has filled the house.’

All such CPs are incorporating:

Part₁ NVC_{property} BECOME (*BAT 2*)

The corresponding incorporating NVC+DO is a causative derivation of the NVC+BECOME construction, thus resulting in a transitive subject “making someone become Y”, as in (37), where the second participant is coded as a (syntactically) regular direct object.

- (37) *alataalaá aní insaan-üi faidá-yii dapáara paidóo*
 Allah.Exalted 3PL.PROX.NOM human.being-GN benefit-GN for born
thül-a hün-a
 do.PFV-MPL be.PRS-MPL
 ‘Allah the Exalted one has created them for the benefit of man.’

Note that on the surface the verb MAKE-BECOME (property) is identical to DO (activity):¹⁸

Part₁ Part₂ NVC_{property} MAKE-BECOME (*causative from BAT 2*)

As with the first-mentioned BAT, this one, too, can be stretched and involve additional, obliquely coded, participants, such as the third person singular in (38).

- (38) *ma [tas sangí] milaáu bhíl-u hin-u*
 1SG.NOM 3SG.ACC with met become.PFV-MSG be.PRS-MSG
 ‘I have met him.’

While it can be argued that such events are semantically transitive, the syntax as well as the agreement pattern remains intransitive:

Part₁ on/with/to-Part₂ NVC_{property} BECOME (*stretched BAT 2*)

Taking it one step further, this “stretched” structure can also be subject to a causative derivation, thus providing room for a third participant (as shown in example (39)):

Part₁ Part₂ on/with/to-Part₃ NVC_{property} MAKE-BECOME (*causative from stretched BAT 2*)

- (39) *míi tu munír-a sangí milaáu thíl-u*
 1SG.GN 2SG.NOM Munir-OB with met do.PFV-MSG
 ‘I introduced you to Munir.’

For a large number of CPs in Palula we seem to be able to define them according to this categorization, and some examples are given in Table 5.

¹⁸ While many verbs can go through valence increase through a regular morphological process (adding a suffix *-á* as shown above) this is not possible with *bhe* whose causative/transitive counterpart always is *the*. A discussion of the reverse process, by which valence-reduced counterparts of non-incorporating DO-complexes are derived (i.e. replacing *the* with *bhe*) is not pursued here due to lack of space and the need for further research. However, that does not seem to be widely applied (and unavailable for some NVCs), and such NVC *bhe* constructions also compete with the application of the regular passive suffix *-ĩj* to the verb: NVC *thaij*.

Basic argument template	Stretching with possessive complement	Stretching with oblique complement ¹⁹
<u>BAT 1</u>	⇒	
<i>bhootũ the</i> ‘plow’ [DO plowing]	<i>X-GEN ibaadát the</i> ‘worship X’ [DO X’s worship]	<i>X-OB jhulí hamlá the</i> ‘attack X’ [DO attack on X]
<i>hijrát the</i> ‘migrate’	<i>X-GEN táma the</i> ‘wait for, expect X’	<i>X-OB sangí jhaní the</i> ‘marry X’
<i>kráam the</i> ‘work’		<i>X-OB sangí madád the</i> ‘help X’
<i>nimóos the</i> ‘pray’		<i>X-OB the phóom the</i> ‘take care of X’
		<i>X-OB dúši toóp the</i> ‘jump toward X’
NON-INCORPORATING		
INCORPORATING		
<u>BAT 2</u>	⇒	
<i>bač bhe</i> ‘escape’ [BECOME safe]		<i>X-OB the ašák bhe</i> ‘fall in love with X’ [BECOME “in love” to X]
<i>ɖup bhe</i> ‘drown’		<i>X-OB sangí milaáu bhe</i> ‘meet X’
<i>jamá bhe</i> ‘gather’		<i>X-OB the óol bhe</i> ‘guard X’
<i>ráal bhe</i> ‘rise’		<i>X-OB dũ síum bhe</i> ‘defeat X’
<i>rawaán bhe</i> ‘get going’		
↓		↓
<u>Causative BAT 2</u>		
<i>bač the</i> ‘save’ [MAKE X safe]		<i>XY-OB sangí milaáu the</i> ‘introduce X to Y’ [MAKE X met with Y]
<i>jamá the</i> ‘collect’		<i>XY-OB the óol the</i> ‘make X guard Y’
<i>ráal the</i> ‘raise’		

