



What non-canonical switch-reference systems tell us about switch-reference

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Switch Reference (SR)

As a comparative concept (Haspelmath 2010), SR includes (at least):

A system of clause-level grammatical markers, some indicating coreference (CR), and some indicating disjoint-reference (DR), between a ‘salient’ reference in its own clause, and a ‘salient’ reference elsewhere.
(There are strict, language-specific, criteria in determining which reference in which clause is the ‘salient’ one.)

Switch Reference (SR)

Canonically:

- *SR markers are in paradigmatic opposition;*
- *SR markers are inflectional verbal affixes;*
- *a SR-marked clause is syntactically dependent on the control clause, or the two clauses are codependent with another clause; (in clause chains, the control clause is found in the direction of the independent clause of the clause chain);*
- *SR pivots are subjects, actors, or ‘topics’;*
- *SR markers are used for SR pivots of all persons, numbers, and genders.*

Menggwa Dla language

*SANDAUN (West Sepik) Province, Papua New Guinea
Kabupaten KEEROM, Papua, Indonesia*





SENAGI family

Dla

(a.k.a. Dera; Galis 1956,
Voorhoeve 1975)

Anggor

(e.g. Litteral 1980)

Mengwa Dla

(a.k.a. Duka-Ekor)

“Dla Proper”

Some Menggwa Dla morphosyntax preliminaries

- Verb-final (most usually)
- =TOP, =OBJ (P/R), =GEN, and semantic cases
- Verbal agreement: -SBJ or -SBJ-OBJ
 - does not necessarily correspond with semantic valency;
many monovalent verbs have a dummy -3FSG.OBJ [-3fs.o]*

Menggwa Dla SR morphology

On “type 1” chain verbs:

- CR: \emptyset ;
- DR: *ma-*, *-ma*, or *-me*
(depends on conjugation class, C or V ending verb root)
- CR and DR verbs usually take different sets of agreement suffixes
- dependent verbs have a
DEP suffix $-\emptyset \sim -mbo \sim -mbona$ at the end

...

1. *rani=mbe walambani-Ø-o-mbo, homba-e-Ø-hwa.*
DEM=INS swim-CR-3fs-DEP see-3fs-3ms.O-PST
‘She_j was swimming there, and she_{j/*k} saw him.’

2. *rani=mbe walambani-me-wa-mbo, homba-e-Ø-hwa.*
DEM=INS swim-DR-3fs-DEP see-3fs-3ms.O-PST
‘She_j was swimming there, and she_{*j/k} saw him.’

Traditional SR system in Menggwa Dla

(≈ people born in or before the 1960s)

Canonical SR system:

- a. used for all persons

(i.e. the agreement suffixes are often already sufficient in disambiguating the subject referents.)

3. *ye Ø-ser-i fa-hya-a-mbo, ap-aha-hi.*

then CR-eat-1s SEQ-1s-3fs.O-DEP sleep-1s-PRS;CONT

‘Then I eat, and then I sleep.’ (B)

4. *ini. pusi homba-ma-ha-a-mbo, hwi=na han-wa-hwa.*

yes cat see-DS-1s-3fs.O-DEP water=ALL go.down-3fs-PST

‘Yes, I saw the cat_j, it_{j/k} went down towards the stream.’ (60III)

Traditional SR system in Menggwa Dla

Canonical SR:

b. SR pivot: subject.

(No voice oppositions; animate undergoers of involuntary states expressed as subjects.)

5.	<i>gwa</i>	<i>gihali(=mbo)</i>	<i>sufwa-</i> <u>Ø</u> <i>-a-mbo,</i>
	but	hunger(=OBJ)	feel- <u>CR</u> -1s-DEP
	<i>stroperi</i>	<i>imbu</i>	<i>hihiri-</i> <u>Ø</u> <i>-a-mbo, ser-ih-a-hwa.</i>
	strawberry	two	steal- <u>CR</u> -1s-DEP eat-1s-PST

‘But then I was hungry, and I stole two strawberries and I ate them.’ (50II)

Traditional SR system in Menggwa Dla

Canonical SR:

- c. clause skipping...
- d. referential overlap: usually CR; DR used to emphasise other types of discourse discontinuity...

