Chapter 38. Word classes in Maweti-Guaraní languages

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Abstract

This chapter discusses how Maweti-Guaraní languages challenge the definition of major word classes. The relation between major word classes and syntactic/discourse functions is rather flexible throughout this group of languages. The first issue is the blurred distinction between nouns and verbs, as many nouns can function as predicates without any derivational morphology and with all the "verbal" morphology. The second issue is the classification of descriptive roots (expressing qualities, i.e. with 'adjectival' meaning) as either nouns, verbs or adjectives. Once we apply clear syntactic and morphological criteria to classify parts of speech, it becomes clear that most Maweti-Guaraní languages have three major lexical categories, i.e. nouns, verbs and postpositions, and that these share some morphological and structural properties, involving a much debated 'relational prefix'. Minor word classes that are often discussed in grammars of Maweti-Guaraní languages are adverbs, ideophones, interjections, and particles.

1. Introduction

The identification of word classes is one of the two central issues in Maweti-Guaraní studies, along with the nature of their person indexation system on predicates. This question can be decomposed in two major issues: first, the distinction between nouns and verbs that is blurred by the fact that a large proportion of prototypical nouns can function as predicates without any derivational morphology, while sharing all the "verbal" morphology; second, and related to the first issue, the identification of a class of lexemes with adjectival meaning as either verbal (as they most commonly occur as predicates in discourse), nominal (on the basis of their combination with person indexes which are also found on nouns) or adjectival (on the basis that they are neither prototypical nouns nor verbs). A third matter at hand is the fact that the three inflectionable lexical classes (nouns, verbs and postpositions) enter a similar construction with identical marking of their possessor/object/complement, in which a much debated 'relational' prefix plays a role. These issues in Maweti-Guaraní linguistics essentially

concern theoretical questions regarding the "value" of various criteria used for determining lexical classes, rather than comparative issues that would be based on internal variation within the family. This group of languages is in general rather homogenous for their word classes, but different authors of grammars answer these questions in diverging ways for similar datasets. This is not to deny any variation among those languages regarding word classes, but this variation is not central to the issues discussed in this paper.

There is presently no consensus among specialists, on what the word classes of Maweti-Guaraní languages are. Pioneer work on the question is that of Dietrich (1977, 2000). The identification of word classes in Maweti-Guaraní languages became a research question essentially after the publication of a volume on nouns and verbs in Tupi-Guaraní languages (Queixalós, 2001a).[1] It is noteworthy that all grammars published after that date devote some discussion to the criteria used to define word classes, and most have a very lengthy chapter on word classes. However, this topic has not often been dealt with at the level of the Tupi-Guaraní sub-group or the Maweti-Guaraní group: for example, it is not addressed in comparative works, such as Jensen (1998) or Corrêa-da-Silva (2010: 175).

This paper aims to account for the existing literature as neutrally as possible, rather than offer its own analysis of the data. The theoretical approach will be kept to the essential. First, it is important to specify that the discussion actually deals with the categories of lexical roots, rather than words per se (that can be derived from roots). Criteria for word classes in the theoretical literature pertain to four levels of linguistic analysis (Croft, 1991; Hengeveld, 1992): semantics, morphology, syntax and discourse. For example, prototypical nouns and verbs can be defined very schematically on the level of semantics as items expressing objects vs. actions; on the morphological level as taking for example determiners vs. tense morphology; on the syntactic level as being the head of nominal phrases used as arguments in the clause vs. the head of predicate phrases; and on the discourse level as being used for reference vs. predication. The literature on Maweti-Guaraní languages essentially uses two of these types of criteria: the morphological one, and the syntactic/discourse one. In fact, these two criteria generally coincide, except for 'adjectives'.

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[1] This volume collects proceedings from a conference on nouns and verbs in Tupi-Guaraní languages organized in Cayenne (French Guiana) by the program of the IRD *Langues de Guyane*.

This paper will start with a short introduction to the language group (Section 2). Before describing the characteristics of each word class, this paper will first discuss at length three crucial problems regarding the identification of word classes in Maweti-Guaraní that descriptivists face and may be of interest to both typologists and theoreticians working on word classes: the noun/verb distinction (Section 3), the categorization of words with adjectival meaning (Section 4), and the constructional parallelism between nouns, verbs and postpositions with the so-called 'relational prefix' (Section 5). Once the identification of major word classes is settled, Section 0 will describe each lexical word class with their major characteristics (not only those critical to word class identification), with a focus on what may be typologically remarkable. It will start with the major word classes: verbs (Section 6.1), nouns (Section 6.2) and postpositions (Section 6.3). It will then proceed to minor word classes such as adverbs (Section 6.4), ideophones and interjections (Section 6.5), and particles (Section 6.6). Examples are taken from a large array of descriptions of Maweti-Guaraní languages.

2. The language group

Maweti-Guaraní is one of the seven branches of the Tupi family. It is the largest and best-described branch of the family, with fifty languages (Hammarström, Haspelmath, & Forkel, 2019). The Maweti-Guaraní branch itself has been established relatively recently and includes Mawé, Awetí and the large Tupi-Guaraní subgroup (Drude, 2006; Rodrigues & Dietrich, 1997). The Tupi-Guaraní subgroup has traditionally been separated in 8 branches (Rodrigues, 1984; Rodrigues & Cabral, 2002), while more recent lexical phylogenetic research has resulted in a more resolved internal structure (Michael et al., 2015). The Tupi family with its major subgroups is shown in Figure 1, with Tupi-Guaraní language names in italics, and other Maweti-Guaraní language names in bold.[2]

Figure 1. Tree of the Tupi language family

insert tree here

Some comparative work have been published on Maweti-Guaraní: Meira and Drude (2015) on phonology, Corrêa-da-Silva (2010) on phonology, morphology and syntax, and Corrêa-da-

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[2] This tree, kindly provided by Natalia Chousou-Polydouri, combines two trees resulting from phylogenetic analyses of lexicon, one for the whole Tupi family (Galucio et al., 2015) and a more specific one for the Tupi-Guaraní branch (Michael et al., 2015). Nheengatu and Old Guaraní have been added manually.

Silva (2013) on lexicon. Jensen (1998)'s comparative work on Tupi-Guaraní has been for long a major source of information. The field has been greatly influenced by the Tupi specialist Aryon Rodrigues and his work on Tupinambá (Rodrigues, 1953, 1996 among others).

