

Noun categorization, agreement, and "janus-headed" nominals in Western !Xõo

Tom Güldemann

Max-Planck-Institut für Evolutionäre Anthropologie & Universität Leipzig

1 Classification of the language

Tuu (= Southern Khoisan)

Taa: Botswana including East !Xõo (DC); Namibia including **West !Xõo**

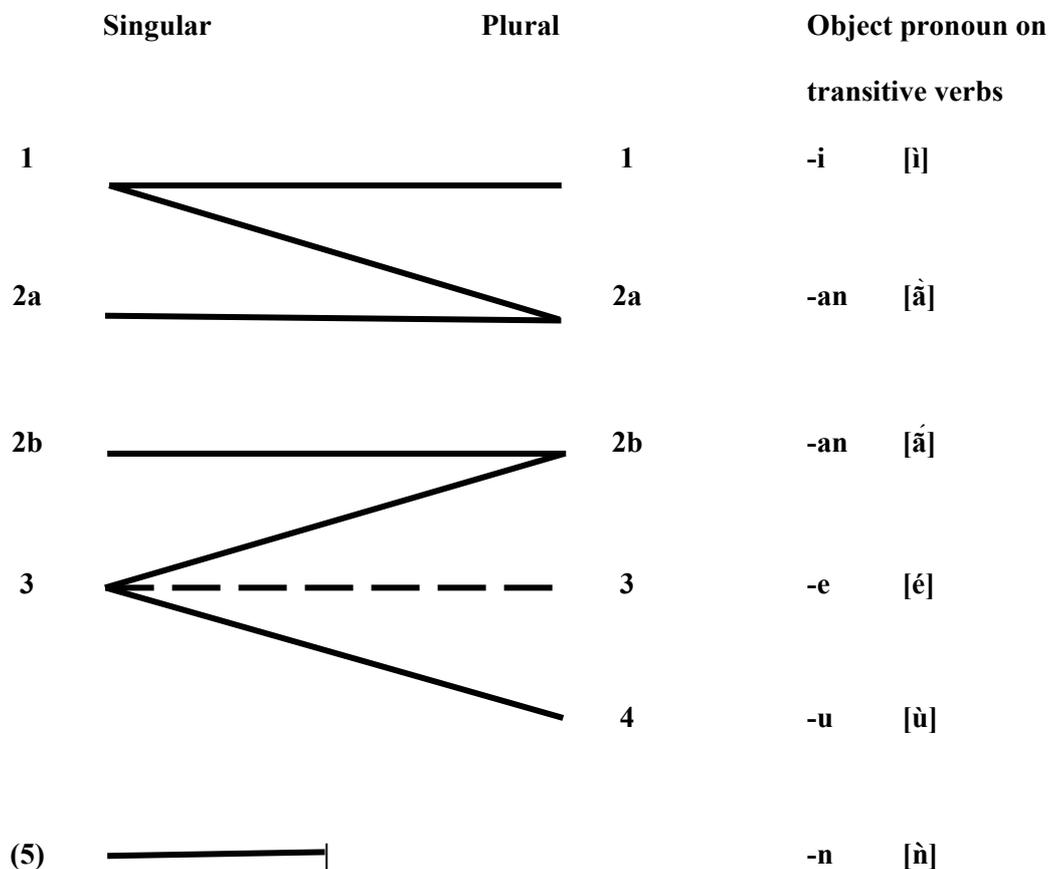
Lower Nossob |'Auni[†], |Haasi[†] (?DC)

!Ui: |Xam (DC)[†]; N||ng including N|huki (DC); †Ungkue[†]; ||Xegwi[†]

2 Agreement classes, number, and gender

- 5 nominal agreement classes index gender as well as a singular~plural distinction, 6th class without a lexical items referring to abstract non-lexical triggers

Figure 1: Agreement classes and genders in Western !Xõo



- noun assignment to a gender often not recoverable from meaning and/or its form
- > largely "covert" gender system
- typologically remarkable features of the system (cf. Güldemann 2000):
- (1) majority of classes not dedicated to either one gender or one number
- (2) number convergence in both directions > "crossed" system (Heine 1982)
- (3) genders outnumber classes, opposite is cross-linguistically common
- (4) probably contradicts Greenberg's universal 37: "A language never has more gender categories in non-singular numbers than in the singular."

