

# THIRD PERSON PARTICIPANT REFERENCE AND ZERO ANAPHORA IN ISTHMUS NAHUATL

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. General issues regarding reference tracking

This paper deals with the problem of identifying participants as they enter and exit the *stage* of a discourse. Grimes (1975:47) says: "The basic problems in identification are first, establishing reference sufficiently well that the hearer is clear about who or what is being talked about, and second, confirming or maintaining it sufficiently well to keep the hearer from becoming confused." Foley and Van Valin (1984:321) comment: "The use of full noun phrases to refer to all participants in each [clause] is a potential solution to this problem, but not an actual one, given the pervasive tendency in language to omit or pronominalize given and topical informaton." They go on to outline four mechanisms used by languages to keep track of participants apart from the use of noun phrases. These are, briefly, as follows:

**a. Switch function.** This mechanism utilizes a language's ability to recast the semantic roles of a participant while assigning it the same grammatical relation. For instance, the main participant may remain subject while changing from actor to undergoer in subsequent clauses by means of a passive construction. Thus other participants may come and go on the stage, but the main participant is retained as subject.

**b. Switch reference.** Switch reference languages employ morphemes to indicate whether the subject of the following clause is going to be the same or different from that of the present clause.

**c. Gender.** Many languages assign nouns to classes according to some property or merely arbitrarily. These classes or genders may serve to distinguish between participants in a discourse, since even in the absence of full nouns, their gender governs the pronouns or verbal affixes. Similarly, some languages exhibit a discourse-conditioned *fourth person* system and/or an inverse person marking system where forms are based on the status of the referent.

**d. Inference.** All languages use inference to some extent to distinguish participants. For example if there are two participants and one says 'Daddy', it is easy to infer that the son, not the father, is speaking. Languages which lack the above three systems of tracking participants will probably lean more heavily on inference, including the sociolinguistic experience of the hearer, to disambiguate than will those that possess overt linguistic signals. As will be seen below, Isthmus Náhuatl is such a language.

### 1.2. Isthmus Náhuatl particulars

The Mecayapan dialect of Isthmus Náhuatl (IN) is spoken by some 30,000 inhabitants of the Mecayapan municipality in the state of Veracruz. IN is a Utoaztecan language with some influence from the neighbouring Popoluca, a Mixe-Zoque language. Mecayapan IN is the only

Nahuatl dialect known to the author which distinguishes inclusive and exclusive first person plural. The variant of IN spoken in the municipality of Pajapan, some 15 kilometers due east of Mecayapan, does not employ this distinction.

The verb is inflected for subject, direct or indirect object, and number. Subject and object are prefixes; plural is a suffix, viz. aspiration of final vowel or *e* plus aspiration following final consonant. There is no distinction as to whether the plural affix pertains to subject or object, unlike the Pajapan dialect of IN which has a distinct plural object prefix. Third person subject is a zero morpheme, as is the singular suffix. The obligatory morphemes of the verb word can be presented as in (1).

- (1) Intransitive Verb: SUBJECT - ROOT - NUMBER  
 Transitive Verb: SUBJECT- DIRECT OBJECT - ROOT - NUMBER  
 Ditransitive Verb: SUBJECT - INDIRECT OBJECT - ROOT - NUMBER

IN has a full set of independent pronouns, including the inclusive versus exclusive first person plural distinction. The three sentences in (2) illustrate three realizations of subject: noun phrase, full pronoun and verb pronominal prefix alone.<sup>1</sup>

- (2) a. *Se taga' @-yajqui-@ Mecayapan.*  
 a man 3-went-SG.(to) Mecayapan  
 b. *Yej @-yajqui-@ Mecayapan.*  
 s/he 3-went-SG.(to) Mecayapan  
 c. *@-yajqui-@ Mecayapan.*  
 3-went-SG.(to) Mecayapan

Sentences (b) and (c) give the same semantic information as (a). Occurrences in text show that the full pronoun is the marked, less common of the two alternatives, as expected. The use of the full pronoun in IN is beyond the scope of this paper, although it can be noted that a third person pronoun is more likely to be used if it is in contrast with non-third person references.

