EXPERIENTIAL-EVENTS IN TRANS-NEW GUINEA LANGUAGES

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ABSTRACT

***Wano** is a **Trans-New Guinea** language spoken in Papua that has **experiential-events**. Terms referring to Experiential-events include nouns related to the cognitive sphere and physiological sense, i.e.: "[w]ords related to thought, memory, dream and the like fall under the cognition type of experiential events. ...Words related to physical feeling and emotion, like happiness, heaviness or pain, are properties of the physiological domain of experiential events." (Burung, 2017: 113).*
*Wano expresses Experiential-events as inalienably possessed nouns (hereafter: **inalienable nouns**). Experiential-events function as predicate elements of **non-verbal clauses**. A non-verbal clause could be an intransitive or a transitive clause, i.e.: the language permits both [$_{CL}$ subject predicate] and [$_{CL}$ subject object predicate] formulae. While the first structure is familiar to typological studies, the second one is an unfamiliar phenomenon. How can a noun be the head of a transitive predicate? My hypotheses follow:*

1) ***Inalieanable nouns** may be found in **Trans-New Guinea** languages,*
2) *languages having inalienable nouns may have **experiential-events**,*
3) *languages having experiential-events may have **non-verbal clauses**,*
4) *non-verbal clauses may be **intransitive** and **transitive** clauses, where*
5) *the **predicate head is a noun** (Burung 2017: §3.4.4; §6.2.2; and §s7.2-5).*

This paper attempts to prove the above hypotheses with illustrations mostly from Wano.

Keywords: *Wano, Trans-New Guinea languages, inalienable nouns, experiential-events*

INTRODUCTION

Wano is a **Trans-New Guinea** language spoken in Papua by approximately 7,000 native speakers. It is a polysynthetic language that displays agglutinative-fusional morphology. It is a verb-final language that allows pronominal pro-drop and has no rigid constituent order for arguments. Consequently, a clause may consist only of:

(*i*) a single verb: {$_{CL}$ V},
(*ii*) a serial verb construction: {$_{CL}$ SVC},
(*iii*) a combination of an inalienable noun with a verb {$_{CL}$ N_{in} V}, and
(*iv*) a combination of an inalienable noun with a serial verb construction: {$_{CL}$ N_{in} SVC}.

Experiential-events function as predicate elements of **non-verbal clauses**: {$_{CL}$*non.v* N_{in}}, where a non-verbal clause could be an intransitive or a transitive clause, i.e.: the language permits both {$_{CL}$ subject predicate} and {$_{CL}$ subject object predicate} formulae. While the first structure is familiar to typological studies, the second one is an unfamiliar phenomenon. The question is then to do with a noun being the head of a transitive predicate. My hypotheses follow:

1) ***Inalienable nouns*** may be found in ***Trans-New Guinea*** languages,
2) languages having inalienable nouns may have ***experiential-events***,
3) languages having experiential-events may have ***non-verbal clauses***,
4) non-verbal clauses may be ***intransitive*** and/or ***transitive*** clauses, where
5) the ***predicate head is a noun*** (cf. Burung 2017: §3.4.4; §6.2.2; and §s7.2-5).

In this paper, I attempt to validate the above hypotheses. For illustrations, I mostly refer to Wano data.

METHODOLOGY

A direct contact with the Wano speakers for a reasonable length of time was the most successful approach to learn their language and culture. This enabled me to appreciate their certain ways of living; the way they interact to each other, how they apply their beliefs in daily life that is reflected using their morphologically riched string of sounds that construes a pragmatically complex grammar one may find. I was privileged to discover what was hidden through an understanding of their uniquely use of language: *nova wa-o, kaye nak-o*, a cultural clause that is used only to genuinely express one's deep gratitude to a respected elderly man, which is equivalent to our English clause 'from the bottom of my heart, I thank you' (Burung 2017: 7-8). My method to grasp Wano grammar was by living with its speakers while

constantly being aware of my linguistic skills in learning the language. By engaging ethnolinguistic and ecolinguistic ingredients of the Wano language, do I come to comprehend its social cognitive in grammar. During the time spent with the Wano people, I managed to compile paradigms of nouns, verbs, various phrases and clauses, traditional oral texts of various genres, among others. For details on the methodology and corpus obtained, see Burung (op.cit. 16-9).

WANO NOUNS AND VERBS

We may distinguish nouns and verbs in terms of their semantic and grammatical coding. I outline their distinction with respect to their morphosyntactic properties.