Maweti-Guaraní languages, and especially Tupi-Guaraní languages, are "noted for a high degree of lexical and morphological similarity in spite of their extensive geographical separation" (Jensen, 1999: 128). They are in general agglutinating to polysynthetic languages, with usually basic SVO or SOV order. Typologically salient features are the following: i) nasality spreading at the word level (Drude, 2009; Michael & Lapierre, 2018); ii) a hierarchical indexation system, whereby the person of both A and P counts in determining which argument is indexed on the verb (Birchall, 2015; Jensen, 1998:562-576; Rose, 2009, 2015b, 2018), once described as an inverse system (Payne, 1994); iii) temporal modification of nouns (see section 6.2); and iv) some genderlect distinctions (Drude, 2002; Pottier, 1972; Rose & Chousou-Polydouri, 2017; Vallejos, 2015).

3. The noun/verb distinction

All grammars of Maweti-Guaraní include nouns and verbs as major word classes, but they do so on the basis of different criteria, and with a different extension of these two classes. The present section will focus on aspects of these languages that are blurring the noun/verb distinction. The description of the form and function of nouns and verbs is summarized at the end of the section in Table 1.

According to the morphological criterion, only verbs combine with a particular set of person prefixes to mark the subject of transitive and intransitive verbs (A and Sa) in independent clauses (Corrêa-da-Silva, 2010: 223), as exemplified in (1) and (2). The indexes that some nouns can take for their possessor belong to another set of person indexes (3). Because the various sets of person indexes are described in different manners (as prefixes, clitics or free pronouns), I will refer to them as Set I and Set II person indexes (Jensen, 1998).

Tupinambá (Jensen, 1990: 117; Rodrigues, 2001: 110)

(1)   ***a-*só**   *Set I for S$_A$ on intransitive active verbs*
         1SG.**I-**go
         'I went.'

(2)   **a-i-*nupẽ*   *Set I for A on transitive verbs*
      1SG.**I-**3.II-hit
      'I hit it.'

(3)   **syé**=*pɨ*   *Set II for Possessor on nouns*
      1SG.**II**=foot
      'my feet'

It does not seem to matter that Set II, used on nouns for their possessors, is also found on verbs to refer to P as in (4) (see also Section 6.1), even to A/S$_A$ in some dependent clauses, and on words with 'adjectival' meaning when they predicate. What is generally taken as a crucial fact is that nouns can never take a Set I index.

Tupinambá (Jensen, 1990: 117)

(4)   **syé**=*nupẽ*   *Set II for P*
      1SG.**II**=hit
      'He/she/they/you hit me.'

According to the syntactic/discourse criterion, the class of nouns comprises those items that are most often used as arguments in discourse, and that of verbs those most often used as predicates (along the lines of Hopper & Thompson (1984)). This criterion has been considered necessary in Mawetí-Guaraní research due to the fact that "there is no perfect superposition in these languages between nouns and arguments and verbs and predicates, i.e. between lexical categories and functional or syntactic categories."[3] (Corrêa-da-Silva, 2010: 223). This situation is primarily based on the fact that even though nouns are most often used as arguments, they can be used as predicates without being first derived into verbs, a fact already discussed in Dietrich (1977). The type of nominal predication that is most often put forward is a construction within which possessible nouns can be used as possessive predicates, simply with a Set II marker for the possessor, just as in a noun phrase (see for example Rose, 2002; Vieira, 2000). In this possessive predicative construction, nouns can take the whole array of morphology used by verbs when they predicate (negation, TAM, causative, plural, see for example Rose, 2002; Vieira, 2000). Examples (5) illustrate this with negation. This construction has often been analyzed as an existential construction (Dietrich,

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[3] My translation for : « não ocorre nessas línguas uma superposição exata entre nome e argumento e verbo e predicado, ou seja, entre categoria lexical e categoria funcional ou sintática. »

2001; Rodrigues, 2001; Rose, 2002),[4] parallel to that involving non-possessible nouns like (6).[5]

Teko (Rose, 2008: 449)

(5) a- **d**-*e-sapato-**ʤi**-ãhã.*
      NEG-1SG.II-shoe-**NEG**-only
      'I don't have any shoes.'
    b- **d**-*o-ʔu-**ʤi***   *sautu.*
      NEG-3.I-eat-**NEG**   salt
      'She does not eat salt.'

Tapirapé (W. N. Praça, 2007: 193, 195)

(6)   *xãwãr   tãj-pe*
         dog   village-LOC
         'There are dogs in the village'

Another aspect of Tupí-Guaraní morphosyntax that blurs the distinction between nouns and verbs in discourse is the curious -*a* suffix (not attested in Awetí and Mawé (Corrêa-da-Silva, 2010: 203)). This suffix can be said to mark a referential expression (Queixalós, 2001b).[6] Cabral (2001) draws a panorama of the use of -*a* in the Tupí-Guaraní branch: it usually does not occur after a vowel, but has also been lost in many more contexts in various languages (Queixalós, 2006). Across the Tupí-Guaraní languages, its maximal distribution comprises nouns when used as arguments, possessors in adnominal possessive constructions and objects of postpositions (see example (7)), but not when they are used as vocative, a citation form, in dislocated NPs, or as a predicate such as (8) (except for equative predicates such as (9)). As a consequence, this -*a* suffix has been considered crucial in the distinction, not between nouns and verbs, but between the syntactic position of argument and predicates. This distribution blurs the noun/verb distinction in two ways. First, nominal predicates do not carry this -*a* suffix, its absence being an additional common feature of verbs and nouns (when used as predicates). Second, there is in many Tupí-Guaraní languages a nominalizer -*a* as in (10), which is usually described as a morpheme distinct from the 'nominal' suffix (except

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[4] Gerasimov (2016) argues against the hypothesis of a zero-copula in Paraguaian Guaraní. Vieira (2000) offers another analysis of these possessive clauses in Mbyá Guaraní as transitive, postulating a zero 'have'-verb.
[5] Note that no existential copula has been reconstructed for the whole language group (various languages have innovated different copulas), so that the noun is also the predicate in (6). It is not clear from the literature whether non-possessed nouns used as (copula-less) existential predicates share their morphology with verbs.
[6] It is called argumentative case (Rodrigues, 2001 see for example), nominal case (Jensen, 1998), or referencing suffix (Queixalós, 2001b) among other terms.

notably in W. Praça, 2000; Rodrigues, 2001). In the literature, verbs are usually judged as being able to be used as arguments with particular morphology only (nominalizers or relativizers, as in (11)). If one considers this *-a* to be marking a referential argument, just as when found on a noun, then nouns and verbs can both fill in NP positions with the same *-a* morphology. By marking the syntactic/discourse functions of arguments and predicates, the *-a* suffix makes the distinction between nouns and verbs secondary.

Kamaiurá (Seki, 2001: 56, 161, 162)

(7)   *kunu'um-a ka'i-a   r-uwaj-a   w-ekyj*
         boy-*a*   monkey-*a*   REL-tail-*a*   3.I-pull
         'the boy is pulling the monkey's tail'

(8)   *je=tutyr-a   morerekwat*
         lSG=uncle-*a*   chief
         'My uncle is (a) chief.'

