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THE MISTAKE OF PREDP

The hypothesis that non-verbal predication is obligatorily mediated by a functional element (Pred^o), which heads small clauses (Bowers 1993), is universally accepted in syntax, but has so far not been evaluated under minimalist assumptions. I will first reevaluate theory-internal arguments in favor of its existence and show that none of them stands in the current state of the theory. Next I will show that it does not appear to be possible to give a unified semantics to the purported mediator. I will then demonstrate that the existence of PredP is not supported by the phenomena originally used to argue for it: predicative instrumental in Slavic (Bailyn and Rubin 1991, Bailyn and Citko 1999, and Bailyn 2001, 2002), copular particles in Welsh (Bowers 1993) and in other languages (Baker 2003), or *as* and *for* in a variety of languages (Emonds 1985, Aarts 1992, Bowers 1993, 2001, Eide and Áfarli 1999, Bailyn 2001, 2002, den Dikken 2006). I will show that none of these phenomena supports the existence of the same functional head in AP, NP and PP small clauses and offer an alternative for the role of different functional elements in small clauses.

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