Predicational encoding in Upper Guinea linguistic area

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Abstract: The paper aims to study nominal and locative predication in Upper Guinea Portuguese-related creoles and the West African languages, mentioned in the literature as substrate - Mandinka, Wolof, and Temne - and/or adstrate - several Atlantic languages. We will look at three features that characterize the copular systems of Upper Guinea creoles: (i) the split between nominal and locative predication, (ii) nonverbal predication, and (iii) copulaless predication. The comparison of our findings in the Upper Guinea creoles and in the languages that contributed to their formation and/or to their further development will allow us to assess influences of the latter in the emergence of the predicational system of this group of creoles. Further outputs will be to show, on the one hand, the grammatical proximity of Upper Guinea creoles as to their predicational system and, on the other hand, to uncover possible commonalities and differences among the Atlantic languages.
Keywords: Copulas. Nonverbal predication. Upper Guinea Portuguese-related creoles. Substrate. Adstrate. Atlantic languages.

Codificação predicativa na área linguística da Alta Guiné

Resumo: Este artigo tem como objetivo o estudo da predicação nominal e locativa nos crioulos portugueses da Alta Guiné e nas línguas da África ocidental que têm sido referidas na literatura como línguas de substrato - Mandinka, Wolof e Temne - e/ou de adstrato - várias línguas atlânticas. Focar-nos-emos no estudo de três aspetos que caraterizam o sistema das cópulas dos crioulos da Alta Guiné: (i) a divisão entre predicação nominal e locativa, (ii) a predicação não-verbal e (iii) a predicação sem cópula. A comparação dos resultados nos crioulos da Alta Guiné e nas línguas que contribuíram para a sua formação e/ou para o seu subsequente desenvolvimento permitirá avaliar possíveis influências destas últimas na emergência do sistema predicativo destes crioulos. Resultados adicionais serão mostrar o nível de proximidade dos crioulos da Alta Guiné em relação ao seu sistema predicativo, e revelar possíveis semelhanças e diferenças entre as línguas atlânticas.
Palavras-chave: Cópulas. Predicação não-verbal. Crioulos portugueses da Alta Guiné. Substrato. Adstrato. Línguas atlânticas.

Introduction

The Upper Guinea region is characterized by a varied linguistic situation and intense language contact. Besides the presence of Atlantic and Mande languages and some non-indigenous languages such as French, Portuguese, English, and Arabic, we also find a group of Portuguese-related creoles, i.e. the Upper Guinea creoles (UGCs),

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i.e. Caboverdean (CV), Bissau-Guinean (GB), and Casamancese (CS), spoken in the archipelago of Cabo Verde, in Guinea-Bissau, and Lower Casamance (southern Senegal), respectively.[2]

Concerning the West African languages spoken in the area, they mainly belong to two language families, the Mande and the Atlantic. Among the languages mentioned in the literature as contributors to the emergence of the UGCs or their further development, i.e. substrate and adstrate, we find Mandinka (Mande), Temne (Mel), and several Atlantic languages such as Wolof, Nyun, Biafada, and Fula (North), Balanta, Diola, and Manjaku - a subgroup which also includes Mankanya and Pepel (Bak).[3] In particular, Rougé (1994) has indicated Mandinka, Wolof, and Temne as possible substrate languages. Moreover, Quint and Moreira's (2019) work have revealed that most African-derived lexical items, common to CV, GB, and CS, derive from Mandinka, Wolof, and, to a lesser extent, Temne, while languages such as Balanta, Biafada, Fula, Manjaku, Mankanya, and Nyun have contributed a very small number of shared lexical items.[4] A few studies have investigated influences at the structural level: Lang (2009) has shown influences of Wolof in CV grammar; Holm and Intumbo (2009) have compared Balanta grammar to GB grammar; and Kihm (2011) has discussed the possible role of languages such as Balanta, Diola, Manjaku, and Mankanya as contributors to GB. Regarding copulas, Baptista (2004) has suggested possible influences of Wolof in CV copular clauses. Moreover, Truppi (2019) has compared the system of copulas of GB, CS, and CV with those of Mandinka and Wolof and revealed possible influences from these languages in the emergence of the UGCs copulas system. According to her results, UGCs are *split* languages, i.e. they use different copulas for nominal and locative predication. According to Stassen's (2013) typological distinction, *split* languages such as Spanish or Mandarin Chinese use different copulas for nominal and locative predication, while *share* languages such as English use the same copula

[2]According to authors such as Quint (2000), among others, Papiamentu, a Spanish-related Caribbean creole, also belongs to the UGC group. However, this language is excluded from the present study. A preliminary investigation has shown that it does not share with the other UGCs any relevant commonality as to the predicational encoding and copular system: it is not a split language, it does not allow nonverbal predication, and it uses the verbal copula *ta* with both nominal and locative predicates.

[3]We follow here the classification proposed in Segerer and Pozdniakov (in press). According to the authors, the Mel languages - among which we find Temne - are not part of the Atlantic family. The two groups are clearly related insofar as they both belong to the Niger-Congo phylum. The same is not clear as to Mande languages: although they are traditionally considered as belonging to the Niger-Congo phylum, there is at present no convincing evidence for this classification (CREISSELS; SAMBOU, 2013; among others).

[4]As for continental UGCs, in particular CS, lexical contributions of languages such as Nyun are more numerous than in CV (Cobbinah, p.c.).

with both predicate types. Furthermore, UGCs have nonverbal copulas for nominal predication in perfective contexts and allow copulaless predication. As it is well known, the split encoding of these languages is also found in their lexifier language, i.e. European Portuguese (EP). By contrast, EP does not allow nonverbal and copulaless predication. EP copular clauses always need a verb such as *ser* 'to be' or *estar* 'to be, to stay' for individual-level and locative/stage-level predicates, respectively (cf. *Ele é professor* 'He is a teacher' and *Ele está aqui* 'He is here'). Finally, Mandinka and Wolof are also split languages and display nonverbal predication (TRUPPI, 2019).