(9)   *je=tutyr-a   morerekwar-a*
         lSG=uncle-*a*   chief-*a*
         'My uncle is the chief.'

Tupinambá (Rodrigues, 2001: 108)

(10)   *né   kér-a   a-j-potár*
         2SG.II   sleep-*a*   1SGI-3SG.II-want
         'I want you to sleep'

Teko (Rose, 2008: 450)

(11)   *o-kuwa-pa   o-manõ-maʔẽ*
         3.I-know-COMPL   3.I-die-NZR
         'He (God) knows all the dead ones.'

On this basis, Queixalos (2001b, 2006) suggested that the Tupi-Guaraní languages may have originated from an omnipredicative language (on omnipredicativity, see Launey, 1994), in which all lexical classes were predicative, and referring expressions are all derived from the predicates with the help of the *-a* suffix.[7]

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[7] The languages show different stages of erosion of this initial stage, with a gradual loss of phonological and grammatical contexts associated with the appearance of *-a*.

As a conclusion, there is no one-to-one relation between the word classes and the syntactic/discourse functions. There are two major positions on the flexibility of nouns and verbs in Maweti-Guaraní languages.[8]

- total flexibility of both nouns and verbs
  In this view, both nouns and verbs are flexible and can be used as referential phrases (with -*a*) or predicates (with 'verbal' morphology). They can be distinguished on the basis of their prime function (higher frequency of use in discourse).
- (partial) flexibility of nouns only
  In this view, verbs are not flexible because they need to be relativized to be used as arguments. A (large) class of nouns (possessible ones) are flexible, and can be used both as referential phrases and as predicates. They can be distinguished from verbs on the basis of two criteria 1) predication is not their prime function, if frequency in discourse is taken into account 2) there are (non-possessible) nouns that are not used as predicates with 'verbal' morphology.

In the end, all authors converge in distinguishing nouns and verbs, because the morphological and syntactic/discourse criteria converge. Crucial facts for a distinction between nouns and verbs are summarized in Table 1. Sections 6.1 and 6.2 will present additional characteristics of verbs and nouns.

Table 1. Function and morphology of verbs and nouns in Maweti-Guaraní (generalization)

	Referential use	Predicative use
Verbs	Set I for S/A	Set I for S/A, Set II for P, negation, TAME
	-*a* (as nominalizer), relativizers	
Nouns	Set II for Poss	Set II for S
	-*a*	negation, TAME

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[8] These two positions have been reconciled by Queixalós' (2001b, 2006) historical hypothesis for Tupi-Guaraní languages, given that Tupinambá, where flexibility of both nouns and verbs is most visible, is considered a 'conservative' Tupi-Guaraní language.

4. Where have all the adjectives gone?

Another ongoing debate among specialists of Mawétí-Guaraní concerns the issue of which part of speech "descriptive" roots belong to (Dietrich, 2000; Sérgio Meira, 2006; Queixalós, 2001a, 2006 inter alia). This class of words with prototypical 'adjectival' meanings has often been described as stative verbs (Jensen, 1998; Seki, 2000). Nevertheless, some authors analyze them as nouns (Corrêa-da-Silva, 2010; Couchili, Maurel, & Queixalós, 2002; Dietrich, 1977). It is noticeable that frequently, authors working on the same language are on opposite sides of the debate as is the case with Ka'apor (Caldas & DaSilva, 2002; Kakumasu, 1986), Mawé (Franceschini, 1999; Sérgio Meira, 2006), Tupinambá (Barbosa, 1956; Rodrigues, 1996), and Tapirapé (Leite, 1990; W. N. Praça, 2007) for example. We are basically facing a problem of analysis, for which no consensus has been reached.

The class of descriptive roots is relatively stable semantically throughout the family, expressing physical states (permanent or temporary), and internal states (such as feelings). They take Set II indexes (12), like nouns do (13), but are typically used as predicates, as in 0 and (15). They can also modify a noun in their bare form as in (16) or after having been nominalized as in (17). They are very rarely used as arguments, and then take the *-a* suffix as in (18) (in languages where it is used on arguments).

Mawé (Sérgio Meira, 2006: 55-57)

(12) *Maria   h-eera*
      Maria   3-be.tired
       'Maria is tired.'

(13) *Maria   h-et*
      Maria   3-name
       'Maria has a name.'

(14) *waipaka i-hup*
      chicken   3-be.red
       'The chicken is red.'

(15) *aware   yt   i-wato   'i*
      dog   NEG   3-be.big   NEG
       'The dog isn't big.'

Kamaiurá (Seki, 2000: 70)

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(16)   *y'yw-a*   *katu*   *n=o-mopen -ite*
        arrow-*a*   good   NEG=3-break-NEG
        'He did not break the good/straight arrow.'

(17)   *y'yw-a*   *i-katu-ma'e-a*   *n=o-mopen -ite*
        arrow-*a*   3-good-NZR-*a*   NEG=3-break-NEG
        'He did not break the good/straight arrow.'

(18)   *awujete*   *i-powyj-a*   *ore-raha*   *ko=wa*
        luckily   3-heavy-*a*   1EXCL-carry   PART=MS
        'luckily we carried her heavy (load)'

The two major alternative analyses of descriptive roots as nouns or verbs rely on different criteria.[9] On the basis of the syntax/discourse criterion, descriptive roots should be described as a sub-class of verbs because they are principally used as predicates. On the basis of the morphological criterion, they should be considered a sub-class of nouns, because they are only preceded by Set II indexes. They may function as predicates, in an existential construction, like possessible nouns do. In contrast to what has been discussed for nouns and verbs in the preceding section, here the two criteria do not coincide. This explains why some authors favor an analysis with a separate class of adjectives (Magalhães, 2007; Villafañe, 2004),[10] on the basis that these show simultaneously both verbal and nominal properties (on the syntactic and morphological levels, respectively). The crucial facts used for determining the part of speech of descriptive roots are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Comparison of Maweti-Guaraní descriptive roots with nouns and verbs

	Morphology	Main syntactic/discourse function
Verbs	Set I for S/A	predication
Nouns	Set II for Poss	argument
Descriptive roots	Set II for S	predication

One should nevertheless keep in mind that there are also real differences in the behavior of those terms from one language to the other (see for example the comparison between Mawé and Kamaiurá descriptive roots in Meira (2006)). As an illustration, one of the arguments of

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[9] There is at least one author (Copin, 2012) that splits this class of descriptive roots as descriptive verbs and descriptive nouns, the latter for those that can function as heads of an NP.

[10] Reiter (2011) also considers that there is an adjective class in Awetí, but it includes only two items.

