

Switch Reference and Discourse Anaphora: Lessons from Mbyá

Guillaume Thomas^(⊠)

Department of Linguistics, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON M5S 3G3, Canada guillaume.thomas@utoronto.ca
http://individual.utoronto.ca/gthomas

Abstract. Most analyses of Switch Reference treat it as a device that tracks the referents of pivots. Against this background, I show that Switch Reference in Mbyá (Tupí-Guaraní) can track plural discourse reference, so that its analysis must be integrated in a theory of discourse anaphora. Indeed, it appears that Same Subject marking is used when one of the pivots is a quantifier and the other refers to a set associated with the former, or both pivots are quantifiers that share the same domain. Building on these observations, I argue that Same Subject markers themselves are anaphoric to one of their pivots, and require that the other pivot introduce or retrieve a discourse referent that is identical to the value of this anaphor.

Keywords: Switch Reference · Plural discourse reference · Mbyá

1 Overview

Canonical Switch Reference indicates whether two clauses have identical or different pivots, where the pivots are prominent arguments of some sort. Although there is variation in this respect, the pivots are generally subjects, topics or agents (see [19]). Following the influential definition of Canonical Switch Reference in [11] as the marking of identity or difference of subjects, Switch Reference markers are usually called Same Subject markers (SS) or Different Subject markers (DS), regardless of the nature of the pivots.

In classical definitions of Canonical Switch Reference, identity or difference of pivots is understood as referential identity. Nevertheless, deviations from this pattern have been observed. In particular, [17,18] observe that 'Different Subject' marking may track a shift in different parameters of the events described by the two clauses, such as time, place and actuality. This phenomenon is known as Noncanonical Switch Reference. [2,16] observe that Noncanonical Switch Reference tends to be attested in coordination and clause chaining structures, while Canonical Switch Reference tends to be attested in subordination structures. [2] conclude that Canonical and Noncanonical Switch Reference might be distinct though related phenomena. In this paper, I will only discuss the former, which I will refer to simply as Switch Reference (SR).

The question that this paper addresses is that of the nature of identity and difference of pivots in SR, excluding cases of Noncanonical Switch Reference. Formally explicit theories of SR have approached pivot identity in one of three different ways. Semantically inclined analyses have treated it as identity of the pivots' referents [15,18], while syntactically inclined analyses have treated it as identity of referential indices in a syntactic representation [1,4,9] or as identity of syntactic features that entails coreference [5,20]. A third group of analyses treat SS marking as pivot sharing due to movement or VP coordination [10,12]. As we will see, this last group of analyses is not adequate for Mbyá, since two overt and lexically distinct pivots can be related by SS marking. This leaves us with the first two types of analyses, and raises the question: can SS marking be analyzed as pivot co-reference?

I will argue that a coreferential analysis of SS marking is problematic, since it fails to apply to sentences where one of the pivots is a quantifier and the other is anaphoric to a set associated with the former. This configuration is illustrated in (1):

(1) Mbovy'i tekoapygua kuery o-mba'apo vy, no-mo-mba voi-i. few villager PL A3-work SS NEG-CAUS-finish quick-NEG 'Since few villagers were working, they didn't finish quickly.'

In Mbyá, the pivots of SR constructions are subjects. In example (1), the matrix subject is anaphoric to the intersection of the restriction and nuclear scope of the subordinate quantifier. The two pivots are not co-referential, since the subordinate subject does not refer. For the same reason, it cannot be said that this subject bears a referential index *stricto sensu*.

In addition, it will be shown that SR in Mbyá is sensitive to the type of plural discourse anaphora that relates the pivots. Quantificational structures D(A)(B) may give rise to two types of plural discourse anaphora. A subsequent anaphor may refer to the maximal set A or to the reference set $A \cap B$. We will see that both types of anaphora may trigger SS marking in Mbyá. Studies of anaphora to quantifier sets also discuss anaphora to the complement set A-B, whose existence is debated. It has been argued that complement set anaphora is a form of contextually restricted anaphora to the domain set [6], or is due to an inferential process that does not depend on the introduction of discourse referents for the complement set [14]. Accordingly, we will see that reference to the complement set tends to trigger DS marking in Mbyá.