Firstly:
Nouns are alienable and inalienable, e.g. (see below);
Verbs are divided based on their conjugational forms, i.e.:
(*i*) *-t* verb, e.g. *wat-* 'one hits him',
(*ii*) sub-*t* verb, e.g. *tat-* 'to roast',
(*iii*) *-d* verb, e.g. *wid-* 'to fetch',
(*iv*) *-n* verb, e.g. *ban-* 'to put down' and
(*v*) -V verb, e.g. *do-* 'to stay'.

Secondly:
Nouns take possessive prefixes and number suffix, e.g.
(*i*) *agwe* {his-wife} 'his wife', *nagwe* {my-wife} 'my wife', *kagwe* {your.sg-wife} 'your.sg wife',
(*ii*) *abut* {his-child of.male} 'his child' (men-term), *ayak* {her-child of.female} 'her child' (women-term);
(*iii*) *agwe-vi* {his-wife-PL} 'his wives',
(*iv*) *aburi* {his-child of.male-PL} 'his children' (men-term).
Verbs take TAM and subject/object suffixes, e.g.
wakirak {hit.3sOBJ-REAL-3sSBJ-then} 'he hit him',
wakacak {hit.3sOBJ-REAL-1sSBJ-then} 'I hit him',
wakendak {hit.3sOBJ-REAL-2sSBJ-then} 'you.pl hit him',
nokirak {hit.1sOBJ-REAL-3sSBJ-then} 'he hit me',
kokacak {hit.2sOBJ-REAL-1sSBJ-then} 'I hit you.sg'.

Thirdly:
Nouns are limited to possessor-prefix and number-suffix, e.g.
n-agwe-vi {my-wife-PL} 'my wives';
Verbs are more complex in their morphology, due to their five conjugational forms, TAM-subject/object affixes, transitivity, deictic markers they take. A verb may have about 280 morphological forms (cf. Burung 2017: appendix 3, for *wat-* 'one hits him').

Fourthly:
Nouns: head/modifier in noun phrases;
Verbs: head in verb phrases.

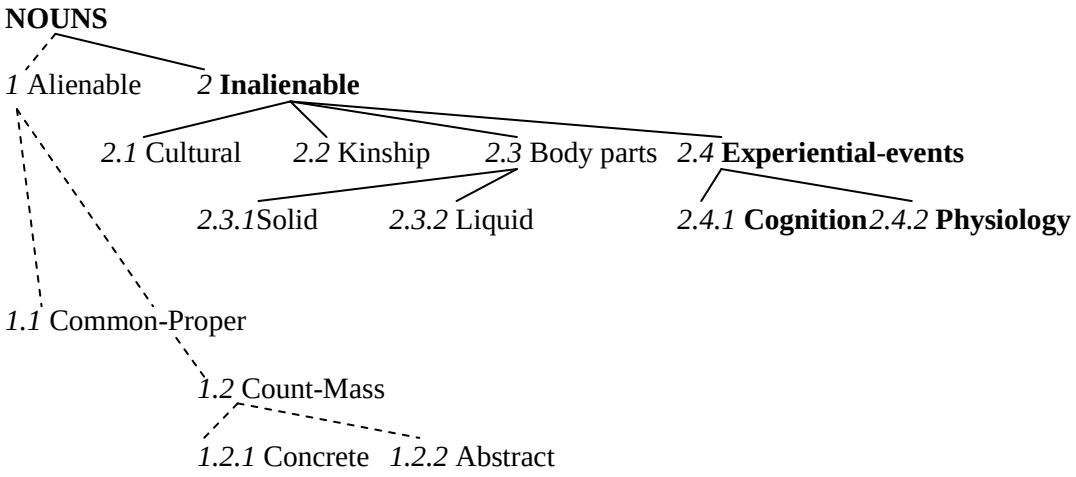
Fifthly:
Nouns function as head/predicate element in non-verbal (in)transitive clauses;
Verbs function as head/predicate element of (in)transitive clauses.

Sixthly:
Nouns express deixies by means of kin terms through semantic-pragmatic morphosyntactically coding, Verbs express deixies by means of eco-cognitive morphosyntactically coding.

This paper is about nominal complex and non-verbal clauses in Wano (Burung 2017: chapters 3 and 7).