Seki (2001: 51) for treating descriptive roots as verbs is that they take the nominalizer *-(t)aw*
(19), which can combine with verbs (20) but not with nouns. In contrast, one of the arguments
of Dietrich (2000) for treating descriptive roots as nouns is that they can take the suffix *-va*
(called 'caracterizante') to be used as nouns modifiers (21), just like nominal possessive
predicates do (22).

Kamaiurá (Seki, 2001: 51)

(19)   *a-kwahaw=in*   *i-jae'o-**taw**-a*
          lSG-know=POT   3-rain-NZR-*a*
          'I know that it will rain.'

(20)   *a -kwahaw=in*   *i-katu-**taw**-a*
          lSG-know=POT   3-good-NZR-*a*
          'I know that he will be good.'

Guaraní (Dietrich, 2000: 259)

(21)   *ha'e*   *kuimba'e*   *h-etia'é-**va***
          3PRO   man   3-good_mood-CAR
          'He is a pleasant man.'

Chiriguano (Dietrich, 2000: 259)

(22)   *kwa*   *kũña*   *i-mémby-**va**-pe*   *a-mẽe*   *aváti*
          this   woman   3-son-CAR-DAT   1SG-give   corn
          'I gave corn to this woman who has chidren.'

As a follow up of his hypothesis of a former omnipredicative stage (see Section 3),
Queixalós (2006: 282) suggests that after the decline of omnipredicativity, "it was the
conservation, in this later stage, of its functional indistinction that allowed the class of states
to lean, in subsequent stages, either towards nouns […], or towards verbs […]." There is
actually one language with two clearly distinct classes of descriptive roots, Teko, a.k.a.
Emerillon (Couchili et al., 2002).[11]

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[11] One of the descriptive root class is comparable to the class of words discussed in this section, while the other
includes roots that need additional morphology (specific to this class) to function as predicates and to be
additionally relativized to be used as modifiers or arguments.

This section can be concluded with typological remarks regarding part of speech systems, and their interaction with syntax. First, the absence of adjectives in presence of adverbs (see Section 6.4) does not respect the parts-of-speech hierarchy given in Hengeveld (1992). Second, if descriptive roots are considered a sub-class of verbs, word class flexibility is then just partial: some verbs only (descriptive ones) can be used as noun modifiers without additional morphology. If descriptive roots are considered a sub-class of nouns, word class flexibility is again partial: many nouns (including descriptive ones) can be used as predicates without additional morphology. If descriptive roots are considered as a separate word class, its flexibility is not bi-directional: they can be used as predicates and (sometimes) noun modifiers without additional morphology, while verbs cannot be used as noun modifiers without additional morphology.

Another interesting typological remark is that noun modification using a lexical noun modifier is not very frequent in Maweti-Guaraní languages. Descriptions of noun phrases with descriptive modifiers are short and examples scarce. Other morphosyntactic means to modify nouns are sometimes mentioned, such as the use of augmentative and diminutive morphology (Dietrich, 2000: 256), or compounding (Rodrigues, 1996: 63-64).

A final typological remark is that the analysis of descriptive roots has a strong effect on the description of major aspects of the syntax of Maweti-Guaraní languages. Most remarkably, it has an impact on the description of its alignment system (Corrêa-da-Silva, 2010: 224). If descriptive roots are analyzed as verbs, there is a split-intransitivity system between two classes of verbs, the active class taking Set I indexes and the descriptive class taking Set II indexes. If descriptive roots are analyzed as nouns, verbs show a nominative-accusative system, with Set I for Sa and A, and Set II for P. Split-intransitivity can then only be described at the level of predicates: verbal predicates take Set I indexes, while non-verbal predicates (i.e. nouns, including descriptive roots) take Set II indexes (Rose, 2008: 453).

5. Construction parallelism with verbs, nouns and postpostions as heads, and relational morphology

This section discusses how Maweti-Guaraní postpositions share syntactic, morphological and lexical behavior with both nouns and verbs. Verbs, nouns and postpositions are often described as 'the three major lexical classes' or 'the three inflected parts of speech' (Corrêa-

da-Silva, 2010: 223). This section will also deal with 'relational prefixes', a topic of much debate.

Adpositions are treated in the typological literature as being closer to verbs than to nouns (Jaworska, 1999).[12] The literature on Maweti-Guaraní instead regularly highlights some similarities between postpositions, verbs and nouns, in sharp contrast with adverbs, particles and conjunctions. Below is a list of three features shared by these three word classes. In fact, the comparison targets all postpositions, but among verbs transitive verbs only and among nouns obligatorily possessed nouns only.

i)   Their dependent is obligatory.

The object of transitive verbs is not always overtly expressed, but it is always semantically present, and is often inferred from the hierarchical indexation pattern on the verb, as in (38) (see section 6.1). It is then interpretable anaphorically.

ii)   The dependent is either expressed by a noun phrase as in (23) and (24) or a Set II index as in (25) to (27), and immediately precedes the head.

This means that postpositions are inflected (see Jaworska, 1999: 304, on this notion).

Teko (Rose, 2011: 162, 123, 66)

(23)   **apam-a-baʔekʷər-a-kom**   *NP + N*
       foreigner-*a*-custom-*a*-PL
       'the customs of the foreigners'

(24)   *Françoise o-ho*   **Surinam-a-pope**.   *NP + Postp*
       Françoise   3.I-go   Surinam-*a*-in
       'Françoise went to Surinam.'

(25)   **e-mebir**   *SetII-N*
       1SG.II-child
       'my child'

(26)   *o-naʔaŋ-tar*   **e-koti**.   *SetII-Postp*
       3.I-meet-FUT   1SG.II-at

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[12] Jaworska (1999) highlights the similarities between prepositions on the one hand and verbs and nouns on the other. For example, in English, verbs and postpositions take an object noun phrase, while complements of nouns are introduced with "of". In Polish, only verbs and prepositions take accusative complements.

'They meet at me (my place).'

(27) zawar   **e-suʔu**.   *SetII-V*
     dog   1SG.**II**-bite
     'A dog bit me.'

The situation with verbs is slightly different, with third person objects. Nouns and third person Set II index for objects may immediately precede the verb in some dependent clauses only, like (28) and (29). In independent clauses, verbs obligatorily take either a subject or an object index, within a so-called hierarchical indexation system (see Section 6.1). This verbal morphosyntax differs from that of postpositions and nouns.

Teko (Rose, 2011: 331)

(28) o-zoka   **bokal-iʧig**.   *NP + V*
     3.I-break jar-drop
     'He broke the jar when dropping it'

(29) o-(w)eraho   ʔɨ-b   **i-mõbo**.   *SetII-V*
     3.I-carry   water-in   3.II-throw
     'She carries (it) and throws it in the water.'.

   iii)   Some items within these three classes of words are said to take a 'relational prefix' when immediately preceded by their dependent (either a noun phrase, or a first or second person index, but not when a third person index).