### 1.3. The problem of reference tracking in IN

Languages which do not mark gender distinctions or switch reference are left with *inference* and *function switching* to track multiple third person referents. IN and Tepehua, spoken in Northern Veracruz, fall into this category. Tepehua makes considerable use of function switching in order to keep the central participant as grammatical subject (James

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<sup>1</sup>Abbreviations used in morpheme glosses are listed at the end of the paper.

Watters, personal communication). It appears that IN makes limited use of this device. One of the few examples noted is given in (3).<sup>2</sup>

(3) Después yáhuiya partera ichan ihuān momácaya<sup>3</sup>  
 after goes.now midwife (her)house and (she).is.given.now

itomín, ixapon que iga quicobrarohua yej.  
 (her)money (her)soap that charges she

'Afterwards the midwife goes to her house and she is given money and soap which is her payment.'

In this example the midwife retains her role as subject by means of the passive. As noted above this is not a common device for keeping track of third person participants in IN. From Foley and Van Valin's list this leaves the inference method to handle the bulk of the load for IN.

The term inference encompasses all the extralinguistic clues that a hearer may be able to apply to a discourse. How can we approach this topic in order to specify some of the ways speakers and listeners know to which participant a zero reference applies? Grimes (1975:50) suggests that although "there are many cases in which the hearer is expected to know who the participants are by deducing it from the context....[Z]ero identification must be approached with caution; there must be a way to recover the reference from context by rule." What kinds of rules Grimes envisages for the situations where inference is needed, he does not elaborate, but this does serve to motivate us to look a little deeper, rather than just saying that all zero third person references are tied by inference to their referents. We may assume that although a clause with a third person subject may appear ambiguous as to its referent to a non-native speaker, the native speaker will not have any problem with identification in the full context of the discourse.

## 2. Subject chaining in clauses

Schram and Jones (1979:272) propose a useful rule for determining the subjects of clauses which are ambiguous as to subject in Jalapa de Díaz Mazatec. This dialect of Mazatec has a problem similar to IN in distinguishing third person referents. Their rule is as follows:

**SUBJECT-CHAINING RULE (SCR):** A noun phrase in an independent clause is understood to be the subject of the following subject-less ambiguous clause(s); a subject noun phrase takes precedence over an object noun phrase if both are present.

IN conforms to this rule in many instances. For example in the following extract from the text *Afternoon*, the narrator's group is subject of the first sentence. Sister Elaine is then

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<sup>2</sup>This example is taken from Law 1955:276.

<sup>3</sup>The form momácaya could be reflexive, literally 'she gives herself now'. Since IN lacks a distinct passive, the same form as the reflexive is used, context making the meaning clear. For example, motōca tzapo' is read 'the banana is planted' not 'the banana plants itself'.

introduced as subject of the second sentence and continues without NP reference as subject of the first clause of the third sentence.

(4) *Se tiqta niajquij iga mandado.*  
One afternoon we.went on.an errand

*La hermana Elena quichij se ilhuitzin.*  
The sister Elaine she.made.it one little.party

*Thuān @netitanquej nej ihuān el hermano Cristóbal*  
And (she)-sent.us I and the brother Christopher

*iga manicohuatij mojli de doña María.*  
so.that we.might.go.buy mole of doña María.

'One afternoon we went on an errand. Sister Elaine gave a party, so she sent me and Brother Christopher to buy mole from Doña María.'