In light of such facts, I will argue that SR in Mbyá is best analyzed as tracking discourse reference. SS markers are anaphoric to one of their pivots, and require that the other pivot introduce or retrieve a discourse referent that is identical to the value of this anaphor. DS markers are used otherwise.

¹ In addition, if the generalization that Canonical SR is attested in subordination structure is correct, [12]'s analysis of Same Subject and Different Subject marking as vP (high) or VP (low) coordination may be valid for Noncanonical but not for Canonical Switch Reference.

Note that existing analyses of switch-reference have observed that quantifiers are attested in SR constructions [10,15]. However, previous discussions of this fact were limited to examples like (2) and (3), which can be analyzed by letting a single quantifier bind the two pivot positions. This is indeed how [10,15] analyze such examples:

- (2) Háun hájél èm gúnmáuchè èm dáujàugù.

 NEG person.INDEF [3S.RF] dance-IMP=when.SS [3S.RF] sing+act-NEG

 'Nobody₁ sang while they₁ danced.' [15]
- (3) Minyma tjuta-ngku pu<u>n</u>u atu-ra nyina-nyi. woman many-ERG wood chop-ANT(MERG) sit-PRES 'Many women would be sitting around making wooden artefacts.' [10]

By contrast, it will be shown that SS marking of anaphora to quantifiers in Mbyá must be analyzed as true discourse anaphora, since giving wide scope to the quantified subject would generate incorrect truth conditions. Consequently, an adequate theory of SR must be dynamic or resort to E-type anaphora. In this paper, I will pursue a dynamic analysis.

2 Switch Reference in Mbyá: Referential Pivots

Background on Mbyá. Mbyá is a Tupí-Guaraní language spoken by approximately 30,000 speakers in Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay. The data discussed in this paper come from two sources: Robert Dooley's description of SR [7], and elicitation sessions conducted by the author with four native speakers of Mbyá from Misiones (Argentina). Note that Dooley's description is based on data collected in the state of Paraná (Brazil) in the 1970s and 1980s. However, the Mbyá consultants I worked with agreed with the judgments reported in Dooley's work. Example from Dooley's work are referenced as such. All other examples were produced by the Mbyá speakers who worked with the author.

Some remarks on Mbyá grammar are in order. Verbs are not inflected for tense and aspect. In the absence of additional tense/aspect/modality markers, such 'bare verbs' have non-future temporal reference and are underspecified for viewpoint aspect. There are no definite and indefinite articles, and bare nouns may be interpreted as definite or indefinite descriptions. Subject or object arguments are cross-referenced on the verb using a split-S system known as active/inactive or active/stative. While the cross-referencing of one argument on the verb is mandatory, both null subjects and null objects are frequently attested. The reader is referred to [8] for a description of this system in Mbyá, and to [21] for its description in Paraguayan Guaraní, a closely related language.

Since I will propose that the pivots of SR in Mbyá are subjects, I should point out that some authors have argued that the grammar of Guaraní languages does not make use of the grammatical functions subject and object [21]. There is however solid evidence for a grammatically relevant opposition between subjects and objects in Mbyá, as reviewed in [8]. I will not review these arguments here, and I refer the reader to Sect. 7.1 of [8] instead.

Structure of Switch Reference. SR in Mbyá is marked by the particles vy (SS) and ramo (DS) or its reduced form $r\tilde{a}$, both of which occur in the right periphery of the predicate of the marked clause:

- (4) Juan o-vae vy, o-mo-potî ta ng-oo. Juan A3-arrive SS A3-CAUS-clean PROSP REFL-house 'When Juan₁ arrives, he_{1/*2} will clean his_{1/*2} house.'
- (5) Maria o-vae rã/*vy, Juan o-mo-potî ta oo. Maria A3-arrive DS/SS Juan A3-CAUS-clean PROSP house 'When Maria arrives, Juan will clean the house.'

