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## **On Finitization**

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### **Abstract**

Most diachronic studies dealing with finiteness are centered on the functional shift between main and dependent clause status. In contrast, this paper focuses on the acquisition of morphosyntactic finiteness features by a non-finite dependent construction that remains dependent, namely “finitization.” Givón (2011) suggests a theoretical distinction between “gradual” and “instantaneous” finitization, depending on whether the intermediate stage of the evolution involves mixed finite/non-finite morphosyntax or a variation between finite and non-finite clauses. The main findings of this paper are that, first, diachronic data from various languages attest to both these theoretical models, and second, that this distinction does not reside in the diachronic mechanisms at play (reanalysis or extension), but rather in the functional motivation for the change.

### **1 Introduction**

The notion of “finiteness” has been widely debated, with most discussions centered on its usefulness, its universality, its definition on functional or formal grounds, and on the specific morphosyntactic criteria involved (Koptjevskaja-Tamm 1999, Bisang 2001, Givón 2001, Nikolaeva 2007). In the functional literature, it is now generally defined as a scalar continuum of constructions between prototypical independent clauses and prototypical nominal phrases. Finiteness is defined language-specifically with the morphosyntactic characteristics of prototypical main clauses. Non-finiteness is primarily defined in contrast to finiteness, as a morphosyntactic restriction or modification of clause features with respect to an independent clause. Finiteness is correlated to main clause status without being restricted to it, since it can also be found in dependent clauses. Non-finiteness is generally used to mark the downgrading of a clause to an NP or adverbial function. However, there is no strong correlation between non-finiteness and dependent clause status, since some dependent clauses are finite and some non-finite clauses may diachronically come to be used as main clauses.

Interestingly, besides the extensive literature referring to finiteness, “still very little attention has been given to exploring how finiteness and its correlates are affected by language change” (Ledgeway 2007:335). Most of the literature on diachronic syntax in the large domain of dependency /subordination does indeed focus on either the genesis of subordinate clauses<sup>1</sup> or on their disintegration in clause fusion. It is centered on the question of the functional shift between main and dependent clause status. In contrast, little attention has been given to formal changes within non-finite dependent clauses whose status is unchanged, that is to say, to the renewal of subordinate clauses by changes in the overall degree of finiteness. The acquisition of finite features by a non-finite construction has indeed been little discussed in the literature (essentially in Givón 1994, Harris and Campbell 1995, Heine 2009, Givón this volume). Remarkably, very little diachronic analysis of illustrative data is offered in this literature.

This paper aims at filling this gap by discussing the previous proposals concerning the formal shift of non-finite forms, where a dependent construction acquires morphosyntactic finiteness features without acquiring main clause status. It proposes coining the term “finitization” to mean precisely this acquisition of morphosyntactic finiteness features by a dependent clause, and to distinguish it clearly from phenomena in which a non-finite clause comes to be used as a main clause. It also offers illustrative data for the diachronic process of finitization and evaluates the different scenarios suggested in the literature.

Section 2 starts by giving the definition of finiteness on which the paper is based. Section 3 then gives a quick overview of functional and formal diachronic shifts that can affect non-finite dependent clauses, and suggests the term “finitization” for an acquisition of finiteness features by dependent clauses without change in their dependent status. Section 4 offers a summary of the previous literature on the process of finitization, which suggests a theoretical distinction between two types of process, to which I give the name “gradual” and “instantaneous” finitizations respectively. Sections 5 and 6 respectively illustrate these two types of process through a detailed examination of first-hand data from two Amazonian languages, as well as other languages from already published studies.

## **2 Finiteness**

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<sup>1</sup> Deutscher (2009) interestingly argues that most of these discussions actually concern the renewal rather than genesis of subordination.

“Finiteness” is defined in the functional literature as a scalar continuum of constructions from prototypical independent clauses (1a) to prototypical nominal phrases (1b) (Koptjevskaja-Tamm 1999, Bisang 2001, Givón 2001, Nikolaeva 2007). Finiteness is defined by a set of properties of a prototypical independent clause, characterized by maximal marking of verbal categories and minimal marking of nominal categories. Non-finiteness, by contrast, is characterized by minimal marking of verbal categories and maximal marking of nominal categories. Since clausal properties and morphological marking of nouns and verbs differ from one language to another, the morphosyntactic criteria of finiteness are language-dependent. Originally, criteria were restricted to inflectional morphology on the verb. Today, criteria include various types of morphosyntactic features at the level of the clause: order of constituents, case, agreement on the verb, TAM combinations, determiners, nominalizers, category of modifiers, and so on. Since it involves different criteria, finiteness is not a dichotomous concept but is seen as a range of clause types going from maximally finite to maximally non-finite clauses, as exemplified with the English examples in (2).

- (1) a. Finite verbal clause (Givón 2001: 25)  
She *knew* mathematics well.  
b. Nominalized NP  
Her good *knowledge* of mathematics.
- (2) Least finite to most finite (Givón 2001: 26)  
a. Her good *knowledge* of math helped  
b. Her *knowing* math well helped  
c. For her *to know* math so well surely...  
d. She wanted *to know* math well  
e. *Having known* math well since high school, she...  
f. She *should have known* math well

While the definition of finiteness depends crucially on morphosyntactic properties of independent clauses, non-finiteness is primarily defined via formal criteria in opposition to finiteness. The term “non-finiteness” characterizes a restriction or distinction in morphology and syntax with respect to an independent clause. However, finiteness and main/dependent clause status do not necessarily correlate (see

Table 1). Finiteness is indeed a characteristic of prototypical main clauses (1a) but this does not exclude less finite main clauses (3). Non-finiteness very frequently marks the downgrading of a clause to an NP (2b-d) or adverbial function (2e). Yet dependent clauses can be finite (4). Their dependency is then marked overtly with some subordinate marker (4). In many languages, all dependent clauses are non-finite; in others both non-finite and finite dependent clauses are found while in yet others only finite clauses are found. Since finiteness and main/dependent clause status do not correlate, “finiteness” is a useful category only if it is defined independently of its functional distribution. It is moreover relevant only in languages with morphological asymmetry between independent and dependent clauses (Bisang 2001).

