Proceedings of the Sixteenth Meeting of the Austronesian Formal Linguistics Association (AFLA)

University of California, Santa Cruz

May 1 - 3, 2009

edited by Sandy Chung, Daniel Finer, Ileana Paul, and Eric Potsdam

Table of Contents

photos courtesy of Sandy Chung and Justin Nuger

PREFACE

Although the Austronesian Formal Linguistics Association (AFLA) has been holding annual meetings since 1994, until now it has had no consistent approach to the publication of its *Proceedings*. Papers from AFLA 2 and AFLA 14 were published as edited volumes; in other years the local organizers published the *Proceedings* in their Department's Working Papers series; in still other years no *Proceedings* was published. The 16th annual meeting of AFLA was held May 1-3, 2009, at the University of California, Santa Cruz. During the business meeting, the idea was floated that the *Proceedings* henceforth be published electronically, in a consistent format, at the AFLA website (http://ling.uwo.ca/afla/), which is generously hosted by the University of Western Ontario. The initial result is this volume, which has emerged very quickly indeed—less than six months after AFLA 16 was held. Our hope is that on-line publication of this and future volumes of the *Proceedings of AFLA* will enable research on the formal linguistics of Austronesian languages to reach as wide a readership as possible.

We want to thank UCSC's Linguistics Department and its Linguistics Research Center for hosting AFLA 16, the authors for submitting their papers so efficiently, and the University of Western Ontario for hosting the website at which this volume is posted. We also wish to acknowledge the precedent set by the *Proceedings of AFLA 12*, which was published on-line as *UCLA Working Papers in Linguistics* No. 12, and whose stylesheet heavily influenced the stylesheet we constructed for the *Proceedings of AFLA*.

Sandra Chung
Daniel Finer
Ileana Paul
Eric Potsdam

THE TAGALOG COPULA[*]

Norvin Richards
MIT
norvin@mit.edu

I argue that Tagalog, contrary to appearances, has a copula, which is often null. In particular, the copula is null when it would be in the imperfective form; in other forms, it is overt, surfacing as the verb *maging*. I show that Tagalog clauses may lack overt aspect morphology, in which case stative predicates receive the interpretations they would have had if they bore imperfective aspect; in fact, the null copula is possible just in those contexts in which aspect may be omitted. I offer evidence from extraction, however, that the copula is syntactically present even when it is unpronounced; it is made overt just when needed to support overt aspectual morphology.

1.   Introduction

Tagalog is typically described as allowing predicates of any category:

(1) a. Nag-aaral   ako   [*verbal predicate*]
        IMPF.NOM-study ANG.I
        'I'm studying'
     b. Doktor ako   [*nominal predicate*]
        doctor ANG.I
        'I'm a doctor'
     c. Maganda ako   [*adjectival predicate*]
        beautiful ANG.I
        'I'm beautiful'
     d. Nasa   gitna   ako   [*prepositional predicate*]
        PRED.LOC middle ANG.I
        'I'm in the middle'

In fact, Tagalog's apparent indifference to the category of its predicates has sometimes led researchers (e.g., Foley 1998, Gil 2000, Kaufman 2009, and references cited there) to conclude that Tagalog lacks category distinctions entirely, at least between lexical categories. However, there are contexts in which the predicate must be morphologically verbal:

---

(2) a. Ayo-ko   na-ng   [**mag-aral**]
    don't.want-NG.I now-LI   INF.NOM-study
    'I don't want to study any more'
   b. Ayo-ko   na-ng [*(**maging**)   **doktor**]
    don't.want-NG.I now-LI   INF.NOM-be doctor
    'I don't want to be a doctor any more'
   c. Ayo-ko   na-ng [*(**maging**)   **maganda**]
    don't.want-NG.I now-LI   INF.NOM-be beautiful
    'I don't want to be beautiful any more'
   d. Ayo-ko   na-ng [*(**maging**)   **nasa   gitna**]
    don't.want-NG.I now-LI   INF.NOM-be PRED.LOC middle
    'I don't want to be in the middle any more'

In the infinitival clauses in (2), nonverbal predicates (like the ones in (2b-d)) must be supplemented with the verb *maging*, which I analyze as a copula. Thus, Tagalog at least has a contrast between verbs and nonverbs; verbal predicates, but not nonverbal ones, may appear in infinitival clauses. I will argue in this paper that even the sentences in (1b-d) involve a null copula, and thus that all Tagalog predicates contain a verb, though not necessarily an overt one[1].