4 Morphosyntactic encoding

4.1 Agreement vs. pronominalization

- anaphoric pronominalization across sentences can deviate from above gender system: tendency for 3/4 agreement for all animates irrespective of their lexical gender

(1a) |huun i †qhaa n|ng [...]# e †qhaa g||u'ri lori †ose
 white.1 1 then say [...] 3 then open:1 lorry door
 the Boer said: ["We shall buy ..."] # he then opened the lorry

(1b) |huun kaiki # i †om ku # n |uan g|aan n|au #
 white.1 DEI:1 1 agree MPO:4 and give:2 work.2 DAT:4
 tuin |an # i !obe ku n|ann
 garden.1 GEN:2 1 tell MPO:4 say

this Boer # he agrees to them # and gives them work # garden work # he tells them ...

- certain grams and lexical stems obligatorily cross-reference/index a nominal with respect to > person, gender, number; "alliterative" enclitics
- function like concord or pronoun (tonal differentiation in at least in some contexts)
- "clitic host" precedes or follows the nominal trigger > "cataphoric" or "anaphoric"
- adjective-like modifiers and the clause-final relative marker only hosts which refer anaphorically to a PRECEDING noun trigger and thus display canonical agreement > §4.2
- in all other cases the co-reference trigger FOLLOWS the clitic host and thus displays cataphoric cross-reference > §4.3-4 + §5

Orientation	Domain	Trigger type	Target = clitic host
Anaphoric	NP	any	adjective, demonstrative, relative-final concord
Cataphoric	NP	object or possessor	MPO, DAT, COM, SIML, alienable GEN
Cataphoric	VP	object or possessor	verb, lexicalized prepositions, copula
Cataphoric	Clause	subject or possessor	initial conjunctives (cleft, relative, complement, intention)

4.2 NP-internal anaphoric agreement on postposed modifiers

Adjective agreement (including deictics and some numerals)

- (2) **si.n|ause** **!xae** ke !abi kisi
 problem.3 big:3 REL:3 be.on.top MPO:1P.E
 it's a big problem that faces us

Final relative kV

- (3) si ke **si.n|ause** kisi kaisi ='ee **ke**
 1P GEN:3 problem.3 REL:1P DEI:1P have:3 REL:3
 the problem that we have here

4.3 Object in the scope of preceding predicates and relational grams

Transitive verb

- (4) e si **n|ang** s/he sees me
 e si **n|aa** s/he sees you
 e si **n|ae** s/he sees him/her
 e si **n|ai** s/he sees us
 e si **n|au** s/he sees you
 e si **n|au** s/he sees them
 3 IPFV see:X

Copula

- (5) si'i **ka** **si|aqan**
 1P COP:2 women.2
 we are women

Multipurpose oblique kV

- (6) e si tana **ka** †**aan** n†um
3 IPFV speak MPO:2 language.2 two
he speaks two languages (I1)

Dative-benefactive n|aV

- (7) n si |uan †xanya **n|aa**
1S IPFV take:2 book.2 DAT:2S
I give you a book (I30)

Comitative |'aV

- (8) n si n||ohm tam |'ai **n†ora**
1S IPFV stab:1S REFL COM:1 knife.1
I stab myself with a knife (I28)

Similative ka koV

- (9) e si n!aan **ka kui Chris**
3 IPFV walk.S like:1 PROP
he walks like Chris (I75)

Genitive |V or kV

- (10) tuu |a †**aan**
people GEN:2 language.2
(San) people's language
- (11) n |a **si†om†om-ka-sa**
1S GEN:2 greet-MPO-NOM.2
my greeting (Frida)

4.4 Subject of finite clauses in the scope of clause type markers

Initial relative tV, kV

- (12) toet ka ||'ae **knn** qoa kang |habi ⊙quqnu n†um ka
until MPO:2 time.2 REL:1S PST here get:"i" children two REL:2
until the time when I got two children

Reason

(13) n||aa knn n!ore kaeke a ku ||qhoa koeka saa uin-sa ka ke
as:1S land.3 DEL.3 2S IRR NEG well get:2 live-NOM.2 ? MPO:3
want my land hier, jy sal nie mooi lewe (kry) nie

Obligation

(14) n †'aun knn ||au ka ke
1S OBL:1S teach MPO:2S NOM
I must teach you (S) (Elsie)

5 Complex nominals, linear proximity, and janus-headed agreement

5.1 Genitives and possessors

- at least cataphoric agreement not steered by syntactic configuration, but by linear adjacency/ proximity

- genitive and related constructions as major evidence, head-final order opposed to generally head-initial NPs and clauses

> two types: (a) juxtaposition without linker (= "inalienable")

(b) with linker |V or kV agreeing with final possessee (= "alienable")

(15a) tuu |a †aan
people GEN:2b language.2b
(San) people's language

(15b) e †aan |i qham
3 talk.2b GEN:1 truth.1
the truth of his words

- clitic host indexes initial possessor (concord or pronominal), not final possessee

(16a) a haan si n|ann |a †xanya
2S where IPFV see:1S GEN:2b book.2b
where do you (S) see my book?

