Introduction

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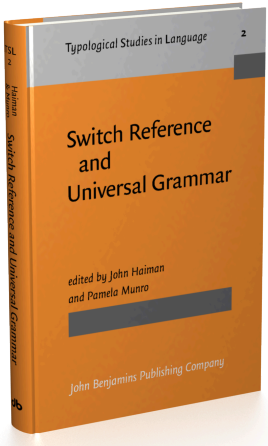

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INTRODUCTION

Canonical switch-reference is an inflectional category of the verb, which indicates whether or not its subject is identical with the subject of some other verb. Representative examples are furnished below:

Maricopa (Gordon, this volume: a Yuman language)

1. *Nyaa '- ashvar- k '- iima- k*
   I 1 sing SS 1 dance aspect
   "I sang and I danced." (SS = same-subject)

2. *Bonnie -sh ø - ashvar - m '- iima - k*
   Bonnie subj. 3 sing DS 1 dance aspect
   "Bonnie danced and I sang." (DS = different-subject)

Usan (Reesink, ms.: a Papuan language)

3. *Ye nam su - ab isomei*
   I tree cut SS I=went=down
   "I cut the tree and went down."

4. *Ye nam su - ine isorei*
   I tree cut DS it=went=down
   "I cut the tree down."

Like any other grammatical phenomenon, switch-reference may be analyzed from a structural or a functional point of view.

Functionally, switch-reference is a device for referential tracking. it is then related not only to grammatical devices that narrowly define identity (such as reflexivization or the transformation of Equi-Noun Phrase Deletion), but to devices which limit possible range of nominal reference more broadly, such as obviation or a complex gender system.

Formally, on the other hand, switch-reference is almost always a verbal category, similar to the familiar category of verbal concord — in both cases, an affix on the verb indicates something about the identity of a noun. Switch-reference appears exotic because of the correlation of this particular function (referential tracking) with this particular structure (verbal affixation). In

more familiar languages, whether or not two arguments have identical reference — especially when they are in different clauses — is indicated on the arguments themselves.

Although switch-reference marking is indicated by a verbal affix in all the languages extensively described in this volume, in a few languages the switch-reference may be marked by an independent morpheme (cf. Jacobson). In Pima, for instance (Langdon and Munro, 1979), the switch-reference marker need not even occur adjacent to a verb:[1]

Pima

5. *Hegai 'uuvi 'a-t 'am ṣohñi hegai ceoj c 'am ṣoṣa.*
that woman 3-perf hit that man SS cry
"The woman hit the man and she cried."

6. *Hegai 'uuvi 'a-t 'am ṣohñi hegai ceoj ku-t*
that woman 3-perf hit that man DS-perf
(hegai ceoj) 'am ṣoṣa.
that man cry
"The woman hit the man and he (the man) cried."

(*'am* is a deictic particle.) As Hale (1980) shows, the Pimic switch-reference indicators developed from old verbal affixes — but this is clearly not the synchronic situation.

The papers in this volume are concerned, for the most part, with questions of the form, function, and genesis of canonical switch-reference systems. A number of generalizations and other observations have emerged from these papers, and from the general discussion at the Symposium.

A) The formal similarity between switch-reference marking and verbal concord noted above may lead to a complete overlap between these two systems: in many of the languages of New Guinea, in fact, switch-reference is a system of concord.

In Papuan languages like Kâte and Fore, the DS markers are typically subject-verb agreement affixes, while the same-subject markers are typically either zero or an invariable affix. The same pattern is found in some Austronesian languages like Lenakel (cf. Lynch), as well as in Turkish (cf. Haiman). The Ancash dialect of Quechua, spoken in Peru, like the Papuan language Chuave, offers a partial parallel, inasmuch as SS verbs consist of the verb stem followed by a characteristic SS suffix, while DS verbs consist of the verb stem followed by a contrasting DS suffix *and* a set of personal endings (cf.

Cole).

In most North American Indian languages, however, switch-reference is distinct from concord. The contrast is clearly exemplified in the Maricopa and Usan sentences of above. In Maricopa, verbal agreement with the subject is indicated by a set of prefixes on the verb stem. Switch-reference is marked independently by the pair of suffixes *-k* (SS) and *-m* (DS). In Usan, on the other hand, the SS suffix *-ab* is an invariable verb-class marker; the DS suffix *-ine* is a 1 sg. agreement marker, whereby the verb is marked as agreeing with its subject *ye* "I".