In requiring infinitival clauses, but not ordinary main clauses, to contain overt verbs, Tagalog patterns with Russian:

(3) a. Ja vrač
    I   doctor
    'I am a doctor'
   b. Ja ne xoču [*(**byt'**)   vračom]
    I   not want-1SG be-INF doctor-INSTR
    'I don't want to be a doctor'

2.   Questions about the Copula

The following sections will offer answers to a variety of questions about the Tagalog copula. The first has to do with a difference between Tagalog and Russian; though the languages are alike in requiring copulas in infinitival clauses (but not in main clauses), Russian is unlike Tagalog in requiring the copula in clauses describing states that held in the past:

(4) a. Ja **byl** vračom   [*Russian*]
    I   was doctor-INSTR
    'I was a doctor'
   b. Doktor ako   (noon)   [*Tagalog*]
    doctor ANG.I then.PAST
    'I was a doctor'

---

[1] See Manueli (2006) for a similar claim.

Section 2.1 will investigate the question of why this should be so.

The Tagalog verb *maging*, which I have described as a copula, can also mean 'become':

(5) a. **Naging**   doktor ako   noong 1977
      PERF.NOM-be doctor ANG.I in.PAST 1977
      'I **became** a doctor in 1977'
   b. Ayo-ko   na-ng [*(**maging)**   doktor]
      don't.want-NG.I now-LI   INF.NOM-be doctor
      'I don't want to **be** a doctor any more'

Crucially, while *naging* in (5a) means 'became', *maging* in (5b) can mean 'be'; (5b) is compatible with a situation in which I currently am a doctor and want to stop being one. In section 2.2, we will see that such ambiguities are generally found with Tagalog verbs describing states.

In section 2.3, we will investigate the question of why the copula is required in infinitives (like the one in (5b)). We will see that the copula can in fact only be null if it would be in the form typically used to describe currently ongoing states.

In section 2.4, we will address the standard syntactician's question: if you can't see the copula, is it really there? We will see evidence that there is a null copula in Tagalog.

Finally, in section 2.5, we will consider some other peculiarities of the behavior of *maging*. These will largely be morphosyntactic in nature.

2.1.   Copulas and the Past Tense

The Tagalog null copula, unlike its Russian counterpart, can describe states which hold in either the present or the past:

(6)   Doktor ako   [*Tagalog*]
      doctor ANG.I
      'I am/was a doctor'
(7) a. Ja **byl** vračom   b.   Ja vrač   [*Russian*]
      I was doctor-INSTR   I   doctor
      'I was a doctor'   'I am a doctor'

This is part of a larger Tagalog pattern; Tagalog verbs mark aspect rather than tense. Thus, Tagalog stative predicates can describe either present or past states:

(8) a. Natutulog   sila
      IMPF.NOM-sleep ANG.they
      'They're sleeping'
   b. Pag-uwi   ko,   natutulog   sila
      when-come.home NG.I   IMPF.NOM-sleep ANG.they
      'When I came home, they were sleeping'

Here, the verb *natutulog* can mean either 'are sleeping' or 'were sleeping'. Tagalog's null copula apparently has the same freedom to describe either past or present states. Both types of verbs typically receive a present tense interpretation by default, but can be given a past tense interpretation by context or by relevant adverbs.

2.2.   Being and Becoming

We have seen that Tagalog *maging* can mean either 'be' or 'become':

(9) a. **<u>Naging</u>**   doktor ako   noong   1977
        PERF.NOM-be doctor ANG.I in.PAST 1977
        'I **became** a doctor in 1977'
     b. Ayo-ko   na-ng [*(**maging**)   doktor]
        don't.want-NG.I now-LI   INF.NOM-be doctor
        'I don't want to **be** a doctor any more'

Here, again, Tagalog *maging* patterns with a number of other verbs (including many which, like *maging*, begin with *ma-* in their infinitival forms) which can be either stative or inchoative:

(10) a. Pag-uwi   ko,   natutulog   sila
        when-come.home   NG.I IMPF.NOM-sleep ANG.they
        'When I came home, they were sleeping'
     b. Pag-uwi   ko,   natulog   sila
        when-come.home NG.I PERF.NOM-sleep ANG.they
        'When I came home, they fell asleep'

2.3.   Aspects of *Maging*

As we have already seen, the overt copula *maging* is required in infinitives, though not in main clauses describing past or present states:

(11) a. Doktor ako
        doctor   ANG.I
        'I am/was a doctor'
     b. Ayo-ko   na-ng [*(**maging**)   doktor]
        don't.want-NG.I now-LI   INF.NOM-be doctor
        'I don't want to be a doctor any more'