Table 1. Finiteness and main/dependent clause status

	main clause	dependent clause
finite construction	(1)	(4)
non-finite construction	(3)	(2b-e)

(3) Non-finite main clauses (Evans 2007:366)

*‘John go to the movies?! No way, man.’*

(4) Finite dependent clauses

*‘She did well at the exam [because she knows math well].’*

### 3 Functional and formal diachronic evolutions of non-finite dependent clauses

Non-finite dependent clauses can undergo different types of diachronic evolutions, as illustrated in

Table 2.<sup>2</sup> Non-finite dependent clauses can acquire morphosyntactic features typical of finite clauses in analogy with main clauses (formal shift) or extend their use as main clauses (functional shift).

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<sup>2</sup> The examples provided in Table 2 do not cover the whole array of possible diachronic changes involving non-finite dependent clauses. Non-finite dependent clauses introduced by a covert main predicate can also undergo a type of clause fusion that promotes directly the non-finite verb form as the main clause verb (see for instance Cohen 1984, Gildea 1998, Kalinina 2002, Watters 2002). Markers of dependency (including non-finiteness) can

Table 2. Examples of diachronic changes in finiteness and/or main/dependent clause status

		main clause	dependent clause
		← functional shift	
finite construction	↑ formal shift	clause fusion	finitization
non-finite construction		insubordination	non-finite dependent clause

Most of the literature on the diachrony of non-finite clauses is concerned with the functional shift of previously non-finite dependent clauses as main clauses. Insubordination is an example of such a functional shift. The term was coined by Evans (2007: 367) for “the conventionalized main clause use of what, on prima facie grounds, appear to be formally subordinate clauses.” It involves the ellipsis of a matrix clause with no modification of the erstwhile subordinate clause. Evans’s paper is not specifically concerned with non-finite clauses, but many of his examples of subordinate clauses used without matrix clauses are non-finite, like the English infinitive used in exclamative clauses (3). The functional shift of non-finite dependent clauses as main clauses can be correlated with a formal shift, as in the best-known phenomenon of reanalysis of a dependent non-finite verb form as the main lexical verb of an independent clause. This diachronic process, labeled “clause fusion” by Harris and Campbell (1995:172-173), involves the reduction of a bi-clausal structure to a mono-clausal one, where the verb of the original main clause is grammaticalized into an auxiliary (or a particle, clitic, or affix) marking tense, aspect, modality, negation, and so on, and the verb of the original subordinate clause becomes the main verb carrying the lexical meaning. This is what happened in English, with the verbs *be* and *have* now serving as auxiliaries for tense or voice marking, such as in ‘John has gone’ or ‘The house was built in 1989’ (Koptjevskaja-Tamm 1999: 149). The new construction, resulting from the reanalysis of a previously complex sentence, obviously displays finite properties (such as subject agreement and TAM alternations).

The term “finitization” has been occasionally used for the functional shift of non-finite dependent clauses used as main clauses, without any formal correlates. For instance, an encyclopedia article on finiteness notes that “there is also a general tendency to *finitivize* non-finite verb forms, which thus start being used as matrix predicates.” (Koptjevskaja-Tamm

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also be functionally extended from the syntax level to the discourse level, even in the absence of a matrix clause, to give a less assertive interpretation of the clause (Mithun 2008).

1999:149).<sup>3</sup> Two examples are given: the use of French infinitives in commands instead of the imperative, and that of adverbial gerunds of certain Russian dialects in a predicative function with the “perfect” meaning. I would recommend that the term “finitization” not be used for this type of process. The resulting construction in fact remains non-finite, in that it exhibits formal properties that differ strongly from regular main clauses. Rather, the diachronic process involved is an extension in the distribution of the non-finite constructions from dependent clauses to main clauses. This use of the term “finitization” for a change in dependent/main clause status blurs the important distinction between finiteness and dependent/main clause status. As shown earlier, the fact that finiteness and main/dependent clause status do not exactly correlate is precisely the reason for the usefulness of the “finiteness” notion. Mithun (this volume) uses “re-finitization” as a cover term for both the functional and the formal shifts that can affect a non-finite dependent clause, distinguishing them as “syntactic vs. morphological re-finitization.” Givón suggests restricting the term “re-finitization” to the addition of finite features. In contrast, he has suggested calling the functional extension of the formally dependent clause used as an independent clause “liberation” (Givón 1994), “re-surfacing” (p.c.), and “de-subordination” (Givón this volume). Another diachronic process involving non-finite dependent clauses, which is less specifically dealt with in the literature, is the formal shift by which a non-finite dependent clause acquires morphosyntactic finiteness features without a change in its dependent status. The present paper will discuss precisely the change in formal finiteness within dependent clauses, a shift for which no regular label is found in the literature. My proposal is to label it “finitization.”<sup>4</sup> Givón (1994, this volume) uses the term “re-finitization.” I prefer the simpler term “finitization,” which does not presuppose that non-finite clauses find their origin in a diachronic process of de-finitization (see also Harris and Campbell 1995: 310). In short, finiteness is a notion used in synchronic descriptive linguistics for a set of features characteristic of main clauses. Its main interest is to distinguish dependent clauses that are morphosyntactically comparable to main clauses (finite dependent clauses) from those that show more nominal properties (non-finite dependent clauses). This paper argues for restricting “finitization” to mean the diachronic process by which non-finite dependent clauses acquire finiteness features without a change in their dependent status. “Finitization”

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<sup>3</sup> Italics mine.

