

## RELATIONAL PROCESSES AND VERBLESS CLAUSES IN REMBARRNGA

Paper presentation

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### Abstract

Halliday (1994:119–138) divides relational processes in English into intensive, circumstantial and possessive types, each with attributive and identifying modes. Existential clauses have some similarities with relational clauses. In Rembarrnga, a polysynthetic language of Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory of Australia, the equivalent constructions are predominantly verbless clauses, since there is no copula in Rembarrnga (cf Bininj Gun-wok, Evans 2003: 555ff.). These clauses comprise a subject and a complement nominal. The class of nominals in Rembarrnga corresponds to English adjectives and nouns, so that they are used as complements in both attributive and identifying modes. Subject prefixes in such verbless clauses are largely the same as those used for intransitive verbs with the exception of the third person minimal non-past positive form. These verbless clauses have no tense marking in the present but may carry special suffixes for marked tenses past and future. Having/lacking clauses and existential clauses are other types of verbless clause in Rembarrnga, with existential clauses also being attested with positional verbs. This paper outlines the nature of such clauses in Rembarrnga in the light of typological findings such as those of Curnow (1999) and Dixon (2002).

### References

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