Since Wano is a Trans-New Guinea (TNG) language, it is not unreasonable to speculate that **experiential-events** can be found in other TNG languages as well – hence the title. I will first define

experiential-events and **inalienable nouns**. There, will be apparent that the two are closely related and that the two play key role in **non-verbal clauses** found thus far in Wano. I trust that Wano represents its related languages like Dani, Walak and Nggem (Burung 2017: §s1.5-6), and hopefully, they represent TNG languages. Our discussion is limited to nouns > inalienable > experiential-events > cognition and physiology. The following figure presents the typology of nouns in Wano.



INALIENABLE NOUNS AND EXPERIENTIAL-EVENTS

Recap the above figure. Wano distinguishes alienable nouns and inalienable nouns. Alienable nouns are divided into (*i*) Common-Proper nouns and (*ii*) Count-Mass nouns, which is further subdivided into (*ii.a*) Concrete nouns and (*ii.b*) Abstract nouns. **Inalienable nouns** (N_{in}) are further divided into those terms belong to: (*i*) cultural items, (*ii*) kinship relation, (*iii*) body parts, and (*iv*) **experiential-events**. Body parts are further subdivided into (*iii.a*) solid, and (*iii.b*) liquid body parts. Experiential-events are subdivided into (*iv.a*) cognitive sphere ($N_{in.Cog}$), and (*iv.b*) physiological domain ($N_{in.Phy}$) (Burung 2017: §s3.2-4; §7.2; §9.4; 2007, 2003, 2002).

Inalienable nouns are nominal elements that cannot be separated from their possessors. The two are essentially integral parts that semantically glued together. In Wano, we find for:

(1) cultural items: *egin* {his-bow}, *negin* {my-bow}, *kegin* {your.sg-bow}, *inyegin* {their-bow}, *ninyegin* {our-bow}, *kinyegin* {your.pl-bow};

(2) solid body parts; *eruk* {his-hair}, *neruk* {my-hair}, *keruk* {your.sg-hair}, etc.;

(3) liquid body parts: *adian* {his-blood}, *nadian* {my-blood}, *kadian* {your.sg-blood}, etc.; and

(4) kinship terms: *ova* {his-father} *nova* {my-father}, *kova* {your.sg-father}, etc. Note that we cannot find words for 'bow', 'hair', 'blood' or 'father' on their own in Wano.

Regarding **experiential-events**, in Burung (2017: 131-2), we read: "[w]ords related to thought, memory, dream and the like fall under the cognition type of experiential events." e.g.

(5) *an at enokweid* {I he his-mind} 'I think of him/her' or 'I have a thought of him/her' or 'I am mindfull of him/her' (*lit*. 'I have his-mind'). The inalienable noun *enokweid* {his-mind} is a cognitive experiential-event.

(6) *an kat kabua* {I you.sg love} 'I love you' or 'I feel for you' or 'I have pity on you.sg' (*lit*. 'I have your.sg-love'). The inalienable noun *kabua* {you.sg-love} is a cognitive experiential-event.

We further read (ibid.): "[w]ords related to physical feeling and emotion, like happiness, heaviness or pain, are properties of the physiological domain of experiential events." e.g.

(7) *an nanggin* {I my-weariness} 'I am wearied' or 'I am tired' (*lit*. 'I have my-weariness'). The inalienable noun *nanggin* {my-weariness} is a physiological experiential-event;

(8) *an kat kanggin* {I you.sg your.sg-weariness} 'I am tired of you.sg' (*lit*. 'I have your.sg weariness');

(9) *an nanop anduk* {I my-head its-pain} 'I have a headache' (*lit*. 'I have my head its pain'). The inalienable noun *anduk* {his-pain} is a physiological experiential-event.