As these examples illustrate, there is no indication of the structural relation between the marked clause and the reference clause, beyond the presence of the SR marker itself. Furthermore, SR marking underspecifies the semantic relation between the two clauses: the marked clause may be notably interpreted as the antecedent of a conditional, as a temporal modifier (a 'when-clause') or it may express a reason or cause of the event described by the reference clause. Dooley demonstrates that the marked clause is subordinate to the reference clause in [8], Sect. 21.2.2. In particular, Dooley observes that (i) the order of the two clauses need not reflect the order of events they describe, (ii) the marked clause verb is defective in the range of functional particles that it accepts (most tense, aspect, modality, negation and interrogation markers are unattested or have a restricted distribution in the marked clause), and (iii) SR constructions are not subject to the Coordinate Structure Constraint on question formation (Sect. 21.2.1.9).

Relation Between Pivots. [7] demonstrates that the pivots of SR in Mbyá are subjects, rather than agents or topics. Again, I refer the reader to this work for relevant examples and discussion.

Let us first put aside quantificational pivots and only consider referential ones. When the two pivots are coreferential, SS marking is used. If they have disjoint reference, DS marking is used instead. See examples (4) and (5) for illustration.

More interesting are cases of overlapping reference. [7] argues that SS marking is used when the referent of one pivot is included in that of the other one, provided the two pivots agree in person and clusivity. Example (6) from our own fieldwork appears to support this conclusion. Example (7) suggests that the two pivots must indeed agree in grammatical person:

- (6) Juan ha'upei Maria o-vae vy/*ra, Juan o-mo-poti oo. Juan and Maria A3-arrive SS/DS Juan A3-CAUS-clean house 'When Juan and Maria arrived, Juan cleaned the house.'
- (7) Nhande nha-vaẽ rã/*vy, re-mo-potĩ ta oo. we.INCL A1.PL.INCL-arrive DS/SS A2.SG-CAUS-clean PROSP house 'When we[INCL] arrive, you[SG] will clean the house.'

However, examples like the following show that this generalization is too weak:

(8) Context: A drunk *jurua* (non-indigenous person) caused trouble in the Guaraní village. Juan is one of the villagers who frequently represents the village in negotiations with *jurua* authorities.

I-pochy rã/*vy tekoapygua kuery, Juan i-jayvu ta policia pe. B3-angry DS/SS villager PL Juan B3-talk PROSP police DOM 'Since the villagers are angry, Juan will talk to the police.'

Both matrix subjects have referents that are included in the denotation of the subordinate subject ('the villagers'), yet DS marking must be used. This suggests that it is not referential inclusion itself that licenses SS marking in an example like (6). Instead, one notes that in this example, the subordinate subject Juan ha'upei Maria makes Juan salient enough to serve as the antecedent of a subsequent anaphoric pronoun. By contrast, the subordinate subject in (8) does not make any particular villager salient. This phenomenon is illustrated in English by the following examples:

- (9) When Maria and Juan₁ arrive, he₁ will clean the house.
- (10) If the villagers are angry, he? will talk to the police.

In view of this fact, I would like to suggest that SS markers in Mbyá require that the referent of one of the pivots be identical to the value of an acceptable anaphoric mention of the other:

- (11) Switch Reference marking (preliminary): In a structure [[$S_1 \ vy/r\tilde{a}$] S_0], the SR marker $vy/r\tilde{a}$ introduces a covert pronoun pro_{SR} . The use of SS marking is acceptable only if:
 - 1. $subject(S_0)$ and $subject(S_1)$ agree in grammatical person and
 - 2. pro_{SR} is anaphoric to subject(S₁) and $[pro_{SR}]^{M,g} = [Subject(S_0)]^{M,g}$. DS marking is used when SS marking is unacceptable.

In example (6), the subordinate subject conjunct Juan ha'upei Maria is the antecedent of pro_{SR} , which has the same denotation as the matrix subject. SS marking is acceptable since the conjoined phrase Juan ha'upei Maria licenses anaphoric reference to Juan. By contrast, the plural subject tekoapygua kuery in (8) does not provide an antecedent for the SR marker that has the same denotation as the matrix subject. The analysis correctly predicts that SS marking of partially overlapping subjects is unacceptable:

(12) Maria ha'upei Pedro o-vaẽ rã/*vy, Juan ha'upei Maria Maria and Pedro A3-arrive DS/SS Juan and Maria o-mo-potĩ oo. A3-CAUS-clean house

'When Maria and Pedro arrived, Juan and Maria cleaned the house.'

