

I Want to But I Can't: The Frustrative in Amahuaca

Margarethe Sparing-Chávez

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Contents

Abstract

1. Introduction
2. Definition of the term “frustration”
3. The frustrative morpheme in Amahuaca
 - 3.1 Functions and meanings
 - 3.2 Some general illustrations of the use of *-pana-*
 - 3.3 *-pana* followed by optional markers
 - 3.4 *-pana* preceded by optional markers
 - 3.5 *-pana* occurring sentence finally
4. Frustrative in Amahuaca compared with other Panoan languages
5. The origin of *-pana-*
6. Conclusions

Abbreviations

References

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Margarethe Sparing-Chávez, PhD, SIL International

Abstract

Amahuaca belongs to the Panoan language family and is spoken in the southern part of the Peruvian Amazon Basin as well as in the border areas with Brazil. Typologically, Amahuaca is an agglutinative language with some twenty-seven switch reference markers which I call interclausal reference markers (IRM). The morpheme *-pana-* (and, but, however, although), which primarily expresses some type of frustration, functions as a conjunction. Among other idiosyncrasies it reflects singular/plural, case markings, in a limited way co-reference between subjects of adjacent clauses and in a few cases also between subject and object of two clauses. Depending upon the context it can be preceded or followed by different morphemes which makes the use of the frustrative very flexible. As far as the meaning is concerned, it expresses frustration due to unrealizable goals or a pleasant outcome of a situation due to fortunate circumstances. Furthermore, it allows for a variety of meanings, ranging from misunderstandings to contradictions and from mild accusations to protests. The frustrative is used in declarative sentences and in questions. It is frequent in everyday conversation, narratives reporting daily events, and particularly in legends, myths, folktales, and trickster stories.

1. Introduction

Amahuaca belongs to the Panoan language family and is spoken in the southern part of the Peruvian Amazon Basin as well as in the border areas with Brazil. It is one of the many endangered languages of the Peruvian rainforest. At present approximately 100 people of the more or less 800 Amahuacas master the language. The main reason is drastic changes in the environment.

Typologically, Amahuaca is an agglutinative language with some twenty-seven switch reference markers which I call interclausal reference markers (IRM). The case system is basically tripartite with ergative/absolute and nominative/accusative cases (Sparing-Chávez 1998:444–445). The language has a well-developed evidentiality system (Sparing-Chávez 2001). Most of these features interact to some degree with the frustrative morpheme.

When I first studied the language, I thought there were no conjunctions because I could not find any ‘and’, ‘or’, ‘but’, etc.; and indeed, those are absent. However, now I realize that the IRM *-pana-* (and, but, however, although), that mainly expresses some type of frustration, functions as a conjunction. Among other idiosyncrasies the IRMs reflect singular/plural, transitivity, case markings, time sequence, and also movement towards or away from the speaker. The frustrative *-pana-* reflects singular/plural subject, case (ergative/nominative), and often receives the theme marker. At times it also is followed by an IRM affix indicating that the subjects of two clauses are coreferent (SS), and in rare cases that the subject of a clause is coreferent with the direct object of the clause that follows (S/O).

In this discussion, I trust to make an **empirical** (rather than theoretical) contribution to functional grammar. The frustrative marker in Amahuaca falls into the framework of **pragmatics**. It is a **speech act** that cannot be negated. The native speaker employs it to communicate his feelings to his addressee with the hope to not only air his disappointment or disgust, but also to bring about a change in the knowledge or belief (pragmatic information) (Dik 1980:16) and/or action of the addressee. The marker is affixed to the verb of a dependent clause with the specific function to express a certain type of frustration (defined below). I propose to investigate the meaning of *-pana-* in different contexts. The morpheme expresses an **unrealizable action** in two or three adjoining clauses that can be preceded or followed by an indefinite number of clauses. Where the first clause states the complaint, the second one

states the reason and the third one, which is optional, the result. As mentioned above, *-pana-* most often expresses frustration—the actor’s desires or intentions cannot be satisfied due to some preceding action, event, or circumstance as seen in example (1). At times it also expresses a pleasant state of affairs, i.e., an accident is prevented due to some fortunate happening as seen in (5) and (15). Most of the illustrative sentences are taken from folktales, myths, legends, and narratives of daily activities that I collected over a fifteen-year period.