The overt copula is also used to describe future states (here the example is constructed to avoid the 'become' reading, leaving only the 'be' reading of *maging*):

(12)   Doktor na   ako,   at   **<u>magiging</u>** doktor ako   sa   buo-ng   buhay ko
        doctor now ANG.I and FUT.NOM-be doctor ANG.I DAT whole-LI life   my
        'I'm a doctor now, and I will be a doctor my whole life'

In general, it appears that *maging* is null just if it has the stative reading (rather than the inchoative one) and would appear in the imperfective form if it were overt. The inchoative version of *maging* is always overt:

(13) a. Naging   doktor ako   b.   Nagiging   doktor ako
        PERF.NOM-be doctor ANG.I   IMPF.NOM-be doctor ANG.I
        'I became a doctor'   'I am becoming a doctor'
     c. Magiging   doktor ako   d.   Ayo-ko   na-ng [maging   doktor]
        FUT.NOM-be doctor ANG.I   don't.want-NG.I now-LI INF.NOM-be doctor
        'I will become a doctor'   'I don't want to become a doctor any more'

When it means 'be', *maging* is null just when it would appear in the imperfective form; that is, when it would describe an ongoing or past state. Thus, the null copula in (14a) has the same range of aspectual and temporal interpretations that the imperfective form of the stative verb *matulog* 'sleep' has in (14b):

(14) a. Doktor ako
        doctor ANG.I
        'I am/was a doctor'
     b. Natutulog   ako
        IMPF.NOM-sleep ANG.I
        'I am/was sleeping'

As we have already seen, the copula is overt if it would be in its future or infinitival form; unsurprisingly, these are contexts in which an ordinary stative verb like *matulog* 'sleep' would not be in the imperfective form:

(15) a. **Magiging**   doktor ako
        FUT.NOM-be doctor ANG.I
        'I will be a doctor'
     b. Matutulog   ako
        FUT.NOM-sleep ANG.I
        'I will sleep'
(16) a. Ayo-ko   na-ng [*(**maging**)   doktor]
        don't.want-NG.I now-LI   INF.NOM-be doctor
        'I don't want to be a doctor any more'
     b. Ayo-ko   na-ng   [matulog/*natutulog]
        don't.want-NG.I now-ng   INF.NOM-sleep/*IMPF.NOM-sleep
        'I don't want to sleep any more'

When the clausal complement of *ayoko* 'I don't want' contains an overt subject, Tagalog speakers vary on which verb forms may be used. All speakers agree, for ordinary stative verbs like *matulog* 'sleep', that the verb in such a clause may be in the infinitival form; some speakers will

also allow the imperfective form (unlike in control clauses, where such a form is universally impossible, as we saw above in (16b)[2]:

(17) Ayo-ko   na-ng [matulog/%natutulog   ang anak ko]
      don't.want-NG.I now-LI INF.NOM-sleep/ IMPF.NOM-sleep ANG child my
      'I don't want my child to sleep any more'

We find the same split among speakers in the distribution of the overt copula; speakers who permit the imperfective form in (17) also permit the null copula in the same contexts, while speakers who require the infinitive form in (17) also require an overt infinitive copula in (18):

(18) Ayo-ko   na-ng [%(**maging**)   doktor ang anak ko]
      don't.want-NG.I now-LI   INF.NOM-be doctor ANG child my
      'I don't want my child to be a doctor any more'

Thus, the null copula has the same distribution as the imperfective form of stative verbs.

To account for this distribution, I will claim that Tagalog clauses may be generated without overt aspect morphology; this may involve a phonologically and semantically null aspect morpheme (cf. Matushansky 2000), or perhaps Aspect is simply not projected in such clauses. The claim will be that just in these 'aspectless' clauses, the copula must be covert.

The copula is not the only verb that can appear without aspect morphology. The stative predicate *alam* 'know', for example, standardly appears without such morphology:

(19) Alam ko   ang sagot
      know NG.I   ANG answer
      'I know/knew the answer'

As we can see in (19), bare *alam* is like the null copula not only in having a stative meaning, but in being able to describe past or present states. Another similarity between *alam* and the null copula is that neither can appear in control infinitives:

(20) Gusto ko-ng [malaman/*alam   lahat ng sagot]
      want   NG.I-LI INF.NOM-know/know all   NG answer
      'I want to know all the answers'

In (20), we see that *alam* cannot be the predicate of a control clause; the corresponding aspectually inflected verb *malaman* must be used instead. This is reminiscent of the behavior of the copula; as we have seen, the null copula (by hypothesis, the form of the copula that appears when overt aspect is absent) cannot appear in contexts which require infinitival morphology, and an overt, infinitive form must be used instead.