Table 5: Categories of Palula complex predicates based on *basic argument templates*

The reasoning, however, assumes that all incorporating CPs with *the* are causative derivations of a more basic CP with *bhe* and an identical NVC. There are some challenges to this. First, the relationship between some *bhe*-complexes and their *the*-counterparts is not always entirely straightforward, neither semantically or syntactically. The CP *ting bhe*, exemplified in (40), fits into the category “stretched BAT 2”, with two human arguments, and the complex can be glossed as ‘face, challenge (someone)’. Its *the*-counterpart, however, is a “causative from BAT 2”, without any additional third argument, and its semantics – something like ‘hold, keep, support (someone/something)’ – is not immediately deducible from the former, although a reconstructed glossing of the NVC as ‘immovable’ to a certain extent would explain how these two parallel complexes have lexicalized.

- (40) *nis* *the koó* *ting* *na* *bháan-a*
 3SG.PROX.ACC to someone NVC NEG become.PRS-MPL
 ‘No-one could face him.’

¹⁹ The postpositions exemplified are: *dũ* ‘from’, *dúši* ‘toward’, *jhulí* ‘on’, *sangí* ‘with’, *the* ‘to’.

- (41) *se bi čúur páanĵ bhe ma na ɽing tháai bhóon de*
 3PL.NOM also four five become.CV 1SG.NOM NEG NVC do.INF be.able.3PL PST
 ‘Even they, being four five people, were not able to hold me.’

Another example of a *bhe/the*-pair with a somewhat unexpected semantic relationship is *yaád bhe* vs. *yaád the*. Instead of a simple valence relationship, there is a contrast between, on the one hand, an involuntary experience, ‘come to one’s mind, suddenly remember’, as in (42),²⁰ and on the other, a voluntary or conscious cognitive act carried out, ‘think about someone, recollect something, memorize something’, as in (43) (= (22) presented above).

- (42) *tasíi se baát ma yaád bhíl-i*
 3SG.GN DEF word(F) 1SG.NOM NVC become.PFV-F
 ‘I [male speaker] remembered what he had said.’ / ‘His words came to my mind.’

- (43) *míi tas yaád thíl-u*
 1SG.GN 1SG.ACC NVC do.PFV-MSG
 ‘I remembered him.’ / ‘I thought about him.’

It should be noted that the corresponding contrast in Urdu is captured by the two CPs *yaad aanaa* (NVC + COME) and *yaad karna* (NVC + DO), respectively.

Second, there are NVC+*bhe/the* pairings where the *the*-complex is by far the more frequently occurring and in some cases seems to be the more basic of the two. The incorporating CP *ḍóo the* ‘carry on one’s back’, as exemplified in (44), is one of these.

- (44) *tíi tas uḥíi ḍóo thíl-u*
 3SG.OB 3SG.ACC lift.up.CV NVC do.PFV-MSG
 ‘He lifted him up and carried him on his back.’

Some incorporating NVC+*the* complexes, such as *baát the* ‘sharpen’ in example (45), apparently lack any natural *bhe*-counterpart altogether.

- (45) *míi kaṭéeri baát thíl-i*
 1SG.GN knife(F) NVC do.PFV-F
 ‘I sharpened the knife.’

²⁰ The form of the “non-nominative experiencer” (cf. Hook’s “dative subject” (1990: 326-330)) does not contrast with the nominative in 1SG, while for e.g. 3SG, 1PL, 2PL, 3PL an accusative form must be used, and for nouns the oblique (which is also used to express some locative meanings). In this sentence the intransitive syntactic subject, with which the verb agrees in feminine gender, is ‘his words’. The literal meaning can be captured by something like: ‘His word became recollected in/by me.’ Cf. other expressions with a non-nominative experiencer, such as *míiṣ-a bhíli séeti* ‘The man became frightened [was overcome by fear]’, where ‘man’ is an oblique noun and ‘fear’ a nominative noun with which the intransitive verb ‘adhered’ agrees.