The SCR states that object NPs that occur alone in a clause will become the subject of a following ambiguous clause. Data thus far shows this not to apply broadly to IN. Objects do not tend to become the subjects of following ambiguous clauses, rather the previous subject generally continues in that role. Human or animate objects may be more likely to pick up the subject role than inanimate ones. I imagine that it would be possible to elicit an example such as Schram and Jones give where an inanimate object becomes subject of a following existence type verb: 'Give me my machete. (It) is lying over there'. However, in such an example it is more likely that it is the change in person and strong inferential factors rather than the SCR that require such a reading. Counterexamples such as '(He) grabbed a machete and (he) went' would, I imagine, predominate in IN. Thus we may modify the SCR to tailor it to IN. At the same time it is expedient to call it a strategy rather than a rule due to the flexibility of its application.

Isthmus Náhuatl SUBJECT-CHAINING STRATEGY (SCS): A subject noun phrase in an independent clause is understood to be the subject of a following subject-less ambiguous clause(s). Object noun phrases have the potential of becoming subjects of following subject-less ambiguous clauses.

Note that this is closer to what would be expected in what Foley and Van Valin call a switch-function system.

## 2.1. Tracking established participants with the SCS

In the following example from the text *Vulture*, the vulture is introduced in the first clause with a noun phrase. From there on anaphora is realised by the zero subject prefix to the verb. The example just gives the following four clauses, but the whole episode in which the vulture finds dead meat and fights with another vulture, then goes home to sleep, is recounted without recourse to any other means of identification beyond the zero subject prefix. The last

clause of the episode is a summary statement in which the noun phrase is repeated, sixteen clauses after the previous (i.e. the first) occurrence of the NP.

(5) Moxi @patantinemi.  
vulture (it)-goes.flying.around

Icuá' @siahui, @moquetza ipan cuahui', @mosehuiá.  
when (it)-tires (it)-perches on tree (it)-rests

@Quicui sej iga @patantinemi ipan ajco.  
(it)-takes again to (it)-goes.flying.around on high

'The vulture goes flying around. When it tires it perches on a tree and rests. It sets off again to go flying around on high.'

This example suggests a broad principle on which many IN speakers seem to operate, viz. once a participant is established it is unnecessary to use a noun phrase or free pronoun in future references except (a) to distinguish from other participants, or (b) to focus on the participant in some way.

The first exception above is transparently necessary. The second exception arises because of the overlap of two discourse functions: the identification of participants and the speaker's desire to raise the hearer's awareness of a participant for a particular purpose. For example, the participant referred to as 'that brother' in the following extract from the text *In Vain*, had already been referred to as such twice and introduced as 'a brother'; he had been sole subject of four previous clauses and joint subject, with a group of men, of six previous clauses. At this point the brother is identified more fully and becomes the main participant as he goes out into the sea to fish while the others wait on shore.

(6) Huan ij quiytoj inón hermano itocá' Geronimo, quiytoj yéj  
and then he.said that brother his.name Geronimo, he.said he

iga maniquisacan pan inón a'ti, maniacan can boca,  
that we.SJV.leave from that stream, we.SJV.go where mouth,

in can menbocarohua lám̄ar ihuán inón soya ahuj.  
where it.mouths.together sea with that palm stream

'Then that brother, named Geronimo, said that we should leave that stream and go to the mouth, where that palm stream meets the sea.'

We may say that while it may not be necessary for a speaker to use a full NP to refer to a participant in order to disambiguate the reference, the speaker may choose to do so for reasons such as some sort of thematic emphasis. The summary statement at the end of the first episode of the vulture text may also be cited as an example of such emphasis. By the SCS it is

unnecessary for the purpose of identification alone to specify the subject of a clause if it is the same as that of the preceding clause.

### 3. Reference switching which does not follow the SCS

Schram and Jones do not expect the SCS to apply mechanically. They go on to say (274):

Sometimes a sequence of clauses can have different subjects even though no new noun phrase has been introduced. In these cases there is no ambiguity regarding subject because some aspect of the context has established clearly the identification of the subject. The context may be: (1) the lexical content of the verb, (2) the script of the text, (3) the larger social context, or (4) the performative interaction (dialogue or conversation).