<sup>4</sup> The term “finitization” was first used when discussing my data on another language, Mojeño Trinitario, with T. Givón, at the Seminario de complejidad sintactica y diversidad tipologica (organized by Z. Estrada Fernández y C. Chamoreau at the University of Sonora at Hermosillo, November 15-16, 2010).

pertains to the domain of the renewal of subordinate clauses, rather than that of their origin (Harris and Campbell 1995: 283). It should be clearly distinguished from the functional shift by which a previously dependent clause (whether finite or non-finite) is used as a main clause, that is to say, de-subordinated.

#### 4 Scenarios of finitization

Finitization, that is to say the extension of finite features to a non-finite construction (without change in dependent status), has been discussed in few works (essentially Givón 1994, Harris and Campbell 1995, Heine 2009, Givón this volume). Remarkably, very little diachronic analysis of illustrative data is offered in the literature. This section gives an overview of the previous literature on the issue. The following sections will provide illustrations and discuss the theoretical scenarios proposed in the literature.

Harris and Campbell (1995: 310-312) discuss the emergence and evolution of non-finite dependent clauses. Their first point is that this type of dependent clause does not originate in parataxis, but that non-finite verb forms, being by nature both noun/adjective-like and verb-like, can fill a complement position without a particular diachronic mechanism. Their second point is that non-finite verb forms, “being at once substantival and (de)verbal, ... have the potential for being diachronically reanalyzed as having a complex initial structure.” They give the example of an Estonian participle (a non-finite verb form) that is reanalyzed as a finite form expressing reported speech. Example (5) shows that the Estonian participle is a non-finite form of the verb, since the dependent clause displays characteristics different from those of a main clause: genitive case marking of the subject, participle suffix. Example (6) shows a case of finitization of the same participle, with the acquisition of morphosyntactic features characteristic of finite clauses: nominative case marking of subject, possibility of combination with the complementizer *et* (Harris and Campbell 1995: 98-100). The resulting finite form is subsequently extended to main clauses (7), but this paper is not concerned with this further functional shift. Importantly, the finitization of a non-finite dependent clause exemplified in (6) precedes the extension of the previously subordinate construction to a main clause (7). The formal shift of non-finite dependent clause is therefore independent from its functional shift as a main clause.

(5) Estonian (Harris and Campbell 1995: 99-100):

*sai kuul-da seal ühe mehe ela-vat.*



got hear-INF there one.GEN man.GEN live-PRES.ACTIVE.PARTICIPLE  
 ‘S/he came to hear that a man lives there.’

(6) *sai kuul-da, (et) seal uks mees ela-vat.*  
 got hear-INF that there one.NOM man.NOM live-PRES.INDIRECT  
 ‘S/he came to hear that (they say) a man lives there.’

(7) *naabri perenaine ole-vat linna sõit-nud.*  
 neighbor.GEN lady.NOM is-PRES.INDIRECT town.into travel-PAST.INDIRECT  
 ‘They say the neighbor lady (lady of the house) has traveled to town.’

The renewal of dependent clauses through the acquisition of finiteness is also examined in Heine (2009). The synchronic diversity of complement clauses in various languages shows that complement clauses manifest both nominal and verbal properties at various degrees. On this basis, Heine suggests a diachronic scenario of clause expansion, that is, a reinterpretation of a nominal participant as a propositional participant. The complement gradually loses nominal properties and acquires verbal properties. Heine’s four-stage diachronic scenario of the acquisition of finiteness features in complement clauses is detailed in Table 3. The author nevertheless adds that fully-fledged (finite) complement clauses are not necessarily due to completed clause expansion. They can also result from clause integration, that is to say a copying of a finite construction in the complement position, without necessarily supposing a previous nominal construction. Heine thus distinguishes emergence from renewal of dependent clauses.

Table 3. Heine’s (2009) scenario of gradual finitization (also known as clause expansion)

Stage 1 - The extended noun	The complement is filled by a non-finite clause, with the internal structure of a noun phrase.
Stage 2 - Mixed morphosyntax	The nominal structure is gradually invaded by a clausal syntax.
Stage 3 - Clausal syntax with nominal relics	The complement clause is now a fully-fledged subordinate clause, with relics of nominal morphosyntax.

Stage 4 - The fully-fledged complement clause	The complement clause is indistinguishable in its morphosyntax from a finite main clause.
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Givón (this volume) discusses the semantico-pragmatic correlates of finiteness, through the study of languages with heavy use of non-finite structures as well as languages displaying various levels of finiteness in comparable syntactic contexts. First, the use of non-finite constructions correlates with subtle semantic or pragmatic effects. Non-finiteness in dependent clauses is linked to reference and TAM continuity vis-à-vis the main clause. Second, the variation in finiteness is also seen as the result of diachronic evolution, such as emerging diachronic expansion and surviving vestiges of older patterns. The variation in finiteness could indeed emerge during the original process of creation of non-finite constructions, or through reanalysis and “re-finitization” of non-finite constructions. Two alternative models of finitization are suggested by Givón. These are set out in Table 4. The point of departure of the two models is a subordinate clause encoded by a nominalization, that is, a non-finite clause. The first model of re-finitization is gradual, with the nominalized clauses being gradually finitized for semantico-pragmatic reasons (i.e. to allow TAM and reference discontinuity). It implies that there is a stage of complementary distribution between non-finite and finite dependent clauses. The second model involves the emergence of a new set of finite clauses, implying that there is a variation stage in which both finite and non-finite subordinate clauses are in competition with the same functions. In the final stage, non-finite subordinate clauses are replaced by finite subordinate clauses. When presenting the two hypothetical scenarios for finitization, Givón links finitization following Scenario 1 with a recovery of reference and TAM discontinuity. No semantico-pragmatic explanation is offered for finitization following Scenario 2. The lack of time-slice data supporting Scenario 1 makes it dubious, according to Givón (this volume).