2. Definition of the term “frustration”

What does it mean when someone is frustrated due to the fact that an event or an action is impeded? Does the would-be spouse communicate frustration when he says: “I wanted to marry her, but she ran away.” The *Encyclopedia Britannica*, vol. 9 (1963:887–888) defines the term “frustration” as follows:

Frustration refers to the interruption of an episode of behaviour before its completion.

However, not every interruption of behaviour is frustrating. A man hard at work on a hot afternoon will not usually be frustrated if his employer interrupts him and says: “I want you to quit now, but I’ll pay you for a full day’s work.”...

Some kinds of behaviour can be explained only in terms of such a concept as motive (or desire, purpose, want, need, instinct, sentiment or psychological tension). Motive refers to an inferred state of the individual that is presumed to organize and direct behaviour in relation to existing conditions until a more-or-less particular goal is reached. When such an episode of behaviour is interrupted before an appropriate goal is achieved, frustration results....

Source of Frustration—The chief causes of behaviour interruption are: (1) motor, intellectual or perceptual inadequacies; (2) physical obstacles or social prohibitions; and (3) conflict of motives.

3. The frustrative morpheme in Amahuaca

3.1 Functions and meanings

Where most Indo-European languages use so-called four-letter or swear words, Amahuaca and other languages belonging to the Panoan language family use a morpheme to express frustration. In Amahuaca the frustrative morpheme is *-pana-*. It conjoins two phrases that complement each other. The clause, which always is a subordinate one, ends in a verb that carries the marker. Several modifying markers may precede *-pana-*, and the morpheme is followed by a case marker or an IRM. At times it is followed by several other morphemes such as the theme marker *-mun* (i.e., what the clause or sentence is about), the question marker *-ra*, the reportative *-quiha*, and the like. As mentioned above, the underlying emotion is frustration be it due to a negative or a positive situation or event. Other meanings expressed through *-pana-* are: different types of conflict, contradiction, opposition, limitation, contrast, protest, prohibition, and accusation. The use of the morpheme besides expressing legitimate complaints, gives the person involved a chance to blame someone else for his/her inadequacies or to trick or accuse others.

The most common use of *-pana-* is to express a desire or need that is impeded due to a prior action, event, or circumstance.

3.2 Some general illustrations of the use of *-pana*¹

- (1) Jii tucu vi-tan cosha-**pana-n-mun** haa yora-n jii
 wood piece grab-SQ.IMM.ACN(SS) beat-**FRUST-ERG-TH** tapir body-LOC wood

tucupacu-u-tai-hqui.²
 break.into.pieces-REFL-one.planting.season.ago-DECL

‘I grabbed a log to beat (the tapir to death) but it broke into pieces on the tapir’s body.’
 (Hunting narrative)

Example (1) falls into the category of *physical obstacle* and illustrates a situation where there is a lack that cannot be met under the present circumstances. Depending on the context, it might be a complaint against a person for not providing the necessary tools to accomplish a task. In the present example it is an unfortunate situation. The hunter lost all his arrows and is trying to kill the tapir with a log that breaks on the animal’s back.

- (2) Xau vuchi-**pana-x-mun** hun hovi hi-cain³
 turtle look.for-**FRUST-NOM-TH** me rain do-NONSQ(DS)

ca-yama-vahii-ha-hqui-nu.
 go-NEG-all.day-COMPL.PAST-ACT-DECL

‘I was going to look for a turtle, but it rained and I did not go all day.’ (Hunting narrative)

Example (2) also involves a *physical obstacle*. A natural force hinders a person from carrying out his/her intentions to do something. In the example, the weather hinders a man from going to the river to look for turtles. Depending on the context, the person in question might be looking for an excuse for not going.