   Teko (Rose, 2011: 93, 95, 90)

(30) **teko-r-apɨʤ-**a-te.   *NP+r-N*
     Teko-REL-house-*a*-FOC
     'It is the house of Teko'

(31) **nõde-r-apɨʤ-**am   *SetII-r-N*
     2.II-REL-maison-TRANSL
     'for our houses'

(32) **o-sisig-a-r-ehe**   *NP+r-Postp*
     3.COREF-soeur-*a*-REL-POSTP
     'with his (own) sister'

(33) **de-r-ehe**   *SetII-r-Postp*

2SG.II-REL-POSTP
'at/with you'

(34)   *o-ho-tar*   **pureru-r-eka.**   *NP+r-V*
3.I-go-FUT   toad-REL-look_for
'He is going to look for the toad.'

(35)   *d-**e-r-aihi**-dʒi.*   *SetII-r-V*
NEG-1SG.II-REL-aimer-NEG
'He does not like me'

The subset of lexical items taking the relational prefix cannot be predicted on a semantic or a phonological basis, though all of the items taking it start with a vowel. This prefix has been reconstructed for Proto-Tupí (Corrêa-da-Silva, 2010; Rodrigues & Cabral, 2012; Rodrigues & Dietrich, 1997). It has been much discussed (Cabral, 2000b; Jensen, 1998: 498-502, 557-562; Payne, 1994) because its function is difficult to define: it is usually defined by its distribution, and is thus said to be marking the head-dependent relationship. There are two other analyses of the relational morpheme. Payne (1994) analyses it as a marker of inverse (see section 6.1), but this analysis does not account for its use on nouns and postpositions. Meira and Drude (2013) argue that it results from historical morphophonological changes undergone by the initial consonant of the root, conditioned by both the phonological context and the morphosyntactic structure. In their view, the relational morpheme should therefore not be reconstructed, since it is not a morpheme.

The three word classes are split in several lexical classes depending on the allomorphs of the relational morpheme that they take (the distribution is only partly predictable on the basis of phonology). Because these lexical classes also seem to predict the form of the third person index for possessor, object and object of postposition, most authors consider that there is a paradigm of four different relational prefixes (see for example Cabral, 2000b). Rose (2011: 97-103) discusses the alternative analyses.

    i)   *r-* (or allomorphs) when the dependent (noun or first or second person index) immediately precedes the head;

    ii)   *i-* (or allomorphs) when the dependent does not immediately precede the head. Elsewhere it is simply analyzed as a Set II index.

    iii)   *o-* when the dependent is coreferential with the subject. Elsewhere it is analyzed as a person index.

iv) *t-* when the dependent is a non-specific human being. Elsewhere it is analyzed as a dummy marker when an obligatorily possessed noun has no specific possessor.

The different constructions are illustrated below with nouns of two different classes in Teko, *owa* 'face' that takes the relational prefix and *kija* 'hammock' that does not.

Table 3. Teko possessive constructions of nouns with or without the relational prefix

e-r-owa	*e-kija*	1st person
X-(a)-r-owa	*X-(a)-kija*	noun phrase
Ø-owa	*i-kija*	3rd person
o-owa	*o-kija*	3rd person coreferential
t-owa	*kija*	non-specific possessor

The common behavior of nouns, verbs and postpositions is summarized in Table 3. Postpositions share with some sub-classes of nouns and verbs their syntax (they all enter a similar construction where they head a dependent), their morphology (set II indexes, and relational prefixes for some), and their lexical classes (determining which allomorph of the relational prefix they take).[13] Additional information on postpositions will be given in Section 6.3.

Table 3. Comparison of Maweti-Guaraní postpositions with subclasses of nouns and verbs

	Morphology	Lexical classes taking different allomorphs of the relational prefix	Syntactic construction with dependent expressed as an N
Transitive verbs	Set I for S/A, Set II for P	yes	N(-a-REL)-V
Possessible nouns	Set II for Poss	yes	N(-a-REL)-N
Postpositions	Set II for Object	yes	N(-a-REL)-POSTP

6. Major features of lexical word classes

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[13] This parallelism between transitive verb roots and their object and nouns and their possessor drove Dietrich (2001) as well as Cabral (2007a) to consider 'verbal roots' with a Set II index as forming a nominal phrase. According to them, the translation of '(s)he hits me' should in fact be analyzed as '(there is) my action of hitting (= hitting that concerns me)'.

6.1. Verbs

As discussed in Section 3, verbs in Maweti-Guaraní are defined either as the class of roots that is most often used as predicates, or as the class of roots that can combine with Set I indexes. This section will discuss reduplication (a typical feature of Maweti-Guaraní verbs), the hierarchical indexation system (a typologically remarkable characteristic of verb morphology), and finally the syntactic sub-classes of verbs.

First, the process of reduplication to express aspect has frequently been put forward as specific to verbs (Cruz, 2014; Dietrich, 2014; Drude, 2014; Everett & Seki, 1985; Lima, 2007; Rose, 2005, 2007). Jensen (1998: 538) reconstructs for Tupi-Guaraní languages a distinction between monosyllabic reduplication, expressing event-internal plurality as in (36), and disyllabic reduplication, expressing event-external plurality as in (37), using here Cusic's (1981) terminology, distinguishing repetition within the limits of the event vs. repetition of the event itself (see more details in Rose (2007)). However, most modern Tupi (including Maweti-Guaraní) languages do not clearly show this distinction (Dietrich, 2014; Rose, 2007).
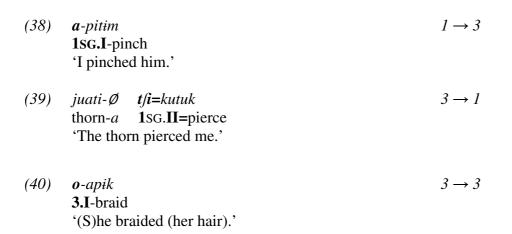
Tupinambá (Jensen, 1990: 128-129)

(36)   a. oro-pópór
          1EXCL.I-jump.RED1
          'We jumped, one after the other'

         b. a-i-mokókón
          1SG.I-3-swallow.RED1
          'I swallowed one after the other.'

(37)   a. oro-poropór
          1EXCL.I-jump.RED2
          'we jumped frequently'

         b. a-i-mokómokón
          1SG.I-3-jump.RED1
          'I swallowed them frequently.'