Table 4. Givón’s scenarios of finitization (this volume)

Scenario 1

Stage I – Nominalization    When subordinate clauses are nominalized, they lose their TAM marking.

Stage II – Re-finitization Over time, for functional reasons (expressive power), nominalized clauses are gradually re-finitized, among other things by re-acquiring TAM marking.

#### Scenario 2

Stage I – Nominalization When subordinate clauses are nominalized, they may or may not lose their TAM marking.

Stage II – Variation A new set of finite clauses, with no evidence of prior nominalization, gradually invades the subordinate-clauses paradigm, slowly increasing in frequency.

Stage III – Final displacement The new finite set gradually replaces the old nominalized set.

Table 5 compares the different scenarios discussed in the literature concerning finitization. I coined the terms “gradual finitization” and “instantaneous finitization” to refer to the two major types of phenomena that have emerged from the literature. Basically, gradual finitization implies the existence of intermediate stages in the evolution from non-finite to finite dependent clauses, with transitional mixed morphosyntax. In contrast, instantaneous finitization implies the innovation of finite dependent clauses, with a period of variation during which they co-occur with the previously existing non-finite clauses. The subordinate clauses are then completely renewed as finite at the expense of non-finite clauses. In both cases, finitization is diagnosed on the basis of morphosyntactic features of the construction and does not entail any change in its functional distribution.

Table 5. Summary of scenarios of finitization and emergence of the finite dependent clause

		Harris and Campbell (1995)	Heine (2009)	Givón (2011)
renewal of the dependent clause	gradual finitization		clause expansion	Scenario 1
	instantaneous finitization	reanalysis of Estonian participle as finite		Scenario 2
emergence of the dependent clause		development of complex constructions	clause integration	

Gradual finitization is understood here as the modification of a prior non-finite construction via the acquisition of finite features. The process can continue as far as to result in a perfectly finite dependent clause. In this case, the non-finite construction is eventually replaced by a finite one. A hypothetical scenario has been suggested for it by Heine (2009) under the name of “clause expansion,” on the basis of the variety of degrees of finiteness in the complement clauses of unrelated languages, and by Givón (Scenario 1) on the basis of the variety of degrees of finiteness in comparable syntactic contexts within the same language. This process of gradual finitization has lost favor to some extent, compared to that of instantaneous finitization (Harris and Campbell 1995, Givón this volume), due to the lack of sound illustrative data.

Instantaneous finitization can be defined as the replacement of a prior non-finite construction by its finite analogue. It is accounted for by Givón’s Scenario 2, as well as by Harris and Campbell (1995: 310-312), according to whom it is due to the dual nature of non-finite forms, which can easily be reanalyzed as finite: “We are not suggesting that finite subordinate clauses develop by adding these [verbal] categories to non-finite proto-clauses but that they can develop instantaneously by applying in an embedded S’ all of the rules that are already available for simple clauses.” (Harris and Campbell 1995: 312). This type of diachronic process implies that there is no relic of nominal properties in the innovative finite clauses. In Givón’s Scenario 2, the intermediate stage is characterized by variation, where both finite and non-finite clauses are found with no complementary distribution. In this scenario, finite clauses acquire frequency, while non-finite clauses tend to disappear. Non-finite dependent clauses could in the end be completely replaced by finite clauses.

I argue that both gradual and instantaneous finitization are typologically attested. The next sub-sections will present illustrative data for the two diachronic models of “gradual” and “instantaneous” finitization. The examples are taken from the literature as well as from my own studies on two Amazonian languages, Emerillon of the Tupi-Guarani sub-group and Mojeño of the Arawak family. Their analysis as gradual or instantaneous finitization is tentative, given the present state of knowledge of their syntactic history. Since finiteness is defined on a language-to-language basis, the list of criteria for finiteness varies from language to language. It includes various types of morphosyntactic features, such as the order of constituents, case, agreement on the verb, TAM combinations, determiners, nominalizers, category of modifiers, and others.

## **5 Gradual finitization**

Gradual finitization is the modification of a prior non-finite construction via the acquisition of finite features. Gradual finitization can be partial and then minimally involves the addition of one or more finite features to a non-finite construction. It can also result in the re-analysis of the construction as a completely finite construction. Gradual finitization has been suggested as a possible diachronic process by Heine (2009) for complement clauses and by Givón (this volume) and Harris and Campbell (1995) as a theoretical model lacking clear data as evidence for it. This section aims at providing data of individual languages to argue for such a diachronic process on internal and comparative evidence. Three examples are provided, illustrating three different stages of Heine’s scenario (Table 3), and applying it to any type of dependent clause rather than complement clauses alone.

### *5. 1. Pekodian: Stage 2 of gradual finitization<sup>5</sup>*

The following example illustrates partial gradual finitization, at Stage 2 in Heine’s scenario of clause expansion (Table 3). It is mentioned in Gildea (2012): in the Pekodian branch of Cariban, most (if not all) of the nominalized dependent clauses are unusual in the family because they do not present the standard absolutive possessive prefixes. Instead, the entire

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<sup>5</sup> I am grateful to Spike Gildea for pointing this to me.

person-marking system of main clauses has been extended to Pekodian dependent clauses, partially finitizing them.

In the Cariban family, the only way to create a subordinate predicate is through nominalization (Gildea 1998). Nominalized clauses can constitute dependent clauses with different functions: as sentential subjects, as complement clauses, or as objects of a postposition (adverbial clauses). The following example is of a nominalized clause ‘the monkey’s killing by us’ used as a complement clause, filling the object slot of the verb *ekari* ‘permit’.

(8) Wayana, Cariban (Gildea 1998: 128):

[*ku-ya-he meku wə-top*] *ekari-∅ Jake*

1+2-DAT-COLL monkey kill-NZR permit-TAM Jaké

‘Jaké allowed us-all to kill the monkey (lit. Jaké permitted the monkey’s killing by us-all).’