B) The function of switch-reference systems is to avoid ambiguity of reference. Whether or not switch-reference is indicated by verbal concord or a separate category, it is redundant where either subject is first or second person, and necessary where both subjects are third person. We may therefore expect to find languages in which switch-reference is limited to the third person: typical examples are Gokana (cf. Comrie; Hyman and Comrie, 1982); Eskimo (cf. Woodbury, who describes the Central Yup'ik system); or the Algonkian languages, with their functionally parallel proximate/obviative distinction. We may also expect to encounter languages in which switch-reference is grammaticized or generalized beyond the call of functional duty: typical examples are Chickasaw (cf. Munro) or Hua (cf. Haiman), and most of the other languages discussed in the contributions to this volume. But we should never expect to find languages which mark switch-reference in the first and second persons, but not the third. (In the same way, there are languages like French which distinguish between reflexive and non-reflexive objects in the third person only; other languages like Hungarian which distinguish between reflexive and non-reflexive objects for all persons; and apparently no languages which distinguish between reflexive and non-reflexive objects in the first and second persons only.)

C) Characterization of the notion "subject" is strictly syntactic, rather than semantic or pragmatic in most cases: it is not the agent or the topic whose identity is being traced (cf. Comrie, Gordon; Gordon & Munro, 1982). But most languages exhibit a number of grey areas in which the determination of *sameness* between non-distinct arguments is not easy. Differences in number between non-distinct subjects (eg. the difference between 1sg. and 1pl.) are easier to "overlook" and treat as examples of same-subject marking, than are differences of person (eg. the difference between 2sg. and 1pl.). See, for example, Franklin, Comrie; Longacre 1972; Austin, 1981; Langdon &

Munro, 1979). In most cases, nominals that differ in person will also differ in number, so that differences in person consequently entail not one but two steps away from identity.

D) Following Munro 1980a, we identify the clause in which switch-reference is marked as the marking clause, and the clause with reference to which it is marked as the reference clause.[2] There is considerable variety in the possible relationships between marking and reference clauses, but one pattern never seems to occur: a reference clause is never subordinate to a marking clause.

We have no explanation for this puzzling restriction, which is anomalous in both functional and structural terms.

From a functional point of view, subordinate clauses tend to be used to establish or restate the givens in a discourse. By this commonly accepted criterion, they should be the ideal reference clauses, with respect to which superordinate clauses are marked.

It may seem that the behaviour of reflexivization in languages like English may offer a structural parallel: the antecedent (referent) nominal cannot be subordinate to the reflexive (marking) pronoun. But the structural explanation which has been proposed to account for this phenomenon is the principle of "strict cyclicity". This principle rules that a cyclical process on any sentence cannot be sensitive to material that was processed on an earlier cycle: it therefore effectively rules out the possibility of reflexivization across coordinate clause boundaries. If switch-reference were, like reflexivization, a cyclical rule, it would also be unable to apply across coordinate clause boundaries, and yet in a variety of languages, switch-reference is either marked exclusively over coordinate clause boundaries (cf. Franklin, Haiman, Longacre, and Lynch), or over both coordinate and subordinate clause boundaries (cf. Munro).

E) Where reference and marking clauses are coordinate, the linear order of the two seems to depend on whether the switch-reference marker is a prefix or a suffix on the verb. Where the affix is a suffix (as it is in most of the languages herein discussed) the marking clause in the basic order *precedes* the reference clause. Where the marker is a prefix on the verb (as it is in the Austronesian languages discussed by Lynch), the marking clause follows the reference clause. This generalization, coupled with Haiman's observation that in most of these languages

DS:SS = agreement marker : ø

suggests the possibility that switch-reference marking in coordinate clauses may be the outcome of conjunction reduction or gapping (cf. Haiman, Lynch; Ross 1970).

F) Where the marking clause is subordinate to the reference clause, either order seems to occur: in most North American Indian languages, the subordinate marking clause typically precedes the reference clause (cf. Gordon, Comrie, Oswalt), and this is also the pattern in languages of the Caucasus (cf. Nichols). In Gokana and most of the languages of Australia (cf. Comrie; Austin, 1981), the subordinate marking clause follows the reference clause. In some languages such as Chickasaw (cf. Munro), certain clauses marked for switch-reference may be freely moved around their reference clause, while in other languages the relative order of clauses has semantic correlates. For example, in Maricopa, "extraposition" of a switch-reference clause forces a causal interpretation (cf. Gordon) while in Quechua, adverbial clauses of time precede, and clauses of purpose follow, their superordinate reference clauses (cf. Cole).