The main purpose of this paper is to investigate whether West African languages other than Mandinka and Wolof may have influenced the emergence of nonverbal and copulaless predication in UGCs. We are going to focus mainly on the following aspects: (i) the distinction between nominal and locative predication in perfective contexts, (ii) nonverbal predication, and (iii) the possibility for copulaless clauses.[5] In particular, nonverbal predication is triggered by the presence of nonverbal items in the clause such as nonverbal copulas, focus markers, predicators, or noun class agreement.[6] As a difference, no predicational item shows up in copulaless clauses. First, we will compare these features in the UGCs. Besides the two continental UGCs, i.e. GB and CS, we will consider the CV varieties of Santiago (ST) and Fogo (FG), which belong to the Sotavento group of CV, and the variety of São Vicente (SV) - Barlavento. Subsequently, we will investigate the three features in all languages mentioned above as possible contributors to UGC: Mandinka, Wolof, Temne, Fula, Biafada, Nyun, Manjaku, Mankanya, Pepel, Balanta, and Diola.[7] From a synchronic perspective, these languages are still spoken in Guinea-Bissau and/or Casamance and, therefore, are in contact with GB/CS. Based on the comparison of our findings, we will discuss possible influences from these languages in the predicational system of UGCs. Further outputs will be to assess the degree of structural proximity among UGCs, on the one hand, and among

[5] We limit our study to perfective contexts since the UGCs and the West African languages considered here use verbal copulas with aspect markers to express imperfective aspectual values. Moreover, adjectival predicates are excluded from the present study. While CV has only proper adjectives (see e.g. BAPTISTA, 2002), the continental UGCs have both adjectives and property items: the latter behave like verbs in predicative function (see e.g. KIHM, 2000), although they are sometimes introduced by the nonverbal copula *i*. However, their behaviour in continental UGCs needs to be better studied.

[6] In our discussion of West African languages, we will stick to the original terminology concerning these nonverbal items as found in the literature.

[7] In addition to the languages considered as possible contributors, we also take into account Pepel (Bak) based on the historical relevance of the presence of the Pepels in the region of present-day Bissau (see e.g. SANTOS, 2015).

Atlantic languages, on the other hand. This study is mainly comparative in nature: the data for the comparison come from the literature on the languages taken into account.

Predication in UGCs

In the present section, we are going to compare the basic encoding of predication in UGCs and look at nonverbal and copulaless predication.[8] With respect to the continental varieties, i.e. GB and CS, they will be treated together due to a number of facts. First, as we will see in more detail below, they share the same nonverbal copula *i* (see sentences in (1a-b) below). Furthermore, the two languages allow copulaless predication in the same contexts. Both GB and CS present the predicational split between nominal and locative predication. In particular, nominal predicates in perfective contexts are introduced by the copula *i* or are found in copulaless clauses (cf. (1a-b) and (2a-b)). Copulaless predication in GB and CS is allowed in virtually any context where *i* may occur, although elicitation tasks reveal a preference for the overt copula *i* (TRUPPI, 2019, 2021). As a difference, locative predicates occur with a verbal copula which derives from EP 3SG present indicative *está* 'stays', i.e. *sta* in GB and *sá* in CS (see (5a-b)). Notice that all UGC copulas dealt with in the present paper are invariable forms and do not morphologically agree with the subject.[9]

Regarding the nominal predication, the sentences below represent copular clauses with *i* in GB (1a) and CS (1b), respectively.[10]

(1) a.

Abo	***i***	*fidju*	*di*	*un*	*mandjaku.*
2SG.NCL	COP	son	of	INDEF	Manjaku

'You are the son of a Manjaku.' (GB; TRUPPI, forthcoming)

b.

[8] For more detailed descriptions of copulas in UGCs, we address the interested reader to more comprehensive studies such as Baptista (2002, 2004, 2007), Swolkien (2014), and Moreira (2020) for CV varieties; Kihm (1994, 2007) and Truppi (2019, 2021) for GB; and Biagui (2012) for CS.

[9] The striking proximity of GB and CS is not unexpected: according to Biagui (2012), CS derives from 17th century GB.

[10] Interestingly, we found in GB a few instances of locative predicates introduced by the copula *i* (TRUPPI, forthcoming). Although this use of *i* is not frequent, elicitation tasks suggest that nonverbal locative predication is associated with the expression of more inherent properties. For example, *skola i na matu* (school COP in forest) does not mean that a particular school is in the forest, but that the forest is the place where the school (meaning a certain training) takes place. However, more investigation is needed.

Pidru ***i*** *boŋ* *soldadi.*
Pidru COP good soldier
'Pidru is a good soldier.' (CS; adapt., BIAGUI, 2012, p. 188)

The optionality of the copula *i* and the possibility for copulaless predication are represented in the sentences (2a) and (2b) for GB and CS, respectively.

(2) a.

Kil *omi-s* (***i***) *piskadur(-is).*
DEM man-PL COP fisherman(-PL)
'Those men are fishermen.' (GB; adapt., TRUPPI, 2019, p. 93)

b.

Tera *di* *mi* (***i***) *bonitu.*
land of POSS.1SG COP be.beautiful
'My land is beautiful.' (CS; adapt., BIAGUI, 2012, p. 142; NUNEZ, p.c.)

The nonverbal behaviour of *i* may be verified on the basis of a well-known battery of tests.[11] First, the behaviour of *i* towards the negation *ka* is different from verbs. In the former case, the negation follows *i* (3a, b), while it always precedes verbs (3c, d). A second test regards the pronominal subject of a copular clause with *i*: while *i* (or its null counterpart) always requires a strong pronoun as its subject (3a, b), the only pronouns allowed as subjects of verbs are weak (clitic) subjects (3c, d). A third test regards the fact that aspect markers may only combine with verbs (3e, f), and never with *i*: combinations such as **na/ta i* (PROG/HAB + COP) are banned altogether both in GB and in CS.

(3) a.

Ami ***i*** ***ka*** *storiador* *nunka.*
1SG.NCL COP NEG historian never
'I am not a historian.' (GB; TRUPPI, forthcoming)

b.