- (3) Paran-xon miya voztu-**pana-xon** hun miya ha-yama-cun,
 deceive-SQ(SS)TR you remove.from.throat-**FRUST-SQ(SS)TR** I you kill-NEG-SQ(DS)

¹The data in this paper are presented in practical orthography. IPA phonetic values are shown in square brackets as follows:

Vowels: a [a]; i [i]; o [o, u]; u [i]. Vowel qualities contrast between short (V) and long (VV) and between nasalized (Vn) and not nasalized (V). Accents and tone are generally not written.

Plosives: p [p, b]; t [t, d]; c, q [k, g]; h [ʔ];

Fricatives and Approximants: v [w, β]; z [s, θ]; sh [š]; y [j]; x [ç, x]; j [h]

Affricates: tz [ts, tθ]; ch [tš];

Nasals: m [m, m^b]; n [n, n^d]

Flap: r [r, ř];

A glottal stop (h) is inserted between an accented monosyllabic morpheme followed by an unaccented one.

²Grammatical homophones. The Amahuaca has many homophones. Here are a few examples of those surfacing in the examples:

-qui ‘DECL’, ‘PAST.PERF’, ‘TR.INF’, ‘3IMM.PAST’.

-hi ‘PURP’, ‘PRES’, ‘ITR.INF’ IRM = ‘SQ(SS)TR’.

-xon ‘BENEF’, ‘NONSQ.TR.ACN’, IRM = ‘NONSQ(SS)TR’

-hax ‘PAST.PERF’, ‘3INTERR’, ‘NONSQ.ITR.CAN’ IRM = ‘NONSQ(SS)ITR’

³-hain>-cain; h>c _accentuated syllable

¿cuzanon hiya copii yocaa-hi-ra min-hcai? quin-mun
 why me payment ask-PRES-QUEST you-2INTERR NONSQ(SS)TR-TH

maxoo vichonha yohi-ni-xo-hnu.
 fox stork say-REM.PAST-3PAST-DECL

“Deceiving me you removed the splinter from my throat and (although I could have) I didn’t kill you. Why (then) do you ask me to pay you?” said the fox to the stork.’ (Aesop Fable, “The Stork and the Fox,” retold in Amahuaca)

Example (3) shows an *intellectual inadequacy*. A deception has been discovered and the would-be victim airs his disgust. It is an accusation (‘deceiving me...’) as well as a complaint stating a possible negative outcome for the deceiver (‘I didn’t kill you’), and finally it questions the motives of the deceiver.

(4) Tii-pan haa nami vu-**pana-van** hiyu-x-mun,
 one-indeed tapir meat bring-**FRUST-PL.ERG** heavy-NOM-TH

caracun-mun mishtin-razi vi-hi vo-nox-can-qui-hnu.
 therefore-TH little.only get-PURP go.PL-HABIT-they-ACT-DECL

‘Indeed one person cannot bring the meat of a tapir, it is (too) heavy. Therefore, they (everyone who goes) customarily go to get only a little bit.’ (Hunting narrative)

Example (4) states a hypothetical situation. The *physical obstacle* in the form of a limitation has forced the people to come up with a solution. The solution has become a custom.

(5) Jaa hun racata-hton hiin-yama-**pana-hto**-mun hun hain-nin hiya:
 where I lie.down-REL see-NEG-**FRUST-SO-TH** my wife-ERG me

cazorina-ya aceite-mun chami-n vi-qui-hnu.
 gasoline-and oil-TH younger.brother get-3IMM.PAST.PERF-DECL

‘From where I was stretched out, I couldn’t see (what was going on), so my wife said to me: “Younger brother has gotten gasoline and oil (to take you to the hospital in town)”’. (Narrative about a trip to a hospital)

Example (5) also expresses a *physical obstacle*. The meaning is straightforward: the person is frustrated because he is stretched out on his back and cannot see what is going on. Another person, however, is filling him in on the activities surrounding him. The frustration arises due to his physical position, yet the outcome is positive: his wife fills him in on what is happening. Syntactically, the example is quite unique. It is the only example I have found in more than 100 pages of data that has an IRM affixed to the frustrative marker expressing that the subject of a clause is coreferent with the object of the following clause. Example (3) specifies that two subjects are coreferent, which is more common. (In the IRM system, of course, every one of the twenty-seven IRMs are being used often.)

