BASIC ILLOCUTIONS IN THE NATIVE LANGUAGES OF BRAZIL

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- ABSTRACT: This paper shows that the distribution of basic illocutions (defined as grammatical structures that can be related to a default communicative intentions) within and across the indigenous languages of Brazil can be described systematically in terms of a set of implicational hierarchies by means of which the existence of certain basic illocutions can be predicted from the existence of others. In doing so, a case is made for a major distinction between propositional and behavioural basic illocutions, the former having to do with the exchange of information, the latter with influencing behaviour.

- KEYWORDS: Typology; illocution; indigenous languages; Functional Discourse Grammar.

1 Introduction

Within Functional Discourse Grammar (HENGEVELD, 2005; HENGEVELD; MACKENZIE, 2008, Forthcoming.) typological research may focus on two different aspects of linguistic organization. Within the model a strict separation is made between formulation on the one hand, and encoding on the other. The process of formulation is concerned with specifying the interpersonal and representational configurations that are allowed within a language, irrespective of their expression. The process of encoding is concerned with the morphosyntactic and phonological

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form that these interpersonal and representational configurations may take in the language. These two steps are represented in Figure 1.
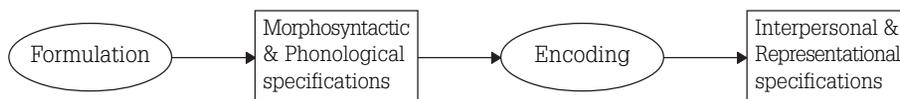

Figure 1 – Major operations in FDG

In terms of Figure 1, two broad types of typological research may be distinguished, the first concerned with semantics and pragmatics, the second with morphosyntax and phonology.

The study reported on in this article belongs to the first type. The question addressed is whether the distribution of basic illocutions within and across the indigenous languages of Brazil can be described systematically in terms of one or more implicational hierarchies, predicting the existence of certain basic illocutions from the existence of others. This question is looked at from the perspective of formulation, generalizing across the expression strategies that languages use to encode their set of basic illocutions. The conclusion will be that implicational hierarchies can indeed be formulated, and that they can be joined together in an implicational map.

As a first illustration of what we mean by basic illocution, consider the following examples:

Desano (MILLER, 1999, p.73)

(1) Yɨ-re   karta   goha-beo-ke.
     1.SG-SPEC.OBJ   letter   write-send-IMP
     'Do write and send me a letter!'

(2) Guʔa-rã   wa-rã.
     bath-ANIM.PL   go-HORT
     'Let's go bathe!'

(3) Ĩã-si.
     see-SUPPL
     'May I see it?'

Desano has various verb suffixes that indicate how the utterance should be interpreted as regards the speaker's communicative goals, i.e. as a speech act. Thus the imperative in (1) is conventionally associated with an order, the hortative

in (2) with an exhortation, and the supplicative in (3) with a request for permission.

In what follows we will first briefly present the language sample used in section 2. In section 3 we refine the notion of basic illocution, and then present the basic illocutions encountered in the sample languages. The data encountered are interpreted and discussed in section 4. We round off with a conclusion in section 5.

2 The sample

Gordon (2005) lists 229 extant and extinct native languages in 22 groups for Brazil. The great majority of these languages have hardly been documented, which makes it difficult to draw up a representative sample. For this reason, all languages for which we had access to a full description at the time of the research are included in the sample. These languages distribute across the aforementioned groups in the way indicated in Table 1.

Table 1 – The sample

Arauan (0/8)	*Paumarí*	Nambiquaran (0/5)	*Nambiquara, Sabanê*
Arawakan (2/22)	*Warekena*	Pankararú (0/1)	—
Arutani-sape (0/1)	—	Panoan (7/17)	*Mayoruna*
Carib (2/21)	*Apalai, Hixkaryana,*	Ticuna (0/1)	—
	Macushi, Waiwai	Trumaí (0/1)	—
Chapakura-w. (2/4)	*Wari'*	Tucanoan (2/14)	*Cubeo, Desano, Tucano*
Creole (2/3)	*Karipúna Creole*	Tupi (10/60)	*Kanoé, Kamayurá,*
Katukinan (0/3)	—		*Urubu-Kaapor*
Macro-ge (13/28)	*Bororo, Canela-Krahô*	Tuxá (0/1)	—
Maku (0/4)	*Dâw*	Unclassified (0/28)	*Kwaza*
Mataco-Guaicuru (0/1)	—	Witotoan (0/1)	—
Mura (0/1)	*Pirahã*	Yanomam (0/4)	*Sanuma*