Notice that this enumeration of what is meant by *context* is a good summary of the factors involved in inference. Elaborating on (4), Schram and Jones (275) note that in conversation, "the give and take of performative interaction...may provide unambiguous identification of subjectless clauses." IN texts display frequent reliance on this inference from conversational exchange to identify participants. A speech verb, e.g. *quijliá* 's/he says to him/her', is often used without specifying the subject or indirect object. Examples in text give up to thirteen consecutive clauses of speech interaction without identifying the participants as arguments of the speech verb. This is usually when two participants are conversing together, so we might say that, as is often true, participant A alternates with participant B as subject of every other clause. However, as (7) shows, simple alternation does not always account for the facts. In this example, A and B refer to a villager and his son respectively.<sup>4</sup>

- (7) a. A: @Quijliaqui': «?Te in tichoca?»  
3-says.to.3      Why    you cry?
- b. B: @Quijliaqui': «Atē.»  
3-says.to.3      nothing
- c. B: @Quijliaqui': «Se choolintzín yej este cuajchapoti'  
3-says.to.3      a boy                    who is    black.faced
- d.    *necuilij*      *nopaj*    *irretratoj.*»  
took.from.me    my.dad    his.picture
- e. A: @Quijliaqui': «¿De can in tej?»  
3-says.to.3      from where.are you?
- f. B: @Quijliaqui': «Nej nihualaj ipan cuayo.»  
3-says.to.3      I    I.come    from forest
- g. B: @Quijliaqui': «Ompi vivirohua noman.»  
3-says.to.3      there lives      my.mother

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<sup>4</sup>The full gloss for *quijliaqui* 's/he.says.it.to.him/her.EVID' was reduced for economy.

- h. A: @Quijliaqui': «Aj.»  
 3-says.to.3 oh
- i. A: @Quijliaqui': «Inān tē ticchijtinemi nij?»  
 3-says.to.3 now what you.go around.doing here?

Clearly, it is essential for the hearer to process the content of the quote in order to decide which of the participants is speaking. However, we can still say that after a speech verb, specifically the ditransitive form which calls for an IO *quijliá* '3.says.it.to.3', rather than transitive *quijtohua* '3.says.it', a change of participant is anticipated unless the content of the quote does not elicit a response. Thus lines b and h, 'nothing' and 'oh', do not elicit a response and the current speaker continues. That line f is not a full turn in the conversation would be impossible to predict. Rather, line g might repeat the quotation formula, probably because it was an afterthought by the storyteller.

### 3.1. Ditransitive clauses as exceptions to the SCS

The prediction that a ditransitive speech verb is likely to signal a change of participant can be extended to other ditransitive verbs, or verbs of transfer as we might term them. Data demonstrating this is limited but significant enough to be included as the basis for hypothesis and further investigation. I propose the following strategy:

**SUBJECT TRANSFER STRATEGY (STS):** The indirect object of a ditransitive verb is likely to become the subject of a following clause which is ambiguous as to subject. Ditransitive speech verbs follow this strategy except if the content of the quote does not elicit any type of response.<sup>5</sup>

The following example comes from the text *Black Boy*. Participant A is the mother, B is the son.

- (8) a. A: @Quijliaqui': «Nij nicpiá se irretrato can  
 3-says.to.3 here I.have a (his)picture where
- b. nionoquej niomemej.»  
 we.EX.are we.EX.two
- c. B: @Quijliaqui': «Aj ta' xicuajlígahua'»  
 3-says.to.3 oh hey bring.it
- d. A: @Quinextilij.  
 3-shows.it.to.3
- e. B: @Quijliaqui': «Aj sí mataj quénpaqui' an nopaj.»  
 3-says.to.3 oh yes just like.EVID ? my.dad

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<sup>5</sup>There is some evidence that speech clauses containing indirect quotations do not obey the STS, but rather follow the SCS.

In line d the ditransitive verb ‘to show’ functions the same way as a speech verb would in transferring the role of subject to the other participant. Later in the story the picture figures again in the interaction, as seen in the following example, where A is the son and B is the black boy.