Proto-Cariban nominalized dependent clauses are reconstructed by Gildea (1998) with two major characteristics that make them clearly non-finite. First, the verb stems take nominalizing suffixes, resulting in a word that can be identified syntactically as a noun (for instance, taking nominal number marking, not exemplified here). One of these nominalizing suffixes is *\*topo*. It is illustrated above with its Wayana reflex *-top*, and below with its Tiriyo reflexes *-to ~ -ho*, conveying an instrumental meaning.

(9) Tiriyo, Cariban (Meira 2003: 161):

*ji-tu:ka-to*

1-hit-NZR

‘an instrument to hit me’

Second, the nominalized dependent clauses show an ergative/absolutive morphosyntax. The verb form is prefixed with a marker that refers to either S on intransitive verbs or P on transitive verbs: it has an absolutive distribution. This prefix is similar to the possessive prefix on nouns: *j(i)-* 1SG, *ə-* 2SG on substantives, as is shown by the comparison of (9) with (10). In nominalized clauses, the agent of a transitive verb can be introduced by a *\*uya* goal/dative/ergative postposition, the reflex of which is *ja* in Tiriyo (11). The alignment of the dependent predicate is ergative/absolutive, while in the main clause transitive verbs generally follow a hierarchical indexing system (see Gildea 1998 for more details). The main clause

verb is indexed with an A prefix if P is a third person (12), and with a P prefix if P is not a third person (13). Nominal phrases are unmarked in the main clause. The argument structure of the nominalized dependent clauses differs clearly from that of main clauses. This is visible from both the indexing on the verb and by case-marking on the nominal phrases. The nominalized clauses are thus non-finite.

(10) Bakairi, Cariban (Meira 2003: 156):

*j-enu*  
**1-eye**  
'my eye'

(11) Tiriyo, Cariban (Meira 2003: 161)

*ə-tu:ka-to (Sebastião ja)*  
2-hit-NZR Sebastian **POSTP**  
'something (for Sebastian) to hit you with'

(12) Bakairi, Cariban (Meira 2003: 158, 156)

*k-ātə-li*  
**1-cut-ATEMPORAL**  
'I cut it/her/him.'

(13) *j-ene-də*

**1-carry-PAST.IMMEDIATE**  
'He/She has carried me.'

Non-finite dependent clauses as exemplified in (8), (9), or (11) are reconstructed for the whole Cariban family. Criteria for their non-finiteness are: the presence of a nominalizing suffix, combination with nominal number (not shown here), the absolutive/nominal indexing on the verb, and the ergative marking of an A nominal phrase. These are all characteristics that distinguish the nominalized clauses from main clauses.

The recent descriptions of two languages of the Pekodian branch of the family (Ikpéng and Bakairi) show that the dependent clauses have undergone finitization in these particular languages. The first finite feature of the dependent clauses in the Pekodian branch is the

hierarchical rather than absolutive indexing on the verb. The following examples show that in Bakairi dependent clauses, A is indexed when P is a third person (14), and P elsewhere (15). This pattern is the same as that found in main clauses, as exemplified in (12) and (13). Indexing in Bakairi dependent clauses is a finite feature, since it is similar to indexing in main clauses. In other languages, the clauses corresponding to (14) would index P, as illustrated in the Tiriyo non-finite dependent clause (11).

(14) Bakairi, Cariban (Meira 2003: 161)

*kə-ene-to*

**1**-carry-NZR

‘something for me to carry with’

(15) *j-ene-to*

**1**-carry-NZR

‘something to carry me with’

The second finite feature of the dependent clauses in the Pekodian branch is that an A nominal phrase is not marked with a postposition.

(16) *Sérgio s-atə-ho*

Sérgio 3-cut-NZR

‘something for Sérgio to cut with’

Finitization of the nominalized clauses in Bakairi is nevertheless incomplete, in that the nominalizers still derive nominals that take nominal morphology. Gildea (2012) notes that they take the collective marker that adds to derived nouns rather than to finite verbs.<sup>6</sup> Though the Pekodian dependent clauses very likely derive from the Proto-Cariban non-finite clauses, they show more finite features than those do. This means that they have been finitized. However, they are not completely finite, because they do not show all features typical of main clauses. The result of this gradual finitization can be seen as illustrating Stage 2 “mixed morphosyntax” in Heine’s scenario, that is to say the nominal structure is gradually invaded

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<sup>6</sup> This feature is not illustrated in either Gildea’s or Meira’s studies.





the reconstruction of Proto-Tupi-Guarani dependent clauses as non-finite clauses, hints at a gradual finitization process that did not impact all types of dependent clauses to the same degree. This case of gradual finitization is examined in detail in Rose (2013), on the basis of both internal reconstruction and comparative data (Jensen 1999, Rose 2008, 2011b). The central argument is that the present layering in synchronic data (Table 6) is a nice illustration of the hypothetical scenario of gradual finitization, with several types of dependent clauses illustrating the four different stages of gradual finitization according to Heine’s scenario (Table 3), which was initially drawn from data on complement clauses only.