Innovative SR system in Menggwa Dla

(≈ some people born in or after the 1980s)

- a. When the person-number-gender features of the subject agreement suffixes are sufficient in disambiguation,
CR verbs becomes SR-neutral.

- 6. *hofahi(-Ø)-a-mbo, yoambo sumbu-Ø-hwa.*
fall(-‘CR’)-1s-DEP 1SG;OBJ laugh-3ms-PST
‘I tripped over and he laughed at me.’ (90I)

- 7. *hofahi(-Ø)-a-mbo, sumbu-aha-hwa.*
fall(-‘CR’)-1s-DEP laugh-1s-PST
‘I tripped over and I laughed.’

Innovative SR system in Menggwa Dla

(DR can still be used, especially when a type of discourse discontinuity is emphasised.)

8. *dukumi*po-me-Ø-*mbona*,
valley go;DR-DR-3ms-DEP
 yo *lohama* *rɔŋgo* *pi-aha-hwa.*
 1 ridge along go-1s-PST

‘He went to the valley, and I went along the ridge.’ (N)

Innovative SR system in Menggwa Dla

- b. When the person-number-gender features of the subject agreement suffixes are not sufficient in disambiguation,
CR = CR and DR = DR.

9. *twangi=lofo* *wuli=na* Ø-hahof-o-mbo,
white.person=COM house=ALL CR-go.up-3fs-DEP
aflamqli *nafi-Ø-a-hwa*.
many show-n1s-3fs.O-PST

‘She_j went into the house with the white person_k, and she_j showed her_{k/l} many things.’ (90III)

Innovative SR system in Menggwa Dla

10. *twaygi=lofo* *wuli=na* *ma-hahof-wa-mbo*,
white.person=COM house=ALL DR-go.up-3fs-DEP
aflambli *nafi-Ø-a-hwa*.
many show-n1s-3fs.O-PST

‘She_j went into the house with the white person_k, and she_{k/l} showed her_{j/m} many things.’

11. *Pita=na* *wamla* *ma-ser-u-mbo*, /*Ø-ser-u-mbo)
Peter=TOP betal.nut DR-eat-3ms-DEP CR-
Saimonu=na *fofo-Ø-mbi*.
Simon=TOP blow-3ms-PRS;CONT

‘Peter is chewing betal nut, and Simon is smoking.’ (80II)

[The deciding factor is the subject suffixes; NPs are ignored.]

Menggwā Dla SR

Traditional Menggwā Dla SR

Canonical

Innovative Menggwā Dla SR

Functioning CR markers only available when the two subjects are both third person and with non-conflicting gender information.

Otherwise, CR verb forms have become SR-neutral.

SR in Menggwā Dla: de Sousa (2006a, 2006b, 2007)

Functions of SR

1. Reference tracking:

The **Innovative SR system** has become more economical in reference tracking. (For reference tracking; functioning CR/DR markers are only needed for third person references.)

However, consider the following facts:

- Nearly all SR systems require functional CR/DR markers to be used even for first and second person references;
- 49 out of 116 languages (<40%) in Roberts' (1997) survey of PNG SR systems have subject agreement (including anticipatory marking) for both CR and DR verbs.

Functions of SR

2. Grammatical marking of discourse dis/continuity of the 'salient' participant.
(≠ Givón's topic continuity, i.e. topic predictability)

Between clauses in discourse, some level of cohesion of:

- 'Discourse theme'
- Temporal/spatial settings, logical relationships (incl. foregrounding and backgrounding);
- Participants

(rephrased from Givón 1983a, 1983b)

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In a Papuan-type clause-chaining SR system:

CR: (CR, &) the 'salient' participant will remain/re-emerge as topical (i.e. my 'participant continuity');

DR: DR, the 'salient' participant will no longer be topical, and/or disruption in other types of discourse continuity.