Second, a feature of Maweti-Guaraní verbs that is typological important (though not used in the definition of verbs) and plays a central role in the literature since Monserrat and Soares (1983) is the hierarchical person indexation system on transitive verbs. A first explicit definition of hierarchical indexing systems is found in Nichols (1992: 66): "Access to

inflectional slots for subject and/or object is based on person, number, and/or animacy rather than (or no less than) on syntactic relations." In practice, this means that the participant that is higher on the hierarchy is favored over the one that ranks lower. Inverse systems (a special case of hierarchical systems) indicate specifically whether the direction of the action respects the hierarchy or not. Maweti-Guaraní languages are said to follow a person hierarchy, often 1>2>3, determining which of the two arguments of a transitive predicate is to be represented in the unique index slot of the predicate. There are two sets of person markers that qualify for this slot, Set I for A and Set II for P. When the A argument is the highest on the hierarchy, it is indexed on the verb with Set I. This is illustrated in (38) for $1 \rightarrow 3$. When the P argument is highest on the hierarchy, it is indexed on the verb with Set II. This is illustrated in (39) for $3 \rightarrow 1$. When two third persons interact, only the third-person A argument is indexed on the verb (40).

Avá-Canoeiro (Borges, 2006: 158-160)

(38) **a**-*pitɨm*   *1 → 3*
     1SG.I-pinch
     'I pinched him.'

(39) *juati-Ø*   **tʃi**=*kutuk*   *3 → 1*
     thorn-*a*   **1SG.II=**pierce
     'The thorn pierced me.'

(40) **o**-*apɨk*   *3 → 3*
     3.I-braid
     '(S)he braided (her hair).'

The hierarchical indexing system is summarized in Table 4. Arguments against an analysis of this system as an inverse system (Payne, 1994) have been given in Rose (2009).

Table 4. The 'canonical' hierarchical indexing system of Maweti-Guaraní languages

	1P	2P	3P
1A		A	A
2A	P		A
3A	P	P	A

A survey of Tupi-Guaraní languages (Rose, 2015b) shows that only two languages out of twenty-eight exemplify this canonical system, Avá-Canoeiro (Borges, 2006) and Kayabí (Dobson, 1997). The great majority of languages support a 1/2 > 3 hierarchy, but with a more complex encoding of configurations involving two speech act participants, that do not clearly support a robust 1>2 hierarchy. This can be seen, for example, in the detailed description of the Teko indexation system (Rose, 2009). The hierarchy between the two speech act participants is in fact cross-linguistically debatable (Zúñiga, 2006). It has also been argued that the person hierarchy has not been the functional motivation responsible for the creation of hierarchical systems, but that the latter basically result from independent historical morphological processes (Rose, 2018). It is suggested that these systems originate from the indexing of pronominal paradigms lacking third-person forms.

Finally, sub-classes of verbs in Maweti-Guaraní languages are not much discussed beyond the questions already presented above, i.e. the distinction between intransitive (41) and transitive (42) verbs, and that between two classes of intransitive verbs. Two additional sub-classes are sometimes discussed: first, extended intransitive verbs (43), which mark their subject with Set I and have a second obligatory argument marked with a postposition; second, ditransitive verbs (44), with a third obligatory argument, introduced by a postposition.

Araweté (Solano, 2009: 184, 187, 186, 189)

(41)   *ere-ja*   *ku*   *ne*   *braziʎə-hɨ*
       2.I-come   FOC   2   Brasilia-ABL
       'You come from Brasilia.'

(42)   *Iwaneru*   *ku*   *u-juka*   *mɨtu*
       Iwaneru   FOC   3-kill   curassow
       'Iwaneru killed a curassow.'

(43)   *ere-maʔẽ*   *ku*   *kujĩ*   *r-ehe*
       2.I-look   FOC   woman   REL-for
       'You look at the woman.'

(44)   *u-meʔẽ*   *ku*   *kaʧe*   *ure*   *r-e*
       3.I-give   FOC   coffee   1EXCL   REL-for
       'He gives us coffee.'

6.2. Nouns

Beyond the issue of distinguishing nouns from verbs (and possibly adjectives), grammars of Maweti-Guaraní languages usually discuss two issues concerning nouns: first, the scarce morphology that is specific to nouns, and second, the sub-classes of nouns depending on possessibility.

As far as morphology is concerned, we have already seen that nouns can be distinguished from (most) verbs in that they do not take the « subject person prefixes » (Set I indexes). They instead take Set II indexes for their possessor but these are also found on verbs, either for the object of transitive verbs or for the subject of stative intransitive verbs (often called descriptive). Another type of morphology that distinguishes nouns and verbs, or rather nominal phrases and predicates, is negation (Chousou-Polydouri, Gasparini, Michael, O'Hagan, & Rose, 2016), but it is actually extremely rarely invoked for distinguishing word classes (Reiter, 2011 is an exception). Also, number marking is rarely invoked, probably because it varies a lot within the family (Gasparini, 2011).

When considering the morphology specific to nouns, authors describing Tupi-Guaraní usually discuss the -*a* suffix, other cases and the so-called « nominal tenses ». The -*a* "argumentative case" has already been discussed in Section 3. As mentioned before, the -*a* suffix is not really specific to nouns, since it is also used on verbs when they serve as arguments. There are four other case suffixes, three locative ones, and a "translative" one, expressing temporary qualities. Nouns in Maweti-Guaraní languages are supposed to be devoid of case suffixes only when used as vocative, in compounds and as predicates, except that most languages are in the process of losing these suffixes, at least in some contexts (Rodrigues, 2000). Only two of the locative cases are found in Mawé and Awetí, while the -*a*, the translative suffix and the third locative case are absent (Corrêa-da-Silva, 2010: 203-207).

Asuriní do Tocantins (Cabral, 2000a: 10, 13)

(45)   *más-a*   *kaʔá-**pe***
       snake-*a*   forest-**LOC.PUNCT**
       'There are snakes in the forest.'

(46)   *sahý-a*   *sekwehé*   *akoma'é-**ramo***   *pané*
       moon-*a*   in_the_old_days   man-**TRANSL**   FRUSTR
       'In the old days, the moon had been a man.'

Most Maweti-Guaraní languages also show two nominal suffixes that are usually glossed « past » and « future » but are importantly never found on verbs. Tonhauser (2006, 2007) has studied this phenomenon in detail in Paraguayan Guaraní. She argues that Guaraní *-kue* and *-rã* do not locate the noun phrase in time like tense markers locate the state-of-affairs in time, but instead « express a temporal precedence relation: they specify that the property (or relation) denoted by the nominal predicate is true of the individuals denoted by the noun phrase prior and subsequent to another time, respectively. » In (47), the woman whose existence is expressed in the noun phrase will be a wife in the future, while in (48), the possessive relation precedes the time at which the whole noun phrase is interpreted.

Paraguayan Guaraní (Tonhauser, 2007: 833 and 836)

(47) *O-ho   peteĩ   arriéro   o-jeruré-vo   la   h-embireko-**rã**-re.*
      3.I-go   one   man   3.I-ask.for-at LA   3.II-wife-RA-RE
      'A man went to ask for his future wife.'