Table 6. Stages in gradual finitization in Emerillon of Tupi-Guarani non-finite clauses

Finitization stages	Dependent clause types	Person indexation	TAM/NEG	Nominal marker on verb
Stage 1	Nominalizations	NF	NF	NF
Stage 2	Transitive gerundives	NF	NF	F/NF
Stage 3	Intransitive gerundives (SVC)	F	NF	F/NF
Stage 4	Temporal subordinates	F	F	F

In Proto-Tupi-Guarani, dependent clauses were all (except for one type not discussed here) non-finite (Jensen 1999, Rose 2013). Different types of dependent clause can be distinguished depending on their final marker and their function, among which “nominalizations” were mostly used as complement or relative clauses, “gerundives” for sequential, simultaneous, or purposive adverbial clauses, and “temporal subordinate” for adverbial clauses with temporal meanings. Three morphosyntactic features are used to evaluate the (non)-finiteness of the Tupi-Guarani dependent constructions: (i) nominal vs. verbal person indexing, (ii) nominal vs. verbal TAM and negation morphology, and (iii) dependency marker on the verb vs. no marker or a dependency marker at the level of the clause. These three features distinguish the dependent clauses from the main clauses. First, Proto-Tupi-Guarani dependent clauses exhibit nominal indexing, S or P being marked with the possessive nominal morphology (as in Cariban), rather than the hierarchical indexing used in main clauses. In the dependent clause (19) involving a third person A and a third person P, P is indexed with the third person possessive prefix as in (20), while in a main clause also involving a third person A and a third person P, markers for both arguments are found (20). Second, the verbs of the dependent

clauses take the same TAM and negation markers as those found on nominals, rather than those found on main verbs (compare the distribution of the negative markers *-e'ym* and *n=...-i* in examples (21) to (23)). Third, Proto-Tupi-Guarani dependent clauses are marked by a dependency marker adjoined to the verb (*-a* in (19), *-amõ* in (21)). The hypothesis of gradual finitization from this reconstructed Proto-Tupi-Guarani system to Emerillon is described below and summarized in Table 6. It is examined in detail in Rose (2013).

(19) Proto-Tupi-Guarani (Jensen 1998a:503-504)

*o-úr [i-kuáp-a]*

3-come 3P-meet-GER

‘He came in order to meet him.’

(20) *i-čý o-c-epják*

3-mother 3A-3P-see

‘He saw his (someone else’s) mother.’

(21) Tapirapé, Tupi-Guarani (Praça 2007:51-52, 16)

*ara-ãro ekwe ka-pe i-a-e'ym-amõ.*

A1.P2-wait imminent\_future field-LOC 3-go-NEG-TEMPORAL.SUB

‘I will wait for you in the field, if he doesn’t go.’

(22) *konomĩ-e'ym-a rõ'õ a-o'o xãwãr-a.*

child-NEG-REF it.seems 3A-bite dog-REF

‘It seems it wasn’t the child that the dog bit.’

(23) *ã'ẽ=gã n=a-kãxym-i kã'ã-pe.*

DEM-SG NEG=3-flee-NEG woods-LOC

‘He did not flee in the woods.’

In the present-day Emerillon language as described in Rose (2011b), there are only very rare examples of nominalizations used as complement clauses. They are the last relics of non-finite verb forms such as these reconstructed for Proto-Tupi-Guarani. They illustrate Stage 1, the extended noun phrase. Example (24) shows much nominal morphology in the nominalized





Instantaneous finitization can be defined as the replacement of a prior non-finite construction by its finite analogue. According to Givón, it involves a stage of variation between a new set of finite clauses and the older set of non-finite clauses, before the finite dependent clauses completely replace the non-finite ones. There are several difficulties in identifying instantaneous finitization. First, it must be shown that there previously existed a set of non-finite dependent clauses, since otherwise the situation can simply be described as a case of emergence rather than renewal of subordinate clauses.<sup>7</sup> Second, it must be shown that the dependent clause acquired its finite features at once, and not gradually. Third, according to Givón's scenario, the two types of subordinate clause must have been in competition at some point, that is, not in complementary distribution (as in the case of gradual finitization).

Three putative examples of instantaneous finitization are now presented. Two of them involve the reanalysis of a non-finite verb form as finite, and the third one illustrates the extension of finiteness features into the dependent clauses. A suggestion is that reanalysis was possible in the first two cases because some verb forms were ambiguous, meaning that they could be analyzed as either finite or non-finite verb forms. In the third case, non-finiteness involves so many morphosyntactic factors that no ambiguous form favors reanalysis. Extension of finiteness is found instead.

### *6.1 Udi: reanalysis of a non-finite verb form as finite*

A first example of instantaneous finitization is that of Udi, a member of the Lezgian family (Harris and Campbell 1995: 311-312). Udi possesses finite relative clauses, a type of clause that is not reconstructible for Proto-Lezgian since it is generally absent from other Lezgian languages. The inherited participle construction was open to reanalysis because the participle verb form in (29) can also be analyzed as a finite verb form, since Udi sentences can consist of a single finite verb form (30). Thus relative clauses with finite verb forms, such as (31), started to be used. The reanalysis mechanism is instantaneous. Only the replacement in terms of use in discourse and frequency is gradual. The reconstruction of Proto-Lezgian provides information about the previous prominence of non-finite dependent clauses, and the alternative analyses of (29) in Udi provide evidence for the competition between the two types of dependent clauses, that is, finite vs. non-finite.

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<sup>7</sup> Harris and Campbell (1995) and Heine (2009) also discuss the emergence of finite dependent clauses independently of a previous non-finite construction.

(29) Udi (Harris and Campbell 1995: 311-312)

*azak'e xinar-ax gölöšp-i*

I.saw girl-DAT dance-PARTICIPLE

'I saw the girl who danced' or 'I saw the dancing girl.'

(30) *gölöš-ne-p-i*

dance<sub>1</sub>-3.SG-dance<sub>2</sub>-PERF

'He/She had danced.'

(31) *azak'e xinar-ax mat'in-te gölöš-ne-p-i*

I.saw girl-DAT who-REL dance<sub>1</sub>-3.SG-dance<sub>2</sub>-PERF

'I saw the girl who had danced.'

