

Distinguishing switch-reference and relativization in Amahuaca*

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1 Introduction

- Descriptions and analyses of switch-reference (SR) have often assumed (either implicitly or explicitly) that it is a subject-oriented phenomenon
 - SR markers indicate whether the subjects of two clauses are coreferential or disjoint in reference
- Languages of the Panoan family have been described as allowing objects to be tracked by SR (Sparing-Chávez, 1998, 2012; Fleck, 2003; Valenzuela, 2003; Zariquiey, 2018, a.o.)
- However, even within Panoan, the status of object-tracking SR morphology has been a source of disagreement due to the surface similarity between SR clauses (SRCs) and relative clauses (RCs)
 - In Shipibo, Valenzuela (2003) assumes that the marker *-a* functions as both an object-tracking SR marker and an RC participle marker
 - Camacho (2010) rejects the classification of *-a* as an SR marker and assumes it only has an RC use
- The lack of clarity about the status of RCs and SRCs has led to conflicting claims about what contrasts can be encoded by SR systems
 - If we take existing descriptions of Panoan languages at face value, SR can track all arguments of the verb
 - If we assume that purported object-tracking SR actually involves relativization, we may be able to maintain that SR is subject-oriented
- ▶ A reliable method for distinguishing RCs and SRCs is therefore useful in understanding the typology of SR systems
- In this talk, I provide six morphosyntactic diagnostics for distinguishing RCs from SRCs in the Panoan language Amahuaca
- ▶ These diagnostics support the conclusion that both matrix and dependent clause objects can be tracked by Amahuaca's SR system

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• Roadmap:

- §1: Introduction
- §2: Background on Amahuaca SRCs and RCs
- §3: Diagnostics for SR and relativization
- §4: Implications for accounts of SR
- §5: Conclusion

2 Background on Amahuaca SRCs and RCs

- Amahuaca is an endangered Panoan language spoken in the Peruvian and Brazilian Amazon
- Data for this project come from my fieldwork with native speakers
 - Data were collected over the course of four field trips in 2015-2018
 - A total of 14 Amahuaca community members were involved as language consultants, with most data coming from 4 primary consultants
 - All speakers live in the town of Sepahua in Atalaya Province, Ucayali, Peru
- Amahuaca is mostly head final
 - Aspect clitics in matrix clauses often appear in a clause-medial position, suggesting that aspect is head initial (Clem, 2018)
 - Matrix clauses involve a second position clitic that can be analyzed as a head initial complementizer and can be used to diagnose syntactic constituency (Clem, 2019a)¹

¹The following abbreviations are used: 3 = third person, AM = associated motion, C = complementizer, DECL = declarative, DEM = demonstrative, DS = different subject, ERG = ergative, INT = interrogative, IPFV = imperfective, LG = long form, NOM = nominative, OS = object coreferential with intransitive subject, PFV = perfective, PRES = present, PST = past, SA = subject coreferential with transitive subject, SG = singular, SIM = simultaneous, SO = subject coreferential with object, SQ = sequential, SS = subject coreferential with intransitive subject, TAM = tense/aspect/mood.

(1) *Initial nominal*

[_{NP} jaa joni chaita=n]=**mun** nami pi=hi=ki=nu
 DEM man tall.LG=ERG =C meat bite=IPFV=3.PRES=DECL
 ‘That tall man is eating meat.’

(2) *Initial PP*

[_{PP} nihi muran]=**mun** joni=n jiriti vuna=xo=nu
 forest inside =C man=ERG food look.for=3.PST=DECL
 ‘The man looked for food in the woods.’

(3) *Initial SR clause*

[_{CP} joni=n xuki jova=hain]=**mun** xano vua=xo=nu
 man=ERG corn cook=DS.SIM =C woman sing=3.PST=DECL
 ‘While the man cooked corn, the woman sang.’

- Case marking exhibits a tripartite alignment with ergative (=n), nominative (=x), and accusative (∅) case

(4) **vaku**{*=n / =x}=mun rakuu=xo=nu
 child{=ERG / =NOM}=C be.afraid=3.PST=DECL
 ‘The **child** was afraid.’