(48) *Che   a-reko   peteĩ lívro de medisína,   che-aguélo   mba'e-**kue**.*
      PRO1SG   1SG.I-have one   book of medicine   1SG.II-grandfather thing-KUE
      'I have a medicine book, it was my grandfather's.'

All grammars similarly describe three classes of nouns, based on their behavior in regard to adnominal possession. The relational nouns (also called obligatorily possessed, dependent or inalienable) are those that cannot appear without a possessor being expressed. In Wayampi, for example, relational nouns comprise parts of a whole (body or not) and bodily excretions, and kinship terms (Copin, 2012: 37-38). The autonomous nouns (also called optionally possessed, or alienable) may appear with or without a possessor. In Wayampi, autonomous nouns comprise artefacts, social status, cyclic times of day or year, properties, natural phenomena and food and drinks (Copin, 2012:41-42). Avalent nouns (also called non-possessible or absolute) cannot be expressed with a possessor. In Wayampi, these include human beings, ethnic names and animals (Copin, 2012:44-45). The adnominal possession construction does not differ for those nouns that can or must be possessed, but the avalent nouns referring to animals can sometimes enter a different possessive construction, where they are possessed with the help of a relational noun for 'catch' or 'pet' in a construction reminiscent of possessive classifiers (Copin, 2012:45; Rose, 2011: 163-166).

6.3. Postpositions

Rodrigues (2000:1) states that « most languages of the Tupi-Guaraní family mark dependent nouns with [case] suffixes as well as postpositions."[14] In practice, it seems there is some confusion about these terms, for several reasons: first, postpositions may be seen as formal expressions of semantic cases (for example Cabral, 2000a; Solano, 2009: 164-173); second, postpositions may be described formally as suffixes (as for example in Dietrich, 1986: 55-56; Villafañe, 2004: 55) or as clitics (as in Vallejos, 2010: 163), and last of all, there are probably been some historical changes which led to variation among Maweti-Guaraní languages, and a less straightforward distinction in individual languages (da Cruz, 2011: 222-224). Rodrigues (2000:1) indeed suggests that "it is possible that some of these languages have lost marking with case suffixes and have replaced them entirely with the use of postpositions ».[15]

A dozen of postpositions have been reconstructed for Proto-Tupi-Guaraní (Jensen, 1998: 514), but individual languages may have innovated new ones, either through compound postpositions or combinations of a relational (locative) noun with a case suffix or a postposition (see for example Copin, 2012: 95-102). It has been shown in Section 5 that Maweti-Guaraní postpositions are inflected adpositions (Jaworska, 1999, p. see: 304, on this notion): if the noun phrase they introduce is not overtly expressed, then it is indexed on the postposition with a Set II index.

Finally, in some languages like Awetí (Reiter, 2011: 150) and Teko (Rose, 2011: 368-370, 2013), some postpositions function as subordinators (see Rose, 2006 for a typological investigation of formal identity between postpositions and subordinators), along more specific subordinating suffixes reconstructable to Proto-Tupi-Guaraní (Jensen, 1998: 528).

6.4. Adverbs

Central pieces of comparative work (Jensen, 1998, 1999; Corrêa-da-Silva, 2010) and the pioneer and influencing description of a Maweti-Guaraní language (Rodrigues, 1953, on Tupinambá) do not mention a lexical class of adverbs. Dietrich (2000: 255) asserts that there is no class of adverbs in Maweti-Guaraní languages. Nevertheless, most descriptions of individual Maweti-Guaraní languages do include a category of adverbs. These are described as non-inflected words, mainly used as modifiers of the predicate. They are easily

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[14] My translation for: « A maioria des línguas da família Tupi-Guaraní marca os nomes dependentes por meio tanto de sufixos como de posposiçoes. »
[15] My translation for: « É possivel que algumas dessas línguas tenham perdido a marcação por sufixos casuais e a tenham substituído inetiramente pelo uso de posposições. »

distinguished from nouns, verbs and postpositions by not taking person indexes. Two properties of adverbs are often put forward: the fact that they can be nominalized with a specific de-adverbial nominalizer as in (49) (this also applies to postpositional phrases) and that when in clause-initial position, they trigger a special form of the verb, differing from that of regular main verbs by taking a suffix and following a different person indexation pattern as in (50).[16]

Asuriní do Xingu (Pereira, 2009: 163)

(49)   *karukame-war-a*
         yesterday-NZR-*a*
         'the one of yesterday'

Kamaiurá (Seki, 2000: 76)

(50)   *ikue*   *rak*   *i-ker-i*
         yesterday AT   3.II-sleep-CIRC
         'Yesterday he slept.'

The usual sub-classes of adverbs are temporal, locative, and manner adverbs. Note that in several grammars, numerals (often only three items) are considered adverbs, on the basis that they are often used to modify a predicate, can be nominalized with the de-adverbial nominalizer (51) and trigger the oblique-topicalized verb form (52). In other languages, numerals are considered a separate lexical class, on the basis that they are generally used either as modifiers of a noun or as predicates; or they are considered as adjectives or nouns.

Asuriní do Xingu (Pereira, 2009: 167)

(51)   *mukuj-war-a*
          two-NZR-*a*
          'the two'

Kamaiurá (Seki, 2000: 78)

(52)   *mojepete*   *i-ker-i*
         one   3.II-sleep-CIRC
         'One (day) he slept.'

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[16] This is called either Indicative 2 (following Rodrigues, 1953: 132), circumstantial mood (see for example Pereira, 2009: 162) or oblique-topicalized verb form (Jensen, 1998: 526).

6.5. Ideophones and interjections

A lexical class of ideophones (see the definition in Dingemanse's chapter) has been identified in many Maweti-Guaraní languages. They are often only briefly mentioned, but there are a few more detailed studies (Langdon, 1994; Rose, 2011: 400-409; Rose, Fillon, Mao-Line, & Krzonowski, Jennifer, 2019) and an extraordinarily comprehensive and detailed investigation of ideophones in Awetí (Reiter, 2011).

Leaving aside the phonosemantic and prosodic properties of ideophones, these can be distinguished from other parts of speech by their usual absence of morphological combinatorics except reduplication, and their variable syntactic integration. They can indeed be extra-clausal (53), introduced by a light verb (the same that introduces direct speech as in (54)) or the sole predicate of a clause with its own arguments (55). They are often repeated in discourse, as in (54).

Awetí (Reiter, 2011:338, 346, 337)

(53)   ***Powowowo,***   *o-to*   *a'yn.*
     IDEO.fly   3-go   PART
     'It flew off.' (lit.: '(There was) powowowo, it went off.')

(54)   ***Tyryk tyryk****,   e'i   a'yt   ti   n=eko-tu   a'yn.*
     IDEO.limp   3.say   EMOT   EVID   3=walk-NZR   PART
     '"Tyryk tyryk", the poor (animal) does when it walks.'