We note that in three of the five preceding examples *-pana-* is followed by either an ergative (*-n/-van*) or a nominative (*-x*) case ending. In (3) and (5) IRMs (*-xon*) and (*-hto*) are taking their place. The marker *-hto* is an elliptical form. The complete IRM is *-haito*, meaning nonsequence of

actions/events and the preceding subject is coreferent with the following object. As in the IRM system, so with the frustrative marker, the IRMs are cataphoric.

3.3 *-pana-* followed by optional markers

Certain optional markers that follow the frustrative morpheme include *-ra* ‘QUESTION’, *-quiha* ‘REPORTATIVE’, *-tzi* ‘PERSONAL COMMITMENT’, and *-rocon* ‘THRUTHFULNESS’. Their use is illustrated in examples (6) to (9).

- (6) ĩMin chihī pima-**pana-n-ra** caro vu-yama-shin-ax?
 You fire eat-cause-**FRUST-ERG-QUEST** firewood bring-NEG-yesterday-2INTERR

‘You want to make a fire (literally, cause the fire to eat), but didn’t bring any firewood yesterday?’

Example (6) refers to a *physical obstacle* in that there is a lack. A goal cannot be carried out because the proper preparations have not been made. It is a rhetorical question. It expresses irony and functions as a mild rebuke to show the addressee how silly he/she is in wanting to do something without doing all the necessary steps to carry out the goal. This is considered a mild confrontation in Amahuaca culture. Although the question marker is affixed to the verb phrase of the first clause, it refers to the whole sentence. The example shows that the frustrative can be used in questions.

- (7) Ja.jahaaquin namaa-namaa-hi vuzo-hax nanpu hishmin-hax
 Like.that dream-dream-SQ(SS)ITR wake.up-SQ(SS)ITR fly condor-SQ(SS)ITR

mananqui chahi novi-hi caan-**pana-n-mun-quiha**
 high.up far.away fly-SQ(SS)ITR go-**FRUST-ERG-TH-REPORT**

cuz-covin-hax caan-tima-ni-xo-hqui.
 how-INTES-PAST.PERF go-cannot-3P.REM.PAST-DECL

‘It is said that dreaming again and again like that, the fly woke up (and thinking) he had turned into a condor, desired to fly high up and very far away, but although he wanted to, he was not able (to do so) and (therefore) didn’t go (anywhere).’ (Folktale, “A Fly Dreamt It had Turned into a Condor”)

Example (7) illustrates a *perceptual inadequacy*. The actor thinks of himself as someone much bigger and more powerful than he is. When he faces reality, he experiences his limitations and is greatly disappointed. Here we see the reportative (*-quiha*) added to the verb phrase that carries the frustrative. This indicates that the content of the sentence is secondhand information. The example aligns the evidentiality system with the frustrative. As in the previous example, the affix on the verb phrase of the first clause refers to the whole sentence.

- (8) Moha man ha-shin-na⁴-hqui-nu, hun-tzin vutza
 now you kill-yesterday-2PAST.PRFTV-ACT-DECL I-next another.one

ha-**pana-n-tzi** hiya ha-can-xanh-can-na-pu
 kill-**FRUST-ERG-PERS.COMM** I kill-MAL-IMM.FUT-PL-not- men’s talk

⁴-ha>-na; h>n _n

mai, quin-mun jan jato yohi-vahin-ni-xo-hqui.
ATTN NONSQ(SS)TR-TH he them say-away-REM.PAST-3PAST-DECL

‘Now you killed (game) yesterday, I am next, don’t you kill another one, you guys, he said and left.’ (Hunting narrative)

In (8) we encounter a *conflict of motives* or possibly an *inadequate perception* of a person’s own abilities. Several people have had success in their hunting activities and the one who has not been successful, asks the others to give him a chance. Here the frustrative marker is followed by *-tzi* ‘personal commitment’, which in this context expresses selfishness. Depending on the context it could also express deception, cover up one’s own inabilities, and the like.