## 6.2 Newari: reanalysis of a non-finite verb form as finite

Genetti (1991) details the development of postpositions (32) to subordinators (33) in Newari. This development involves a reanalysis of originally nominal morphology as verbal morphology via the reanalysis of unmarked nominal clauses as finite clauses. The author emphasizes that the reanalysis was facilitated by the fact that some nominalizations lacked overt nominalizing suffixes in Classical Newari (compare (34) with (35)). Two syntactic analyses of the nominalized clauses without overt nominalizer were then possible, as in (36): nominal clause + case suffix or finite verb + subordinator. The ambiguous cases were reanalyzed as finite verbs with verbal morphology, and some non-finite forms were lost in the process. This evolution exemplifies instantaneous finitization, with a stage of variation (ambiguity) between finite and non-finite dependent clauses.

(32) Dolakhali Newari (Genetti 1991: 227)

*cotan-na pol-ju*

spoon-INSTR strike-3SG:PAST

'He hit it with a spoon.'

(33) *chě-ku yer-na wā ām-e naku moy-an coŋ-gu.*

house-LOC come-**when** EMPH he-GEN cheek swell-PRCL stay-3SG:PAST.HAB  
'When he came to the house his cheek was swollen.'

(34) Classical Newari (Genetti 1991: 245, 246)

*kumāl hjer-ā-yā arth*  
boy laugh-A6-GEN meaning  
'the meaning of the laughing of the boy'

(35) *syān-ā-hma-yā rā*

kill-A6-NZR-GEN flesh  
'the flesh of one who has been killed'

(36) *āva chan daya-n jin rājy li kāya dhuna*

now you have-INSTR I kingdom back take finish  
'Because you are here I have now won back my kingdom.'

It is well-known that dependency markers are often used as both adpositions/cases and subordinators, well beyond Newari (Craig 1991, Kortmann 2001, Rose 2006). One of the mechanisms that lead to this polyfunctionality<sup>8</sup> is precisely the reanalysis of the dependency marker in the process of finitization. If a dependency marker was present in the original non-finite construction, finitization triggers its reanalysis as a finite clause subordinator. Mojeño Trinitario, described in the next section, is an additional example of the reanalysis of an adposition into a subordinator subsequent to finitization.

### 6.3 Mojeño Trinitario: extension of finiteness into dependent clauses

A more detailed case study is that of Mojeño Trinitario. This Arawak language spoken in Bolivia possesses two types of dependent clause in synchrony. Both types are used with the

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<sup>8</sup> Another diachronic mechanism leading to the adposition/subordinator is the simple extension of an adposition into a subordinator, without implying that nominalizations were used in an intermediate stage. Harris and Campbell (1995) have described it with Laz. The formal identity of adpositions and subordinators could also logically result from a synchronic abstract function of introducing a complement, be it an argument or a clause (cf. Rose 2006 for more details). This is particularly the case in languages in which both nouns and verbs have the capacity to fill an argument position when combined with a specific morpheme (called "translatif substantivant" by Lemaréchal (1994)).



same function of embedding a clause in a nominal position, be it as a subject, an object (a complement clause), a possessor, a headless relative, or an adverbial subordinate after the preposition/subordinator *te*, as illustrated in (37) and (38)).

(37) Mojeño Trinitario, Arawak (fieldnotes)

*eto jmani n-im-'o-gne [...] te to n-juu-s-ira.*

PRO.NH DEM 1SG-see-ACT-P\_NZR PREP ART.NH 1SG-grow-ACT-ACN\_NZR

‘These are the things that I have seen when I was growing up.’

(38) *eto n-im-'o-gne [...] te to n-juu-ko-po.*

PRO.NH 1SG-see-ACT-P\_NZR SUB ART.NH 1SG-grow-ACT-PERF

‘This is what I have seen in my life when I grew up.’

The two types of dependent clause clearly differ in terms of finiteness, as illustrated in Table 7. The six criteria defining (non-)finiteness in Mojeño Trinitario are presented below the table.

Table 7. Finiteness features of the two types of nominalization in Mojeño Trinitario

	nominalizer	plural	TAM	person agreement	order of argument NPs	article
Non-finite nominalizations	NF	NF	NF	NF <sup>9</sup>	NF	NF
Finite nominalizations	F	F	F	F	NF	NF

All non-finite dependent clauses differ from main clauses in several respects.

(i) By taking a nominalizer on the verb form (such as *-ira* in (37)).

(ii) By suffixing the plural *-ono* after the nominalizer, as in (39), whatever the person prefix (rather than directly on the verb stem and exclusively with an unspecified third person prefix as in main clauses (Rose 2011c)).

<sup>9</sup> With the exception of two nominalizers that take verbal person agreement.

(iii) By encoding TAM within the nominalizer (37)<sup>10</sup> or after it with a nominal TAM marker, rather than with a verbal TAM marker directly on the verb, like *-yore* in (39).

(iv) By displaying a slightly different verbal person indexing (compare (41) with (42), illustrating that transitive verbs with a third person subject and a first or second person object only allow an unspecified third person prefix in main clauses, cf. (Rose 2011c)).

(v) By displaying an OVS order in object relative clauses (41) rather than SVO as in main clauses (43).

(vi) By often being introduced by a determiner, either an article, as in (37) and (39), or a demonstrative, as in (41).

(39) *eñi ty-om-yore eto to v-imot-gieñ-ono.*  
3M 3-take-FUT 3NH ART.NH 1PL-know-P\_NZR-PL  
'He will take the things that we know (our knowledge).'

(40) *eno ty-om-ono / \*viti vi-om-ono to saware*  
3PL 3-take-PL 1PL 1PL-take-PL ART.NH tobacco  
'They took / \*we took the tobacco.'

(41) *wo t-ori [pjokni mu-emit-ko-n-giene muena Napo]*  
NEG 3-IRR\be\_good DEM 3M-teach-ACT-1SG-P\_NZR DEM Napo  
'It is not good what that Napo taught me!'

(42) *t-imit-ko-nu \*mu-emit-ko-nu*  
3-teach-ACT-1SG 3M-teach-ACT-1SG  
'He teaches me.'

(43) *ma profesoru mu-emit-ko no 'moper-ono*  
ART.M teacher 3M-teach-ACT ART.PL youngster-PL  
'The teacher teaches the youngsters.'