The figures between brackets in Table 1 give the following information: the number before the slash relates to the number of subnodes, while the number after the slash specifies the number of languages included in the group.

3 Basic illocutions and their manifestation

Languages may exhibit different grammatical (including phonological) structures that are in a default relation with specific communicative goals of the speakers using these structures. Thus, the default interpretation of a declarative sentence is that of an assertion, while the default interpretation of an imperative sentence is that of an order. One has to distinguish between default and non-default interpretations since in the appropriate context the

aforementioned grammatical configurations may be used to convey communicative intentions other than the default ones. A grammatical structure that can be related to a default communicative intention will be said to be the carrier of a BASIC ILLOCUTION. Sadock and Zwicky (1985, p.155) define a basic illocution as "a coincidence of grammatical structure and conventional conversational use", but our use of the term is closer to Dik's (1997, p.232) who defines it as "the illocution to the extent that it is coded in linguistic expressions" One may characterize this situation, as Sadock (2004, p.53) does, as one in which the formal properties of an utterance are directly related to the accomplishment of the speech act it embodies.

Languages differ as regards the extent to which they distinguish between various basic illocutions. Consider the following examples from Sanuma:

Sanuma (BORGMAN, 1990, p.21, p.72)

(4) Kaikana   te   ku-ki   kite-(')
    headman 3.SG   COP-FOC   FUT-(IND)
    'He will be a headman.'

(5) Hapoka   wa   naka   kite-Ø
    cooking.pot   2.SG   ask.for FUT-INT
    'Did you ask for a cooking pot?'

In Sanuma declaratives and interrogatives are not distinguishable from each other intonationally. The distinctive sign for a declarative, in contrast with an interrogative basic illocution, is a glottal stop at the end of the utterance. However, when the context would make it impossible for the utterance to be interpreted as an interrogative, the glottal stop may be absent. Thus, in certain circumstances, no formal distinction is made in Sanuma between declarative and interrogative basic illocutions.

For a second illustration, consider the following examples from Kwaza:

Kwaza (VOORT, 2000, p.199, p.158, p.159)

(6) o'ja-da-tsy-'re.
    leave-1.SG-POT-INT
    'Am I going to leave?'

(7) 'peDro   jere'çwa   dilɛ-'wã   wa'dy-re.
    Pedro   jaguar   someone-OBJ give-INT
    'To whom did Pedro give a dog?'

(8) dilε-'wã-here   aw're-da-tara-tsε.
    someone-OBJ-think   marry-1.SG-PROC-DEC
    'I'm going to marry someone.'

In Kwaza, both polar questions (6) and content questions (7) occur in the interrogative mood. What at first sight may seem to be a question word in (7), is also used as an indefinite pronoun, as can be seen in the declarative sentence in (8). Thus, no formal distinction is made in Kwaza between polar and content questions. A content question is simply a polar question containing an indefinite pronoun.[4]

Some categories that at first sight seem to belong to the domain of basic illocution, are actually instances of illocutionary modification (see HENGEVELD, 2004), which serve to reinforce or mitigate the illocutionary value of an utterance. These cases have been excluded from the investigation, since they represent more general communicative strategies than basic illocution itself. This is evident from the fact that mitigation or reinforcement is not limited to a single illocutionary value, but is compatible with declaratives, interrogatives, imperatives, etc. This can be seen in the following examples from Mandarin Chinese, in which the same mitigating particle combines with different types of illocution:

Mandarin Chinese (LI; THOMPSON, 1981, p.313-317)

(9) Wŏ   bìng   méi   zuò-cuò   a
    1SG   on.the.contrary   NEG   do-wrong   MIT
    'On the contrary, I didn't do wrong.'

