

snippets

Issue 47 - January 2025

Contents

1. Shubham Bokade, Gurujegan Murugesan.
Empirical evidence for switch reference involving Agree(ment)
2. Imke Driemel, Abigail Anne Bimpeh, Reginald Duah.
Resumption as a novel DP/NP diagnostic
3. Diego Feinmann.
On breaking symmetry by complexity
4. Pasha Koval.
An indicative null C in Russian, they said. But it is a slifting parenthetical
5. Jéssica Mendes.
Against the blocking approach to the Bagel Problem



Empirical evidence for switch reference involving Agree(ment)

Shubham Bokade · Indira Gandhi National Tribal University, Amarkantak

Gurujegan Murugesan · Indian Institute of Technology Jodhpur

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.7358/snip-2024-047-bomu>

In the study of switch reference (SR), recent approaches (including Finer 1985, Baker and Carmargo Souza 2020, Clem 2023, and Arregi and Hanink 2018;2022) consider the phenomenon to involve Agree(ment). In support of these approaches to switch reference, we present empirical data from Malto, a Dravidian language spoken by the Pahariya tribe in the Indian subcontinent. First, as originally observed by Kobayashi (2012), Malto exhibits a rare ϕ -inflectional ending when the subject in its own clause is referentially the same (i.e. “same subject”, or SS) as the one in the adjacent clause (1). However, when the subjects of two adjacent clauses are referentially different (2) (i.e. “different subject”, or DS), the switch reference is encoded by a default *-ko* that does not inflect for any ϕ -features.

- (1) Geeta:d_i bərc-ki:d Geeta:d_i ca:-en bita:d.
Geeta return-SS.3SG.F Geeta tea-ACC make.PST.3SG.F
‘After Geeta returned, Geeta made a tea.’ (data from fieldwork)
- (2) Geeta:d_i bərc-ko e:n_j ca:-en bita-ken.
Geeta return-DS 1SG.M tea-ACC make-PST.1SG.M
‘After Geeta returned, I made a tea.’ (data from fieldwork)

The pattern seen in (1) and (2) is the inverse of what has been observed before in switch reference typology, where it is the different-subject marking that involves ϕ -agreement, but not the same-subject marking. For instance, Hua medial markers (Haiman 1980a,b), Quechua ϕ -agreement in different-subject clauses (Cole 1983, Assmann 2012, Georgi 2012), and Amahuaca 3PL different-subject marking (Clem 2019:146) exhibit ϕ -agreement only in different-subject contexts, but not in the case of same-subject contexts. Malto, however, has a switch reference agreement paradigm only in the same-subject context, where the relevant morphology can be analysed as a portmanteau of switch reference and subject agreement (note that following the initial <*k*> for switch reference, the same-subject ϕ -endings appear to match those for typical subject inflection). In contrast, all the different-subject contexts have invariable *-ko*. The paradigm is given in Table 1.

In addition to the ϕ -covariance, Malto presents another piece of empirical evidence that supports the Agree(ment) view of switch reference. The same-subject marker is sensitive to the case markers of the subjects that are involved. When one or both of the subjects is marked with dative case, switch reference is encoded by default *-ko*, despite both subjects having the same reference (3).

- (3) a. Eɲga_i meru korc-ko e:n_j əɖa-k bərc-ken.
1SG.M.DAT sick get-DS 1SG.M home-DAT return-PST.1SG.M
‘After I got sick, I returned home.’ (data from fieldwork)

	1SG	1PL.INCL	1PL.EXCL	2SG.M	2SG.F	3SG.M	3SG.F	2/3PL
1SG	-ken	-ko	-ko	-ko	-ko	-ko	-ko	-ko
1PL.INCL	-ko	-ket	-ko	-ko	-ko	-ko	-ko	-ko
1PL.EXCL	-ko	-ko	-kem	-ko	-ko	-ko	-ko	-ko
2SG.M	-ko	-ko	-ko	-ke	-ko	-ko	-ko	-ko
2SG.F	-ko	-ko	-ko	-ko	-ki	-ko	-ko	-ko
3SG.M	-ko	-ko	-ko	-ko	-ko	-ke	-ko	-ko
3SG.F	-ko	-ko	-ko	-ko	-ko	-ko	-ki:d	-ko
2/3PL	-ko	-ko	-ko	-ko	-ko	-ko	-ko	-ker