None of these objections, however, invalidates the claim that we are dealing with two fundamental structures, and although there are some discrepancies, especially when considering constructions with a longer history in the language, the tendencies for NVC+*bhe/the* pairings to be related in terms of valence are strong enough to stand as important models for newly acquired CPs. This is further strengthened by the abundance of such pairings in languages of wider communication (as described above and exemplified in Table 4).

There is another piece of evidence for a fundamental differentiation between the two templates, or rather for placing these two structures differently along a fusion (or perhaps rather a co-lexicalization) scale. While a negative particle *na* can only occur immediately before the inflected verb in a non-incorporating CP, it can occur either before the verb or before the entire incorporated CP, as displayed in Table 6. Here it becomes clear, when comparing the incorporating CP category with the non-incorporating CP category, that the former is further ahead of the latter in terms of co-lexicalizing the NVC with the verb component. Haig (2002: 42-44) suggests a similar categorization of different types of CP in Kurdish as well as for Iranian at large.

	Incorporating CP	Non-incorporating CP
Pre-NVC negation	<i>na bač bhîlu</i> ‘didn’t escape’ <i>na dîo thîlu</i> ‘didn’t carry’	* <i>na jargá thîlu</i>
Pre-verb negation	<i>bač na bhîlu</i> ‘didn’t escape’ <i>dîo na thîlu</i> ‘didn’t carry’	<i>jargá na thîlu</i> ‘didn’t consult’

Table 6: Negative particles in incorporating vs. non-incorporating CPs

It is certainly no coincidence that some of the well-established and semantically more opaque CPs are also the ones where we frequently find the negative particle in the pre-NVC position, as in example (41) above, and in (46) below, rather than in the immediate pre-V position.

- (46) *karáaru asée baát [na] kaṇ thî, asaám ghaší ba khúu*
 leopard 1PL.GN word NEG NVC do.3SG 1PL.ACC catch.CV PRT eat.3SG
 ‘The leopard won’t listen to our words. He’ll catch us and eat us.’ (B)

Here I need to point out that I am not proposing entirely homogenous and discrete categories, since the data suggest that we are dealing with a degree of fusion, a continuum, along which these two structural types tend to cluster, but where a small minority of CPs do show ambiguity (as to whether they are incorporating or not) and where a few incorporating CPs obviously are even further ahead of other incorporating CPs in its development into a higher degree of co-lexicalization, which may or may not lead to fusion (see Section 4) between the NVC and the verb component.

4 Possible approaches

Already in the previous section we made an attempt at categorizing and analyzing the CPs found in Palula. However, there are a number of questions yet to be answered relating to this phenomenon:

What is the origin of CPs in Palula? What is their role in the language of today? What is the syntactic and lexical identity or status of CPs and their verb and non-verb components, respectively?

It is obvious that the CPs found in Palula are of various kinds (see Table 3) and have arisen at different time periods. That in itself suggests not one single origin but multiple origins, where structures already well-established or native to the language (or language family) have facilitated the incorporation of new lexical material along the same lines,²¹ further reinforced by the existence of very similar structures in a larger area (comprising at least South and Central Asia (Bower 2008: 165)) and in languages belonging to a number of different genetic groupings: Indo-Aryan (Masica 1991: 326, 368), Iranian (Haig 2002; Folli et al. 2005; Babrakzai 1999: 110-112), Nuristani (personal communication with Richard Strand 2009), Tibeto-Burman (personal communication with Scott DeLancey;²² Watters 2002: 76-77), Dravidian (Krishnamurti 2003: 370-373), Turkic (Bower 2004; Öztürk 2005: 55-56), Burushaski (Lorimer 1927: 513; Berger 1998: 212-218), and Kusunda (Watters 2006: 77, 90). This process is particularly pertinent to the interaction between Palula and the languages of wider communication that it has been exposed to (Pashto, Urdu and, probably more indirectly, Persian). We can perhaps talk about internal structure facilitating, and eventually accommodating to, external pressure.²³

We already saw some example of old “native” CPs, consisting of the verbs BECOME, DO or GIVE and an NVC that originally may have been a noun, and in some cases still is a homophone of a regular noun. At some stage it ceased to be regarded as a nominal argument of the verb, opening up for a second participant to be coded as the direct object.