---

[2] For some speakers, the status of the Imperfective verb in an example like this can be improved with the addition of adverbials like *tuwing umuuwi ako* 'every time I come home'. Such adverbs have no effect on the acceptability of the imperfective form in (16b).

We also saw, with the copula, that the overt form *maging* has another, inchoative meaning, 'become'. Similarly, *malaman*, the aspectually inflected version of *alam*, can have the inchoative meaning 'find out':

(21) Nalaman   ko   ang sagot
      PERF.NOM-know NG.I ANG answer
      'I found out the answer'

Both the stative and inchoative readings are available in an example like (20); again, this patterns with the behavior of the copula.
      Both for the copula and for *alam* 'know', then, the absence of aspect morphology is associated with particular interpretations (by default, present-tense interpretations, though these verbs can also be coerced by context to describe states holding in the past), and is inconsistent with interpretations or syntactic environments that require other aspectual forms (as in control infinitives, for example). What is unusual about the copula is that its aspectless form is null.
      Another verb which can appear without aspect morphology is *sabi* 'say':

(22) a. Sabi ni Juan [na   pangit ang bahay]
        say NG Juan that ugly   ANG house
        'Juan said the house was ugly'
    b. Sinabi   ni Juan [na   pangit ang bahay]
       PERF.ACC-say NG Juan that ugly   ANG house
       'Juan said the house was ugly'

As (22) shows, *sabi*, which is an eventive rather than a stative verb, receives a past-tense interpretation when its aspect morphology is missing. Just as with *alam* 'know' and the copula, the bare form of *sabi* cannot appear in contexts requiring the infinitive form:

(23) Ayo-ko-ng   [sabihin/*sabi [na   pangit ang bahay]]
      don't.want-NG.I-LI INF.ACC-say/say that ugly   ANG house
      'I don't want to say that the house is ugly'

Thus, stative verbs like *alam* 'know' and the copula receive a different kind of interpretation, when aspectless, than the eventive verb *sabi* 'say' does; stative verbs typically receive a present-tense interpretation when aspect is missing, and can also describe states in the past, particularly when context or the relevant adverbs make it clear that the past is under discussion. The eventive verb *sabi* 'say', by contrast, receives a past-tense interpretation when aspectless.
      This state of affairs is reminiscent of the interpretations associated with factative morphemes, in languages like Haitian Creole and Igbo (Dechaine 1991, Lumsden 1995, Lefebvre 1996, Fitzpatrick 2006, and references cited there). As (24) shows, factative forms of stative verbs typically give rise to (typically present) stative interpretations, while factative eventive verbs generally receive past tense interpretations:

(24) a. Ó chò-rò   ákpú áhùn   [*Igbo*]
      3SG want-**FACT** bread the
      'He/she wants the bread'   [*stative*=PRESENT]
   b. Ó rì-rì   ákpú áhùn
      3SG eat-**FACT** bread the
      'He/she ate the bread'   [*eventive*=PAST]

Thus, Tagalog null aspect appears to receive a factative interpretation.

     A full analysis of Tagalog aspect is well beyond the scope of this paper. I will close this section with one mystery. We have seen that the Tagalog copula, in sentences intended to describe states holding in the present, can combine with null aspect, in which case the copula itself is null. In fact, this is the only way in which such sentences can be constructed; the copula cannot, for example, combine with overt imperfective morphology:

(25) *(**Nagiging**)   doktor ako
      IMPF.NOM-be doctor ANG.I
      'I am a doctor'

If the copula in (25) is overt, the sentence can mean 'I am becoming a doctor', but not 'I am a doctor'. Why does the copula have to combine with null aspect (and hence be null) when it can?

     One possibility is that the answer to this question lies in a better understanding of the semantics of null aspect. I have suggested that this aspect yields an interpretation not unlike that of the factative in languages like Haitian Creole and Igbo; it may be that if we understood completely the semantics of this factative interpretation combined with the copula, we would know why the factative is to be preferred to the imperfective in this case.