(5) **xano**{=n / *=x}=mun **chopa**{*=n / *=x}
 woman{=ERG / =NOM}=C clothes{=ERG / =NOM}
 patza=hi=ki=nu
 wash=IPFV=3.PRES=DECL
 ‘The **woman** is washing **clothes**.’

- Amahuaca has a series of SR markers that appear in adjunct clauses
- SR markers indicate coreference or disjoint reference of a dependent clause pivot and matrix pivot²

(6) [jaa=x_i vua=**kin**]=mun xano=n_i xuki jova=xo=nu
 3SG=NOM sing=SA.SIM=C woman=ERG corn cook=3.PST=DECL
 ‘While she_i sings, the woman_i cooks corn.’

(7) [joni_i vua=**hain**]=mun xano=n_j xuki jova=xo=nu
 man sing=DS.SIM=C woman=ERG corn cook=3.PST=DECL
 ‘While the man_i sings, the woman_j cooks corn’

- Additionally, SR markers encode information about the temporal relationship between clauses

(8) [jaa=x_i vua=**hi**]=mun xano_i chirin=xo=nu
 3SG=NOM sing=SS.SIM=C woman dance=3.PST=DECL
 ‘While she_i sang, the woman_i danced.’

(9) [jaa=x_i vua=**hax**]=mun xano_i chirin=xo=nu
 3SG=NOM sing=SS.SQ=C woman dance=3.PST=DECL
 ‘After she_i sang, the woman_i danced.’

- Finally, SR markers are sensitive to the grammatical function (S/A/O) of the matrix pivot³

(10) [jaa=x_i vua=**hi**]=mun xano_i chirin=xo=nu
 3SG=NOM sing=SS.SIM=C woman dance=3.PST=DECL
 ‘While she_i sang, the woman_i danced.’

(11) [jaa=x_i vua=**kin**]=mun xano=n_i xuki jova=xo=nu
 3SG=NOM sing=SA.SIM=C woman=ERG corn cook=3.PST=DECL
 ‘While she_i sang, the woman_i cooked corn.’

- Amahuaca also has a system of RCs, which can be internally or externally headed (IHRC vs. EHRC)

(12) ‘The alligator that the man quickly found bit Maria.’

a. [koshi joni=n **kapuu** vuchi=hato]=n=mun Maria
 quickly man=ERG alligator find=PFV.LG=ERG=C Maria
 pi=xo=nu
 bite=3.PST=DECL

b. [koshi joni=n vuchi=ha] **kaputo**=n=mun Maria
 quickly man=ERG find=PFV alligator.LG=ERG=C Maria
 pi=xo=nu
 bite=3.PST=DECL

²More accurately, SR markers encode (non-)coreference of a pivot in a marked clause and a pivot in a reference clause, in the terminology of Munro 1979 and Haiman and Munro 1983. The reference clause may be the matrix clause or another adjunct clause in a clause chain.

³Evidence from the behavior of indirect objects and applied objects, which also participate in SR, suggests that this sensitivity to grammatical function should be treated as sensitivity to the abstract case of the matrix pivot (Clem, 2019a,b).

- RCs show a perfective/imperfective aspect distinction

(13) [xano=n xuki jova=**ha**]=mun joni=n xutu=xo=nu
 woman=ERG corn cook=PFV=C man=ERG smell=3.PST=DECL
 ‘The man smelled the corn that the woman had cooked.’

(14) [xano=n xuki jova=**hai**]=mun joni=n xutu=xo=nu
 woman=ERG corn cook=IPFV=C man=ERG smell=3.PST=DECL
 ‘The man smelled the corn that the woman was cooking.’

- RCs are nominal and therefore are case-marked like other matrix nominals

(15) [joni=n kapuu vuchi=**hato**]=**x**=mun na=xo=nu
 man=ERG alligator find=PFV.LG=NOM=C die=3.PST=DECL
 ‘The alligator that the man found died.’

(16) [joni=n kapuu vuchi=**hato**]=**n**=mun Maria pi=xo=nu
 man=ERG alligator find=PFV.LG=ERG=C Maria bite=3.PST=DECL
 ‘The alligator that the man found bit Maria.’