Abo ***i*** ***ka*** *fiju* *di* *labrador.*
2SG.NCL COP NEG son of farmer

[11]See e.g. Baptista (2002, 2004, 2007), Ichinose (1993), Kihm (2007), and Truppi (2019, 2021).

'You are not a farmer’s son.' (CS; adapt., BIAGUI, 2012, p. 182)

c.

N	***ka***	*na*	*lembra.*
1SG.CL	NEG	PROG	remember

'I don’t remember.' (GB; TRUPPI, 2019, p. 93)

d.

N	***ka***	*tené*	*nada*	*na*	*mi.*
1SG.CL	NEG	have	nothing	in	1SG.NCL

'I don't have anything with me.' (CS; adapt., BIAGUI, 2012, p. 267)

e.

Bay	*Formosa,*	*u*	***na***	***odja****.*
go	Formosa	2SG.CL	PROG	see

'Go to Formosa, then you will see.' (GB; TRUPPI, forthcoming)

f.

I	***na***	***fiká***	*tres*	*anu*	*siŋ*	*miñjer.*
3SG.CL	PROG	stay	three	year	without	woman

'He will stay three year without a woman.'

(CS; adapt., BIAGUI, 2012, p. 269)

Nonverbal and copulaless predication are also possible in the case of past tense: the past marker ***b a*** can occur after the nominal predicate of a copular clause with *i* or in a copulaless clause (4a, b).

(4) a.

Abo	***(i)***	*bon*	*alunu*	***ba****.*
2SG.NCL	COP	good	student	PST

'You were a good student.' (GB; TRUPPI, 2019, p. 95)

b.

Anos	*tudu*	(***i***)	*di*	*la*	***baŋ****.*
1PL.NCL	all	COP	of	there	PST

'We all came from there.' (CS; adapt., BIAGUI, 2012, p. 173)

As to locative predication, the sentences in (5a) and (5b) represent locative copular clauses with the verbal copula *sta* in GB and the verbal copula *sá* in CS, respectively.

(5) a.

Si	*kuku*	***sta***	*dentru*	*di*	*kila*.
POSS.3SG	kernel	COP	inside	of	DEM-LOC

'The kernel is inside it [the fruit].' (GB; TRUPPI, 2019, p. 101)

b.

Sicor	***sá***	*na*	*Senegal*.
Ziguinchor	COP	in	Senegal

'Ziguinchor is in Senegal.' (CS; adapt., BIAGUI, 2012, p. 190)

With respect to CV, ST and FG share almost the same setting, except for a few differences we are going to look at. Both are split languages and allow nonverbal predication. In particular, like continental UGCs, ST and FG have both verbal and nonverbal copulas. The copula *e* (or *ê*) occurs in present perfective copular clauses with nominal (and adjectival) predicates, as the examples in (6a, b) show.

(6) a.

Vieira	***e***	*diretor*	*di*	*skola*.
Vieira	COP	director	of	school

'Vieira is a school director.' (ST; BAPTISTA, 2002, p. 102)

b.

Kondutor	*afinal*	***ê***	*más*	*mofinu*	*profisâu* [...].
driver	after all	COP	more	sad	profession

'Driver is the worst profession [I got in my whole life].'

(FG; adapt., MOREIRA, 2020, p. 204)

This copula in CV varieties generally displays nonverbal behaviour: the preverbal negation *ka* usually follows the copula *e* (7a, b). While the copula may follow *ka* in ST (see 7c), this is not attested in FG. The sentences in (7d, e) show the preverbal behaviour of the negation *k a* in ST and FG. Finally, (7f) shows that FG allows

copulaless predication just like continental UGCs, while it seems to be possible in ST with adjectival predicates in negated contexts only (7g).

(7) a.

Joao	***e***	***ka***	*padri*.
João	COP	NEG	priest

'João is not a priest.' (ST; BAPTISTA, 2002, p. 105)

b.

Zingi	***e***	*kel*	*lata*	*artu,*	***e***	***ka***	*sima*
Zingi	COP	DEM	can	tall	COP	NEG	like

es	*bardi*	*di*	*oji* [...].
DEM	bucket	of	today

'The *zingi* is a tall can, it is not like present-day buckets [...].'

(FG; adapt., MOREIRA, 2020, p. 154)

c.

[…]	***es***	*kusa*	***ka***	***e***	*dretu.*
	DEM	thing	NEG	COP	good

'[…] this thing is not good.'

(ST; adapt., VEIGA, 2000, p. 157; in BAPTISTA, 2004, p. 101)

d.

N	***ka***	*gosta*	*propi*	*di*	*odja*	*gera.*
1SG.CL	NEG	like	really	of	see	war

'I really don't like to see fights.' (ST; adapt., BAPTISTA, 2007, p. 187)

e.

N	***ka***	*parí*	*más*.
1SG.CL	NEG	give.birth	more

'I had no more children.' (FG; adapt., MOREIRA, 2020, p. 202)

f.

Si	*povu*	*pergunta-bu*	*ka*	*bu*	*frâ*	*kárru*	*di*	*bo.*
if	people	ask-2SG.CL	NEG	2SG.CL	say	car	of	2SG.NCL

'If people ask you, do not tell the car is yours.'

(FG; adapt., MOREIRA, 2020, p. 204)

g.

Bo *bu* *ka* *dodu*.
2SG.NCL 2SG.CL NEG crazy
'You are not crazy.'

(ST; adapt., VEIGA, 2000, p. 165; in BAPTISTA, 2004, p. 104)

As in the continental UGCs, combinations of aspect markers and the copula *e* are excluded from CV grammar altogether: this means we cannot find cases like **ta e* (PROG + COP). This represents further evidence of the fact that this copula in ST and FG is mainly nonverbal. Furthermore, the copula *e* takes a strong pronoun as its subject (8a, b). The situation as to the pronominal subject of a verb is more complicated in CV than in continental UGCs: according to Baptista (2002, 2007), a verb in CV may take as its subject either a strong pronoun or a weak one, or both, at least in ST and SV; in (8c), we have an example from ST.

(8) a.

