Symmetrical objecthood in Panoan languages

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Introduction: The talk addresses the phenomenon of symmetrical objecthood using data from three Panoan languages: Shipibo-Konibo, Cashinawa, and Matsés. Symmetrical objecthood is defined as the possibility for both objects to display the same properties in double object constructions, such as ditransitives and applicatives (1). This topic has been widely studied in Bantu languages under various frameworks (Bresnan and Moshi, 1993; Baker, 1988; McGinnis, 2001). The question behind symmetrical objecthood is why some languages have this property, and others do not (assymmetrical object languages). Furthermore, symmetrical objecthood poses a potential problem for generative approaches in which theta roles are linked to different structural positions.

Proposal: This talk proposes that the structural Case assigned by a Multiple AGREE operation is responsible for the symmetry between both objects. I assume that there is indeed a deep asymmetry in the hierarchical position of the two objects in the phrase structure. The (superficial) symmetry is derived by the assignment of a single structural Case to both objects by means of Multiple AGREE. Given my proposal in (2), this causes both objects to be equidistant. The reasons for this analysis are based on the following: i) Panoan languages have an ergative-absolutive case marking, and in double object constructions, the objects display the same case (absolutive). Following Legate (2008), absolutive is a morphological default for accusative in objects and for nominative in intransitive subjects. I assume that object licensing comes from the accusative Case assignment, ii) Multiple AGREE (Hiraiwa, 2005) is a single simultaneous syntactic operation: AGREE applies to all the matched goals simultaneously at the same point in the derivation. Thus, in a symmetrical object construction, small v multiply AGREEs with the two objects and simultaneously assigns to them structural acc. Case, thus generating equidistance. Small v contains two acc. features, one of them transferred by the applicative head (3). iii) Even though Panoan languages usually lack subject and object agreement, Matsés has an object clitic (4) that agrees with either object. I show that its behavior is an instantiation of Multiple Agree.

Implications: This analysis accounts for the following properties a) word order/extraction: the Panoan languages considered here allow either object to move freely within the clause (5a,b). Equidistance makes possible equal access to movement for either object. b) Reciprocalization: the subject could be reciprocal either with the direct object or with the indirect object. This correlation depends on the morphological ordering of the reciprocal and applicative suffixes. When the reciprocal is attached first, only the direct object can be reciprocal with the subject (6). In contrast, when the applicative is attached first, either interpretation is available (7). I adapt Bruening's (2006) analysis for the reciprocal. In the former, the morphological ordering only allows for the direct object to corefer with the subject. In the latter, the null direct object optionally moves over the indirect object to corefer with the subject. Since both objects are equidistant, the movement is allowed; without movement, the subject is coreferential with the indirect object. c) Participant agreement: this term (Valenzuela, 2002) refers to the phenomenon in which adjuncts bear marking oriented to the subject (8) or the object (9). As predicted, the indirect object can also participate in this construction (10). I analyze PA as AGREE, in which either object can be a matching goal for the adjunct. As we see, equidistance plays a role in PA as well so that the higher object is not an intervener.

Typological consequences: my account predicts that all symmetrical object languages simultaneously assign structural Case to the two objects, while asymmetrical object languages assign structural Case to one object, and inherent case to the other (Baker, 1988). This is independent of the type of applicative/ditransitive constructions the language has, in contrast to a phase-based approach (McGinnis, 2001). The phase-based approach identifies high applicatives (sym. objects) with phases, and low applicatives (assym. objects) as phaseless. This does not account for the high appl./asym. objects (Chichewa benefactive) or low appl/sym objects (Shipibo-Konibo ditrasintives[1]). Thus, my account is less restrictive in order to generate the right typology. Finally, even though my proposal's first motivation is the same (zero) case marking in both objects, I also argue that structural Case valuation is a syntactically

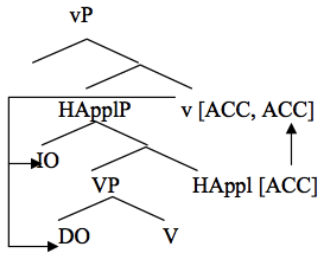
[1] I analyze SK ditransitives as low applicatives, but SK applicatives as high applicatives.

independent process, and that morphological case is assigned post syntactically. Even though the same case marking could be seen as a realization of Multiple Agree, maintaining this division between structural Case and morphological case permits a more accurate typology.

(1)[2] Papa-n-ra jawen tita yawish rete-xon-wan-ke
Dad-ERG-EV 3POS mom armadillo kill-APPL-PAST-COMPL
'Dad killed an armadillo for his mom' (Shipibo-Konibo, ED)

(2) X and Y are equidistant if a head H Agrees simultaneously with both X and Y.

(3) Feature transference from Appl to v, and Multiple Agree



(4) mibi mene-o-sh-i
2ABS give-past-3-1obj
'He gave me to you/He gave you to me' (Fleck, 2003)

(5a) Ainbo-nin-ra meraya tari a-xon-ke
Woman-ERG-EV great.shaman:ABS tari:ABS do.T-APPL-CMPL

(5b) Ainbo-nin-ra tari meráya a-xon-ke.
woman-ERG-EV tari:ABS great.shaman:ABS do.T-APPL-CMPL
'The woman made a tari (traditional men's clothes) for the great shaman (Valenzuela 2003:700)

(6) Tetai-bo-ra sai.ik-anan-xon-ke jaton patron
Worker-PL:ABS-EV yell.AUX-REC-APPL-COMP 3plPOS boss
'The workers fought each other benefiting their boss' /*'The workers fought with the boss for each other' (Shipibo-Konibo, ED)

(7) Tetai-bo-ra sai.i(k)-xon-ananan-ke jaton patron
Worker-PL:ABS-EV yell.AUX-APPL-REC-COMP 3plPO boss
'The workers fought with the boss for each other'/'The workers fought each other for the boss' (ED)

(8) E-n-ra kachio-xon ninká-ke.
1-ERG-EV in.the.forest-A hear-CMPL
'I heard it from the forest.' (I was in the forest; the noise may have come from the forest or not; lit.'I heard it in the forest.') (Valenzuela 2003:373)

(9) E-n-ra kachio-kea ninká-ke.
1-ERG-EV in.the.forest-from:O hear-CMPL
'I heard it from the forest.' (the noise came from the forest) (Valenzuela 2003:373)

(10) Ainbu-bu-n bawa-xun-kan-ikiki juni-bu ni-medan
women-PL-ERG cook-APPL-3PL-PR men-PL forest-LOC
'The women are cooking for the men who are in the forest' (Cashinawa, ED)

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[2] Data for SK: Valenzuela (2003), for Matsés: (Fleck, 2003). Elicited data for SK and Cashinawa: fieldwork done in Peru (supported by a Mellon summer grant).