(10) Nĭ   ziăng bu   ziăng tā   a
     2SG   think NEG   think 3SG   MIT
     'Don't you miss her/him?'

(11) Chī-fàn   a
     Eat-food   MIT
     'Eat, OK?!'

Basic illocutions may be expressed in a variety of ways, employing syntactic, morphological and phonological means of expression. Since this paper is about the distribution of basic illocutions irrespective of the way in which they are expressed, we refrain from discussing the expression strategies encountered in the sample languages in detail. It may suffice to note that in determining the conventional associations between the formal properties of utterances and their

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[4] For a similar point, see Evans (2003) on the Australian language Bininj Gun-Wok.

conversational use, the following distinguishing grammatical differences between utterances were taken into account: (i) suprasegmental patterns; (ii) word order; (iii) inflection; (iv) particles; (v) auxiliaries; (vi) differential expression of arguments; (vii) presence of question words; (viii) combinations of the preceding means of expression.

3.1 Basic illocutions in the languages of the sample

Taking the formal differences between utterances listed above as the point of departure, a number of basic illocutions can be detected within the sample that can be grouped together in terms of their communicative use: assertive, questioning, and behavioural.

As regards the group of ASSERTIVE BASIC ILLOCUTIONS, it turns out, unsurprisingly, that all languages in the sample have a basic illocution that is used to pass on information. This DECLARATIVE type is often the most unmarked basic illocution. In some languages the declarative contrasts with another type of basic illocution that is used to inform, the MIRATIVE type (see DELANCEY, 1997). In this type, it is not so much the content of the utterance itself that is being transmitted, but rather the emotional reaction of the speaker with respect to this content, in particular feelings such as surprise and delight. Consider the following examples of a declarative and a mirative basic illocution, respectively:[5]

Kamayurá (SEKI, 2000, p.100, p.156)

(12) kunu'um-a   o-ket.
     boy-NUCL   3-sleep
     'The boy is sleeping.'

(13) h-ajme-ma'e   te'   an   pa.
     3SG-have.sharpness.NR FOC   PROX MIR.M.S
     'Wow, how sharp is this (knife)!'

As regards the group of QUESTIONING BASIC ILLOCUTIONS, the common distinction between POLAR INTERROGATIVES (asking for a yes- or no-answer) and CONTENT INTERROGATIVES (asking to fill in information gaps) is formally reflected in many sample languages. The following examples are from Bororo:

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[5] Note that the mirative particle in (13) is the one used by male speakers. Female speakers use *ma'e*.

Bororo (CROWELL, 1979, p.76, p.77)

(14) A-tu-re   (na)?
    2SG.SBJ-go-NTL Y/NQ
    'Did you go?'

(15) Kai-ba   kodu-re?
    where-CQ   go-NTL
    'Where did he go?'

As illustrated above in 3 for Kwaza, not all sample languages make a distinction between polar and content interrogatives. Apart from Kwaza, Kanoê and Macushi use a single interrogative strategy for both types of question.

The largest number of basic illocutions is found in the area of speech acts that aim at influencing the behaviour of the addressee and/or others. Within this area of BEHAVIOURAL BASIC ILLOCUTIONS a further distinction should be drawn between positive and negative ones.

The POSITIVE BEHAVIOURAL BASIC ILLOCUTIONS encountered in the languages of the sample can be subdivided into four different types. The IMPERATIVE type is conventionally associated with orders; the HORTATIVE type with exhortations; the ADMONITIVE type with warnings; and the SUPPLICATIVE type with requests for permission. Tucano displays all four positive subtypes, as shown in examples (16)-(19):

Tucano (RAMIREZ, 1997, p.144, p.145, p.147)

(16) apê-ya!
    play-IMP.2PL
    'Play!'

(17) apê-râ
    play-HORT.1PL
    'Let's go play!'

(18) ape   asá   tiro ehâ-gɨ   uró   wee-ápa!
    another people   near arrive-IMPL well do-ADMON
    'When you arrive (in the house of) another people, behave yourself'

(19) apê-ma
    play-SUPPL
    'Let me play!'