(16b) n saa ki |huun ke n||aeh
and go MPO:1 white.1 GEN:3 house.3
... and go to the Boer's house

- cataphoric indexing with inalienable nouns automatically for possessor

(17) e ka kae tuu |'e n!am #'oan

3 BG DEI:3 lie.S COM:3 side.2a one:2a

while she (girl) lies on her one side

- "ambidextrous" agreement, possessor is not the head (cf. Dixon 2000)

(18) n si n|ai |huun n||aeh !xae

1S IPFV see:1 white.1 house.3 big:3

I see the white's big house

5.2 Compounds

- 'cloud' as compound nominal 'rain house' with gender 2a/2a

(19a) ||kx'oe n||aeh #'oan

rain house one:2a

one cloud

(19b) ||kx'oe n||aen ka ||ari ka

rain houses REL:2a many REL:2a

many clouds

- compound does not have gender 3/1 of the head 'house'

(20a) n si n|ae n||aeh #'oe

1S IPFV see:3 house one:3

I see one house

(20b) n si n|ai n||aen ti ||ari ki

1S IPFV see:1 houses REL:1 many REL:1

I see many houses

- compound does not have gender 3/3 of the satellite noun 'rain'

(21a) n si n|ae ||kx'oe

1S IPFV see:3 rain

I see rain

(21b) n si n|ae ||kx'oe te ||ari ke

1S IPFV see:3 rain REL:3 much REL:3

I see much rain

- compound triggers cataphorically gender 3/3 according to satellite, but anaphorically gender 2a/2a

(22a) n si n|ae ||kx'oe n|aeh †'oan

1S IPFV see:3 rain house one:2a

I see one cloud

(22b) n si n|ae ||kx'oe n|aen ka ||ari ka

1S IPFV see:3 rain houses REL:2a many REL:2a

I see many clouds (182)

- ambidextrous agreement (question of lexical integrity of the compound)
- agreement not steered by syntactic configuration (no head agreement)
- anaphoric agreement not steered by adjacency (no head agreement)

What is the gender of a compound? the gender emerging from anaphoric agreement

- cataphoric agreement according to syntactic principle overriding lexical agreement: indexing cannot "jump over" an overt or implied trigger proximity/ adjacency

5.3 Complex pronominals

- free pronouns noun-like > pronoun modification (Güldemann forthcoming)
- final modifier can trigger agreement 2a/2a different from initial pronoun head

!aaxa 'other'

(23a) u si g|aan |'aisi mar u !aaxa ||qhoa taqan ka g|aan

4 IPFV work COM:1P.E but 4 other NEG VOL:2a IRR work

they work with us, but the others don't want to work (with us)

(23b) u ||qhoa taqu ka g|aan

4 NEG VOL:4 IRR work

they don't want to work

- modifier can be ignored as trigger at least in subject relative > semantic rather than proximity agreement

(24a) u !aaxa ku ||ari ku

4 other REL:4 many REL:4

(24b) u !aaxa ka ||ari ka

4 other REL:2a many REL:2a

the others who are many

- similar situation with other pronoun modifiers

'n//aahn 'all' < 'amount, total'

(25a) u 'n||aahn an ku si g|aan

4 all 2a REL:4 IPFV work

hulle almal werk (JuliettaLife)

(25b) u 'n||aahn an ka si g|aan

4 all 2a REL:2a IPFV work

they all work (a.-version produced spontaneously)

'n@aahn 'self' < 'body'

(26) e 'n@aahn an

3 self.2 2

she herself

5.4 Nominal derivatives

Diminutives

- host-final -mà / -màni

(27a) ||'ae-ma ||'ae-(sike)-mani

time.2a-DIM time.2a-P-DIM.P

little time, pause little times, pauses

(27b) n si kuru ka ||'ae-ma

1S IPFV make MPO:2a time.2a-DIM

I make a pause

(27c) n si kuru ka ||'ae-(sike)-mani

1S IPFV make MPO:2a time.2a-P-DIM.P

I make pauses

(28a) n||aeh-ma n||aeh-mani

house.3-DIM house.3-DIM.P

small house small houses

(28b) n si n|ae n||aeh-ma †'oan

1S IPFV see:3 house.3-DIM.2a one:2a

I see one small house

(28c) n si n|ae n||aeh-mani ka ||ari ka

1S IPFV see:3 house.3-DIM.P.2a REL:2a many REL:2a

I see many small houses

(29a) n |ubi ||'ai #'ui

1S know:1 place.1 one:1

I know one place

(29b) n |ubi ||'ai-ma #'oan

1S know:1 place.1-DIM.2a one:2a

ek ken een plekkie (Julietta)