     Alternatively, it may be that *maging* can only be inserted as a last resort, to support overt aspect morphology; this would make insertion of *maging* something like *do*-support. Some evidence for this idea may come from the behavior of adjectives like *galit* 'angry', which has a corresponding inchoative verb *magalit* 'get angry':

(26) a. Galit ako
      angry ANG.I
      'I am/was angry'
   b. **Nagalit**   ako
      PERF.NOM-get.angry ANG.I
      'I became angry'

We might expect to be able to combine the adjective in (26a) with the inchoative version of *maging*, yielding a sentence synonymous with (26b). Such sentences are generally rejected by speakers, however:

(27) ***Naging**   galit ako
      PERF.NOM-be angry ANG.I
      'I became angry'

This is consistent with *maging* being a last resort; in this case, the inchoative version of *maging* cannot be used, because there is a way to express the same thing using the inchoative verb *magalit* 'get angry'.

2.4. Evidence for a null copula

In the previous section, I suggested that Tagalog has a phonologically null version of aspect which yields interpretations like those associated with factative forms in languages like Haitian Creole and Igbo. This aspect can combine with a variety of verbs, but when it combines with the copula, I argued, the result is the null copula.

Since this aspect is phonologically null, one possibility, also mentioned above, is that it is not present at all. This would be consistent with some of the work on factative semantics, which suggests that factative interpretations appear when tense morphology contributes no meaning to the sentence. In some languages, like Igbo, there are in fact overt factative morphemes, but since this is not the case in Tagalog, we can entertain the possibility that null aspect is not merely unpronounced but actually syntactically absent.

The same possibility arises for the null copula. I have tried to show that Tagalog does have an overt copula when the null aspect cannot be used (as, for example, in control infinitives). It might be, of course, that overt *maging* has a null counterpart that appears in sentences with null aspect; another possibility is that such sentences actually contain no copula in their syntactic representation. In this section I will argue that a copula is in fact always present, even if it is phonologically null; contrary to appearances, Tagalog predicates invariably contain a verb.

Evidence for this conclusion comes from the interaction between the null copula and extraction.[3] Labov (1969, 1995) notes that the AAVE null copula is subject to a number of constraints, and one of these is that it cannot be directly followed by an extraction site:[4]

(28) a. He Ø fast in everything he do
　　 b.*How beautiful you Ø!

As Labov also notes, the same condition holds for contracted copulas in Standard English:

(29) a. He**'s** fast in everything he does.
　　 b.*How beautiful you**'re**!

Thus, it appears that certain things cannot precede extraction sites, including AAVE null copulas and Standard English contracted copulas. We find the same effect with the Tagalog null copula.

If we put the copula in contexts in which it is overt (in control infinitives, for example, or in clauses describing the future), then wh-extraction of the following predicate is well-formed:

---

[3] Thanks to David Pesetsky for calling my attention to Labov's work.
[4] Though see Bender (2000) for evidence that the generalization must be somewhat more complicated than this.

(30) a. Ano-ng klase-ng doktor ang gusto niya-ng **maging**?
     what-LI kind-LI   doctor ANG want   ANG.3-LI INF.NOM-be
     'What kind of doctor does she want to be?'
   b. Ano-ng klase-ng doktor ang sinabi   ng   tatay niya na **magiging** siya?
     what-LI kind-LI doctor ANG PERF.ACC-say NG   father her that INF.NOM-be ANG.3
     'What kind of doctor did her father say that she would be?'

When the copula is null, however, the predicate that follows it cannot be extracted:[5]

(31) *Ano-ng klase-ng doktor ang sinabi   ng tatay niya na Ø   siya?
      what-LI kind-LI doctor ANG PERF.ACC-say NG father her   that   ANG.3
      'What kind of doctor did her father say that she is?'

Thus, we can add the Tagalog null copula to the list of elements which cannot be followed by extraction sites--but only if we are willing to posit a null copula in Tagalog.

   This theory might seem to be contradicted by well-formed Tagalog examples like (32):

(32)   Ano-ng klase-ng doktor siya?
        what-LI kind-LI   doctor ANG.3
        'What kind of doctor is she?'

Here the predicate has been wh-extracted, and the copula is null. However, precisely because the copula is null, it is difficult to be certain where it is. If we consider versions of (32) with an overt copula, we can see that the copula need not be stranded by wh-movement in this example:

(33) a.%Ano-ng klase-ng doktor siya **naging**?
        what-LI kind-LI   doctor ANG.3 PERF.NOM-be
        'What kind of doctor did she become?'
   b. **Naging**   ano-ng klase-ng doktor siya?
        PERF.NOM-be what-LI kind-LI   doctor ANG.3
        'What kind of doctor did she become?'

In (33), we see that while some speakers do allow *naging* to be stranded by wh-movement, all speakers allow a different word order in which *naging* remains at the beginning of the clause (which presumably involves leaving the predicate in situ). As long as this word order is also allowed when the copula is null, the copula need not be stranded in examples like (33), in which wh-movement is string-vacuous.