In Burung (2017: §7.2), we read further: "[t]he term **Experiential Events** refers to grammatical notions that express certain cognitive and physiological states of affairs. Words that relate to cognitive spheres are those which refer to 'mind', 'knowledge', 'thought', 'love', 'ignorance' and 'remember', while those related to physical feelings of 'happiness', 'sadness', 'pain', 'heaviness', 'weariness', 'laziness', and the like are physiological words ...". We note in (5), the clause is a transitive clause of cognition-experiential-events, i.e. *an at enokweid* 'I think of him/her'. The same is true for the clause in (6), i.e. *an kat kabua* 'I love you.sg'. Both (5) and (6) form an {$_{CL}$*tr* argument-predicate} clause structure, where *an* 'I', *at* 'he' and *kat* 'you.sg' are arguments, and *enokweid* 'his-mind' and *kabua* 'your-love' are predicates. Since Wano allows arguments pro-drop, in fact radical pro-drop (cf. Crystal 2008: 389), (5) and (6) can be reduced to (5a) *an enokweid*, (5b) *at enokweid*, (6a) *an kabua* and (6b) *kat kabua*, with no significant semantic change. (5) and (6) represent Table 1b given below. Turning to (7), the clause *an nanggin* 'I am tired' is an intransitive clause of physiological-experiential-events, or an ambitransitive if we consider (8), *an kat kanggin* 'I am tired of you.sg'. Lastly, the clause in (9) is, like (7) an intransitive physiological-experiential-events clause. (7) and (9) form a {$_{CL}$*intr* argument-predicate} clause structure with possible arguments pro-drop as well. (7) and (9) represent Table 1a given below. Since there is no verbs involved here, both clause structures are **non-verbal clauses** that is our topic of discussion hereunder.

NON-VERBAL CLAUSES

It was pointed out that experiential-events function as predicate elements of **non-verbal clauses**: {$_{CL}$*non.v* N_{in}}, where a non-verbal clause could be an intransitive or a transitive clause, i.e.: the language permits both {$_{CL}$ subject predicate} and {$_{CL}$ subject object predicate} formulae. I refer to the intransitive clause as **1-place predicates**, and the transitive clause as **2-place predicates**. Table 1 outlines the structures and their elements of Wano non-verbal clauses. Conventions: IPN = inalienable noun; NP = noun phrase; PRON = pronoun; SVC = serial verb construction; V = verb.

Table 1: Distribution of nominal clausal properties in Wano (Burung 2017: §7.1 and §9.3)

a. **1-place predicates**

ARG	PREDICATE
NP/PRON	NP {Physiological inalienable nouns (+ V/SVC)}

b. **2-place predicates**

ARG	ARG	PREDICATE
NP/PRON	NP/PRON	N {Cognitive inalienable nouns (+ V/SVC)}

Cross-reference obligatorily takes place between predicate (PRED) and experiential-object (OE). Strictly speaking, the grammatical function of an argument (ARG) as experiential-subject (ES) or EO is determined by its cross-referencing with PRED. The ARG that is in cross-reference with PRED will always be EO.

There are four types of non-verbal predications in Wano, which are: (*i*) experiential-event predicates, (*ii*) nominal predicates, (*iii*) adjectival predicates, and (*iv*) deictic predicates. Our discussion concerns the first type, experiential-event predicates. Three structures attested are: (*i*) *basic structure*, (*ii*) *basic structure plus verbs*, and (*iii*) *experiential-events plus serial verb construction*. As we will see later, only cognitive inalienable nouns may be the head of 2-place predicates.

BASIC STRUCTURE

The section is based on Burung (2017: §7.2.1). The examples given in our previous discussion represent the basic structure of non-verbal clauses. Since Wano is a heavily pro-drop language, while the predicate is always clause-final, the word order of the arguments is not important.

1-place predicates

Observe Table 1a for clause structure. The clause in (9) is repeated in (10) for illustration.

(10) ES PRED
an nanop *anduk*
I 1s-head 3s-pain
'I have a headache' (*lit*. 'I have my head its pain' or 'I have my head's pain')

In (10), the pronoun of the noun phrase ES may undergo pro-drop, as illustrated in:

(11) ES PRED
Ø nanop *anduk*
1s-head 3s-pain
'I have a headache' (*lit*. 'I have my head its pain' or 'I have my head's pain')

Cross-reference between ES and PRED in (11) is semantically coded. Consider:

(12) ES PRED
an *nanduk*
I 1s-pain
'I am in pain' or 'I am sick'

Physiological experiential-events may fill the PRED slot.

2-place predicates

See Table 1b for clause structure. The clause in (5) is repeated in (13) and (14), where the ARG *at* 'he' is in cross-referencing with the PRED *enokweid* {his-mind}. Note that the morphological structure of *enokweid* is {ø-enokweid} where {ø-} marks '3s'.

(13) ES EO PRED
an *at* *enokweid*
I he his-mind
'I think of him/her' or 'I have a thought of him/her' or 'I am mindfull of him/her'

(14) EO ES
at *an* *enokweid*
he I his-mind
'I think of him/her' or 'I have a thought of him/her' or 'I am mindfull of him/her'

In (15) and (16), we have {n-} that marks '1s' in *nenokweid* {n-enokweid} denoting the cross-reference relation between *an* 'I' and the predicate.