- On the surface, RCs and same subject SRCs show several similarities
 - The clause-final morphology of both clause types encodes temporal information
 - The clause-final morphology of both clause types encodes information about the case of a matrix argument
 - In both types of clauses, an overt pivot can appear internal to the clause or external to it
- These surface similarities make it difficult to distinguish RCs and SRCs in Amahuaca
- Sparing-Chávez (1998, 2012) breaks “interclausal reference” markers into Set A and Set B
 - Set A markers “primarily relate events to one another” (Sparing-Chávez, 1998: 464)
 - Set B markers relate “participants (subjects or objects) to events” (Sparing-Chávez, 1998: 464)

- Sparing-Chávez (1998) notes that many Set B markers “function as relative clause markers” (464)

- Sparing-Chávez provides no morphosyntactic diagnostics to identify RCs or to distinguish Set A from Set B
- The morphosyntactic diagnostics provided here suggest that the Set A/Set B divide largely, but not entirely, reflects the SRC/RC split

3 Diagnostics for SR and relativization

- I present six diagnostics in Amahuaca that distinguish RCs from SRCs based on their morphosyntactic properties
- To develop these diagnostics, I identified various clause-final morphemes that occurred in non-matrix clauses
- I then searched for and elicited clauses with each of these morphemes in various morphosyntactic environments
 - In some environments, all clauses behaved identically
 - In other environments, a divide emerged between two types of clauses with distinct behavior
 - In the latter case, it was assumed that one group consisted of RCs and the other of SRCs
- The six diagnostics presented here yielded the same division of clauses
 - The group of clauses with properties that more closely matched nominals was identified as the RC group
 - The other group of clauses was identified as the SRC group

3.1 Position of the clause

- The first diagnostic divides clauses based on what positions they can occupy within the matrix clause
- Matrix argument nominals can appear to the right of the verb between aspect and tense

(17) kuntii=mun choka=hi xano=ki=nu
 pot=C wash=IPFV woman=3.PRES=DECL
 ‘The woman is washing a pot.’

- RCs, as nominalizations, can appear in this nominal argument position

(18) ‘The man who always sleeps is singing quickly.’

- a. [joni hoxa=hai]=mun koshi vua=hi=ki=nu
man sleep=IPFV=C quickly sing=IPFV=3.PRES=DECL
- b. koshi=mun vua=hi [joni hoxa=hai]=ki=nu
quickly=C sing=IPFV man sleep=IPFV=3.PRES=DECL

- SRCs cannot appear in this position

(19) ‘After the woman_i sang, she_i is washing manioc.’

- a. [xano vua=xon]=mun hatza choka=hi=ki=nu
woman sing=SA.SQ=C manioc wash=IPFV=3.PRES=DECL
- b. *hatza=mun choka=hi [xano vua=xon]=ki=nu
manioc=C wash=IPFV woman sing=SA.SQ=3.PRES=DECL

Diagnostic 1

RCs may appear in a position reserved for argument nominals. SRCs may not.

3.2 Position of the pivot

- RCs can be internally or externally headed
- An EHRC pivot (head) can appear to the right of clause-final morphology
 - The pivot forms a constituent with the clause
 - The pivot itself is marked with matrix case and the clause is not⁴

(20) ‘The alligator that the man quickly found bit Maria.’

- a. [koshi joni=n kapuu vuchi=hato]=n=mun Maria
quickly man=ERG alligator find=PFV.LG=ERG=C Maria
pi=xo=nu
bite=3.PST=DECL
- b. [koshi joni=n vuchi=ha] kaputo=n=mun Maria
quickly man=ERG find=PFV alligator.LG=ERG=C Maria
pi=xo=nu
bite=3.PST=DECL

⁴Some roots occur in a long form with an additional syllable in presence of an overt case marker. This extra syllable is truncated in the absence of case marking.

- In SRCs, the pivot may not appear after the clause-final morphology

- We might assume that markers such as =xon can be decomposed into =xo plus the ergative =n
- Removing the =n and case marking the “external” pivot, does not result in grammaticality

(21) ‘After the woman_i washed clothes, she_i cooked manioc.’