Indeed, let us assume that the SR marker in (12) is anaphoric to the subordinate subject. Its possible antecedents are Maria, Pedro and their sum. None of these individuals has a referent that is identical to the denotation of the matrix subject, which is the sum of Juan and Maria. Consequently, SS marking is unacceptable.

The proposed analysis also captures patterns of SS marking with disjunctions of referential subjects:

- (13) Context: Juan and Maria are married and each bought a lottery ticket:

 Juan e'ỹvy Maria o-gana vy/*rã, Maria o-jogua ta auto pyau.

 Juan or Maria A3-win SS/DS, Maria A3-buy PROSP car new

 'If Juan or Maria wins (the lottery), Maria will buy a new car.'
- (14) Context: Juan and Maria are married; Maria bought a lottery ticket:

 Maria o-gana rã/*vy, ha'e e'ỹvy Juan o-jogua ta auto pyau.

 Maria A3-win DS/SS, 3 or Juan A3-buy PROSP car new

 'If Maria wins (the lottery), she or Juan will buy a new car.'

The subordinate subject in (13) makes two antecedents available to the anaphoric SR marker: Juan and Maria. The latter is identical to the matrix subject, which licenses SS marking. Crucially, the disjoined subject is not referential, which supports the conclusion that the expression whose reference is compared to that of the matrix subject is the disjunct Maria, rather than the whole disjoined subject $Juan\ e'\tilde{y}vy\ Maria$.

Finally, [7] observes cases of SS with seemingly expletive subjects of weather predicates and verbs in the 'impersonal' voice, see examples (15a) and (15b). However, a closer look at these two classes of predicates reveals that they both have implicit subjects, which can control into purpose clauses, as illustrated in (16a) and (16b):

- (15) a. O-mombe'u-a va'e-rã ha'e o-japo va'e-kue hexe i-ma'endu'a A3-tell-IMPRS REL-FUT 3 A3-do REL-PAST 3.OBL B3-remember vy.
 - 'They will tell what she has done, remembering her.' [7]
 - b. Arai vaipa, oky-xe vy.cloud much rain-DES SS'It's very cloudy, since it's wanting to rain.' [7]
- (16) a. Arai oky aguã.
 cloud rain PURP
 (Lit.) 'It's cloudy in order to rain.'
 - b. Oga o-mo-ngai-a i-ja pe o-juka aguã. house A3-CAUS-burn-IMPRS B3-OWNER DOM A3-kill PURP 'The house was burned to kill the owner.'

Note that the nature of the implicit subjects of weather predicates is not directly relevant to this paper; what is relevant is that they do refer. This being said, I will assume following [13] that these arguments play the role of a 'source,' similar to subjects of emission verbs.

3 Quantificational Pivots

Anaphora to Quantifier Sets. The pivots of SR constructions may be quantifiers. Importantly, SR marking of quantified subjects is not restricted to constructions where a single quantifier binds the two pivot positions. SS marking is also used when one of the pivots is anaphoric to a set associated with a quantifier that occupies the other pivot position. This is illustrated by examples (17) and (18):

- (17) Mbovy'i tekoapygua i-jayvu kuaa español py vy, o-mba'apo tekoa few villager B3-speak know Spanish in SS A3-work village py. in
 - 'Since few of the villagers can speak Spanish, they work in the village.'
- (18) Heta tekoapygua i-jayvu kuaa español py, ha'e ... many villager B3-talk know spanish in and 'Many villagers speak Spanish, and ...'
 - a #mbovy'i i-jayvu kuaa español py vy o-mba'apo tekoa py. few B3-speak know spanish in SS A3-work village in '#since few of them speak Spanish, they work in the village.'
 - b mbovy'i i-jayvu kuaa va'e español py o-mba'apo tekoa py. few B3-speak know REL spanish in A3-work village in 'few of those who speak Spanish work in the village.'

Sentence (17) is an example of maximal set anaphora². If the quantifier *mbovy'i* tekoapygua took scope over the whole sentence, (18a) should be a felicitous continuation of (18), like (18b). The fact that it isn't demonstrates that the matrix subject of example (17) is anaphoric to the subordinate quantified subject.