- (9) a. B: @Quijliaqui’: «T<sub>a</sub>’ xingemaca on retretratoj.»  
3-says.to.3 hey give me that picture
- b. A: @Quima’  
3-gives.it.to.3
- c. B: ihuān @quijliaqui: «An si.»  
and 3-says.to.3 oh yes
- d. B: @Mochichijto’, @quitzto’, cua’qui’ @motalojtē,  
3-pretending 3-looking when.EVID 3-suddenly.ran
- e. @cholo el negrito, yej este cuajchapoti’.  
3-fled the little.black who was blackfaced
- f. B: @Quijliaqui’: «iChoca choolintzin! Choca.»  
3-says.to.3 cry little.boy cry
- g. A: @Quit<sub>a</sub>loch<sub>t</sub>ij  
3-pursued.3
- h. B: ihuān @miyan inōn choolintzin yej este cuajchapoti’.  
and 3-hid that little.boy who was blackfaced

Line b again illustrates how a ditransitive verb serves to transfer the subject role to the other participant in the following clause, line c, even though this clause is closely linked to the next with ihuān ‘and’. A parallel construction in lines g and h *not* involving a transfer verb takes a noun phrase to clarify the change of subject. Subject switches from line a to line b and from lines f to g serve to further illustrate transfer by speech verb. The lack of switch from line c to line d can be claimed to comply with the notion that the quote content does not elicit a response.

### 3.2. Application of the STS to Chinese

Charles Li and Sandra Thompson (1979) discuss zero anaphora in Mandarin Chinese discourse. Although a third person pronoun is available to the speaker, it is very often not used. Ambiguity as to the identity of third person referents leads to similar difficulties in tracking participants as are presented in IN. Their first cited example is an interesting case for the application of the STS to Chinese. In the following extract, Yang-Zhi has been the topic (i.e. subject) of the previous three ambiguous clauses as would be predicted by the SCS.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup>This presentaion of the Chinese script lacks diacritics. @ marks slot where a pronoun could appear; each instance of @ is numbered as per Li and Thompson.



- (11) a. Icuā' iga támi'ya @tacua<sub>j</sub>, @yáhu<sub>i</sub>ja ti<sub>o</sub>pan.  
 when finished 3-eat.PL 3-go.PL (to).church  
 'When (they) finish eating (they) go to church.'
- b. @Hui' pa<sub>l</sub>ej huejca.  
 3-comes priest (from).far  
 'The priest comes from far away.'
- c. Ompí @asi, @quin<sub>o</sub>ntzaj.  
 there 3-arrives 3-counsels.3.PL  
 'On arrival (he) counsels (them).'
- d. Tami @quin<sub>o</sub>ntzaj, @yahuij sej ca<sub>n</sub> ono' ilhui'.  
 finishing 3-counsels.3.PL 3-go.PL again where is feast  
 'When he is done counselling them, they go back to the feast.'
- e. Ompa sej tayohuati, sej @quin<sub>o</sub>ntzaj.  
 there again it.gets.dark again 3-counsel.3.PL  
 'There when it gets dark again, they counsel him again.'
- f. @Quiljiáj, «Tej inān timonamictiá ihuān notacotz<sub>i</sub>n,  
 3-say.to.3.PL 2 now 2.marry with our.daughter
- g. pero amo ticmagas queman.»  
 but not 2.will.hit.3 sometime
- 'They say to him, «Now you are getting married to our daughter, but don't you ever hit her.»'

