snippets

Issue 29   **June 2015**

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Morphological case mismatches under sluicing

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Nykiel and Sag (2011), van Craenenbroeck (2012), and Barros (2014) have argued that remnants of sluicing and their correlates may not bear different case morphology, even if a different case is possible in principle ((1)). Languages with case morphology may satisfy (1) under case syncretism (van Craenenbroeck 2012), and languages without case morphology satisfy it trivially.

(1) Case matching under sluicing.
    The remnant of sluicing and its correlate must have non-distinct case morphology.

To illustrate, (2a) only allows a case-matched accusative remnant; a mismatched nominative remnant is ungrammatical, even though an unelided cleft with a nominative wh- pivot is licit in this context ((2b)), and cleft-based sluices are otherwise licit in German (van Craenenbroeck 2012).

(2) German
    a. Sie hat jemand-en getroffen, aber ich weiß nicht { we-n / * we-r }.
       she has someone-ACC met   but I know not   who-ACC / who-NOM
    b. Sie hat jemand-en getroffen, aber ich weiß nicht we-r   es ist.
       she has someone-ACC met   but I know not   who-NOM it is

    However, the examples in (3)-(9) show that case mismatches are in fact possible in a number of languages, contrary to what (1) predicts. It is likely that further research on lesser-studied languages will expand this list.

(3) Japanese: (Merchant 1998:94)
    Dareka-ga   sono hon-o yon-da ga,   watashi-wa dare-(*ga) ka wakaranai.
    someone-NOM this book-ACC read-PST but I-TOP   who-NOM   Q know.not
    'Someone read this book, but I don't know who'

(4) Turkish (Merchant 2001:111fn, Ince 2012:262)
    Ahmet biri-nin Ankara-ya   git-tig-i-ni   söyle,
     Ahmet one-GEN Ankara-DAT go-COMP-POSS.3SG-ACC tell-PST.3SG
    ama { kim   / *kim-in }   bil-my-yor-um.
    but who-NOM / who-GEN   know-NEG-PRS-1SG
    'Ahmet said that someone went to Ankara, but I don't know who'

(5) Korean (Jo 2004:176)
    John-i   Mary-eykey mwuenka-lul   cwu-ess-ta-nuntey,   mwues-(ul)-i-nci
    John-NOM Mary-DAT something-ACC give-PST-DEC-CIRC what-ACC-COP-Q
    molukeyssta.
    not.know
    'John gave Mary something, but I don't know what'

(6) Chamorro (Chung 2013:25)
   Ilek-ñiha na   man-ma'å'ñao siha ni un tåotao, lao ti ma   sångan (*ni) håyi.
   say-AGR COMP AGR-afraid   they OBL a person but not AGR say   OBL who
   'They said they were afraid of a certain person, but they didn't say who'

(7) Uzbek (Gribanova 2013:830)
   Siz kim-ga-dir   pul   ber-di-ngiz,   lekin kim-(ga)
   You some-DAT-one money give-PST-2SG but who-DAT

   lig-i-ni   bil-ma-y-man
   COMP-3SG.POSS-ACC know-NEG-PRS-1SG

   'You gave money to someone, but I don't know who'

(8) German (Barros et al 2014:16).
   Elke hat ein-en groß-en   Mann geheiratet, aber ich weiß nicht wie groß-(*en).
   Elke has a-ACC big-ACC man married   but I   know not how big-ACC

(9) Mongolian (Sakamoto 2014:3)
   Bat   hennegen-d   ene nom-ig   ug-sun,   gevch bi
   Bat.NOM someone-DAT this book-ACC give-PERF but   I

      { hen-ig / *hen-d } 'n   med-eh-gui.
   who-ACC / who-DAT POSS know-INF-NEG

Although I haven't been able to figure out which factor(s) license case mismatches in some configurations (and require strict case matching in others), the small sample in (2)-(9) suffices to eliminate some possibilities, viz., at least (i) whether the language is wh- fronting or wh- in situ; (ii) whether mismatched remnants carry an overt case morpheme or are zero-marked; and (iii) a [±case matching] parameter/filter ranging over languages.

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