We may be able to trace an even older layer of particle verbs on which these early complexes may have been modeled, as suggested for Sanskrit “verbal compounds” with *kr* ‘make’, *bhū/as* ‘be’, *dhā* ‘put’ and *i* ‘go’ already by Whitney (1960 [1889]: 396, 400-401). Considering the high degree of fusion between the NVC and the verb of some of the older CPs in Palula we may consider them as already losing their independent status as words, perhaps on their way of (if they survive) eventually becoming morphologically fused with the verb. While those probably served as models in the past for new complexes to be formed in the language, often with foreign lexical material in the NVC slot, that role has been taken over by the numerous and still transparent DO NVC_{activity} and BECOME NVC_{property} templates. In many cases these complexes are direct calques of CPs in Urdu or Pashto, an observation in line with previous claims that there is a strong cross-linguistic correlation between loan verbs and complex predicates using DO (Bower 2008: 173).

In some works on this topic (Verma 1993: 201; Mohanan 1993: 165; 1994: 214), a strict distinction has been drawn up between the verbs used in CPs as so-called verbalizers or light verbs and their corresponding use/specification as “full” (i.e. simple) verbs. Often the verbs as used in CPs are described as “emptied” or “bleached” of their “original” semantic content. I do not propose such

²¹ Cf. Berger (1998: 212) on NVC+verb complexes (“Verbalkomposita”) in Burushaski: “Das System der verbalen Komposition ist im Bur. zweifellos heimischen Ursprungs, doch haben bei der weiteren Ausbildung auch Lehnübersetzungen aus dem Urdu mitgewirkt.” [“The system of Verbal Composites is without doubt native to Bur., although calques from Urdu have contributed to its further development.”]

²² The feature is more prevalent in those Tibeto-Burman languages that have been in contact with Indo-Aryan longer and more intensely, an areal linguistic grouping (after Matisoff (1990: 113)) referred to as “Indospheric” as opposed to “Sinospheric” languages.

²³ This idea is somewhat echoed in Masica’s (1993: 161) statement: “Borrowed vocabulary [...] seems to be a necessary but insufficient cause of conjunct verb formation.”

a distinction, as I think it is less helpful in explaining why complex predicates arise in the first place (as duly pointed out by Masica (1993: 159-160)). Instead I suggest that there is a limited number of verbs (in Palula *bhe*, *the* and possibly *de*, and in many other languages verb with a similar semantics, i.e. BECOME/BE, DO/MAKE and GIVE/PUT) that are already extremely generic or skeletal (Goldberg 1995: 40-41), and with the passing of time, and with the growth in number of CPs, have become even more “stretched”,²⁴ an idea also embraced by Butt (2003: 18).²⁵

While more specialized verbs have a much narrower scope, these generic verbs used in CPs have a large “repertoire” and are semantically flexible and open to a number of argument structures. To use Givón’s (2001: 105-171) terminology, all syntactic frames or prototypes (approximately corresponding to my BATs) needed to express virtually any proposition in the language are provided by this severely limited group of verbs, often through metaphorical extension (2001: 140). For instance, quite a few CPs in Palula, such as *iraadá the* ‘decide’ (47) and *išaará the* ‘signal’ (48), take a clausal complement, each of a particular kind.

- (47) *alataalaá [tas dubaará dunya-yí the phray-ainií] iraadá thūil-u*
 Allah.Exalted 3SG.ACC again world-OB to send-VN decision do.PFV-MSG
 ‘Allah the Exalted one decided to send him another time to the world.’

- (48) *se kuṇaak-á the išaará thūil-u ki [ma khúna yha] thaní*
 DEF child-OB to signal do.PFV-MSG COMP 1SG.NOM near come.IMP.SG QT
 ‘He signaled to the child to come to him. (lit. He signaled to the child, saying: Come here!)’

The formal limitations of each individual verbalizer are to do mainly with morphological transitivity. This sometimes results in a “mismatch” between the syntactic structure triggered by a CP and the semantics of the same clause. We may for instance use a transitive *the*-CP to capture what is essentially a single-participant event, such as *kráam the* ‘work’, which in a semantic sense is intransitive. On the other hand we may use an intransitive *bhe*-CP for what is really a two-participant event, such as *ašáq bhe* ‘fall in love’ in (49), where the second participant syntactically is treated as an oblique complement, while it in a semantic sense is an essential core participant in the proposition. (See (42) for another “mismatching” example.)