G) It is generally the case that the marking clause and the reference clause are adjacent to each other, but this need not always be true. It is often possible for a clause to intervene between the marking clause and the *following* (but perhaps, never the *preceding*) reference clause, thus establishing one of two possible diagrams:

i) a symmetry of first and second marking clauses, both of which seem to look forward to the same reference clause;

ii) subordination of the second marking clause, which is thereby shifted off the "time line" along which the first and third clauses are joined (cf. Longacre 1972; Haiman 1980a, b; Gordon, Oswalt.)

There seem to be no languages, however, in which switch-reference is marked *exclusively* between non-adjacent clauses. Thus, if a language has switch-reference marking between non-adjacent clauses, it will also mark switch-reference between adjacent clauses.

H) The origins of switch-reference marking are extremely heterogeneous. Some of the attested possibilities are the following:

i) SS marking clause are reduced versions of the corresponding DS marking clauses. Reduction is motivated by the identity of semantic material in marking and reference clauses. In these cases, many of which are discussed in Haiman, there is then little formal, and perhaps no semantic difference between SS clauses and "serial verbs" in languages like Chinese, (cf. Li &

Thompson, 1973) and Yoruba (cf. Stahlke, 1970). The reduction of an entire SS clause to the point where it is an auxiliary-like affix on the verb of the reference clause, a clearly possible outcome of such a reduction process, is attested in Chickasaw (cf. Munro; Munro, 1982).

ii. SS and DS markers originate as deictics such as *hither* and *hence* (cf. Jacobsen).

iii. SS and DS markers originate as case affixes (cf. Jacobsen).

iv. DS markers originate as subordinating particles or complementizers, whose original function is not to establish necessarily non-identity, but rather indifference as to identity of the subject of the complement clause. Examples are Angaṭiha (cf. Longacre), Daga (cf. Murane 1974; Haiman), Indo-European languages like Latin, which distinguish between a *nominal* absolute construction for DS clauses, and an adjectival conjunct construction for SS clauses (cf. Winter 1976; Haiman), and a number of Caucasian languages (cf. Nichols), in which DS marking verbs still have what Nichols terms "open Reference": rather than mark DS, they signal indifference as to the coreference of the subject of the marking clause with the subject of the reference clause.

v. SS markers originate as temporal successive markers; DS markers originate as temporal overlap markers. Longacre reports on this remarkable derivative function of temporal markers in Guanano, a Tucanoan language of South America. Longacre proposes as the inferential basis for this interpretation the supposition that the same person is unlikely to be doing two things at the same time.

(The converse inference, that DS-marking verbs signal simultaneous time, is apparently attested in the Papuan language Daga. Murane 1974 points out that the substantive clitic *-wa*, which nominalizes a medial clause and thus signals DS, is also used to "unambiguously indicate simultaneous actions between the verb with the *-wa* suffix and the following verb"(50).)

Although we know of no other languages in which such a reinterpretation of temporal markers has occurred, if Longacre's observations are valid, we should predict that there will be no language in which simultaneous marking can ever be interpreted as SS exclusively; and no language in which sequential marking can be interpreted as DS exclusively.

vi. In Pomo (cf. Oswalt; Oswalt 1977), the causative may serve as a switch-reference marking mechanism, such that a verb with the causative affix marks DS, while one without such an affix marks SS. This is presumably motivated by the fact that the causer and the causer are generally different people.

Both cases (v) and (vi) exhibit a non-obligatory linkage between two semantic properties of a verb, which are generally, but not necessarily, associated with each other.

A considerable amount of discussion at the symposium was devoted to the typological characterization of switch-reference languages: most of these languages happen to be verb-final (but cf. Lynch); most happen to mark switch-reference by verbal affixation (but cf. Jacobson; Hale 1980). It seems impossible to predict with total confidence that languages of any given type *cannot* develop switch-reference (cf. Givón, Heath) and it may be that a purely structural characterization of switch-reference languages cannot be given. Nevertheless, a number of patterns emerged with more than chance frequency. Their confirmation, and their interpretation, still await further research. In the meantime, this volume brings together a wealth of new information about a phenomenon which seems less strange and more familiar with every passing day.

NOTES

1) We thank Etheleen Rosero for the Pima data.

2) Once again, the synchronic facts of Pima and Papago pose a terminological problem for our generalization. The switch-reference markers *c* and *ku* whose use was exemplified in (5) and (6) above are clearly constituents of the reference clauses which follow them rather than the (marking) clauses which precede them, a fact shown by intonational and syntactic tests — for instance, under certain conditions these markers may occur sentence-initially.