In contrast, finite-dependent clauses are not marked with a nominalizer and exhibit all verbal properties. Example (38) displays a subordinate clause with a finite verb, marked for aspect.

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<sup>10</sup> Nominalizers convey aspectual meanings such as durative, punctual or habitual. In (37), *-ira* has a durative component.

The finite subordinate clause in (44) also displays the same plural marking and the same person indexing as in the corresponding main clause (45). The verb form is completely comparable with a main clause verb form. Only two syntactic properties of the clause mark it as subordinate: the combination with a determiner, embedding the finite clause within the main clause in an NP position, and the subsequent position of S after the verb (the position before the verb being filled with the determiner). This type of subordinate clause is very close to the independent clause prototype on the finiteness continuum. Its nominal properties are the minimal requirement for marking the otherwise completely finite clause as dependent. This type of clause is therefore considered finite.

(44) *wo na-(a)-uro'o [to t-siop-a-no eno tkomeriono]*  
 NEG 3PL-IRR-want ART.NH 3-enter-IRR-PL PRO.PL non-indigenous  
 'They did not want the non-indigenous people to enter.'

(45) *eno tkomeriono t-siopo-no*  
 PRO.PL non-indigenous 3-enter-PL  
 'The non-indigenous people enter.'

To sum up, Mojeño possesses two types of dependent clause that differ in terms of finiteness. The variation in finiteness between these two types cannot be explained on semantico-pragmatic grounds: they both serve in all syntactic positions, with the same meaning, and the two can occur with various degrees of reference and TAM continuity (see Rose 2011a for more details). There seems to be no semantic explanation for the variation, hence none for the diachronic process. Interestingly, no intermediate construction with mixed morphosyntax is found, giving no evidence of prior nominalization of these innovative finite dependent clauses. It is therefore plausible that Mojeño Trinitario illustrates the variation stage (Stage II) in Givón's Scenario 2 (instantaneous finitization). It seems that these finite dependent clauses emerged through the extension of the finite pattern from the independent clause domain into the dependent clause domain. The inverse direction, that is, the development of non-finite dependent clauses to replace finite dependent clauses, is unlikely for two reasons. First, if finite dependent clauses existed previously, the diachronic process leading to the renewal of subordinate clauses with non-finite clauses would introduce more complexity, without any particular functional explanation. In contrast, the renewal of subordinate clauses via finitization can be explained by the well-known diachronic process of extension (of finite

features from main clauses to dependent clauses) aiming at less complexity. Second, both types of dependent clause can be introduced by morphemes originally combinable with nominals: determiners and a subordinator *te* (46) used elsewhere in the language as a preposition (47). It seems much more plausible that determiners and adpositions started to be used with nominalizations than with finite clauses. The extension of finiteness properties to dependent clauses would then have triggered the reanalysis of the preposition and the determiners as subordinators.

(46) *te*            *p-itekp-a-po*            *p-iimui-gi-a*  
 SUB        2SG-arrive-IRR-PERF    2SG-dance-IRR-PERF  
 ‘**When** you arrive, you will have to dance.’

(47) *py-uusamre*    *p-imori-ko*        *te*    *i-peno*        *pjuena*    *ora-ri’i*  
 2SG-be.happy    2SG-visit-ACT    PREP 1PL-house    DEM    hour-ri’i  
 ‘You are happy to visit (**PREP**) **our house** at this time.’

## 7 Conclusion

The rarely used term “(re-)finitization” has occurred until now with a variety of meanings, covering different diachronic processes affecting a previously non-finite construction. This paper suggests that “finitization” should be specifically used to mean the acquisition of morphosyntactic finiteness features by a non-finite dependent construction that remains dependent. Diachronic data from various languages were used to test the different scenarios for the finitization process suggested in the literature, and more precisely, the distinction between gradual and instantaneous finitizations, depending on whether the intermediate stage of the evolution involves mixed finite/non-finite morphosyntax or a variation between finite and non-finite clauses.

The illustrations presented in this paper seem to indicate that the two theoretical models are indeed both possible. Interestingly, both scenarios of finitization can be explained by the same two different types of diachronic mechanism – either the reanalysis of non-finite forms as finite forms, or the extension of finiteness features from main clauses to dependent clauses. The distinction between the two types of finitization seems not to lie in the diachronic mechanisms at play, but rather in the functional reason for the change. A detailed examination of dependent clauses in Emerillon seems in fact to confirm that gradual finitization is linked

with a recovery of reference discontinuity as presupposed by Givón, while the suggested instantaneous finitization in Mojeño Trinitario does not result in any clear distribution of non-finite and finite clauses in terms of reference and TAM continuity.

Lastly, this study also offers a persuasive argument for why finiteness should be defined on formal rather than on functional criteria: the finiteness of a clause does not correlate with its main/dependent clause status because it can evolve in time without change in main/dependent status. Obviously, finiteness and main/dependent clause status are intricately, but not intrinsically, related.

## Abbreviations

A	agentive argument
ACN	action
ACT	active
ART	article
CAUS	causative
COLL	collective
COMP	complementizer
CONTRAST	contrastive
DAT	dative
DEM	demonstrative
EMPH	emphatic
ERG	ergative
F	finite
FUT	future
GEN	genitive
GER	gerundive
HAB	habitual
IMP	imperative
INF	infinitive
INSTR	instrumental
IRR	irrealis
LOC	locative

M	masculine
NEG	negation
NF	non-finite
NH	non-human
NOM	nominative
NZR	nominalizer
P	patientive argument
PERF	perfective
PL	plural
POSS.COREF	co-referential possessive
POSTP	postposition
PREP	preposition
PRES	present
PRO	pronoun
PRTCL	particle
REF	referential
REL	relative
S	subject
SG	singular
SUB	subordinator

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