SS marking with quantified subjects is attested with maximal set and referent set anaphora, as illustrated respectively by examples (19) and (20):

(19) Mava'eve tekoapygua nda-i-jayvu kuaa-i español py vy, (ha'e no villager NEG-B3-speak know-NEG Spanish in ss, 3 kuery) nd-o-o-i tetã my.
PL NEG-A3-go-NEG city in
'Since none of the villagers speak Spanish, they don't go to the city.'

² This example could arguably be analyzed as a case of complement set anaphora, but we will see that clearer cases of reference to the complement set by an overt matrix subject tend to trigger DS marking, which makes it more likely that *vy* marks anaphora to the maximal set in this example.

(20) Heta tekoapygua i-jayvu kuaa español py vy, o-i-pytyvõ amboae many villager B3-speak know Spanish in SS A3-OBJ-help other kuery o-mbo-jovai aguã jurua kuery reve.

PL A3-CAUS-opposed PURP jurua PL with

'Since many villagers speak Spanish, they help the other ones deal with

the juruas.

By contrast, reference to the complement set of a quantificational pivot tends to trigger DS marking.³ This is true even with downward entailing proportional quantifiers, which have been argued to license anaphora to complement sets in English (see [14]):

(21) Mbovy'i kyri-ngue o-guereko telefono celular rã/*vy, nd-o-guereko-i few child-PL A3-have phone cell DS/SS NEG-A3-have-NEG va'e kuery o-motare'ỹ ha'e kuery pe.

REL PL A3-envy 3 PL DOM
'Since few children have a cell phone, those who don't are jealous of them.'

Finally, the following example shows that SS marking is also licensed by cataphora to quantifier sets:

(22) Nda-i-jayvu kuaa-i español py vy, mbovy'i tekoapygua o-o tetã NEG-B3-speak know-NEG Spanish in SS few villager A3-go city my.
in

'Because they don't speak Spanish, few villagers go to the city.'

Introducing Discourse Reference. The analysis of SS marking sketched in (11) states that the covert pronoun that is anaphoric to one of the pivots must have a referent that is identical to the denotation of the other pivot. However, SS marking is attested in sentences with two quantificational pivots, as illustrated in (23). This is problematic for the current analysis, since neither subject is referential:

(23) Heta tekoapygua i-jayvu kuaa español py vy, mbovy'i o-mba'apo many villager B3-speak know Spanish in SS, few A3-work tekoa py. village in

'Since many villagers speak Spanish, few of them work in the village.'

In order to address this issue, I propose that SR marking is sensitive to the discourse referents introduced or retrieved by the pivots, rather than to their

³ A previous version of this work, which was based on the judgments of a single speaker, reported that reference to the complement set could trigger SS marking. Subsequent elicitation with four speakers of Mbyá suggests that this phenomenon is marginal at best.

actual referents. Following [3], I assume that generalized quantifiers introduce two discourse referents. One of them corresponds to the maximal set, and the other to the reference set. By contrast, generalized quantifiers never introduce a discourse referent for their complement set (see [14]).

SR marking can now be analyzed as follows:

- (24) Same Subject marking (preliminary):
 - In a structure [[$S_1 \ vy/r\tilde{a}$] S_0], the SR marker $vy/r\tilde{a}$ introduces a covert pronoun pro_{SR} . The use of SS marking is acceptable only if:
 - 1. $subject(S_0)$ and $subject(S_1)$ agree in grammatical person and
 - 2. pro_{SR} is an aphoric to subject(S₁) and the discourse referent it retrieves is identical to a discourse referent introduced or retrieved by subject(S₀).

DS marking is used when SS marking is unacceptable.

In example (23), both quantified subjects introduce discourse referents for their maximal set and their reference set. The covert SR pronoun is anaphoric to the maximal set of the subordinate quantifier, i.e. the set of villagers. Since this set corresponds to one of the two discourse referents introduced (or, in the case of the maximal set, retrieved) by the matrix subject, SS marking is acceptable. As one expects, using disjoint restrictions for the two quantifiers prevents the use of SS marking:

(25) Mbovy'i tekoapygua i-jayvu kuaa español py rã/*vy, heta few villager B3-speak know Spanish in DS/SS many jurua kuery ha'e kuery reve nda-i-jayvu-i. non.indigenous PL 3 PL with NEG-B3-speak-NEG 'Since few villagers speak Spanish, many juruas don't talk to them.'

