

Complex structures in Brazilian Indigenous languages

Estruturas complexas em línguas indígenas brasileiras

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INTRODUCTION

The dossier “Complex structures in Brazilian indigenous languages” contributes to the ongoing upsurge of descriptions and analyses of complex sentence structures – a non-extensive list includes van Gijn et al. (2011, 2014), Storto (2012), Amaral et al. (2018), Zariquiey et al. (2019), among many others. Two or more non-serialized verbs characterize complex structures, that is, structures that highlight syntactic and semantic embedding. This dossier features five articles that explore different phenomena: clause chaining and switch reference, conditionals, conjunction and additive constructions, tail-head linkage, and anaphora and subordination. The majority of the articles resulted from research presented in a workshop with the same title as the dossier at the *Associação Brasileira de Linguística (ABRALIN) 50 Meeting* in Maceió, Alagoas, from May 02 to May 09, 2019. The description of the phenomena mentioned above is not only central for a better understanding of the languages featured in this dossier (Aikanã, Kwaza, Dâw, Gavião de Rondônia, Karitiana, Kuikuro) but also central for typological studies. Evidence from languages under-represented in the literature has proven to be highly revealing for linguistic theory in several cases. Three examples of this kind are the discussion of indexical shift in complex clauses in Amharic (Schlenker, 2003), Slave (Anand & Nevins, 2004), among others, the semantics of logophoric pronouns in Ewe (Pearson, 2015), and the discovery of backward control, initially in Tsez (Polinsky & Potsdam, 2002). Below we present a description of the papers presented in this dossier.

Franchetto (2021) describes counterfactual and non-counterfactual conditional constructions in Kuikuro (Upper Xingu Cariban language). Based on the analysis of texts available in the Kuikuro digital corpus and data from context-based elicitation, she analyzes the morphosyntactic features of five different types of constructions that are used by Kuikuro speakers to encode counterfactual and non-counterfactual conditionals. One central contribution of the paper is the detailed discussion of the existence of a hypothetical mood morpheme in Kuikuro that is required in counterfactual constructions.

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Moore (2021) describes conjunct and additive constructions in the Gavião language of Rondônia (Mondé branch, Tupian family). He presents a syntactic analysis of the distribution of the particle *kĩĩ* 'also, too, and' in three different types of constructions involving this particle in verb phrases and noun phrases and shows that *kĩĩ* may occur in additive constructions ('also, too'), in a sequence of additives ('and also') and in conjunction constructions ('and'). He also discusses the differences in the interpretation of additive and conjunction constructions by showing that the former is associated with a distributive interpretation and the latter with a collective interpretation.

Obert (2021) describes the formal and functional properties of tail-head linkage in Dâw (Naduhup family). She shows that the repetition of place references in Dâw narratives is a strategy used by its speakers for the establishment of event and participant coherence. Dâw narratives are discussed in light of the typological studies on tail-head linkage and Obert observes that while these constructions in Dâw share many formal and functional properties with other languages one characteristic feature of tail-head linkage in Dâw is that it is mostly restricted to locative adverbial clauses.

Storto (2021) describes anaphora and subordination in Karitiana (Arikém branch, Tupian family) by presenting the distribution of the medium-distance anaphor *ta*. She shows that this anaphoric element may find its antecedent in the matrix clause, in the same subordinate clause or between embedded clauses, and allows for a logophoric use, in which case the antecedent is not clearly mentioned in the immediate discourse.

Van der Voort (2021) describes clause chaining and switch-reference in Aikanã and Kwaza (isolate languages) and shows that both languages are characterized by medial clause chaining constructions that involve switch-reference systems. He documents the similarities that switch marking has in both languages (including dedicated morphological suffixes, and medial clauses inflected for person) as well as aspects in which they differ from each other, including the fact that in Kwaza but not in Aikanã switch reference markers may be used to signal a new topic, which is a phenomenon observed in other South American languages (van Gijn, 2012), and that the Kwaza system is anticipatory, unlike the Aikanã system.

In conclusion, the research reported on in this volume will help to advance the discussion in theoretical linguistics of the constructions mentioned above by means of featuring new data or new analyses of complex structures in languages that have been underrepresented in the literature so far.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

All authors declared active participation during the stages of elaboration of the manuscript.