(15) EO ES
an *at* *nenokweid*
I he my-mind
'he thinks of me' or 'he has a thought of me' or 'he is mindfull of me'

(16) ES EO
at *an* *nenokweid*
he I my-mind
'he thinks of me' or 'he has a thought of me' or 'he is mindfull of me'

The cross-referential restriction gives room to argument pro-drop, especially, EO pro-drop. (15) is the pro-drop version of (11) and (12), and (16) is of (13) and (14).

(15) ES EO
an *Ø* *enokweid*
I his-mind
'I think of him/her' or 'I have a thought of him/her' or 'I am mindfull of him/her'

(16) EO ES
Ø *at* *nenokweid*
he my-mind
'he thinks of me' or 'he has a thought of me' or 'he is mindfull of me'

BASIC STRUCTURE PLUS VERBS

This section is based on Burung (2017: §7.2.2). The addition of a verb to the basic structure is permitted. In this case, the verb follows the noun predicate head. The verb takes the role of supporting verb to mark TAM (Table 1).

1-place predicates

(17) a.

ARG	PRED
an	*nangginuk*
an	n-ankinuk
I	my-happiness

'I am happy' (*lit*. 'I have my-happiness')

b.

ARG	PRED	V
an	*nangginuk*	*tetik*
an	n-ankinuk	te-tt-ik
I	my-happiness	intend-1s.SBJ-PROG

'I am intending to be happy' (*lit*. 'I am having my-happiness')

c.

ARG	PRED	V
kat	*kangginuk*	*tendik*
kat	k-ankinuk	te-nt-ik
you.sg	2s-happiness	intend-2s.sbj-prog

'you.sg are intending to be happy' (*lit*. 'you.sg are having your.sg-happiness')

(17a) is the basic structure. Cross-reference takes place between ARG and both PRED elements, i.e. alienable noun and verb. In all examples, ARG may undergo pro-drop, illustrated in:

(18) a.

ARG	PRED
Ø	*nangginuk*
	n-ankinuk
	my-happiness

'I am happy' (*lit*. 'I have my-happiness')

b.

ARG	PRED	V
Ø	*nangginuk*	*tetik*
	n-ankinuk	te-tt-ik
	my-happiness	intend-1s.SBJ-PROG

'I am intending to be happy' (*lit*. 'I am having my-happiness')

c.

ARG	PRED	V
Ø	*kangginuk*	*tendik*
	k-ankinuk	te-nt-ik
	2s-happiness	intend-2s.sbj-prog

'you.sg are intending to be happy' (*lit*. 'you.sg are having your.sg-happiness')

2-place predicates

Unlike the 1-place predicate, a parameter is need regarding cross-referencing. What follow is based on Burung (2017: §7.2.2):

Parameter:

a. Agreement between ES argument and V is required.
b. Agreement between EO argument and inalienable noun is required.
c. Word order of arguments is not significant, but the function of arguments that determine their agreement either with inalienable noun or with V.

We will use example (6), *an kat kabua* 'I love you', to illustrate 2-place predicate of non-verbal clause with a verb as part of predicate element.

(19) a.

ARG	ARG	PRED
an	*kat*	*kabua*
an	kat	k-abua
I	you.sg	2s-love

'I love you.sg' (*lit*. 'I have your.sg-love')

b.

ARG	ARG	PRED	V
an	*kat*	*kabua*	*tetik*
I	kat	k-abua	te-tt-ik
I	you.sg	2s-love	intend-1s.SBJ-PROG

'I will love you.sg' or 'I want to love you.sg' or 'I will have pity on you.sg'

c.

ARG	ARG	PRED	V
an	*kat*	*nabua*	*tendik*
an	kat	n-abua	te-nt-ik
I	you.sg	1s-love	intend-2s.SBJ-PROG

'you.sg will love me' or 'you.sg want to love me' or 'you.sg will have pity on me'

(19a) is the basic structure. In (19b), we have cross-reference between the ARG *an* 'I' with the V *tetik* 'I am intending' that makes the ARG is the ES (Parameter a). The ARG *kat* 'you.sg' cross-references with the inalienable noun *kabua* 'your.sg-love' and so it is the EO (Parameter b). (19c) is the reverse of (19b). Pro-drop is the norm, but this time with a slightly different semantic switching. Observe (20):

(20) a.