[...] ***mi*** ***e*** *mas* *nobu*.
1SG.NCL COP more young
'I am younger.' (ST; adapt., BAPTISTA, 2007, p. 191)

b.

Si ***bo*** ***ê*** *bónga* *mi* *N* *ka* *diminginha.*
if 2SG.NCL COP bonga 1SG.NCL 1SG.CL NEG diminginha
'If you are Bonga, I am not Diminguinha (I am not like you)'.

(FG; adapt., MOREIRA, 2020, p. 270)

c.

Ami *fika* *si,* *mi* *sozinha.*
1SG.NCL stay so 1SG.NCL alone
'I remained like that, all alone.' (ST; adapt., BAPTISTA, 2007, p. 191)

Concerning the locative predication, similarly to GB, the copula *sta* is selected whenever the predicate complement is locative (9a, b). The copula *sá* is sometimes found in FG instead of *sta* (9c).

(9) a.

Un ***sta*** *la* *pa* *Sal*.
one COP there in Sal
'One is there in Sal.' (ST; BAPTISTA, 2002, p. 81)

b.

Argen *mudje* *ki* ***sta*** *li* *n* *a* *Serkinhu* *e* *so* *mi.*
some woman REL COP there in Cerquinho COP only 1SG.NCL
'I am the only woman in Cerquinho (lit. Woman who is here in Cerquinho is only me).' (FG; adapt., MOREIRA, 2020, p. 119)

c.

[…] *ki* ***sa*** *na* *Merka.*
REL COP in America
'[…] who is in America.' (FG; adapt., ibid., p.227)

Finally, regarding the varieties of Barlavento, the paradigm of copulas of SV also consists of both verbal and nonverbal items. The non-verbal copula *e* occurs in nominal predication like in the other UGC varieties (10).

(10)

Se *pai* *d'fidj* ***e*** *peskadór*.
3SG.POSS father of+child COP fisherman
'The father of her children is a fisherman.'
(SV; adapt., SWOLKIEN, 2014, p. 242)

As for the negation, according to Baptista (2007), in Barlavento varieties such as SV and São Nicolau (SN), the negation usually precedes the copula, showing the order *ka* + *e* both in SV and SN (11a,b). However, according to Swolkien (2014), the most common negator in copular clauses is the sentential negator *ne* (11c).

(11) a.

Ka ***e*** *mi.*
NEG COP 1SG.NCL

'That's not me.' (SN; BAPTISTA, 2007, p. 189)

b.

Koza	***ka***	***e***	*ben*	*asin.*
thing	NEG	COP	well	so

'Things are not really this way.' (SV; adapt., SWOLKIEN, 2014, p. 253)

c.

Mi	***n'é***	*ken*	*bo*	*ti*	*ta*	*pensá.*
1SG.NCL	NEG+COP	who	2SG.NCL	ASP	HAB	think

'I am not who you think I am.' (SV; adapt., ibid.)

Apart from the behaviour of the negation in the Barlavento varieties, and in particular, in SV, the nonverbal syntactic behaviour of the copula *e* survives in the selection of strong pronouns (12). Also, like in the other UGCs, the combination of this copula with aspect markers is banned altogether.

(12)

Mi	***e***	*prop*	*peskador.*
1SG.NCL	COP	proper	fisherman

'I'm a real/proper fisherman.' (SV; adapt., SWOLKIEN, 2014, p. 183)

Copulaless predication, according to Swolkien (2014: 248f.), is completely excluded from contemporary SV, but it was possible at least until the mid-20th century (13a). Moreover, copulaless predication in negated adjectival contexts is possible in SN, too (13b).[12]

(13) a.

Bô	*falá*	***ca***	***ê***	*d'Dêus,*	***ca***	***bôn.***
POSS.2PL	speech	NEG	COP	of God	NEG	good

'Your speech is not God's, (is) not good.'

[12]According to Swolkien (2014, p. 248), historical data suggest that the copula could be omitted in Sotavento CV in positive adjectival contexts, too. For Baptista (2004), the fact that copulaless predication is allowed only in negated contexts with adjectival predicates may be due to remnants of verbal behaviour of *ka*, possibly inherited by some substrate's verbal auxiliaries from which it may come from. However, since it happens with adjectives only, we may consider the possibility of adjectives in CV still having some verbal properties as property items in the continental UGCs.

(SV; adapt., FRUSONI, 1979; in SWOLKIEN, 2014, p. 248)

b.

N	***ka***	***kulpòd.***
1SG.CL	NEG	responsible

'I am not responsible for it.'

(SN; adapt., CARDOSO, 1989: 68; in BAPTISTA, 2004, p. 105)

As for locative predicates, the situation is slightly more complex in SV. According to Swolkien (2014, p. 245-246), locatives may be introduced either by *ta* (or *te*) or by *stod.* This would translate into a difference between stage-level and individual-level predication, respectively (cf. 14a-b).

(14) a.

El	***ta***	*na*	*Sant Anton*.
3SG.NCL	COP	in	Santo Antão

'He is in Santo Antão.' [now, temporally]

(SV; adapt., SWOLKIEN, 2014, p. 251)

b.

El	*ta*	***stód***	*na*	*Sant Anton*.
3SG.NCL	PRS.IPFV	COP	in	Santo Antão

'He is in Santo Antão.' [permanently] (SV; ibid.)

Summary of the findings with respect to predication in UGCs

The comparison carried out so far on the predicational split and on nonverbal and copulaless predication in UGCs has revealed a relevant degree of homogeneity among these languages. First, all UGCs considered in this paper are split languages. Second, all have nonverbal copulas which occur with nominal predicates. In particular, the copula *i* in the continental UGCs is clearly a nonverbal item. By contrast, the copula *e* in the insular varieties has a semi-verbal behaviour. FG shows nonverbal behaviour by taking as its subject a strong pronoun and preceding the negation *ka*. Moreover, while in ST the copula *e* may occur either before or after the negation, in the Barlavento varieties

it always occurs after it,like the verbs. Finally, copulaless predication is allowed with nominal predicates in the continental UGCs and FG, but in ST and in the Barlavento varieties discussed here it is possible only in negated contexts and with adjectives but never with nouns. All in all, GB and CS are very close to each other. Among the CV varieties analysed here, FG is the closest to continental UGCs, while ST is half-way between FG and the Barlavento varieties. Chart (1) below offers a summary of our findings.

