# snippets

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**Shifty operators in Dhaasanac**

There has been much debate on whether or not contexts are shiftable. Kaplan 1977 claimed that they are not, but Schlenker 2003 and Anand and Nevins 2004, among others, have argued that context shifters (referred to as *monsters*) exist in languages such as Amharic and Zazaki.  Without context shift, an indexical *I* only refers to the speaker or the writer as in the English (1a).  The result of context shift is that indexicals such as *I*, *you*, *here*, *now*, and *yesterday* can potentially change their reference – similarly to what happens in direct quotation as in (1b).

(1) a. Baali said that I am an idiot.
    b. Baali said "I am an idiot."

In this snippet I present data from Dhaasanac that contradict Kaplan's claim and that echo Anand and Nevins' Zazaki data.  Dhaasanac is a Cushitic language spoken by approximately 48,000 people in Ethiopia and Kenya  (Lewis 2009, Tosco 2001). The data used in this study are based on fieldwork I conducted in 2011.

In (2), the subject of the embedded clause refers either to the matrix subject Baali or the speaker of the sentence. Here, in contrast to the English (1a), the reference of *I* appears to be shifted by a monstrous attitude predicate *say*.

(2) Baali$_i$     kieye               yaa/yu$_{\{i/speaker\}}$    deech.
    Baali     say.3SG.PAST       I.SUB/I.ABS         idiot
    `Baali said {I/he} was an idiot.'

Note that (2) does not seem to be a direct quotation. Direct discourse is known to be opaque to A' extraction (Partee 1973, Recanati 1999, Schlenker 1999). However, the object extraction in (4) and (5) does not affect the reference of *I* in the relative clauses.

(3) Baali$_i$     kieye               "yaa/yu$_{\{i/speaker\}}$    deech".
    Baali     say.3SG.PAST       I.SUB/I.ABS         idiot
    `Baali said "{I/he} was an idiot".'

(4) Ini   giri Hassan$_i$ kieye          yu$_{\{i/speaker\}}$ af   gaa duŋeka      he    miðab.
    girl  that Hassan say.3SG.PAST I.ABS      mouth on  kiss.1SG.PAST be  beautiful
    `The girl that Hasan said {Hasan/I} kissed is pretty.'

(5) Maaya  Baali$_i$  kieye            NY ha       yu$_{\{i/speaker\}}$   gaa aargira?
    who    Baali  say.3SG.PAST     NY PREVERBAL I.ABS            in  see.FUTURE
    `In NY, who did Baali say {Baali/I} would meet?'

Moreover, the indexical *yesterday*, which on a Kaplanian view should never shift temporal reference from one day before the utterance, seems indeed to shift reference

in Dhasaanac embedded clauses. From (6), it is interpreted that Loya met Baali one day before the reference time of the matrix, that is, eight days ago.

(6) Ram tiiya     beeyetia     Baali$_i$     ye     geey              kieye
    days  seven    ago          Baali         to me  tell.3SG.PAST     say.3SG.PAST
            Loya    gefere       mu$_{\{\sqrt{i}/*speaker\}}$  hol       arge.
            Loya    yesterday    him           REFLEXIVE     meet.3SG.PAST

    `A week ago, Baali told me that Loya met him the day before.'
    ($\sqrt{}$Loya met Baali eight days ago./*Loya met Baali yesterday.)

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