(29c) n |oma n||'ann-te ka ||ari ka

1S know:2a places.2a-P REL:2a many REL:2a

I know many places

(29d) n |oma n||'ann-te-mani ka ||ari ka

1S know:2a places.2a-P-DIM.P.2a REL:2a many REL:2a

n |ubi ||'ai-mani ka ||ari ka

1S know:1 place.1-DIM.P.2a REL:2a many REL:2a

I know many small places

(30) si dram si #[si] si uin uin kisi taan

1P.E after.all IPFV CAUS DUP live MPO:1P.E P.REFL

ki seleng-ma kaanka

MPO:1 money.1-DIM.2a DEI:2a

After all, we make our living with this money

(31) n ka ||'aa ke ⊙qaqe si|aqnn-ma xata n ka ||qhoa

1S IRR love MPO:3 child.3 woman.3-DIM.2a but 1S IRR NEG

ers ||'aan

first take.S:2a

I may love a girl, but I will not go and take her

- anaphoric agreement shows lexical gender of diminutives: 2a/2a

- cataphoric agreement is triggered by linear proximity
- diminutives are grammatical word, not yet clear whether also phonological word

Associative plurals

- suffix *-tu* on proper names and kinship terms > class 4

(32) Sofia-**tu**

PROP-ASS.P

Sophia and company/them

(33) nna **n|ai** **Tom-tu** **ku** |ai ki dertien **ku**

1S:PERF see:"i" PROP-ASS.P REL:4 stay MPO:1 TOPO.1 REL:4

I have seen Tom and them who were at post 13

(34) n |oa si g|aan |'i **Rolan**

1S yesterday IPFV work COM:"i" PROP

I have worked yesterday with Roland (JuliettaLife)

(35) n |um **ki** **tuu**

1S know:1S GEN:"i" people.4

I know my people

5.5 Idiosyncratic nouns

- *tuu* 'people' with cataphoric i, anaphoric u (class 4)

(36) n |i **tuu** **!xabu** si !obe knn

1S GEN:"i" people.4 big:4 IPFV tell MPO:1S

my old people told me

- also with *Ōquqnu* 'children' (presumably from **Ōqaqe-?N-tu*)

6 Summary of cross-reference patterns

- (1) intrasentential cataphoric according to adjacency > linear syntax
- (2) intrasentential anaphoric according to lexical feature > hierarchical syntax + lexicon
- (3) intersentential anaphoric incipiently according to meaning > semantics

- obligatoriness: High (1) > (2) > (3) Low

- semantic arbitrariness: High (1) > (2) > (3) Low

- host-trigger distance: Short (1) > (2) > (3) Long

- hierarchies related to processing ease?

- arbitrary agreement is harder to anticipate (1) than to resume (2)-(3)
- arbitrary agreement is harder to resume for long (3) than short distance (2)

Abbreviations

ASS associative, CAUS causative, COM comitative, COP copula, DAT dative, DEI deictic, DIM diminutive, DUP reduplication, E exclusive, GEN genitive, IPFV imperfective, IRR irrealis, MPO multi-purpose oblique, NEG negative, NOM nominalization, OBL obligation, P plural, PERF perfect, PROP proper name, PST past, REFL reflexive, REL relative, S singular, SIML similative, TOPO toponym, VOL volition

Arabic numerals indicate agreement classes or, if followed by S or P, person

References

- Dixon, Robert M. W. 2000. Categories of the noun phrase in Jarawara. *Journal of Linguistics* 36: 487-510.
- Güldemann, Tom. 2000. Noun categorization systems in Non-Khoe lineages of Khoisan. *Afrikanistische Arbeitspapiere* 63: 5-33.
- Güldemann, Tom. forthcoming. Pronominal noun phrases in Tuu and Ju with special reference to their historical significance. *Afrika und Übersee*.
- Heine, Bernd. 1982. African noun class systems. In Seiler, Hansjakob and Christian Lehmann (eds.), *Apprehension: Das sprachliche Erfassen von Gegenständen, Teil I: Bereich und Ordnung der Phänomene*, 189-216. (Language Universal Series, 1/I.) Tübingen: Gunter Narr.