Line b is an example of a minor participant--the priest--entering the stage in VS order, as in Huaztec Náhuatl. This coincides with the fact that in IN, VS is the unmarked order for an intransitive verb. This minor character then becomes the subject of the following two clauses in line c as per the SCS. The verb of the second clause requires a complement. By inference it must be the couple who receive counsel, and this is reinforced by the third person plural object marking. The first clause of line d is a typical link, repeating the verb of the previous clause with an auxiliary marking completed aspect; the whole clause can be read as 'then'. The second clause of line d has a different subject than the first. If the verb *quin<sub>o</sub>ntza* 'to counsel' is a transfer verb (i.e. 'to give counsel'), then the STS makes the couple the subject of the second clause which is the best reading; i.e. the priest leaves the stage at this point. The verb *quin<sub>o</sub>ntza* occurs three more times in the text but none of these give rise to ambiguous referents to which the STS might be applied. The occurrence in line e is followed by *quijliáj* 'they say to him' going on to give the content of the counsel. Similarly the next occurrence of *quin<sub>o</sub>ntza* goes on to give the content of the counsel. The third occurrence is a summary statement followed by a clause introducing a new subject, the girl, with a full noun.

The first clause in line e is temporal setting. The second clause is something of a surprise; the form *quin<sub>o</sub>ntzaj* is identical to the two previous occurrences where it meant 'he (the priest) counsels them (the couple)'. No new subject has been introduced but there has been a change of location and time since the priest was counselling. It

is not until we examine the content of the quote that we, being from outside the culture, realise that *quinonotzaj* must be glossed 'they (the bride's parents) counsel him (the groom)'. If we take the speaker to actually be the bride's father speaking on behalf of his wife, we know that he has been a vocal participant in the negotiations leading up to the wedding. So that rather than coming out of nowhere, he (or they, including his wife) is already part of the inventory of main characters who are available to the listener as potential participants.

I suggest that the Aztec listener builds a mental set of participants as the story progresses, probably ranked as to more or less central, as Beller and Beller suggest. When a subjectless clause arises the listener substitutes the highest ranking participant who fits the context. I suspect that nearness of a previous reference will effect the ranking of a participant so that rank will be a dynamic value, varying as the story progresses.

The vulture text quoted earlier gives a simple illustration of a central character outranking a minor one.

- (12) a. *ompa @majasij ihuān se' moxi,*  
 there they-meet.together with another vulture
- b. *itocā' quebranta-huesoj, ihuān @mocuejcuesohuaj.*  
 its.name bone-breaker and they-fight.together
- c. *Ihuān @quisa ompa @yahui @cochiti can*  
 and it-leaves there it-goes it-goes.to.sleep where
- d. *mijmicto' cuamej.*  
 they.are.many.dead trees

The main vulture has been sole subject of the eleven previous clauses. In line a of this excerpt he becomes the joint subject with 'bone-breaker' of the verb *majasij* 'they meet together' and in line c of the verb *mocuejcuesohuaj* 'they fight together'. Line c contains two clauses without explicit subjects. Even though the bone-breaker was the last participant mentioned, it is not he but the central character, the main vulture, who continues as subject.

## 5. Unintroduced participants

Li and Thompson (1979:318) give an example which shows the extent to which inference is used in Chinese to establish referents; (13) is an excerpt.

- (13) c. *Zhu-Chan yi xian dou xiaode @6 shi yige*  
 Zhu-Chan whole county all know is a
- hua meiguahui de mingbi*  
 paint flower.and.plant rel.cl. famous painter

'The whole county of Zhu-Chan knew that (he) was a famous painter of flowers and plants.'

- d. @7 zheng-zhe      laimai@8  
fight-aspect to.buy

'(People from the county) were fighting to buy (his paintings).'

Commenting on clause d, Li and Thompson say that its referents are not found elsewhere in the discourse sample. They continue (319):

This is, of course, because these referents can only be inferred from the discourse and are not explicitly present in it. Notice that all that clause 5d tells us is 'were fighting to buy'. WHO was fighting and WHAT they wanted to buy have to be inferred from the earlier mention of the whole county and of the fact that W.-M. was a famous painter.

IN is similar to Mandarin Chinese in this almost extreme use of inference. The example in (14) includes lines from example 5 above.