(9) Miya nuno jonu-**pana-n-rocon**-mun naha nuno vuui-hcan-qui-hcho.
you here hide-**FRUST-ERG-truthful**-TH many here enter-they-DECL-ATTN

‘You (could) indeed hide here, but to tell you the truth, many are entering here (and you could be found.’ (Aesop Fable, “The Deer and the Bull,” retold in Amahuaca)

In (9) we see that a *physical obstacle* causes someone to hesitate to grant a favor. The one who has been asked to grant a favor realizes that due to circumstances the situation could have a negative outcome. The morpheme *-rocon* ‘truthfully’ shows willingness on the part of the addressee. In a different context, of course, it could also mean that the person being asked to grant a favor does not want to jeopardize his/her position or reputation and is merely looking for an excuse.

3.4 *-pana-* preceded by optional markers

Certain optional markers that can precede the frustrative morpheme are: *-yama-* ‘NEGATIVE’, *-xanh-* ‘IMMEDIATE FUTURE’, *-xon-* ‘BENEFACTIVE’, *-han-* ‘MALFACTIVE’, *-cahan* ‘almost’. Their use is illustrated in examples (10) through (15).

(10) Hunhra rutu-**yama-pana-vaun**⁵-mun jan jato jan ha-quin
my.cousin kill-NEG-**FRUST-PL.ERG**-TH he them him do-INF

rutu-ma-shin-can-xo-hnu.
kill-cause-yesterday-they-3PAST-DECL

‘They were not going to kill my cousin but he provoked (caused them to do it) them and they killed him yesterday.’

Example (10) illustrates a *conflict of motives*. It seems that the actors had a reason for doing what they intended to do, but they changed their minds. Nevertheless, the victim provoked them to carry out their original plan after all. The negative shows that there was a change in the original plan, but because of intervening circumstances it was carried out.

(11) Jupu puhi non hiya-tan-**xanh-pana-n** hiyaa-covin-cun-mun
type.of.palm leave(s) we carry-away-**IMM.FUT-FRUST** heavy-INTENS-SQ(DS)-TH

⁵ -van>-vaun after accentuated syllable

jovin-hi tzahooahax non-hca-nu-pu
rest-INF sit.down-PAST.PERF we-1ACT-DECL-men's.talk

'We were going to carry the palm leaves, but because they are very heavy we sat down to rest.' (Folktale, "The Monkey Makes Fun of the Tiger")

In example (11) we see a *physical obstacle* provoking the actors not to go ahead with their task right away, but to take a break beforehand. Depending on the context, the immediate future tense allows for some doubt. Were they caught sitting down and just made up an excuse?

(12) ꞥNocu jupu puhi vi-**quinh-pana-n**-ra man
us type.of.palm.tree leave(s) gather-**together.with-FRUST-ERG-QUEST** you.PL

cuza-xanhquin coca rutu-hai-quin-quiha? shinan.vachi-ni-xo-hnu.
why-PURP uncle kill-PROG-NONSQ(SS)TR-REPORT think-quarrel-REM.PAST-3PL.PAST-DECL

'Uncle was helping us getting palm leaves. Why (then) is it being said that there is an attempt to kill him? Thinking like that he quarreled (with his companions).' (Folktale, "The Monkey Makes Fun of the Tiger")

Example (12) represents a *conflict of motives*. Someone is helping in carrying a heavy burden, yet the plan is to kill him/her. In everyday life this does not seem to make sense. In a trickster story, of course, that is a different ball game. The morpheme *-quinh* 'be or do something together/to help' preceding *-pana-* merely states that someone is helping or cooperating in a task or event.

(13) Hiyacari vu-**xon-pana-xon-mun** hiya hatza
mesweet.potatoes bring-**BENEF-FRUST-SQ(SS)TH-TH** memanioc

vu-xon-hax min-hqui-nu.
bring-BENEF-PAST.PERF you-ACT-DECL

'You were going to bring me sweet potatoes, but instead you (actually) brought me manioc.'