(One type of) ‘clause skipping’



t.kangaroo is:sleepy-CR



cassowary walks:pass-DR
(Background)



t.kangaroo sleeps.

Foreground; Mainline of events



[...]

ser-u Ø-num-u-la-mbona,
eat-3MSG CR-sit-3MSG-LIG-DEP
'he (the moon) ate and lived (in this place), and'

CR: the 'salient' participant will remain/re-emerge as topical (i.e. 'participant continuity')

sungu amni=la afila ai Ø-haf-u-mbo,
later garden=GEN father 3SG CR-arrive-3MSG-DEP
'one day the father (owner) of the garden he arrived, and'

[17 chain clauses...]

homba boka-ma-wu-Ø-mbona,
see NEG:R-DR-N1MPL-3MSG:O-DEP
'they did not see him (the moon), and'

Mostly foreground clauses

→ ai=na tumali hupla ambya rungu pipa-me-Ø-mbo,
3=TOP pandanus container hole inside hide-DR-3MSG-DEP
'he (the moon) was hiding in a hole inside a pandanus trunk, and'

'that being the case they broke (the hole) and'
'pulled him (the moon) out, and'
'they took him (the moon) (away).'

Functions of non-canonical SR

- Reference tracking
- Grammatical marking of discourse dis/continuity of the 'salient' participant



Grammatical marking of discourse dis/continuity in general

Functions of non-canonical SR

Grammatical marking of discourse dis/ continuity in general

e.g. Bauzi (East Geelvink Bay)

13. ‘Then Vadu_[v] thought,’ [D]

‘because (Aseda) struck his sister,’ [D]

Sembina beo-me

Sembina strike-C

‘(he_[v]) struck Sembina_[s]’ [C: consequence]

ab si-h-am

IND seize-R-IND

‘and (she_[s]) sat down.’ (Briley 1997:21)

Functions of non-canonical SR

Grammatical marking of discourse dis/ continuity in general

e.g. Bauzi (East Geelvink Bay)

14. ‘([W]e) passed by Gienali’s house,’ [C]

‘and (we) arrived at the base of the matoa tree,’ [C]

ai-ha

hear-D

‘and listened’ [D: boundary between discourse paragraphs]

dam meb-dae ab aii-da-m-am.

people cry-words IND hear-CONT-IR-IND

‘(we_J) began hearing wailing.’ (Briley 1997:118)

Functions of non-canonical SR

**Grammatical marking of discourse dis/
continuity in general**

e.g. Bauzi (East Geelvink Bay)

Other examples:

Central Pomo (Mithun 1993);
Koasati (Rising 1992)

Functions of non-canonical SR

- Reference tracking
- Grammatical marking of discourse dis/continuity of the 'salient' participant



**More economical in reference-tracking:
'third person SR systems'**

Functions of non-canonical SR

**More economical in reference-tracking:
‘third person SR systems’**

e.g.

≈ Innovative SR system in Mengwa Dla

Esk-Aleut languages

e.g. Aleut, linking tensed clause (Bergsland 1994:346-347; 1997:244):