- (49) *se pháí [se maçook-á the] ašáq bhíl-i*
 DEF girl DEF Machoke-OB to in.love become.PFV-F
 ‘The girl fell in love with Machoke.’

²⁴ It is in fact quite likely that the verb *the* ‘do’, now reserved for abstract-noun objects denoting activities, has lost a previous connotation of concrete creation. In the (in many respects) more conservative dialect spoken in Biori Valley a concrete use of the same verb is attested in expressions such as *ak šúunge uštím tháanu* ‘He makes a yoke from a [tree] branch’, whereas in Palula of the Ashret Valley, the verb *samá* ‘build, make’ has to be used for physical creation of that kind.

²⁵ Butt’s focus, however, is on verb-verb complexes rather than on nonverb-verb complexes.

Turning to the NVC, we have already seen that its syntactic status may somehow be that of a noun (in non-incorporating CPs) or that of an adjective (in incorporating CPs). That is also how so-called conjunct verbs in Indo-Aryan are described by, for instance, Masica (1991: 326). But as pointed out by both Radloff (1998: 34), and Schmidt & Kohistani (2008: 207), many NVCs in Shina do not fit neatly into any one of these two part of speech categories. Instead both the Gilgiti and the Kohistani varieties contain a great number of CPs with an NVC that never or rarely occur outside a CP. Radloff refers to them as *pre-categorical*, whereas Schmidt & Kohistani use the terms “quasi-nouns” and “quasi-adjectives”, and describe them as largely abstract in meaning and often corresponding to English gerunds or infinitives. Indeed, even syntactically they have lost some of the abilities associated with more typical nouns or adjectives. Although there is a certain variability between individual NVC, they are, for instance, seldom or never modified (the nouns by adjectives, or the adjectives by adverbs). As for the “adjectival” NVCs, these are usually not used attributively, and the “noun-like” NVCs cannot normally take a determiner.

Morphologically, too, the NVCs are less typical in their adjectiveness or nounness. Unlike firmly established descriptive adjectives, the adjectival NVCs are – to my present knowledge – never inflected for gender, number or case agreement. The latter lines up with the fact that most newly acquired adjectives (outside CPs) used in the language are morphologically invariant as well as distributionally limited. Noun-like NVCs are usually not inflected for case or number, although there are some cases where this is possible, such as in *hamléé thūla* ‘attacked (lit. did attacks)’, capturing the idea of a repeated or continuing attack.

There is nothing suggesting that the NVC would be anything less than a phonological word, or that any individual NVC would be in the middle of a phonological fusion process with the verb component.²⁶ Its relatively independent word status vis-à-vis the verb word is further supported by the possible insertion of the negative particle between the NVC and the verb, as described above. Lexically, however, the individual identity of NVCs is often weak, as evidenced by the following: a) Some entirely native NVCs do not occur outside a CP, and are thus by themselves not synchronically transparent (e.g. *óol* in (26)), b) The meaning of some native NVCs is only traceable by access to an earlier stage of the language when the item had an individual lexical reference, now lost to modern-day speakers (e.g. *póo* in (25)), c) The NVC may be homonymous or near-homonymous with e.g. another noun in the language with which it for good reasons can be considered etymologically related, but its use as a component of a CP does not straightforwardly justify the item to be treated as a special sense of its “regular” use (e.g. *ḍóo* in (44)), d) Many non-native NVCs do not occur, or only exceptionally occur, outside the CP, and although such words can be looked up in a dictionary of e.g. Urdu or Pashto where they may be labeled as nouns or adjectives with certain meanings, and those meanings are known to educated people in the community, it is uncertain to what degree that can be directly applied to Palula and the average language user (e.g. *ašáq* in (49)).

All of the above leads us to consider a great many NVCs as semi-words (Bickel & Nichols 2007: 193). Although they in some senses behave word-like, they also lack very many important characteristics of “full” lexical words and, perhaps most importantly, they stand in a close-knit relationship to the particular verb they team up with within CPs. It therefore makes sense to regard

²⁶ Although Butt (2003: 13-16) holds that so-called light verbs do not (easily) enter into a grammaticalization cline, instead tend to remain very stable, there are diachronic examples, in the region, of complex predicates co-lexicalizing and thereby giving rise to idiosyncratic morphological and/or phonological patterns within its verbal paradigm (Genetti 2008; Watters 2006: 59).