Example (13) illustrates a *misunderstanding* or possibly a *conflict of motives*. Someone asked for one thing but received something else. Depending on the context the second clause might be a clarification, a reminder of the original request or a mild confrontation. The benefactive morpheme meaning 'in someone's favor', makes the situation more personal.

(14) Yora-tza-n tapaz-an non ja-**han-pana-n-mun**
People-other-POSS house-LOC we live-**MAL-FRUST-ERG-TH**

ranopax-qui-hnu.
shame-ACT-DECL

'We would like to live with others in the same house, but (doing so) often causes shame.'
(Narrative, "How to Build a House")

Example (14) portrays a *social problem*. Togetherness breeds contempt and contempt leads to shame. The malfactive like the benefactive marker makes the situation more personal.

- (15) Pacuu-**cahan-pana**-xon-mun hun jii poyan hachi-cu-hnu.
 fall-**almost-FRUST**-SQ(SS)TR-TH I tree branch grab -1PAST-DECL

‘I almost fell (from the tree), but I grabbed a branch.’ (Hunting narrative)

Example (15) presents loss of balance, a *motor inadequacy* that nearly caused an accident. It was prevented through a last minute self help. In this case, the clause following the frustrative is expressing a positive outcome that the definition above allows for. The marker *-cahan* ‘almost’ underlines the closeness of the accident.

Several other modifiers can precede the frustrative marker, yet they do not bring about any better understanding of the meaning of the morpheme.

3.5 *-pana-* occurring sentence finally

The following example shows that the frustrative marker can also be placed at the end of the sentence. I found only one incident in more than a hundred pages of text.

- (16) Maxoo-mun puxcoo-ha-ma ja-ni-xo-hnu,
 opossum-TH grow.up-PERF.RESULT-not be-REM.PAST-3PAST.DECL

hain-**pana-x**.
 marry-**FRUST-NOM**

‘A possum had not yet grown up so he could not get married.’ (Folktale, “The Monkey is Making Fun of the Tiger”)

Example (16) illustrates a *social prohibition*. A youngster has not reached the appropriate age in order to do something suitable only for an adult. The story is about a possum and a tiger. The possum has a girl friend but is too young to get married. He gets put into prison. When the tiger comes by and sees the possum in prison, the possum uses the girl friend as a bait. He asks the tiger to replace him in his prison cell promising to return with the young lady so the tiger can marry her. The tiger falls into the trap and the possum never returns.

In this sentence the subordinated clause that carries the frustrative marker is placed at the end of the sentence, thus intensifying the suspense of the story.

4. Frustrative in Amahuaca compared with other Panoan Languages

A comparison of the frustrative in Amahuaca with other languages of the Panoan language family reveals that not all of them use the marker. Matses for instance does not (Hattie Kneeland, personal communication), and upon investigating Shipibo publications, I did not find it either. Cashinahua (courtesy of Susan and Richard Montag), Capanahua, and Yaminahua (courtesy of Eugene Loos), on the other hand, do employ the morpheme in a similar way yet more restricted. The morpheme in those three languages is *-panan*. The Amahuaca counterpart is *-pana-n/x* with *-n/-x* being case markings. Due to the fact that the Amahuaca IRMs have case markings, it should not be surprising that the frustrative also reflects case. Linguistically though, this phenomenon appears to be unusual. In Capanahua the frustrative means impeded action but never stops an action or event from being carried out (see (15)). Cashinahua, on the other hand, allows for it as example (17) illustrates.

- (17) Inavan ea pi-**panan**, en tsaka-xu-qui.
tiger me eat-**FRUST** I shot-today-DECL

‘The tiger would have eaten me, but I shot it today.’ (Montag 1981:146)

While it is rare in Amahuaca for the clause carrying the frustrative marker to be post-positioned, in Capanahua and Yaminahua it occurs quite often (four out of seven examples in Yaminahua).