For two of the four positive behavioural basic illocutions there are negative counterparts in the languages of the sample. These NEGATIVE BEHAVIOURAL BASIC ILLOCUTIONS are of the PROHIBITIVE type,[6] conventionally associated with orders to not do something, and the DISHORTATIVE subtype, for exhortations to not do something. Note that a prohibitive is not the same as a negative imperative, i.e. an imperative containing a regular negation. Similarly, a dishortative is not the same as a negative hortative. The following examples illustrate the two types in contrast with their positive counterparts:

Kamayurá (SEKI, 2000, p.231-233)

(20) pe-karu-Ø.
    2PL-eat-IMP
    'Eat!'

(21) ere-karu-em.
    2SG-eat-PROH
    'Do not eat!'

(22) t=a-ha=ne   pe-a   nupã-me   ko'yr=a'e.
    HORT=1SG-IRR=ASS   DEICT-NUCL   beat-GER   FS=NON.INT
    'Let me beat that.'

(23) t=a-ha-ume=n.
    HORT=1SG-go-1SG.NEG=POT
    Let me not go!'

Note that the negative affixes *-em-* in (21) and *-um* in (23) are uniquely used in prohibitive and dishortative utterances, respectively, which is why these can be considered separate basic illocutions, rather than compositional negative imperatives and negative exhortatives.

4 Analysis and interpretation

4.1 Introduction

The basic illocutions presented in section 3 manifest themselves in the sample languages as indicated in Table 2, where a '+' indicates that the language uses a special strategy for the basic illocution, and a '-' that it does not. A number

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6 For large-scale typological surveys of prohibitives, see Auwera and Lejeune (2005) and Auwera (2006).

of generalizations emerge from the data in Table 2, most of which can be phrased in terms of implicational hierarchies, which will be specified in the following sections.

4.2 Main types

All languages in the sample have a declarative, a polar interrogative, and an imperative basic illocution. In one language, Sanuma, the distinction between declarative and polar interrogative basic illocutions is not always made, as illustrated in 3 Using the term PROPOSITIONAL BASIC ILLOCUTIONS to cover both assertive and questioning basic illocutions, we might then speculate that the most basic opposition in languages is the one between propositional and behavioural basic illocutions, the next step being a split within propositional between declarative and polar interrogative basic illocutions.

Table 2 – Presence of basic illocutions in the languages of the sample

Language	Declarative	Mirative	Polar Interrogative	Content Interrogative	Imperative	Hortative	Admonitive	Supplicative	Prohibitive	Dishortative
Apalai	+	−	+	+	+	−	−	−	+	−
Bororo	+	−	+	+	+	+	−	−	+	−
Canela–Krahô	+	−	+	+	+	+	−	−	−	−
Cubeo	+	−	+	+	+	+	−	−	−	−
Dâw	+	+	+	+	+	−	−	−	+	−
Desano	+	−	+	+	+	+	+	+	−	−
Hixkaryana	+	−	+	+	+	+	−	−	+	−
Kamayurá	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Kanoê	+	−	+	−	+	+	−	−	−	−
Karipuna Creole	+	−	+	+	+	+	+	−	−	−
Kwaza	+	+	+	−	+	+	+	−	+	+
Macushi	+	−	+	−	+	+	−	−	+	−
Mayoruna	+	−	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	−
Nambikwara	+	−	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	−
Paumarí	+	−	+	+	+	+	−	−	+	−
Pirahã	+	+	+	+	+	+	−	−	+	−
Sabanê	+	−	+	+	+	+	−	−	+	−
Sanuma	(+)	−	+	+	+	−	−	−	+	−
Tucano	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	−
Urubu–Kaapor	+	−	+	+	+	+	−	−	−	−
Waiwai	+	+	+	+	+	+	−	−	+	−
Warekena	+	−	+	+	+	+	−	−	+	−
Wari'	+	−	+	+	+	−	−	−	+	−

4.3 Assertive subtypes

Rather trivially given the omnipresence of the declarative subtype, the presence of a mirative basic illocution predicts the presence of a declarative basic illocution, as represented in (24):

(24) Declarative ⊂ Mirative

Table 3 gives a number of examples of languages exhibiting the possible configurations predicted by (24):

Table 3 – Assertive subtypes

Language	Declarative	Mirative
Dâw	+	+
Bororo	+	−
(not attested)	−	−

As Table 3 shows, the presence of a Mirative basic illocution implies the presence of a Declarative subtype, as illustrated by Dâw, while the opposite is not the case, as illustrated by Bororo.