Chart 1. Predicational features in UGCs

Language	**Split**	**Nonverbal predication**	**Copulaless predication**
GB	yes	yes	yes
CS	yes	yes	yes
ST	yes	yes	yes (in negated contexts)
FG	yes	yes	yes
SV	yes	yes	no

Source: own elaboration

Predication in the contributor languages of UGCs

Possible influences of Mandinka (Mande) and Wolof (Atlantic) in the copular systems of UGCs have already been discussed (TRUPPI, 2019; for Wolof's influences in CV copular clauses, see Baptista, 2004). In what follows, we will provide a summary of the findings since we will need them for our discussion on substrate/adstrate influences. In particular, both Mandinka and Wolof are split languages and display nonverbal predication, while there was no evidence of copulaless predication in the data available (see (15a, b) and (15c, d) for Mandinka and Wolof, respectively). However, there are crucial differences between the two languages. In particular, Mandinka only allows nonverbal copulas in perfective contexts both in the present and in the past. The latter is realized through independent past markers, as in the case of UGCs. On the other hand, Wolof displays a more complex picture as to copular clauses. It selects nonverbal items, i.e. the focus markers *a* and *la*, with nominal predicates, while in locative copular

clauses, a locative item or a verbal copula may occur.[13] As in UGCs and Mandinka, the past tense in nonverbal copular clauses is expressed by an independent past morpheme.[14]

(15) a.

À-té	*lè*	***mú***	*màns-ôo*	*tí.*
3SG-EMPH	FOC	COP	king-D	POSTP

'He is the king.' (Mandinka; adapt. from CREISSELS, to appear (a), p. 24)

b.

Díndíŋ-ò	***bé***	*búŋ-ò*	*kónò.*
child-D	COP	house-D	in

'The child is in the house.' (Mandinka; adapt., ibid.)

c.

Xale	*yi*	*nàppkat-**a**.*
child	D.PL	fisherman-a

'The children are fishermen.' (Wolof; adapt. from TORRENCE, 2005, p. 226)

d.

Móódu	*mu-**ng-i***	***ca***	*ja*	*ba.*
Moodu	3SG-LOC.CL	P	market	D

'Moodu is at the market.' (Wolof; ibid., p. 255)

In the present section, we are going to extend our study of predicational features to Temne and Atlantic languages such as Fula, Biafada, Nyun, Manjaku, Mankanya, Pepel, Balanta, and Diola. As a difference from both Mandinka and Wolof, Temne is not a split language. In particular, according to Wilson (1995, 2007, p. 165-166), it has a verbal copula *yi* which is used with both nominal and locative predicates (16a, b).[15] However, Temne also displays nonverbal and copulaless predication. In particular, (16c) shows the use of the predicator *-äŋ*, preceded by a noun class consonant. Finally, the sentence in (16d) is a copulaless clause with a disjoint pronoun where a pronominal form other than

[13]There is no consensus in the literature on Wolof as to whether the items *a*/*la* are copulas, although it is well known that they occur in nonverbal copular clauses.

[14]With respect to Mandinka, this could be due to the fact that "[m]orphologically unmarked predication is quite marginal in Mandinka" (CREISSELS, to appear (a), p. 23).

[15]We cannot discuss the verbal or nonverbal nature of all items dealt with in the present section. We address the interested reader to the literature mentioned for each language.

a syntactic subject pronoun is used; this pronoun can be preceded by its emphatic (independent) pronoun.

(16) a.

Minɛ	***yi***	*ɔyathki*	*ka*	*Jɔn.*
1SG.INDP	COP	friend	of	Jean

'I am Jean's friend.' (adapt., WILSON, 1995, p. 100)

b.

ɔ	***yi***	*hɛ*	*ro*	*Kiamp*	*ɔ*	*yi*	*nɔ*	*seth.*
3SG.DP	COP	NEG	LOC	PN	3SG	COP	LOC	house

'He is not in Freetown, he is here at home.' (adapt., ibid., p.102)

c.

Məbɔŋɔ	***mäŋ.***
gold	PRED

'That's gold.' (adapt., ibid., p.100)

d.

Minɛ	*ɔwan*	*kämu*	*ubāki.*
1SG.INDP	son	of-2SG	eldest

'I am your eldest son.' (adapt., ibid., p.82)

Like Wolof, its sister language from the North group, Fula is a split language.[16] According to Arnott (1970, p. 30-36), it displays both copulaless predication and verbal copulas. The sentences in (17a, b) represent copulaless clauses with nominal predicates in affirmative and interrogative contexts.[17] Verbal copulas are items such as *woni* 'is' and *ŋgoni* 'are'. Interestingly, Arnott claims that clauses with such verbs may yield different interpretations than copulaless clauses (cf. (17b) and (17c), where the presence of the verbal copula in the latter yields a locative reading). With respect to locative clauses, they contain the predicator *ɗon*, which in (17d) occurs jointly with the past marker *no*. Similar to UGCs and Wolof, this past marker may also occur in copulaless clauses (17e). Finally, focus structures such as (17f) are instances of copulaless predication; they can also contain the verb *woni* 'is' like in (17g).[18]

[16]Arnott's (1970) work is a description of Gombe Fula as spoken in Nigeria. However, according to him, Fula languages, despite their geographical spread from Mali to Nigeria, are quite uniform in morphology and syntax and share a large set of common lexical items (ibid., p. 2-4).

[17]The negation *naa* may occur in copulaless clauses: ex. *Ali* (*naa*) *shooko* 'Ali (is) (not) poor' (Arnott, 1970, p. 31).