ARG	ARG	PRED	V
an	Ø	*kabua*	*tetik*
an		k-abua	te-tt-ik
I		2s-love	intend-1s.SBJ-PROG

'I will love you.sg' (emphasis on ES, clause stress on *an* 'I')

b.

ARG	ARG	PRED	V
Ø	*kat*	*kabua*	*tetik*
	kat	k-abua	te-tt-ik
	you.sg	2s-love	intend-1s.SBJ-PROG

'I will love you.sg' (emphasis on EO, clause stress on *kat* 'you.sg')

c.

ARG	ARG	PRED	V
Ø	Ø	*kabua*	*tetik*
		k-abua	te-tt-ik
		2s-abua	intend-1s.sbj-prog

'I will love you.sg' (simply a statement, no significant emphasis on either ES or EO)

EXPERIENTIAL-EVENT PLUS SERIAL VERB CONSTRUCTION

In Wano non-verbal clauses of both intransitive and transitive clauses, it is possible to have a predicate that includes elements of an inalienable noun, as predicate head, and a serial verb. The following examples are from Burung (2017: §7.2.2 numbers (7.15)). Details on this construction is found in Burung (op.cit. §9.3).

(21) a. **1-place predicate**

ARG	PRED	SVC	
nenokweid	*anduk*	*te*	*dokniq*
n-enokweid	ø-anduk	te	do-k-niq
1s-mind	3s-pain	intend	stay-REAL-as such

'I have a broken heart' or 'my heart will remain in pain' (*lit*. 'my-mind intends to stay in pain')

b. **2-place predicate**

ARG	ARG	PRED	SVC	
an	*kat*	*kabua*	*te*	*dokniq*
an	kat	k-abua	te	do-k-niq
I	you.sg	2s-love	intend	stay-REAL-as such

'I will remain loving you.sg' or 'I intend to stay in love with you.sg' (*lit*. 'I intend to stay in your.sg-love')

The following example is from Text 38 line 16 of my corpus. It's a sad story of the narrator who lost his father on an accident when they went hunting together; the narrator was talking about how he felt and would remain in sorrow for his late father who fell into a waterfall and disappeared.

(22)

an	*nova*	*no*	*abua*	*te*	*dokniq*
an	n-ova	no	ø-abua	te	do-k-niq
I	1s-father	this.way	3s-love	intend	stay-real-as such

'It was for my father, I will remain in sorrow for him.' [Text 38: 16]

A combination of cognitive-physiological inalienable noun with serial verb constructions is commonly attested in Wano daily interaction. (23) is what one of my language consultants told me regarding his uncle who was always sad and gloomy for the lost of his wife.

(23) *at agwe no abua, kanggirak-o, mono nome*
at ø-akwe no ø-abua, kan-k-it-ak=o, mono nome
he 3s-wife this.way 3s-love die-REAL-3s.SBJ-then=PAUS that.way because

enokweid anduk~panduk ne te-o.
ø-enokweid ø-antuk~pantuk n-e te=o.
3s-mind 3s-pain-REDUP go-3s.SBJ intend=PAUS
'It was his wife, poor her, she died, because of that he will go on being deeply in pain.'
[BM, p.c., Biricare 1995/6]

Notice that the predicate of the last clause consists of the cognitive inalienable *enokweid* 'his-mind', followed by the reduplication of physiological inalienable *anduk-panduk* 'his-pain-pain' and the serial verb *ne te* 'he intends to go'. The SVC TAM information with respect to the physiological alienable noun.

CONCLUSION: QUERIES TO PONDER

Since Wano is a Trans-New Guinea (TNG) language, it is not unreasonable to speculate that the notion can be found in other TNG languages as well. In this paper, I have demonstrated that:

(1) alienable and inalienable nouns are found in Wano,
(2) experiential-events are a sub-division of inalienable nouns,
(3) experiential-events play significant role in non-verbal clauses,
(4) such clauses may be intransitive and transitive non-verbal clauses,
(5) where the clause head is a noun.

It should be clear that when dealing with nominal properties of a Trans-New Guinea language, it is possible to find inalienable nouns with experiential-events encoding cognitive and physiological spheres. Regarding non-verbal clauses, intransitive clauses with inalienable noun as the predicate head is not an uncommon grammatical feature. On the other hand, transitive non-verbal clauses attested in Wano grammar is an exceptional language specific, i.e. the feature is rare among the languages of the world. Is it true that transitive non-verbal clause language specific? Further studies on related languages and beyond are crucial to have a satisfactory answer.

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