4.4 Questioning subtypes

As Table 2 shows, while polar interrogatives are available in all languages of the sample, content interrogatives are not, so that the presence of a content interrogative predicts the presence of a polar interrogative, as indicated in (25):

(25)   Polar Interrogative ⊂ Content Interrogative

Table 4 gives a number of examples of languages exhibiting the possible configurations predicted by (25):

Table 4 – Questioning subtypes

Language	Polar Interrogative	Content Interrogative
Cubeo	+	+
Kanoê	+	−
(not attested)	−	−

As shown in Table 4, the presence of a Content Interrogative basic illocution implies the presence of a Polar Interrogative basic illocution, as illustrated by Cubeo, while the opposite is not the case, as illustrated by Kanoê.

4.5 Behavioural subtypes

Within the behavioural domain, a positive and a negative subgroup have been identified earlier. These groups are analysed here one by one, and after that the role of the positive/negative parameter itself is discussed.

As Table 2 shows, the four positive behavioural subtypes can be related to one another according to the following implicational hierarchy:

(26) Imperative ⊂ Hortative ⊂ Admonitive ⊂ Supplicative

This hierarchy correctly predicts the configurations illustrated in Table 5. No other systems than these are attested within the sample.

Table 5 – Positive behavioural subtypes

Language	Imperative	Hortative	Admonitive	Supplicative
Kamayurá	+	+	+	+
Karipuna Creole	+	+	+	–
Waiwai	+	+	–	–
Sanuma	+	–	–	–
(not attested)	–	–	–	–

Table 5 shows that languages may have all four positive behavioural subtypes (Kamayurá), all but the Supplicative subtype (Karipuna Creole), The Imperative and Hortative subtypes (Waiwai), or the Imperative subtype only (Sanuma).

In the negative domain, counterparts to the first two subtypes from the positive hierarchy in (26) have been attested: the Prohibitive and the Dishortative are the negative counterparts of Imperative and the Hortative. Their distribution confirms the hierarchy in (26), as the examples in Table 6 show.

Table 6 – Negative behavioural subtypes

Language	Prohibitive	Dishortative
Kwaza	+	+
Apalai	+	–
Urubu-Kaapor	–	–

Table 6 shows that the presence of a Dishortative subtype implies the presence of a Prohibitive subtype, as illustrated by-Kwaza, while the opposite does not hold, as illustrated by Urubu-Kaapor.

The preceding observations with respect to positive and negative behavioural subtypes show that no separate hierarchies are needed for the positive and negative behavioural subtypes. Within each domain the same

hierarchy is respected. One further generalization emerges from the data in Table 2, however: the presence of a positive subtype can be predicted from the presence of a negative subtype, as represented in the hierarchy in (27):

(27)   Positive ⊂ Negative

This hierarchy is illustrated in Tables 7 and 8 for Imperative/Prohibitive and Hortative/Dishortative basic illocutions respectively.

Table 7 – Imperative and Prohibitive

Language	Imperative	Prohibitive
Sabanê	+	+
Desano	+	–
(not attested)	–	–

Table 8 – Hortative and Dishortative

Language	Hortative	Dishortative
Tucano	+	+
Warekena	+	–
Wari'	–	–

The data in Table 7 show that the presence of an Imperative basic illocution is implied by a Prohibitive basic illocution, as illustrated by Sabanê, while the opposite is not the case, as illustrated by Desano. Similarly, Table 8 shows that the presence of a Dishortative basic illocution implies the presence of a Hortative basic illocution, as in Tucano, while the opposite does not hold, as illustrated by Warekena.