Table 1: Switch reference paradigm in Malto

- b. En̩gaᵢ meru tin dini becc-ko e:nᵢ əḍa-k bərc-ken.
 1SG.M.DAT sick three days stay-DS 1SG.M home-DAT return-PST. 1SG.M
 ‘After I stayed sick for three days, I returned home.’ (data from fieldwork)

In (3), the dative case blocks the expected same-subject \varnothing -agreement, and instead results in default *-ko*. An anonymous reviewer raises an interesting question as to whether non-case-marked *meru* can be construed as a subject instead of dative-marked *en̩ga* in (3). If *meru* is the subject, then this would be a different-subject context, naturally resulting in *-ko*. However, there is good reason to think that it is not *meru*, but rather the dative-marked *en̩ga* that is the subject. Having *meru* in both clauses, as in (4), still results in *-ko*, suggesting that switch reference is not tracking *meru*.

- (4) En̩gaᵢ meru korc-ko en̩gaᵢ meru tin dini becca.
 1SG.M.DAT sick get-DS 1SG.M.DAT sick three days stay.PST
 ‘After I got sick, I stayed sick for three days.’ (data from fieldwork)

Accordingly, this kind of case sensitivity confirms a prediction in both Arregi and Hanink 2022 and Clem 2023, which suggest capturing the subject-only nature of switch reference in various languages via probing that is case-sensitive in tracking only nominative DPs. The data in Malto then advance this case-based proposal by showing that a same-subject context is, as predicted, not sufficient for same-subject marking: even when there are same-subject experiencer dative subjects, switch reference probing does not track such non-nominative DPs.

References

- Arregi, Karlos, and Emily Hanink. 2018. Switch reference in Washo as multiple subject agreement. In *NELS 48: Proceedings of the forty-eighth annual meeting of the North East Linguistic Society, Vol. 1*, Sherry Hucklebridge and Max Nelson (eds.), 39–48. Amherst, MA: GLSA.
- Arregi, Karlos, and Emily Hanink. 2022. Switch reference as index agreement. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 40:651–702.
- Assmann, Anke. 2012. Switch-reference as interclausal tense agreement: Evidence from Quechua. *Linguistische Arbeitsberichte* 89:41–81.

- Baker, Mark, and Livia Camargo Souza. 2020. Agree without agreement: Switch-reference and reflexive voice in two Panoan languages. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 38:1053–1114.
- Clem, Emily. 2019. Agreement, Case, and Switch-reference in Amahuaca. Doctoral Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley.
- Clem, Emily. 2023. Cyclic expansion in Agree: Maximal projections as probes. *Linguistic Inquiry* 54:39–78.
- Cole, Peter. 1983. Switch-reference in two Quechua languages. In *Switch-reference and Universal Grammar*, John Haiman and Pamela Munro (eds.), 1–15. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Finer, Daniel. 1985. The syntax of switch-reference. *Linguistic Inquiry* 16:35–55.
- Georgi, Doreen. 2012. Switch-reference by movement. *Linguistische Arbeitsberichte* 89:1–40.
- Haiman, John. 1980a. *Hua: A Papuan language of the eastern highlands of New Guinea*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Haiman, John. 1980b. The iconicity of grammar: Isomorphism and motivation. *Language* 56:515–540.
- Kobayashi. 2012. *Texts and Grammar of Malto*. Vizianagaram: Kotoba Books.

Shubham Bokade
shubhambokade32@gmail.com
 Department of English and Foreign Languages
 Indira Gandhi National Tribal University
 Amarkantak
 India

Gurujegan Murugesan
gurujeganm@iitj.ac.in
 School of Liberal Arts
 IIT Jodhpur
 India