1st/2nd: -DAT

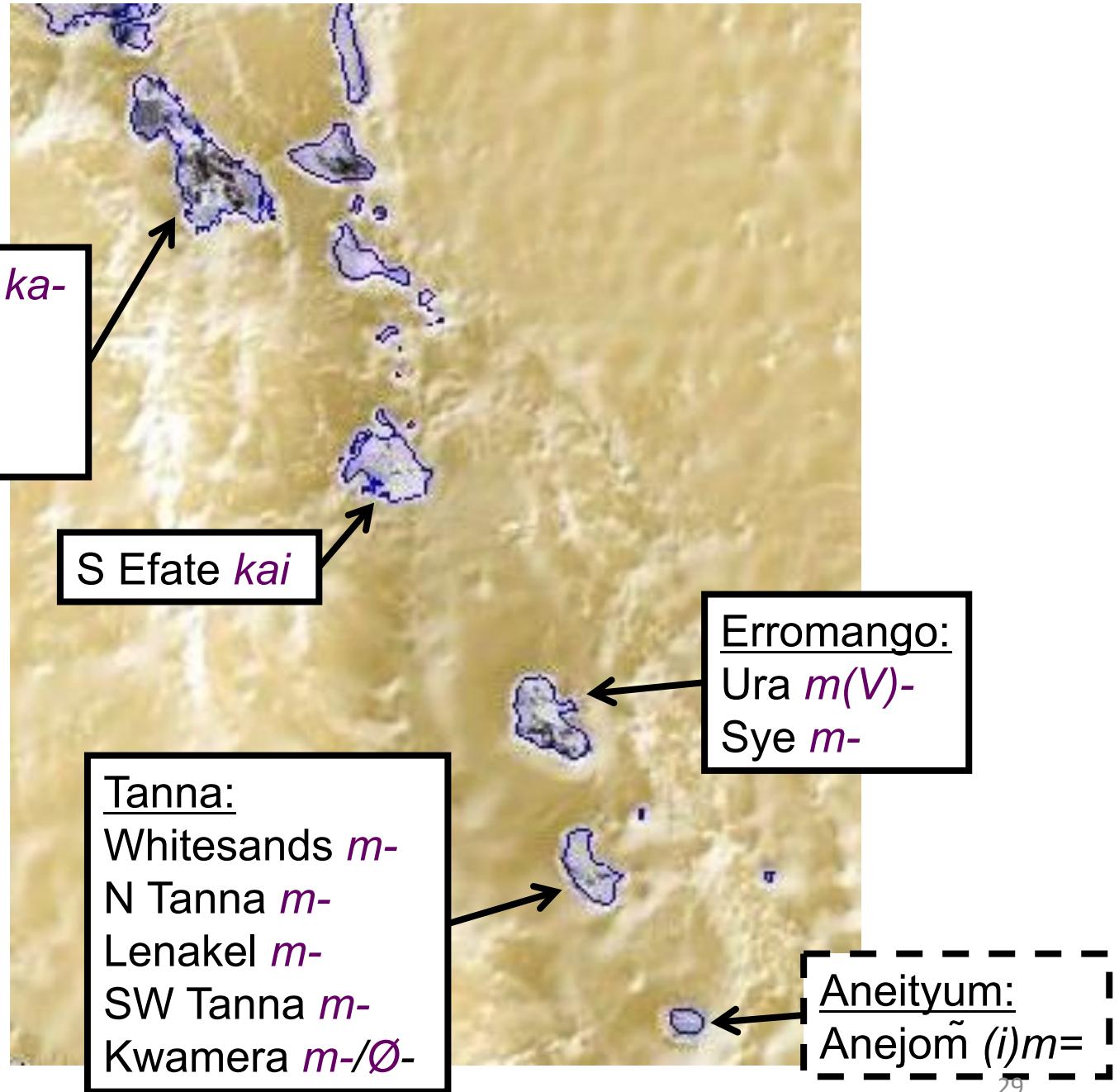
3rd DR: -DAT;

3rd CR: -ABS (immediate SEQ) or -REL (others).

Some Tupí-Guaraní languages, e.g. Guajajára, Tembé
(Jensen 1997, 1998).

Vanuatu Echo- Subject systems

(de Sousa 2008, de
Sousa & Hammond
2010)



Switch-reference in Southern Vanuatu?

	ES marker	DR	ES antecedent
Erromango	(clausal) CR marker	only for 3 rd person	subject, referentially overlap OK, (object: one case found)
Tanna	(clausal) CR marker	yes	usually topic/subject, but otherwise whatever pragmatically fitting. <i>c.f. zero anaphors in East Asian languages.</i>
Aneityum	VP coordinator	no	<i>n.a.</i>

Summary: Non-Canonical Switch-reference

Departure from formal canon of SR; and/or

Alterations in the underlying functions of SR:

- Reference tracking
- Grammatical marking of discourse dis/continuity of the ‘salient’ participant.

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**Thank you!
Hvala!
Fala ni!**