CPs as lexical elements by themselves, perhaps as “distributed lexical verbs” (Givón 2001: 162-163). In any case, I conclude that the resulting argument structure best be treated as a feature of the construction as a whole – particularly its semantics – and not as deducible from any one of its two components or as the straightforward result of a certain combination of an NVC and a particular verb.

Along the lines of Cognitive Construction Grammar (Goldberg 2006: 77-79, 213ff.), I am suggesting that the generic verbs that occur in CPs also are the verbs among the earliest acquired by children and other language learners (although it should be pointed out that no such focused study has been carried out on Palula). As such they lead the way in acquiring syntax and a strong link is thus gradually established between the constructions these verbs occur in and the general semantics of certain propositions in terms of agentivity, causativity and predication. As vocabulary increases and more combinations of generic verbs and NVCs are incorporated, generalizations over the syntax-semantics interface – approximating the *basic argument templates* suggested above – facilitates further learning and makes it easy to assimilate new verbal meanings into these patterns. Such an analysis would also account for on-the-spot creations of new complex predicates or novel uses of this small class of generic verbs, by native speakers and second-language users alike (Goldberg 1995: 28-29, 40-42, 2006: 58-59).

Apart from a recognition of a general interplay between syntax and semantics in the formation and use of constructions such as CPs, it remains to be shown whether and how the particular subsets of complex predicates (i.e. my *basic argument templates*) identified above can be related in a systematic way to certain discourse profiles, as predicted by Du Bois (2003: 42-43, 51-52) in his Preferred Argument Structure approach where “[p]opulations of verbs and constructions may be seen as organized into collectives based on similarities” in a cognitive-pragmatic sense (2003: 47).

Although my treatment, hopefully, has shown a great degree of systematicity in the way many, if not most, CPs are modeled on certain *basic argument templates*, I largely excluded from my discussion such Palula CPs that are formed with other verbs than BECOME and DO. In a fuller treatment, however, we would need to address the descriptive challenges that CPs formed with GIVE, HIT, COME, etc. present us with, and address the question of idiomaticity, which is not an entirely straightforward one (Anderson 1992: 307-308), and one that would be best served by a scalar treatment such as the six-stage process of idiomatization (ranging from complete innovation to opaque idioms) outlined in Clark & Clark (1979: 804-805).

An issue that would need future attention is the role played by complex predicates vis-à-vis simple predicates in the individual languages, and whether it is possible to spot any clear tendency for the number of complex predicates to increase in proportion to the total verb lexicon and in frequency of use. An interesting, and related, question is, on the one hand, to what extent the coining of new complex predicates contributes aspectual or fine-semantic nuances as compared to simple predicates with a very similar semantics, and, on the other hand, to what extent complex predicates replace synonymous or near-synonymous simple predicates. In the latter case we would expect a rather radical restructuring of the entire verb lexicon, eventually leading to a minimal verbal system (as described in Section 2) with only a remnant of simple verbs left, whereas in the former case the result would be an enriched verb lexicon with numerous parallel complex and simple verbs, making fine-semantic differentiations possible and providing new means for the language user to express different registers.

5 Conclusions

The two central queries addressed in this paper, with special regard to Indo-Aryan Palula, were the following: First, what is the grammatical and lexical identity of complex predicates and their integral components? Second, is it possible to pin down any specific properties of a complex predicate or any one of its components that govern or sanction a particular argument structure?