   The facts in this section raise two interesting points for future analysis, with which I will end this section. The first has to do with a point raised at the end of the previous section; I suggested there that the overt copula *maging* is inserted just as a last resort, when aspect must be expressed and the predicate is nonverbal, hence not capable of bearing aspect morphology. The

---

[5] The difficulty with (31) has nothing to do with the clitic *siya* 'ANG.3' at the end of the sentence; converting this clitic to a full DP like *si Maria* 'ANG Maria' or *ang babae* 'ANG woman' does not improve the sentence.

facts about wh-extraction reviewed in this section demonstrate that the relevant notion of 'last resort' must be entirely morphological. We have just seen that wh-extraction of the predicate is impossible if the copula is null. However, this difficulty cannot be circumvented simply by making the copula overt:

(34) *Ano-ng klase-ng doktor ang   sinabi   ng tatay niya na (**nagiging**)   siya?
      what-LI kind-LI doctor ANG PERF.ACC-say NG father her   that IMPF.NOM-be ANG.3
      'What kind of doctor did her father say that she is?'

In the version of (34) with an overt *nagiging*, the overt copula can have its inchoative reading (thus, the sentence can mean 'What kind of doctor did her father say that she is becoming?'), but it cannot mean 'be'. The conditions on insertion of overt *maging* are apparently purely morphological; *maging* may appear just when there is aspectual morphology for it to support, regardless of what effect this may have on wh-extraction.
    Another point of interest has to do with example (30a) above, repeated below as (35a). For some speakers, (35a) may be rephrased as in (35b):

(35) a. Ano-ng klase-ng doktor ang   gusto   niya-ng   **maging**?
        what-LI kind-LI doctor ANG want   ANG.3-LI INF.NOM-be
        'What kind of doctor does she want to be?'
     b.%Ano-ng klase-ng doktor niya   gusto-ng **maging**?
        what-LI kind-LI doctor NG.3   want-LI INF.NOM-be
        'What kind of doctor does she want to be?'

In (35a), the wh-phrase is extracted via a cleft; this is signalled by the presence of the marker *ang* just after the wh-fronted predicate (see Richards 1998, Aldridge 2004 for further discussion). In (35b), by contrast, the wh-phrase has been extracted directly, without clefting.
    One issue raised by the well-formedness of (35b), about which I will have little to say, has to do with the conditions on clefting. Clefting is ordinarily required for extraction of DPs in Tagalog; one possibility is that the predicate in (35b) is not in fact a DP, but some other nominal projection (perhaps an NP).
    Another issue has to do with the placement of clitics in examples like (35b). In clauses with non-verbal predicates, second-position clitics may typically be placed directly after the predicate head or (somewhat marginally, for some speakers) after the entire predicate (Schachter and Otanes 1972, Sityar 1989, Kroeger 1993). This is illustrated below with the pronominal clitic *siya*:

(36) a. Doktor *siya*   ng hayop.
        doctor ANG.3 NG animal
        'She is a doctor of animals'
     b. Doktor   ng hayop *siya*.
        doctor   NG animal ANG.3
        'She is a doctor of animals'

For speakers who allow examples like (35b), the clitic *niya* does not exhibit a similar freedom:

(37) a.*Ano-ng klase-ng   doktor *niya* ng hayop   gusto-ng maging?
　　　 what-LI kind-LI   doctor NG.3 NG animal   want-LI   INF.NOM-be
　　　 'What kind of doctor of animals does she want to be?'
　　 b. Ano-ng klase-ng doktor   ng hayop   *niya* gusto-ng maging?
　　　 what-LI kind-LI   doctor   NG animal   NG.3   want-LI   INF.NOM-be
　　　 'What kind of doctor of animals does she want to be?'

In (37), the second-position clitic *niya* must attach to the entire wh-fronted predicate *anong klaseng doktor ng hayop* 'what kind of doctor of animals'; attaching the clitic to the predicate head *doktor* 'doctor' yields ungrammaticality. The contrast between (36) and (37) will have to be taken into account in our theories of clitic placement and predicate fronting; for reasons of space, I will not discuss the problem further here.