5 Conclusion

The generalizations arrived at in section 4 may now be summarized as in Figure 2:
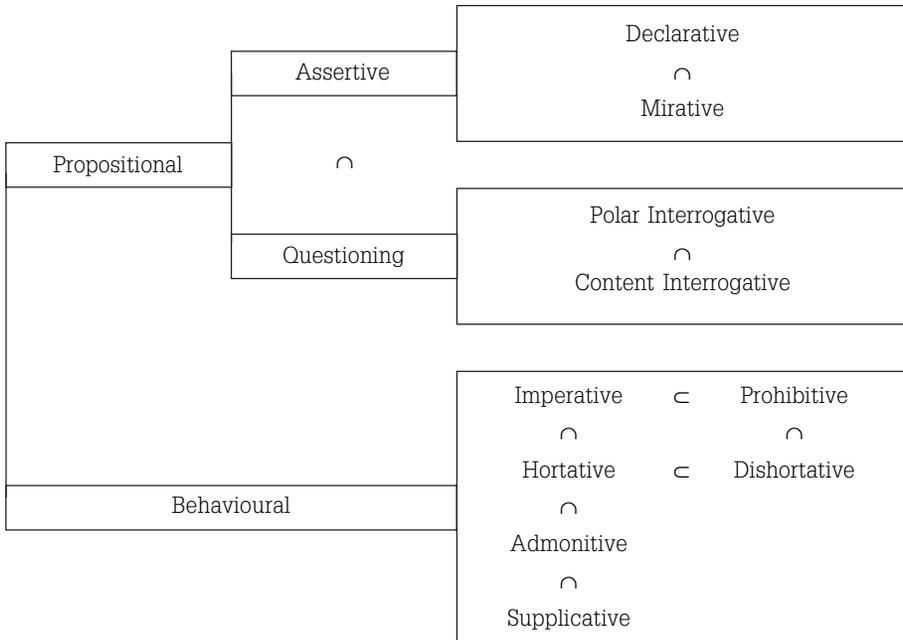

Figure 2 – Implicational relations between basic illocutions

Figure 2 shows that the first major split is between Propositional and Behavioural basic illocutions; the second major split separates Propositional basic illocutions into Assertive and Questioning ones, the former being implied by the latter in highly exceptional cases. The remaining three groups of basic illocutions may each contain various more specific illocutions. Assertive basic illocutions may be separated into Declarative and Mirative ones, the former being implied by the latter. Questioning basic illocutiuons may be separated into Polar and Content interrogatives, the former again being implied by the latter. The greates variety of more specific basic illocutions is found in the domain of Bahavioural basic illocutions. Apart from the distinction between Imperatives, Hortatives, Admonitives and Supplicatives, hierarchically related in that order, the distinction between positive and negative basic illocutions is relevant in this domain, positive values being implied by negative ones.

Although Figure 2 is arrived at on the basis of a restricted sample, both as regards the number of languages and as regards their areal distribution, the

pattern that emerges is a systematic one. The results show that a strict separation in typological research between formulation and encoding, as imposed by Functional Discourse Grammar, leads to new generalizations. They are also useful to help this theory arrive at a systematic treatment of its illocutionary component by providing the parameters for which the grammars of individual languages may be set.

Acknowledgments

HENGEVELD, K. et al. Ilocuções básicas nas línguas nativas do Brasil. *Alfa*, São Paulo, v.51, n.2, p.73-90, 2007.

- RESUMO: Este trabalho mostra que a distribuição das ilocuções básicas (definidas como estruturas gramaticais que podem ser relacionadas a intenções comunicativas padrão), dentro das línguas indígenas do Brasil, pode ser sistematicamente descrita em termos do conjunto de hierarquias implicacionais por meio das quais a existência de certas ilocuções básicas pode ser prevista a partir da existência de outras. Ao fazê-lo, este trabalho argumenta a favor de uma distinção significativa entre ilocuções básicas proposicionais e comportamentais, a primeira relacionada com a troca de informações e a última, com a influência no comportamento.

- PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Tipologia; ilocução; línguas indígenas; Gramática Discursivo-Funcional.

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