Ditransitive constructions in Paraguayan Guaraní:
An uncommon case of alignment mismatch

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Tupí-Guaraní languages are well known for their distinctive person indexing system in canonical transitive clauses, which is dependent on person hierarchy (Jensen 1990; Payne 1994; Rose 2009 *inter alia*). However, three-participant constructions in these languages have never, to my knowledge,been subject of a special study. The present work is dedicated to 'give'-type ditransitives of Paraguayan Guaraní (PG) which manifest an uncommon type of mixed alignment, namely combination of secundative flagging with indirective indexing. I further attempt to show that this particular mismatch can easily be explained in functional terms.
PG is a split intransitive language with two series of person-number prefixes. For transitive predicates normally have one agreement slot: one of the two core arguments which is higher in the person hierarchy 1>2>3 is chosen as the controller. Use of active vs. inactive prefix indicates the semantic role (A vs. P). If both core participants are of the same person, agreement is with the A (A>P); for combinations of the 1→2 type special portmanteau markers are used (Velázquez-Castillo 2008: 381-384). With respect to case marking, A is always unmarked while human Ps attach oblique marker which can be dropped in some cases (see Shain 2009 for details).

(1) *Che ai-nupã Jose-(pe)*   (2)   *Toma che-nupã*
I 1SG.A-hit Jose-OBL   Tomas 1IN-hit
'I hit Jose'. '   Tomas hit me'.
(adopted from Velázquez-Castillo 2008: 384)

Turning to PG ditransitive constructions of the 'give'-type we see that R is consistently marked for oblique, while the argument cross-referenced on the predicate is either A or T, depending on the person hierarchy:

(3) *Kalaíto ,*   *che-rupytý-rõ*   ***a**-me'ẽ-ta ndé-**ve** kó-va.*
Kalaito   1SG-catch-COND   1SG.A-give-PROSP 2SG-OBL DEM-REL
'Kalaíto, if you catch me, I will give this to you'. (T. Zarratea, *Kalaíto Pombéro*).

(4) *...ani **ne**-me'ẽ   mburuvichá-**pe**,*
PROH   2SG.IN-give   chief-OBL
*ha   pe   mburuvicha   **ne**-me'ẽ hembiguái-**pe**...*
and   DEM   chief 2SG.IN-give   3.servant-OBL
'...lest [at any time the adversary] deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer...' (Matthew 5: 25)

We can see that R pairs with P wrt case marking, yet it is T that pairs with P as far as crossreferencing is concerned. PG ditransitives thus show mixed alignment: flagging is secundative, while indexing is indirective. Note that in attested mixed alignment languages the mismatch is normally the other way round (Siewerska 2003; Haspelmath 2005; Malchukov, Haspelmath & Comrie 2010). Commonly assumed explanation for this, dating back to (Dryer 1986: 841) is that case marking is more sensitive to role properties, while cross-referencing is more sensitive to inherent prominence (animacy, definiteness, topicality). My proposal is that the opposite pattern observed in PG can be accounted for in a similar fashion. The PG oblique suffix -*pe* has been shown to mark highly topical animate (typically human) Ps (Shain 2009). Rs are normally human and tend to be topical (Haspelmath 2007), hence the oblique marking. On the other hand, Ps control agreement only if they are locutors, which clearly is not the most natural/frequent person-role combination. Animate Ts are even less frequent than animate Ps, so it's only natural that combinations with locutor Ts receive special marking.

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