2.5.　　The lightness of *maging*

The verb *maging* has several other peculiarities which I will discuss briefly in this section. Morphologically, it is a verb in the *ma-*class; we can see that it is a *ma-* verb and not a *mag-* verb by subjecting it to aspectual reduplication, which identifies *-ging* rather than *-ing* as the root:

(38) a. ma-ging　　　　 a'. ma-GI-ging
　　　　 INF.NOM-be　　　　 FUT.NOM-be
　　　　 'to be/become'　　　 'will be/become'
　　 b. ma-galit　　　　 b'. ma-GA-galit
　　　　 INF.NOM-get.angry　 FUT.NOM-get.angry
　　　　 'to get angry'　　　 'will get angry'
　　 c. mag-aral　　　　 c'. mag-A-aral
　　　　 INF.NOM-study　　 FUT.NOM-study
　　　　 'to study'　　　　 'will study'

　　　　 As the brief list of *ma-* verbs below demonstrates, *maging* is an unusually short *ma-*verb. In fact, it is the only verb in the language with a monosyllabic root:

(39) a. ma-ging　　　 'be, become'
　　 b. ma-galit　　　 'get angry'
　　 c. ma-tulog　　　 'sleep'
　　 d. ma-takot　　　 'be afraid'

This may be related to the fact that *maging* is unable to host second-position clitics:

(40) a. Naging   doktor *ako*
      PERF.NOM-be doctor ANG.I
      'I became a doctor'
  b. Hindi *ako*   naging   doktor
     not   ANG.I PERF.NOM-be doctor
     'I didn't become a doctor'

Example (40b) demonstrates that *naging* is within the domain of cliticization in these examples; since the clitic is capable of attaching to the negative morpheme *hindi* in (40b), *naging* must be within the domain in which clitics may attach. Nevertheless, no form of *maging* can host clitics.

     A plausible analysis of the facts in (40) might say that *maging* is in fact a prefix, despite its orthographic status as a separate word. But we have already seen evidence that this is not the case, since *maging* can be stranded via wh-extraction of the following predicate:

(41)   Ano-ng klase-ng doktor ang gusto niya-ng **maging**?
       what-LI kind-LI doctor ANG want   ANG.3-LI INF.NOM-be
       'What kind of doctor does she want to be?'

Another 'defective' property of *maging* has to do with the Philippine "voice" system, in which it does not participate, at least for modern speakers[6]; it can only appear in the form which marks its subject with *ang* (that is, the Nominative form, in Rackowski's (2002) system, or the Intransitive form, in Aldridge's (2004)). Examples (42-43) contrast *maging* 'be' with *bumili* 'buy':

(42) a.   Bumili   <u>ang babae</u> ng bahay para sa   kanyang mga magulang
           PERF.NOM-buy ANG woman NG house for   DAT 3.DAT-LI PL   parent
           'The woman bought a house for her parents'
     b.   Ibinili   ng babae ng   bahay <u>ang kanyang mga magulang</u>
           PERF.OBL-buy NG woman NG   house ANG 3.DAT-LI PL   parent
           'The woman bought her parents the house'
(43) a.   Naging   doktor <u>ang babae</u> para sa kanyang mga magulang
           PERF.NOM-be doctor ANG woman for   DAT 3.DAT-LI PL   parent
           'The woman became a doctor for her parents' sake'
     b.   * Ipinaging   doktor ng babae <u>ang kanyang mga   magulang</u>
           PERF.OBL-be   doctor NG woman   ANG 3.DAT-LI PL   parent

(42b) shows that the verb *bili* 'buy' may take a form that marks a benefactive argument with *ang*; in (43b), we see that *maging* 'be' has no corresponding form. In many approaches to Philippine "voice", examples like (42b) involve an applicative morpheme which alters the argument structure of the verb (cf. Nakamura 1996, Rackowski 2002, Aldridge 2004). If the account of the behavior of *maging* developed in this paper is on the right track, then the ill-formedness of (43b) is expected. We have seen arguments that *maging* is a dummy verb inserted to support Aspect

---

[6] Schachter and Otanes (1972) note that the Tagalog speakers they worked with are capable of putting *maging* in other voices, but none of the speakers I have talked with can do this.

morphology, without any argument structure of its own, and we therefore should not expect it to be capable of bearing argument-structure changing morphology.

3.   Conclusion

I have argued here that the Tagalog verb *maging* is a copula. We have seen that the copula may often be dropped, though I have also argued that even when the copula is not pronounced it is syntactically present. I claimed that the copula drops when overt Aspect morphology is missing; we saw that absence of Aspect morphology is an independently observable option in the language, attested with a number of verbs, and associated with interpretations reminiscent of Factative tense marking in languages like Haitian Creole and Igbo. When this type of interpretation is inappropriate for semantic or syntactic reasons (as, for example, in control infinitives, where infinitive Aspect morphology is selected for by a higher head), then Aspect morphology must be overt, and the copula must be realized as the appropriate form of *maging*.