Note that the constraint on SS marking introduced in (24) must be strengthened to account for the unacceptability of SS marking with partially overlapping conjoined subjects, which was illustrated in (12) and is repeated here as (26):

(26) Maria ha'upei Pedro o-vaẽ rã/*vy, Juan ha'upei Maria Maria and Pedro A3-arrive DS/SS Juan and Maria o-mo-potĩ oo. A3-CAUS-clean house

'When Maria and Pedro arrived, Juan and Maria cleaned the house.'

The conjoined phrase Juan ha'upei Maria introduces three discourse referents: one for Juan, one for Maria, and one for their sum. Yet, SS marking is unacceptable, which shows that the antecedent of the SR marker cannot be compared to just any discourse referent introduced by the conjuncts of the matrix subject. In order to account for this restriction, we require that the SR anaphor be compared to the discourse referent associated with the whole subject:

(27) Switch Reference marking:

In a structure [[$S_1 \ vy/r\tilde{a}$] S_0], the SR marker $vy/r\tilde{a}$ introduces a covert pronoun pro_{SR} . The use of SS marking is acceptable only if:

- 1. $subject(S_0)$ and $subject(S_1)$ agree in grammatical person and
- 2. pro_{SR} is an aphoric to subject (S_1) and the discourse referent it retrieves is identical to the discourse referent introduced or retrieved by the maximal projection of the subject (S_0) .

DS marking is used when SS marking is unacceptable.

When the subject is a conjunction of referential terms, I posit that its maximal projection introduces a discourse referent for the sum of the conjuncts. This explains the unacceptability of SS marking in (26): none of the three possible antecedents of the SR anaphor (Maria, Pedro and their sum) is identical to the sum of Juan and Maria, which is the value of the discourse referent associated with the matrix subject. When the subject is a quantifier, I hypothesize that its associated discourse referent stores its maximal set. This accounts for the acceptability of SS marking of sentences with two quantificational subjects that share the same maximal set, as illustrated in (23).

There is therefore an asymmetry in the identification of the two discourse referents that SS markers compare. One of them is retrieved by a process of anaphora, whose antecedent must be found within a domain delineated by one of the pivots. When this pivot is a conjoined phrase or a quantifier, it may introduce several discourse referents that can serve as antecedents. The other discourse referent that enters the comparison is not retrieved by anaphora. Rather, it is assumed to be the unique discourse referent that is syntactically associated with the maximal projection of the other pivot: for quantifiers, the discourse referent of their maximal set, for conjoined DPs, the discourse referent for the sum of the conjuncts.

4 Conclusion

Patterns of SS and DS marking in Mbyá present a challenge to existing analyses of SR, which tend to assume that pivot identity is a form of coreference or pivot sharing. In this paper, I showed that SS marking is sensitive to discourse anaphora. In one set of examples, SS marking is triggered when one pivot refers to the maximal set or reference set of another quantificational pivot. In another set of examples, SS marking is triggered when two quantificational pivots share the same maximal set. I sketched an analysis of these facts that may be amenable to a more rigorous implementation in dynamic semantics. The details of this analysis will be fleshed out in future research.

Acknowledgement. Many thanks to the Mbyá speakers who shared their judgments with me for this study. I am also grateful to Philippe Schlenker and Yasutada Sudo for helpful comments and suggestions. All errors are mine.

Glosses. A: cross-referenced argument, class A (active); B: cross-referenced argument, class B (inactive); CAUS: causative; DES: desiderative; DS: different subject marking; DOM: differential object marking; FUT: future temporal marking; INCL: inclusive; IMPRS: impersonal voice; NEG: negation; OBJ: object marking; OBL: oblique; PAST: past temporal marking; PL: plural; PURP: purpose; PROSP: prospective aspect; SG: singular; SS: same subject marking.

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