As for the first main question, an inventory of a Palula corpus identifies complexes consisting of the verbs BECOME and DO as the overall most common CPs in the language. A systematic analysis of a large number of such CPs makes it possible, on the basis of the syntactic behavior of the non-verb component (NVC), to categorize them as either incorporating or non-incorporating. The diagnostics is whether or not the NVC is treated as a direct object with regard to perfective verb agreement. All BECOME-CPs are incorporating, whereas CPs with DO can be either incorporating or non-incorporating. The perfective transitive verb in non-incorporating CPs invariably agrees in gender and number with the NVC, as is also the case with simple transitive predicates vis-à-vis nouns functioning as heads of their direct objects. The NVC in an incorporating CP, on the other hand, never triggers verb agreement of this kind. While most NVCs are invariable as to their form, there are a few NVCs of the non-incorporating type that can be preceded by an attribute or a determiner or even be pluralized under certain circumstances. However, to define the NVC as either a lexical noun or as a lexical adjective on these grounds turns out to be premature, as a great many NVCs, regardless of their diachronic or etymological identity, rarely or never occur outside a CP. Instead, it seems the CPs are better regarded as a subtype of distributed lexical verbs, consisting of two clearly discernable phonological words, one of them a verb (belonging to a small subclass) with a very generic semantics and the other a semi-word with a varying degree of independent lexical status. Although morphological material, such as the negative particle, can be inserted after the NVC and immediately before the verb, most of the time they are syntactically contiguous. However, incorporating CPs seem to display a higher degree of fusion or co-lexicalization, as the negative particle can occur either in the pre-verb position or in the pre-entire-complex position, and the latter even more so with certain well-established NVCs. This variation is not observed with the non-incorporating CPs, where pre-complex negation is considered ungrammatical.

As for the second question, the analysis of the various clauses in which CPs with BECOME and DO occur makes it possible for us to make some interesting generalizations and suggest that an overwhelming majority of these are modeled on two so-called *basic argument templates*: 1. DO ACTIVITY, and 2. BECOME PROPERTY. Typically the NVC used in the first template is an abstract noun denoting an activity carried out by an agent, such as ‘work’, ‘prayer’ or ‘migration’, syntactically coded as a transitive subject and a direct object, respectively: ‘She does prayer’ (= ‘She prays’). The NVC used in the second template is an adjective denoting a quality or propensity, typically applicable to humans, such as ‘well’, ‘safe’ or ‘whole’, and syntactically it is coded as an adjectival predication: ‘He becomes safe’ (= ‘He escapes’). Either of these templates can be syntactically expanded, or “stretched”, in various ways, as to accommodate semantic propositions involving e.g. additional participants. The BAT with DO can, for instance, add an oblique argument to express an activity done to/with/for someone; the activity is still the direct object, syntactically, but the semantic patient finds a place in the argument structure as, e.g., a postpositional phrase: ‘She does help with me’ (= ‘She helps me’). By causativizing the second BAT (through (re)using DO to mean ‘make s.o. become’) the speaker is provided with the structure MAKE-BECOME PROPERTY: ‘He

makes me become safe' (= 'He saves me'). A prerequisite for this structural "elasticity," is that the few verbs used in CPs are extremely generic without being entirely devoid of semantic content or showing even the slightest tendency of losing their intrinsic syntactic transitivity.²⁷ However, no matter how productive or pervasive certain patterns seem to be, with all metaphorical extensions that are possible and all the idiosyncrasies or idiomatizations that are bound to have evolved over the large time spans that CPs have existed, any attempts at systematically mapping any one argument structure to a particular nonverb-verb combination would naturally fail. Instead, it makes more sense to see each complex predicate, with its unique semantic properties, as a whole (just like any simple predicate), which assigns case and sanctions particular arguments.

ABBREVIATIONS

A	transitive subject function	OB	oblique
ACC	accusative	PFV	perfective
BAT	basic argument template	PL	plural
COMP	complementizer	PROX	proximate
CP	complex predicate	PRS	present
CV	converb	PRT	particle
DEF	definite	PST	past
ERG	ergative	Q	question marker
F	feminine	QT	quotative
GN	genitive	REFL	reflexive
IDEF	indefinite	REM	remote
IMP	imperative	S	intransitive subject function
ITR	intransitive	SG	singular
NEG	negative	TAM	tense, mood, aspect
NOM	nominative	TR	transitive
M	masculine	1	first person
NP	noun phrase	2	second person
NVC	non-verb component	3	third person
O	transitive object function		

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²⁷ Note that this "elasticity" is markedly different from the "empty" semantics of e.g. Japanese *suru*, the now classical example of a *light verb* (Grimshaw and Mester 1988: 210).

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