There are a variety of other differences. For instance, in Capanahua the frustrative is never preceded by tense, while in Amahuaca it can be preceded by the immediate future (see example (11)). In Cashinahua the desiderative is used where Amahuaca would use the frustrative as examples (18) and (19) illustrate.

- (18) Dunan ea pi-**pai** ixuqui.
Snake me bite-**want.without.success** today

‘The snake wanted to bite me today, but without success.’

- (19) Nan rama rono-n hiya tuxa-**pana-n-mun** tuxa-tima-xo-hnu.
this day snake-ERG me bite-**FRUST-ERG-TH** bite-cannot-3PAST-DECL

‘The snake wanted to bite me today, but wasn’t able to do so (literally, bite could not).’

In order to investigate all the details, a further study is necessary. I can highly recommend it. No doubt, it would reveal a lot of valuable information.

5. The origin of *-pana-*

Amahuaca (like Cashinahua) has a desiderative *pahi/paihi* ‘to want’ and it is very likely that the frustrative has its origin in it. As (8) shows, the second syllable of the frustrative, *-na-* can mean ‘not’. Consequently, *-pana-* could mean ‘want + not’, an impeded or unfulfilled desire, similar to the usage in Cashinahua, although in Cashinahua the desiderative *-pa* without a negative means ‘to want without fulfillment of the wish’ as example (19) illustrates.

6. Conclusions

As the examples show, syntactically the frustrative marker *-pana-* functions as a conjunction. As far as the meaning is concerned, it expresses frustration due to unrealizable goals or a pleasant outcome of a situation due to fortunate circumstances. Furthermore, it allows for a variety of meanings, ranging from misunderstandings to protest and from mild accusations to contradictions. There is a considerable gap between the extremes of contrast it expresses. The morpheme is always suffixed to the verb of a subordinate clause that generally precedes the sentence final independent clause. For the purpose of highlighting, the subordinate clause carrying the frustrative can be post-positioned to appear at the very end of the sentence. If this is the case, it intensifies the suspense of the story. The frustrative morpheme is marked for case, plural, and at times it is followed by an IRM specifying SS or on rare occasions SO. In these instances, the case marking appears on the IRM. Frequently, *panan/x-* is preceded or followed by other morphemes such as theme and/or the question morpheme, the reportative, personnel commitment, and truthfulness. Morphemes preceding *-pana-* modify the meaning of the whole sentence in different degrees. Some examples are the negative, the immediate future, and the marker meaning ‘together, almost, the benefactive, and malfective’.

The frustrative is used in declarative sentences and in questions. It is frequent in everyday conversation, narratives reporting daily events, and particularly in legends, myths, folktales, and trickster stories. Other languages of the Panoan language family use the frustrative in a similar yet more restricted manner.

The Amahuaca people are shame oriented and it seems to me that the frustrative helps them to save face by covering up their own shortcomings. They blame others, natural forces, or circumstances. It also helps them to express disagreement or carefully accuse someone without having a face-to-face confrontation.

Abbreviations

1, 2, 3	= first, second, third person	NEG	= negative
ACT	= actuality aspect	NOM	= nominative
ATTN	= attention getter	NONSQ	= nonsequence
BENEF	= beneficiary	PAST	= past tense
COMM	= commitment	PERF	= perfect
COMPL	= completed	PFTV	= perfective
DECL	= declarative	PRES	= present
DS	= different subject	PL	= plural
EMPH	= emphasis	POSS	= possessive
ERG	= ergative	PROG	= progressive
IMM	= immediate	PURP	= purpose
FUT	= future	QUEST	= question
FRUST	= frustrative	REFL	= reflexive
HABIT	= habitual	REL	= relative
IMM	= immediate	REM	= remote
INF	= infinitive	REPORT	= reportative
INTENS	= intensifier	SO	= subject coreferent with object
INTERR	= interrogative	SQ	= sequence
IRM	= interclausal reference marker	SS	= same subject
ITR	= intransitive	TH	= theme
LOC	= locative	TR	= transitive
MAL	= malfactive		

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