- a. [xano=n chopa patza=xon]=mun hatza
woman=ERG clothes wash=SA.SQ=C manioc
jova=hi=ki=nu
cook=IPFV=3.PRES=DECL
- b. * [chopa patza=xo(n)] xano=n=mun hatza
clothes wash=SA.SQ woman=ERG=C manioc
jova=hi=ki=nu
cook=IPFV=3.PRES=DECL

Diagnostic 2

RCs may have an external pivot that forms a constituent with the RC. SRCs may not.

3.3 Case of the pivot

- In IHRCs, the pivot typically cannot bear ergative case
 - When the transitive subject is the pivot, it can be unmarked for case⁵
 - Some speakers allow an ergative pivot but only with an information structurally marked interpretation of the pivot

(22) [joni kari choka=hato]=x=mun pakuu=xo=nu
man yam wash=PFV.LG=NOM=C fall=3.PST=DECL
‘The man who washed yams fell.’

(23) [joni=n kari choka=hato]=x=mun pakuu=xo=nu
man=ERG yam wash=PFV.LG=NOM=C fall=3.PST=DECL
‘The yams the man washed fell.’
% ‘The man who washed yams fell.’

⁵The string in (22) is also compatible with a bracketing where the unmarked agent is an external head that surfaces to the left of the RC. The structure of such examples is the subject of ongoing investigation.

- The restricted nature of relativization on the ergative argument can be analyzed as syntactic ergativity
- In SRCs when the pivot is a transitive subject, it must be marked with ergative case

- (24) [joni*(=n) roho vuchi=xon]=mun nami
 man=ERG howler.monkey find=SA.SQ=C meat
 pi=hi=ki=nu
 bite=IPFV=3.PRES=DECL
 ‘After the man_i found a howler monkey_j, he_i is eating meat.’

Diagnostic 3

IHRCs show syntactic ergativity. SRCs do not.

3.4 Choice of pivot

- In RCs, the same clause-final morphology can occur with a subject or object pivot

- (25) [joni=n roho vuchi=hato]=n=mun nami
 man=ERG howler.monkey find=PFV.LG=ERG=C meat
 pi=hi=ki=nu
 bite=IPFV=3.PRES=DECL
 ‘The howler monkey that the man found is eating meat.’

- (26) [joni roho vuchi=hato]=n=mun nami
 man howler.monkey find=PFV.LG=ERG=C meat
 pi=hi=ki=nu
 bite=IPFV=3.PRES=DECL
 ‘The man who found a howler monkey is eating meat.’

- For each SR marker, the choice of pivot is fixed as subject or object

- (27) [joni=n roho vuchi=xon]=mun nami
 man=ERG howler.monkey find=SA.SQ=C meat
 pi=hi=ki=nu
 bite=IPFV=3.PRES=DECL
 ‘After the man_i found a howler monkey_j, he_{i/*j} is eating meat.’

Diagnostic 4

RC morphology allows for flexibility in the choice of pivot. SR morphology does not.

3.5 Differential case marking

- Both intransitive and transitive subjects in Amahuaca show differential case marking
- RCs show differential case marking for both nominative and ergative case
 - When marked for case, the clauses appear with the typical nominative and ergative case markers
 - Otherwise, the clauses appear in the unmarked form that can also be used when they are matrix objects

- (28) ‘The man who had washed yams fell.’
 a. [joni kari choka=hato]=x=mun pakuu=xo=nu
 man yam wash=PFV.LG=NOM=C fall=3.PST=DECL
 b. [joni kari choka=ha]=mun pakuu=xo=nu
 man yam wash=PFV=C fall=3.PST=DECL

- (29) ‘The peccary that he_i found is chasing Juan_i.’
 a. [jan jono vuchi=hato]=n=mun Juan
 3SG peccary find=PFV.LG=ERG=C Juan
 chivan-vo=hi=ki=nu
 chase-AM=IPFV=3.PRES=DECL
 b. Juan=mun chivan-vo=hi [jan jono
 Juan=C chase-AM=IPFV 3SG peccary
 vuchi=ha]=ki=nu
 find=PFV=3.PRES=DECL

- SRCs do not exhibit differential case marking
 - In the sequential paradigm, the marker used for a matrix object pivot is =xo
 - We might assume that =xo is therefore the “unmarked” form of the SR morphology
 - This “unmarked” form cannot appear in place of the SR morphemes that are reserved for matrix intransitive and transitive subject pivots

(30) [jaa=x_i vua=xo]=mun hinan xano_i chivan-vo=xo=nu
 3SG=NOM sing=SO.SQ=C dog.ERG woman chase-AM=3.PST=DECL
 ‘After she_i sang, the dog chased the woman_i.’