We might now ask whether this account of null-copula sentences in Tagalog can be generalized to other languages which appear to lack copulas. We have seen, for example, that some differences between Russian and Tagalog null copulas can be explained in terms of more general differences between the languages. For instance, the Russian copula appears in statements describing states in the past, while the Tagalog copula does not; I connected this to the fact that Russian verbs bear morphology for Tense, unlike Tagalog verbs, and that Russian therefore differentiates morphologically between past and present states, while Tagalog uses the same morphology for both.

In the account developed here, the distribution of the overt copula in Tagalog is determined by three contingent facts about the language: first, that clauses can be generated without any overt Aspect or Tense morphology (and as we have seen, generating such clauses has semantic consequences); second, that Tagalog has some predicates (namely, the non-verbal predicates) which are morphologically unable to bear Aspect morphology; and third, that the Tagalog lexicon contains a 'dummy' verb *maging* which can support Aspect morphology when the clause's predicate is morphologically unable to do so. I have not posited any link between these properties of Tagalog, and it is interesting to consider what a language might be like which lacked one or another of these properties.[7] In particular, if there are languages which are like Tagalog in the first two respects but which lack anything like Tagalog *maging*, we should expect those languages to be able to use non-verbal predicates just when Tense and/or Aspect may be morphologically absent; such predicates would be barred, all other things being equal, in control infinitives, for example. I will leave the question of whether such languages are attested for future work.

References

Aldridge, Edith.   2004.   Ergativity and word order in Austronesian languages.   Doctoral dissertation, Cornell University.

---

[7] Thanks to Sandy Chung for raising this question.

Bender, Emily. 2000. Syntactic variation and linguistic competence: the case of AAVE copula deletion. Doctoral dissertation, Stanford University.

Déchaine, Rose-Marie. 1991. Bare sentences. *Proceedings of SALT 1*, 31-50. Cornell Linguistics Circle, Ithaca, New York.

Fitzpatrick, Justin. 2006. Deletion through movement. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 24:399-431.

Foley, William. 1998. Symmetrical voice systems and precategoriality in Philippine languages. Paper presented at the 3rd LFG conference, Brisbane, Australia.

Gil, David. 2000. Syntactic categories, cross-linguistic variation and universal grammar. *Approaches to the typology of word classes*, ed. Petra Vogel and Bernard Comrie, 173-216. Walter de Gruyter, Berlin.

Kaufman, Daniel. 2009. Austronesian Nominalism and its consequences: a Tagalog case study. *Theoretical Linguistics* 35:1-49.

Kroeger, Paul. 1993. *Phrase structure and grammatical relations in Tagalog*. CSLI Publications, Stanford, CA.

Labov, William. 1969. Contraction, deletion, and inherent variability of the English copula. *Language* 45:715-762.

Labov, William. 1995. The case of the missing copula. In Lila Gleitman and Mark Liberman (eds.) *Language*. MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.

Lefebvre, Claire. 1996. The tense, mood, and aspect system of Haitian Creole and the problem of transmission of grammar in creole genesis. *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages* 11:231-311.

Lumsden, John. 1995. Aspect and lexical semantic representations in Haitian Creole. *The Linguistic Review* 12:123-142.

Manueli, Maria Khristina. 2006. Non-verbal sentences in Tagalog: a minimalist analysis. *Proceedings of the 9th Philippine Linguistics Congress*. University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines.

Matushansky, Ora. 2000. The instrument of inversion: instrumental case in the Russian copula. *Proceedings of WCCFL 19*. Cascadilla Press, Somerville, Mass.

Nakamura, Masanori. 1996. Economy of chain formation. Doctoral dissertation, McGill University.

Rackowski, Andrea. 2002. The structure of Tagalog: specificity, voice, and the distribution of arguments. Doctoral dissertation, MIT.

Richards, Norvin. 1998. Syntax versus semantics in Tagalog wh-extraction. In *UCLA occasional papers in linguistics 21: recent papers in Austronesian linguistics*, 259-275. UCLA Department of Linguistics, Los Angeles.

Sabbagh, Joseph. 2008. Copular clauses and predicate initial word order in Tagalog. ms., Reed College, Portland, Oregon.

Schachter, Paul, and Fe Otanes. 1972. *Tagalog reference grammar*. University of California, Berkeley.

Sityar, Emily. 1989. Pronominal clitics in Tagalog. M.A. thesis, UCLA.