[18]Focalization and cleft structures are particularly relevant to the study of copular clauses. In particular, in

(17) a. *Baaba maako moodibbo.*

'His father (is) a teacher.' (ARNOTT, 1970, p. 31)

b. *To kuuɗe?*

'How's works? (lit. How (are) works?)'. (ibid., p.32)

c. *To kuuɗe* ***ŋgoni****?*

'Where are the works?' (ibid.)

d. *Ali ɗon(-**no**) ɗo 'o.*

'Ali is (was) here.' (ibid.)

e. *'o Dii'o* ***no****.*

'He (was) formely a District Officer (D.O.).' (ibid., p.31)

f. *ɗum sheede Bello waddi hannde*

'It (is) money Bello brought today.' (ibid., p.29)

g. *Sheede* ***woni*** *Bello waddi hannde.*

'Money it is Bello brought today.' (ibid.)

As a difference, Biafada is a non-split language. According to Wilson (1993, p. 78; 2007, p. 105), it has a single verbal copula *ga* 'to be' for both nominal (18a) and locative predication (18b). This copula is also found in the forms *ge*/*gə* (18a), with the initial /g/ being deleted in some cases. Moreover, locative predicates are often found without the copula (18c).

(18) a.

Budihi	***ge****.*
well	COP

'It is a well.' (adapt., WILSON, 1993, p. 78)

b.

Budihi	***ga***	*yan.*
well	COP	here

'There is a well here.' (adapt., ibid.)

c.

the case of Atlantic languages and UGCs, they need to be studied in more detail. However, this is outside the goal of the present paper.

Fo *Mpada-ma.*
LOC PN-3SG
'He's at Empada.' (adapt., WILSON, 2007, p. 106)

As for Nyun languages, spoken in Casamance and to a certain extent in northern Guinea-Bissau, a brief comparison of the literature available (see e.g. COBBINAH, 2013; DIOP, 2018; QUINT, 2013; WILSON, 2007) reveals that they display copulaless predication and both nonverbal and verbal copulas. In affirmative contexts, copulaless predication is restricted to nominal predicates, while the nonverbal copula is used for locative predication. As a difference, the verbal copula *gu* may be selected for either nominal or locative predicates in both positive and negated contexts.[19] The sentences in (19a, b) represent cases of copulaless predication in Gubëeher and Gunyamolo, respectively. The verbal copula *gu* occurs in (19c) with a nominal predicate in a negated clause in Gubëeher, while (19d) represents a case of positive locative predication with *gu* in Gujaxer. Finally, the nonverbal copula – which agrees with the noun class of the subject - occurs with a locative predicate in (19e) from Djifanghor.

(19) a.

Me *u-saw.*
1SG C.u-hunt
'I am a hunter.' (adapt., COBBINAH, 2013, p. 260)

b.

Bɐ-gid-o *ım-ba* *ba-naam.*
C-daughter-DEF DEM1-C C-1SG.POSS
'This daughter is mine.' (adapt., DIOP, 2018, p. 393)

c.

[...] ***gu**-r-oŋ* *di-fand* [...].
be-NEG.PERF-3SG.SBJ CL.di-ronier.fruit
'[...] it is not a ronier fruit [...].' (adapt. COBBINAH, 2013, p. 353)

d.

Agu *Bisaw.*
COP PN
'He is in Bissau.' (WILSON, 2007, p.90)

[19]With nominal predicates, the verb *gu* can yield either a resultative or a state-reading (Cobbinah, p.c.). For more details on copulas in Gubëeher, see Cobbinah (to appear).

e.

Bujɔŋkah-ɔ	*m**bɔ**ŋ*	*raafɔ*	*bunɔhɔm-ɔ.*
manioc-DEF	C.**BU**.COP	on	bench-DEF

'The manioc is on the bench.' (adapt., QUINT, 2013, p. 26)

Like Temne and Biafada, the three languages of the Manjaku group (Bak), i.e. Manjaku, Mankanya, and Pepel, pattern together insofar they are not split languages and only present one verbal copula each for nominal and locative predication. However, according to Wilson (2007, p. 72), they often omit the copula and are therefore provided with copulaless predication. In particular, Manjaku has one verbal copula for both nominal and locative predication, i.e. ***c i*** (20a-b). Moreover, it displays nonverbal predication through noun class agreement (20c).[20] Finally, (20d) represents a case of copulaless predication.

(20) a.

*A-**ci***	*ninx.*
it-COP	man

'It was a man.' (adapt., BUIS, 1990, p. 46)

b.

Bi	*Jon*	*ban-**ci***	*bki*	*xi.*
those	John	who-COP	who	here

'John and his friends who are here.' (adapt., ibid., p.55)

c.

Ukam	*baneki.*
war	last year

'Last year (was the time of) the war.' (adapt., KARLIK, 1972, p. 48)

d.

Inji	*iini.*
1SG	here

'I am here.' (adapt., KARLIK, 1972, p. 112)

[20]In particular, Karlik (1972, p. 47f.) refers to this kind of nonverbal predication as *relator elements* that operate notional relations such as possession, substance, location, etc.. The relation is expressed via morphological items such as noun class agreement, among others.

Mankanya has a verbal copula *wo* which is used for both nominal (21a) and locative predicates (21b). The sentence in (21c) represents a case of nonverbal predication with noun class agreement, while the one in (21d) contains the item *a* (glossed as an *object* in Gaved, 2020; however, it is considered as a focus marker in Pepel - see below).[21]

(21) a.

*Ba-**wo***	*ba-yafan*	*ji*	*ba-şin*	*baka.*
C1P-COP	C1P-shepherd	like	C1P-father	C1P.POSS

'They are shepherds like their ancestors.' (adapt., GAVED, 2020, p. 103)

b.

*Ba-**wo***	*ţ-i*	*b-ţeem*	*na*	*a-şin*	*baka.*
C1P-COP	INT-LOC	C5S-pirogue	with	C1AS-father	C1P.OBJ

'They were in the boat with their father.' (adapt., ibid., p.103)

c.

***Ka**-toh*	***k**-i*	***k**-i.*
C3S-house	C3S-GEN	C3S-DEM

'This is the house.' (ibid., p.124)

d.

