When same subject is not the same: Multiple overt subjects in Amahuaca switch-reference

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The Phenomenon

In Amahuaca same subject constructions, an overt subject can appear in both the marked and the reference clause.

1. Amahuaca Switch-Reference

- Amahuaca (Panoan; Peru) switch-reference (SR) markers surface on the verb of the marked clause and encode same subject (SS) and different subject (DS) distinctions, (1)

(1) a. [jato=x vua=[hi]]=mun
3PL=NOM sing=SS.SIM.NOM=C
chirin=hi kan=ki=nu
dance=IPFV 3PL=3.PRES=DECL
'While they$_i$ sing, they$_i$ dance.'

b. [vaku=vo vua=[hain]]=mun
child=PL sing=DS.SIM=C
chirin=hi kan=ki=nu
dance=IPFV 3PL=3.PRES=DECL
'While the children$_i$ sing, they$_j$ dance.'

- These markers additionally encode temporal relationships between clauses, (2)

(2) a. [hiya=n hun hano jiri=[kun]]=mun
1SG=ERG 1SG paca eat=DS.SQ=C
rato choka=kan=xo=nu
plate wash=3PL=3.PST=DECL
'After I ate paca, they washed plates.'

b. [hiya=x hun jiri=[hain]]=mun
1SG=NOM 1SG eat=DS.SIM=C
rato choka=hi kan=ki=nu
plate wash=IPFV 3PL=3.PRES=DECL
'While I eat, they are washing plates.'

- They also encode the grammatical function (S/A/O) of the coreferential reference clause argument, (3)

(3) a. [hoxa=[hax]]=mun **xano** vua=xo=nu
sleep=SS.SQ.NOM=C woman sing=3.PST=DECL
'After sleeping, the **woman**$_S$ sang.'

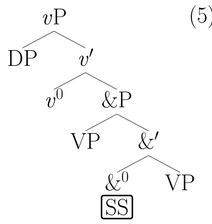
b. [hoxa=[xon]]=mun hiya **xano=n**
sleep=SS.SQ.ERG=C 1SG woman=ERG
vuna=xo=nu
look.for=3.PST=DECL
After sleeping, the **woman**$_A$ looked for me.'

c. [hatapa natuz=[xo]]=mun joni=n **hino**
chicken bite=SO.SQ=C man=ERG dog
hachi=xo=nu
grab=3.PST=DECL
'After it bit the chicken, the man grabbed the **dog**$_O$.'

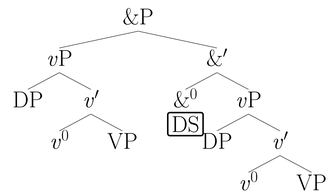
2. Non-Reference-Tracking Accounts of Switch-Reference

- Some recent theories of SR have sought to derive SS and DS marking via a mechanism that does not rely on tracking referential indices in the syntax
- These theories capitalize on the fact that SS clauses often appear to be structurally smaller than DS clauses, as evidenced by verbal morphology and agreement
- Keine (2013) argues that SS clauses involve VP coordination and contain a single shared subject introduced by a higher v^0, (4), while DS clauses involve vP coordination with two subject DPs, (5)

(4)

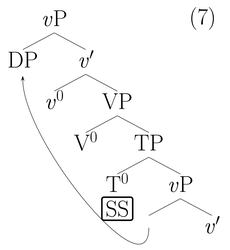


(5)



- Georgi (2012) argues that SS clauses involve control via DP movement out of an embedded TP into the matrix, (6), while DS clauses are standard embedded CPs, (7)

(6)



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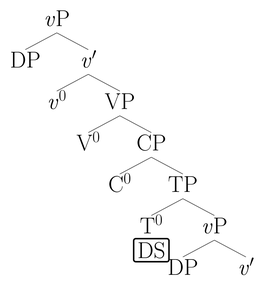


- What both Keine and Georgi's accounts have in common is the idea that SS structures contain only one instance of a subject DP, shared between the marked and reference clause, while DS structures contain two subject DPs

The Puzzle

- Multiple subject DPs in SS constructions cannot be accounted for under non-reference-tracking theories
- However, Amahuaca SS and DS clauses are different in size as non-reference-tracking theories predict

3. The Distribution of Overt DPs in Same Subject Constructions

- In Amahuaca SS constructions, an overt DP can appear in the marked clause, reference clause, or both, (8)

(8) [**(xano=n)** hatza vana=[xon]]=mun
woman=ERG yuca plant=SS.SQ.ERG=C
(xano=n) jiriti vuna=hi
woman=ERG food look.for=IPFV
jan=ki=nu
3SG=3.PRES=DECL
'After planting yuca, the woman is looking for food.'

- When a DP appears in both clauses, each instance bears the case appropriate for its own clause, (9), demonstrating that the two DPs need not be formally identical

(9) [**(hiya=n)** hatza vana=[hax]]=mun
1SG=ERG yuca plant=SS.SQ.NOM=C
(hiya=x) kaan=hi hun=ka=nu
1SG=NOM walk=IPFV 1SG=1.PRES=DECL
'After planting yuca, I am walking.'

- Furthermore, a full DP may appear in one clause and a coreferential pronoun in the other, (10)

(10) [**joni=x** vua=[kin]]=mun **(jato=n)** hatza
man=NOM sing=SS.SIM.ERG=C 3PL=ERG yuca
vana=hi kan=ki=nu
plant=IPFV 3PL=3.PRES=DECL
'While singing, the men are planting yuca.'

- The patterns in (8)–(10) suggest that the two instances of the DPs are not part of the same movement chain
- While both SS and DS clauses can host full DPs, only DS clauses can host person clitics, (11), suggesting that DS clauses are, indeed, structurally larger than SS clauses

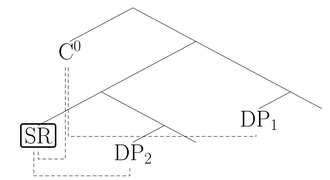
(11) a. [***(hun)** nokoo=[kun]]=mun jan
1SG arrive=DS.SQ=C 3SG
hoxa=xo=nu
sleep=3.PST=DECL
'After I arrived, he slept.'

b. [(***hun**) nokoo=[hax]]=mun hun
1SG arrive=SS.SQ.NOM=C 1SG
hoxa=ku=nu
sleep=1.PST=DECL
'After arriving, I slept.'

4. An Agree-Based Solution

- Direct reference-tracking theories, such as Finer (1985) and Watanabe (2000), have no trouble accounting for the presence of multiple overt subjects in Amahuaca, but they fail to capture the size asymmetry between SS and DS clauses, (11), as well as grammatical function tracking, (3)
- I propose that SS marking reflects an Agree relation between reference clause C^0 and the marked clause SR marker after each has agreed with the subject of its own clause, (12)

(12)



- Grammatical function tracking is enabled by a complex case feature bundle on the coreferential reference clause DP, which contains information about transitivity (Clem, 2017)
- DS marking reflects a larger clause in which no cross-clausal Agree relation is established

Conclusions

- The possibility of multiple overt DP subjects in Amahuaca SS constructions is problematic for non-reference-tracking theories of SR
- An Agree-based reference-tracking theory allows for multiple overt subjects, while capturing a size asymmetry between SS and DS clauses as well as some of the more unique features of Amahuaca's SR system

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