Long-distance agreement in Qunqi and Xuduc Dargwa: raising or clause union

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The term long-distance agreement (LDA) is used to refer to subordinate constructions where an argument of the dependent clause controls the agreement of the main verb. Consider e.g. (1a), where the verb *=ik'-* 'to want' agrees with the NP *aw-ne* 'dress-PL' that belongs to the embedded clause, by means of a neutral plural agreement prefix. The 'canonical' (as defined in Corbett 2006: 19-23) agreement pattern is illustrated in (1b), where the main verb agrees with its sentential argument, i.e. in neuter singular. This agreement pattern has been described as "local", when opposed to LDA.

LDA is attested in many Nakh-Daghestanian languages (see Кибрик 2003; e.g. Tsez (Polinsky 2000); Godoberi (Haspelmath 1999); Tsakhur e.a.), languages of North America – e.g. Algonquin: Blackfoot (Frantz 1978); Passamaquoddy (Bruening 2001); Indo-Aryan: Hindi (Butt 1993), Chukchee-Kamchatkan: Itelmen (Bobaljik, Wurmbrandt 2005) e.a. To account for the LDA, various proposals have been made: restructuring in Bobaljik, Wurmbrandt 2005 and clause union in Haspelmath 1999, «copying from complements» in Frantz 1978, raising-to-object in Bruening 2001, raising to Spec of TopP in Polinsky 2000. Consequently, (as argued by Polinsky 2002) LDA seems not to constitute a homogeneous phenomenon, but a number of constructions that manifest the same superficial properties. This paper is aimed at revealing the syntactic structure of LDA in Qunqi and Xuduc Dargwa (grants RFH № 09-04-00297a; 10-04-00228a).

I analyze the following syntactic properties of LDA constructions in Qunqi and Xuduc:

1. Tests for mono-/biclausality: (1) complex reflexives binding; agreement pattern of adverbials that belong to the dependent / matrix clause; (2) negation in the dependent / matrix clause; (3) possibility of two adverbials of the same type in both clauses; (4) acceptability of two NPs with the same case marker. These properties give evidence in favour of the biclausality of LDA constructions in Qunqi and Xuduc.
2. Evidence that shows that the absolutive NP belongs to the dependent / matrix clause are the tests that single out raising constructions. First, linear order is considered: when the absolutive NP appears non-adjacent of the dependent verb, they most often trigger LDA (2). Second test is quantifiers' scope. By LDA, quantifiers get wide scope over the main predicate, while by local agreement they have narrow scope, cf. (3a) and (3b).
3. The idioms' test (Postal 1974) is used to show that the absolutive NP that triggers LDA is not generated in the main clause (4), i.e. to distinguish the Qunqi and Xuduc constructions from obligatory control structures.

Therefore, the syntactic tests show that the constructions in question demonstrate the properties of raising, and not those of control or clause union. However, it should be noticed that LDA in Qunqi and Xuduc is only possible with verbs that are inclined towards hosting clause union. LDA is only acceptable if the dependent clause is formed with the infinitive and the simple converb. I then show that the infinitive and the simple converb form clauses with a lowered degree of biclausality, even with local agreement. First, in infinitive and converb complements the dependent clause elements can be scrambled to the main clause (5). This is not allowed in other complement clauses, those headed by the masdar or introduced by the complementizer. Next, by infinitives and converbs the NP in the dependent clause can be relativized (6), which is totally unacceptable by masdar complements and complements introduced by the compementizer. However, the tests as outlined in section 1 above argue for the biclausality of the infinitival and converbial complements.

In other words, the local agreement constructions with the infinitive and the converb do not show all the biclausal properties; however, they are clearly not clause union structures. It can not be ignored that the LDA constructions do show properties of raising, but it is raising across a weaker clause boundary than the one in masdar and complementizer clauses.

I suggest to analyze these facts as an evidence against the binary opposition of mono vs. biclausal structures. An intermediate type of constructions is needed to explain the discrepancy shown above, i.e. the constructions with "weakened" clause boundary. (This parallels the properties of German Accusative cum Infinitive constructions as analyzed in Harbert 1977: it is shown that they are not Clause Union structures, however clearly demonstrating some properties of Clause Union.) The LDA constructions in Qunqi and Xuduc Dargwa are then to be accounted for as a type of constructions with weakened clause boundary.

Examples:

QUNQI

(1a) dammij aw-ne **d**=ik'-al-da as□-ij.
I.DAT dress-PL NPL=want-ATR-1 buy-SUBJ.1

(1b) dammij aw-ne **b**=ik'-al-da as□-ij.
I.DAT dress-PL N=want-ATR-1 buy-SUBJ.1

a=b. I want to buy dresses.

(2) du [unc□-urbe] □a□□un-ne ca=**d**=i
I door-pl is.necessary-adv cop=npl-cop
(*ca=**b**=i) [če-d=ač□-i]
cop=npl-cop pv-npl=close:pf-subj.1

I must close all the doors.

(3) dammij redil-ra bagur-me d=irc-i
I.dat all-& bowl-pl npl=wash-subj.1
(a) **d**=ik□-l-ač□u-da // (b) **b**=ik□-l-ač□u-da.
npl=want-atr-neg.prs.1-1 **n**=want-atr-neg.prs.1-1

a. I don't want to wash any dish. ∀(x) [¬ wash(x)] b. I don't want to wash all the dishes. ¬∀(x) [wash (x)]

XUDUC

(4) leb-t-a-j č□ul-i kaχ̥-ij
all-PL-OBL-DAT fork-PL DOWN+kill-INF
ʕaˤʁn-il ca=**d**.
is.necessary-ATR COP=NPL
Everybody must vote (lit. Everybody must kill forks).

QUNQI

(5)it qili=b buχ□̥al-le ca=b-i us□-an-aj.
DEM house=N cold-ADV COP=N-COP sleep-TH-SUBJ

It is cold to sleep in this room.

(6) ajba-li w=ax-w=aˤχ□-uj irχ̥-an
mother-ERG <bathe>M=ST–M=LV.PF-SUBJ [M]become-POT
gali murad ca=w-i.
boy Murad cop=m-cop

The boy that mother can bathe is Murad.

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