(31) ‘After the woman_i planted corn, she_i is singing quickly.’

a. koshi=mun [xano=n xuki vana=hax]
 quickly=C [woman=ERG corn plant=SS.SQ]
 vua=hi=ki=nu
 sing=IPFV=3.PRES=DECL

b. *koshi=mun [xano=n xuki vana=xo]
 quickly=C [woman=ERG corn plant=SO.SQ]
 vua=hi=ki=nu
 sing=IPFV=3.PRES=DECL

(32) ‘After the woman_i sang, she_i is washing manioc.’

a. [xano vua=xon]=mun hatza choka=hi=ki=nu
 woman sing=SA.SQ=C manioc wash=IPFV=3.PRES=DECL

b. *hatza=mun choka=hi [xano vua=xo]=ki=nu
 manioc=C wash=IPFV woman sing=SO.SQ=3.PRES=DECL

Diagnostic 5

RCs are subject to differential case marking. SRCs are not.

3.6 Extraction

- For RCs, no constituent other than the pivot can be extracted from the clause in *wh*-questions or under focus

(33) ‘The man who found a howler monkey is eating meat.’

a. [joni roho vuchi=hato]=n=mun nami
 man howler.monkey find=PFV.LG=ERG=C meat
 pi=hi=ki=nu
 bite=IPFV=3.PRES=DECL

b. *roho=mun [joni __ vuchi=hato]=n nami
 howler.monkey=C man find=PFV.LG=ERG meat
 pi=hi=ki=nu
 bite=IPFV=3.PRES=DECL

- SRCs allow extraction in questions and focus contexts

(34) ‘After the woman_i cooked meat, she_i washed manioc.’

a. [xano=n nami jova=xon]=mun hatza choka=xo=nu
 woman=ERG meat cook=SA.SQ=C manioc wash=3.PST=DECL

b. **nami**=mun [xano=n __ jova=xon] hatza
 meat=C woman=ERG cook=SA.SQ manioc
 choka=xo=nu
 wash=3.PST=DECL

Diagnostic 6

RCs do not allow extraction of a non-pivot. SRCs do.

4 Implications for accounts of SR

- The status of “object-tracking” SR has been debated in the literature
 - Stirling (1993) notes that the subject orientation of SR has been taken to be one of its canonical qualities
 - Very few languages have been claimed to allow objects to be tracked by SR morphology
- Languages of the Panoan family are outliers in purportedly allowing matrix and dependent clause objects to be tracked in SR (thought not necessarily both in the same language)
- Even within Panoan, object tracking has been disputed, with Camacho (2010) assuming that purported object-tracking SRCs are actually RCs
- The diagnostics developed here can be used to distinguish whether clauses that would show object tracking are truly SRCs or simply RCs
- These diagnostics indicate that both matrix and dependent clause objects can be tracked by the SR system of Amahuaca

4.1 Dependent clause subject coreferential with matrix object

- The morpheme =xo has been claimed by Sparing-Chávez (1998, 2012) to be a Set A SR marker indicating coreference of the dependent clause subject and matrix object

- Applying diagnostic 2, concerning clause-external pivots, we can see that clauses marked with =*xo* pattern with SRCs

– =*xo* clauses do not allow pivots to appear to the right of SR marking

(35) ‘After the dog bit the chicken, the man is watching the dog.’