Nji	***a**!*
1SG.INDP	OBJ

'It's me!' (adapt., ibid., 125)

Like Mankanya, Pepel has the verbal copula *wɔ* for both nominal (22a) and locative predication (22b). Concerning the copulaless predication, the sentences in (22c) and (22d) contain a nominal and a locative predicate, respectively. Furthermore, according to Ndao (2013, p. 218), the Mankanya copulaless clause in (21d) above is possible in Pepel too: Ndao analyses the *a* item as a focus marker.

(22) a.

Senegal	***wɔ***	*ɔ-saak*	*ɔ-magı.*
Senegal	COP	C2-country	C2-strong

'Senegal is a strong country.' (adapt., NDAO, 2013, p. 217)

[21]See Gaved (2020, p. 124) as to the presence of the genitive *-i* in the sentence in (21c). Furthermore, according to Gaved (ibid, p. 125), the item *a* in (21d) may be an expletive pronoun.

b.

Ndo ***wɔ*** *u-ium.*
1PL.DP COP C5-Biombo
'We are in Biombo.' (adapt., ibid., p.219)

c.

Kə-tim *u-ium*.
C4-name C5-Biombo
'The name is Biombo.' (adapt., ibid., p.256)

d.

Na *ni* *sʊnda.*
mother POSS there
'My mother is there.' (adapt., ibid.)

Balanta is also a non-split language insofar it displays one single verbal copula *ka*/*ke* (WILSON, 2007, p. 83). However, this copula may be realized differently according to some degree of intralinguistic variation: for example, in the varieties of Fora and Kentohe as spoken in Guinea-Bissau, the copula is *gi* or *ga*[22] (see INTUMBO, 2007), while the variety of Balanta Ganja, as spoken in present-day Senegal, is *gi* (see CREISSELS, to appear (b); CREISSELS; BIAYE, 2016). In both varieties, this copula is a verb and may show up with a nominal (23a) or with a locative predicate (23b). Balanta Ganja allows both copulaless (23c, d) and nonverbal predication (23e). In particular, the sentences in (23c) and (23d) represent copulaless clauses with a nominal and a locative predicate, respectively. Finally, the nonverbal clause in (23e) conveys identification through noun class agreement between the subject and the *identification marker* - which is also used in focalized structures (CREISSELS, to appear (b), p.26).

(23) a.

À-jăa *âg-**gî*** ***b-sʊ́lʊ̀*** ***mà*** *ŋgí-tɛ̀*
C(ha)-balant NEG-COP C(b)-ethnicity DEF AUX_{HAB}-CTRP
fʊ̂ʊŋ *mɔ́* *gì-ŋwɔ́ɔt.*
love HAB C-destroy.NPr
'Balantas are not people who like destruction.'

[22]According to Intumbo (2007, p. 83-84), the form *ga* probably derives from the fusion of the copula with the locative preposition *a*.

(adapt., CREISSELS; BIAYE, 2016, p. 134)

b.

*À-**gí*** *à* *f-θàambɛ́.*
C(ha)-COP LOC C(f)-rice.field
'She is at the rice field.' (adapt., ibid., p.241)

c.

Hala *hɔn?* *Nyi* *hɔn.*
who DET 1SG DET
'Who is it? It is I.' (adapt., WILSON, 2007, p. 83)

d.

θʊ̀ʊbʊ́ *dîɪs* *ándɔ̀mbɔ́.*
C(u)mouse PST here
'A mouse has been here.' (adapt., CREISSELS, to appear (b), p.10-11)

e.

***Bɪ̀**-láantɛ̀* ***bá**.*
Cbi-man Cbi.ID
'These are men.' (ibid., p.26)

As a difference from the Bak languages analysed above, Diola is a split language: while locative predicates select a copula, clauses with nominal predicates have no copula (see e.g. BASSENE, 2006: 181-187; WILSON, 2007, p. 56). In particular, according to Bassene (2006), in Diola Banjal,[23] clauses with nominal predicates are copulaless (24a), while locative predication selects the copula *u*-Classifier-*e*/*u*/*ua* (24b).[24] This copula contains at its right boundary a deictic item that varies according to the distance: *e* is proximal, *u* is distant, and *ua* is vague. The distant deictic is also used with past

[23]We consider here only one variety of Diola, i.e. Banjal since Bassene's description allows us to have a detailed picture of copular structures in this language.

[24] According to Bassene (2006, p. 185), copulas in this language are verbal, they trigger class marking of the locative predicate, but contrarily to the other verbs, they do not co-occur with all TAM markers. As to the locative copula, another peculiarity is that its class marker is infixed, and not prefixed. Furthermore, the copula *u*-classifier-DEM comes from the grammaticalization of a locative deictic (ibid., p.195).

reference together with the past marker -*en* (24c).[25] Moreover, the verbal copula -*om* (allomorphs -*em*/-*am*) occurs after focalized items (24d).

(24) a.

Atejo *a-aŋ-a.*
Atéjo C1-farmer-AG
'Atejo is a farmer.' (adapt., BASSENE, 2006, p. 181)

b.

Atejo ***u***-*m-u* *ni* *b-a-xa.*
Atejo COP-C1-DEM2 inside C5-POST-bush
'Atejo is in the bush.' (adapt., ibid., p.134)

c.

[...] *O-pay-ol* ***u***-*m-u-en* *lopital.*
C1-father-POSS.3SG COP-C1-DEM2-PST hospital
'[...] his father was at the hospital.' (adapt., ibid., p.186)

d.