(55)   *Wej-t-atĩ*   *tsãn*   *a'yn.*   ***Pywpywpyw*** *n-emi'ũkangut.*
     3-EPEN-wrap.up   3PL.PRO   PART [17]   IDEO.tie   3-rest.of.food
     'They wrapped it up. Pywpywpyw a leftover.'

In Yuki (Villafañe, 2004: 101-102) and Siriono (Schermair, 1949: 252), it is explicitly said that ideophones do not form a separate word class but are instead a subclass of verbs distinguished by their taking person suffixes for their subject. However, given that these "suffixes" have a form similar to the conjugated verb 'say', it is at least reasonable to suggest that what has been analyzed as verbal suffixes is at least historically the 'say' verb, postposed to ideophones in a light verb construction (Dahl, 2014: 107, 114). The close study of Awetí

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[17] *a'yn* is a sentence-final particle.

lexicon also shows that some verbs may have been derived from ideophones (Reiter, 2011: 454-495). Also, Reiter (2011: 459) points to non-random correspondances between Awetí and Teko ideophones, hinting at the reconstructability of some ideophones at the Proto-Maweti-Guaraní stage.

Interjections are not often described in grammars as a separate lexical class, except for Awetí, where Reiter specifies how they differ from ideophones (Reiter, 2011: 161-163). Interestingly, they can occur in this language with morphology and be used as a predicate with their own arguments. In many grammars, interjections are instead mentioned as a sub-class of particles (see below). An interesting fact is that interjections are specified as being specific to men's and women's speech in several languages: Old Guaraní (Ruiz de Montoya, 1640), Guarayu (Höller, 1932), Tupinambá (Barbosa, 1947) and Bolivian Guaraní (Ortiz & Caurey, 2012). In South American languages in general (Rose, 2015a) and Tupi languages in particular (Rose & Chousou-Polydouri, 2017), a genderlect distinction is in fact often observed in various types of discourse markers (interjections or particles).

6.6. Particles

The term « particle » is mentioned in most descriptions of Maweti-Guaraní languages, with detailed accounts of the use and behavior of this class of words in most grammars. Particles are defined as uninflected independent words. They are usually classified depending on their position: fixed in the clause, either in second (56) or final (57) position; or variable, following the constituent they have scope over (58). They cover a wide range of functions, with major functions being epistemicity/evidentiality as in (56) (see the comparative study by Cabral, 2007b), information structure as in (58), aspect/mood as in (57), negation, interrogation (57) and deixis. As the term "particle" became associated with these functions and distribution, other authors call « particles » items with similar functions, even though these are not considered words, but suffixes (as in Tapieté (González, 2005)), clitics (as in Teko (Rose, 2011)) or forms belonging to the same phonological word than the preceding element (as in Avá-Canoeiro (Borges, 2006: 202)).

Tapirapé (W. N. Praça, 2007: 163, 173, 177)

(56) marare-ϕ **pa**   'ã-wo   a-ka
      cow-refer **INFER**   DEM-LOC   3.I-be
      'The cows are around (hearing the bellow of the cattle).'

(57) *mayn* *tã* *ãkaj* *ere-a* *ãxe'i* **rã'ẽ**
     why   INTER   C.I.COM   2SG.I-go   yesterday   PST
     'Why did you go yesterday?'

(58) *kotãtãi-wer-a* **xe** *rõ'õ* *ke* *ãkaj* *'ã-wo* *a-a* *rã'ẽ*
     girl-PL-*a*   **REST**   N.ASS   DUB   C.I.COM   DEM-LOC   3.I-go   PST
     'I think that only the girls went there.'

Particles are really frequent in spontaneous discourse (observe the 5 particles of (58)), even though they are not obligatory (Borges, 2006: 202). They are thus markers of native identity. In some languages, particles additionally show a genderlect distinction (Rose & Chousou-Polydouri, 2017). For example, the affirmative particle of Mawé is *ta'i* for men and *hẽ* for women (da Silva, 2010: 241).

7. Conclusion

This paper has presented the major parts of speech of Maweti-Guaraní languages. The central issue concerns the noun/verb distinction, a question that also concerns words with adjectival meaning. The noun/verb distinction in Maweti-Guaraní is blurred by several facts : i) the items that are most often used as arguments (i.e. nouns) can function as predicates without any additional morphology; ii) verbs in some languages can function as arguments without any additional morphology (i.e. with the referential -*a* suffix only); iii) transitive verbs, possessible nouns, postpositions and descriptive roots (candidates for either the noun or verb class) share most of the morphology and syntax. Besides the issue of the noun/verb distinction, this paper also presents the main characteristics of all major word classes : nouns, verbs, postpositions, adverbs, ideophones and interjections, and particles. It presents not only the features that are crucial in identifying these word classes, but also their sub-classes and typical features, some of which are also typologically remarkable (such as the hierarchical indexation system on transitive verbs, or tense marking on nouns).

This paper also gives an image of issues concerning word classes in South America in general, and Amazonia in particular. To start with, in many Amazonian languages various word classes can be used as predicates without additional morphology (Aikhenvald, 2012: 136-137). A set of person indexes shared by nouns and verbs is also one of the features proposed in Dixon & Aikhenvald (1999: 9) for an 'Amazonian' profile, in contrast to an "Andean" one. And the term "particle" is part of the descriptive tradition of lowland South

American languages (Dooley, 1990). Also, South American languages rarely show an independent status of adjectives (Aikhenvald, 2012: 139; Krasnoukhova, 2012: 140). The function of words with adjectival meaning is noteworthy: few South American languages have a possibility of attributive modification by adjectives, whereas predicative use is always available (Krasnoukhova, in preparation, 2012: 158, 184). Many Mawetí-Guaraní languages adhere to this general South American profile. Finally, the parallel construction of possessible nouns, transitive verbs and postpositions with their arguments, including the use of a relational prefix, is one of the features for positing the historical relationship between the Tupi, Carib and Macro-Jê families of Amazonia (Rodrigues, 2009).

Abbreviations (differing from the Leipzig Glossing rules)

AT attested; C.I.COM shared information; CAR characterizing suffix; CIRC circumstancial mode; COMPL completed; COREF coreferential; DUB dubitative; EMOT emotional particle; EPEN epenthesis; EVID evidential particle; FRUSTR frustrative; IDEO ideophone; INFER inferential; INTER interrogative; LA borrowed Spanish definiteness marker *la*; LOC.PUNCT locative punctual; MS male speaker; N.ASS non commitment of speaker; NZR nominalizer; PART particle; POSTP postposition; POT potential; PRO pronoun; RE argument marker; RED1 monosyllabic reduplication; RED2 bisllabic reduplication; REL relational prefix; REST restrictive; TRANSL translative.

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