- a. [hinan hatapa natux=xo]=mun joni=n
dog.ERG chicken bite=SO.SQ=C man=ERG
hiin=hi=ki=nu
see=IPFV=3.PRES=DECL
- b. * [hatapa natux=xo] hino=mun joni=n
chicken bite=SO.SQ dog=C man=ERG
hiin=hi=ki=nu
see=IPFV=3.PRES=DECL

- The other applicable diagnostics yield similar results, grouping =*xo* clauses with other SRCs
- The same pattern is found with the marker =*haito*, which Sparing-Chávez (1998, 2012) also classified as a Set A SR marker indicating coreference of the dependent clause subject and matrix object
- The SR status of =*xo* and =*haito* suggests that SR systems can be sensitive to the reference of matrix clause objects

4.2 Dependent clause object coreferential with matrix intransitive subject

- The marker =*ha*, which can appear when the dependent clause object is coreferential with the matrix intransitive subject (as well as in other contexts), has a somewhat unclear status
 - Sparing-Chávez (1998, 2012) classifies it as a Set B marker, with Set B being the set containing RC morphology
 - Hyde (1980) groups this marker with other SR morphemes that Sparing-Chávez (1998, 2012) classifies as Set A
- Valenzuela (2003) assumes that the cognate *-a* in Shipibo has two functions
 - *-a* forms completive participles in RCs
 - *-a* indicates coreference of the dependent clause object and matrix subject in SRCs

- The diagnostics developed here suggest that there are also two =*ha* markers in Amahuaca
- =*ha* clauses often pattern with RCs, as can be shown by the fact that they allow external pivots (diagnostic 2)

(36) ‘The man grabbed the dog that the woman had seen.’

- a. [xano=n hino hiin=ha]=mun joni=n hachi=xo=nu
woman=ERG dog see=PFV=C man=ERG grab=3.PST=DECL
- b. [xano=n hiin=ha] hino=mun joni=n hachi=xo=nu
woman=ERG see=PFV dog=C man=ERG grab=3.PST=DECL

- Applying diagnostic 6, concerning extraction, we see a split in =*ha* clauses
 - Most =*ha* clauses do not allow extraction in *wh*-questions, patterning with RCs
 - Only when the object of an =*ha* clause is coreferential with the intransitive subject of the matrix clause is extraction possible, as in SRCs

(37) ‘Who saw the man that the alligator bit?’ (*Literally* ‘The alligator bit the man that who saw?’)

- a. [tzova=n joni hiin=ha]=ra kaputo=n pi=hax
who=ERG man see=PFV=INT alligator.LG=ERG bite=TAM
- b. * tzova=n=ra [__ joni hiin=ha] kaputo=n pi=hax
who=ERG=INT man see=PFV alligator.LG=ERG bite=TAM

(38) ‘Who cooked the manioc that fell?’ (*Literally* ‘After who cooked the manioc_{*i*}, it_{*i*} fell?’)

- a. [tzova=n hatza_{*i*} jova=ha]=ra pro_{*i*} pakuu=hax
who=ERG manioc cook=OS.SQ=INT fall=TAM
- b. tzova=n=ra [__ hatza_{*i*} jova=ha] pro_{*i*} pakuu=hax
who=ERG=INT manioc cook=OS.SQ fall=TAM

- This split suggests that there are two =*ha* markers in Amahuaca
 - =*ha*₁, seen in (37), is the perfective aspect marker of an RC
 - =*ha*₂, seen in (38), is an SR marker indicating that the object of the SRC is coreferential with the matrix intransitive subject
- The existence of an SR marker like =*ha*₂ supports the conclusion that SR systems can be sensitive to the reference of dependent clause objects

5 Conclusion

- I have provided six diagnostics that distinguish Amahuaca SRCs from RCs on morphosyntactic grounds
 - The specific details of these diagnostics were developed with Amahuaca in mind
 - The general logic of many of these diagnostics should be able to be extended to other Panoan languages with similar clause types
- Distinguishing these clause types and understanding the differences in their distributions is important for documentation efforts
 - In the grammars of semi-speakers of Amahuaca, the extensive systems of SRCs and RCs are beginning to be conflated
 - Future learners who learn from descriptive materials rather than intergenerational transmission will benefit from accurate documentation of the subtle differences between the two clause types
- Reliable morphosyntactic diagnostics for distinguishing these clause types is also important in understanding the typology of SR systems
 - SR has often been assumed to be a subject-oriented phenomenon
 - The diagnostics presented here demonstrate that Amahuaca SR allows both dependent and matrix clause objects to be tracked by SR

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