Bugo *gu-**om*** *fatia* *bu-nunux* *babu.*
C2.PRN 3PL-COP on-top C5-tree C5.DEM4
'It is they who are on the tree.' (adapt., ibid., p.187)

Summary of the findings with respect to predication in the contributor languages of UGCs

The results of our comparison of the three predicational features in the contributor languages of UGCs show a quite varied situation. For the predicational split, there is no homogeneity: some languages display the split encoding we found in UGCs, others do not. A certain degree of homogeneity is visible within the Bak group: most of the languages considered here are not split languages, except for Diola Banjal that patterns together with languages from the North group such as Fula and Nyun as for the predicational split and copulaless predication. As for the other features, i.e. nonverbal and copulaless predication, our findings show a high degree of homogeneity: almost all

[25]We already mentioned that the past marker may occur in nonverbal and copulaless clauses in continental UGCs, Mandinka, and Wolof. This is due to the fact that these languages use the past marker also with nonverbal items such as nouns, adjectives, adverbs, etc. (see e.g. TRUPPI, 2019). As to copulaless clauses, the past marker can occur with nouns also in Nyun Gubëeher and, in general, in both North and Bak Atlantic languages (Cobbinah, p.c.). Also, see the sentences in (17d-e) above as for the past marker in copulaless clauses in Fula.

languages have both features. However, there are a few differences. As to nonverbal predication, Mandinka is the only language to display only nonverbal predication with both nominal and locative predicates, while all other languages have both verbal and nonverbal predication. As to the nonverbal items involved in copular clauses, there is a certain degree of variation among the languages considered: Wolof, Mankanya, and Pepel use focus markers; Temne and Fula display predicators, at least with nominal and locative predicates, respectively; moreover, Nyun, Manjaku, Mankanya, and Balanta use noun class agreement in nonverbal predication - in the case of Nyun, this happens with locative predicates. Finally, copulaless predication is a possibility to all languages analysed here, except a few unknown cases, i.e. Mandinka, Wolof, and Mankanya. Also, in this case, we find some degree of variation: Temne, Fula, and Nyun allow copulaless predication with nominal predicates, while locative predicates in Biafada are often found without copula. Chart (2) below presents a summary of our findings.

Chart 2. Predicational features in UGC contributor languages

Family	Group	Language	Split	Nonverbal predication	Copulaless predication
Mande	Manding	Mandinka	yes	yes	unknown
Atlantic	North	Wolof	yes	yes	unknown
Mel	Northern	Temne	no	yes	yes
Atlantic	North	Fula (Gombe)	yes	yes	yes
Atlantic	North	Biafada	no	unknown	yes
Atlantic	North	Nyun	yes	yes	yes
Atlantic	Bak	Manjaku	no	yes	yes
Atlantic	Bak	Mankanya	no	yes	unknown
Atlantic	Bak	Pepel	no	yes	yes
Atlantic	Bak	Balanta (Ganja)	no	yes	yes
Atlantic	Bak	Diola (Banjal)	yes	unknown	yes

Source: own elaboration

Conclusions

In this paper, we have carried out a comparison of three predicational features in UGCs and in their West African contributor languages: (i) the split between nominal and locative predication, (ii) nonverbal predication, and (iii) copulaless predication. The findings as to UGCs have revealed that continental UGCs pattern together as for the three features. Among the CV varieties considered here, FG is the closest to the

continental UGCs, while ST is halfway between FG and the Barlavento varieties insofar ST presents more restrictions than FG, GB, and CS as to the nonverbal use of the copula *e* and as to copulaless clauses.

A further aim of this paper was to assess possible influences at the level of substrate and/or adstrate languages. The role of Mandinka and Wolof as substrate languages was already discussed in several studies (see e.g. TRUPPI, 2019). Regarding the role of Temne, this paper reveals possible influences from it in the predicational system of UGCs as to nonverbal and copulaless predication. However, Temne does not display a split encoding like UGCs, while Mandinka and Wolof share this type of encoding with them, along with nonverbal predication. These facts point towards a major influence from Mandinka and Wolof, while Temne may have played a minor role in the emergence of the predicational system of UGCs. This confirms results from lexical studies which reveal that Temne has contributed a small number of lexical items in UGCs and had, therefore, a minor role in their emergence (see e.g. QUINT; MOREIRA, 2019).

This study also aimed to evaluate possible influences from several Atlantic languages. Although they have often been mentioned in the literature on UGCs as possible contributors, their status was never clearly assessed. Our findings reveal novel and interesting data in this regard. First, there is not a homogenous situation among North and Bak Atlantic languages as to the split encoding of predication: only Fula and Nyun (North Atlantic), and Diola (Bak) may have contributed in the setting of the split encoding in UGCs, together with Mandinka and Wolof. However, the small number of lexical items they contributed to the shared African lexicon of UGCs does not point towards a primary role of these languages as substrate. By contrast, in the case of nonverbal and copulaless predication, the situation is much more homogeneous: almost all contributor languages allow copulaless clauses and nonverbal predication. These facts indicate possible influences from Atlantic languages in these two predicational features in UGCs. In particular, continental UGCs were always surrounded and possibly intertwined by the Atlantic languages spoken in Guinea-Bissau and Casamance since their speakers were often multilingual in several of these languages. Adstrate influences from Atlantic languages in continental UGCs could be responsible for their unrestricted use of nonverbal copulas and copulaless predication with nominal predicates in the present and past tense. However, in light of our findings as to the UGC contributor Atlantic languages, a further possibility is available. In particular, in the geographical

area where GB and CS are spoken, mostly Atlantic languages are present: this suggests the possibility of areal influences as to nonverbal and copulaless predication in continental UGCs. This option needs to be investigated in more detail by looking at further Atlantic languages spoken in Upper Guinea and at areal features in the region.

Abbreviations

1,2,3 = person; AG = agent marker; AGR = agreement; ASP = aspect; AUX = auxiliary; C = classifier; C1/1A/3/5S = noun class 1/1A/3/5 singular; C1P = noun class 1 plural; C2/4/5 = noun class 2/4/5; CL = clitic; COP = copula; CTRP = centripetal; DEF = definite; DEM = demonstrative; DET = determiner; DP = dependent; FOC = focalization; GEN = genitive; HAB = habitual; ID = identification marker; INACT = inactual; INCPL = incompletive; INDEF = indefinite; INDP = independent; INT = interrogative; IPFV = imperfective; LOC = locative; NCL = non-clitic; NEG = negation; NPr = name of process; OBJ = object; PL = plural; PN = proper name; POSS = possessive; POST = post-prefix; PRED = predicator; PRN = pronoun; PROG = progressive; PRS = present; PST = past; REL = relative; SBJ = subject; SG = singular; TAM = tense-aspect-mood.

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