- (14) a. B: Y    ch<sub>o</sub>catinemi cho<sub>o</sub>lantz<sub>i</sub>n tatajtantinemi.  
and goes.crying little.boy goes.asking.questions
- b. A: @1-Quijliaqui': «?Te in tich<sub>o</sub>ca?»  
3-says.to.3                      Why    you cry?
- c. B: @2-Quijliaqui': «Atē.»  
3-says.to.3                      nothing
- d. B: @3-Quijliaqui': «Se cho<sub>o</sub>lantz<sub>i</sub>n yej este cuajchapoti'  
3-says.to.3                      a boy                      who is    black.faced
- e.    ne<sub>c</sub>uilij                      no<sub>p</sub>aj    ir<sub>r</sub>re<sub>t</sub>ratoj.»  
took.from.me    my.dad his.picture

As in the Chinese example above, the listener in this text has to supply the identity of the participant, @1 in line b. The only clue is that the boy has gone asking questions in line a. We must infer that he asks questions of someone and that line b begins a sample of the conversations he had with villagers. A significant difference in this IN example against the Chinese example is that here the villager takes a continuing role in the story, participating in 13 exchanges with one of the central characters. In the Chinese example the people from the county are very minor participants, not figuring in the rest of the text extract.

## 6. Conclusion

This paper has examined some aspects of zero anaphora in Isthmus Náhuatl. Although inference is often essential to the identifying of third person referents marked by the zero

subject prefix, it is suggested that there are strategies which can be proposed to account for the majority of cases. These are: (a) The subject chaining strategy, which states that if a clause is unmarked as to subject, its subject is that of the previous clause; and (b) the subject transfer strategy, which is an exception to the SCS applying to ditransitive verbs. It states that the indirect object of a ditransitive clause will become the subject of a following clause which is ambiguous as to subject. Both the SCS and the STS are intended to predict, rather than to be inviolable. Examples from Mandarin Chinese support both these strategies.

There are cases in which neither the SCS nor the STS account for the identity of a subjectless clause. It is suggested in an informal way that the Aztec listener builds an inventory of participants, possibly ranked as to their centrality to the story, from which the most likely filler is drawn when an empty subject slot is not readily filled by the SCS or STS. An exception to this is the entrance of a minor participant without any noun phrase of identification. In this case, as with a close parallel from Chinese, the identity must be inferred from the immediate context.

### Appendix More About Dialogue in Discourse

For the non-native speaker, even the presence of an NP with a speech verb may not always clear up the confusion. Subject (S) and indirect object (IO) are rarely both marked with a speech verb since one of them is usually established in text. If both are present, the clause order is either S-VERB-IO or VERB-S-IO. From the second order it can be seen that the absence of S or IO leaves a noun following a speech verb ambiguous as to its role. More often than not the NP will be the IO, since it is common for the subject to be established. Below are two examples from the text *Drunk man* illustrating both roles for the same word order. In the first, the drunk has been identified by a NP two clauses earlier and has just met the frog. In the second, he was identified by a NP four clauses earlier and had just addressed his wife.

(15) Quijliá      cala': «¿Te ompa ticchijto' tej cala'?»  
 3.says.to.3 frog      What there you.doing you frog  
 'The drunk said to the frog, «What are you doing there, frog?»'

(16) Quijliá      isihua': «Xaj maj xitahuānati.»  
 3.says.to.3 his.wife go more go.get.drunk  
 'His wife said to the drunk, «Go and get more drunk.»'

The content of these quotes serves to identify their speakers. Also the SCS anticipates that the subject of the first example is the drunk and not the frog. The STS anticipates that the subject of the second example is the wife and not the drunk. Perhaps it is the reliance on other factors besides the presence of an NP that encourages the dropping of NPs. Several instances are recorded in text where multiple speech interchanges occur *without even the presence of a speech verb*. The only clues to change of participant are in pauses and in the content of the quote.

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### Abbreviations

EVID	reportative evidential
EX	exclusive
PL	plural
SG	singular
SJV	subjunctive
2	second person
3	third person
@	zero morpheme