Syntactic Conditions on Null Arguments in Indo-European Bible Translations

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Introduction

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This in turn might lead to hypotheses regarding the inherited PIE syntax, though these must be tested in the other branches too.
Syntax and discourse

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The aim is to show that the two first conditions reduce to one
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Types of anaphoric expressions

Definite NP

(The story about the steward goes on.)

kai epêinesen ho kurios ton oikonomon tês adikias
and praise.AOR.3S the lord.NOM the steward.ACC the injustice.GEN

‘And the lord praised the unjust steward’
Types of anaphoric expressions

Pronoun

(There was a rich man who had a steward.)

kai fônêsas auton eipen autôi
and calling him ACC said AOR.3S him DAT

‘And he called him and said to him . . . ’
Types of anaphoric expressions

Null anaphora

(Men will tell you ‘He is here’ or ‘He is there’.)

mê apelthête mède diôxête
not go away.AOR.3P.SBJ nor follow.AOR.3P.SBJ

Do not go and follow (them)
Object anaphors and their antecedents in Greek

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Antecedents of overt object anaphora by distance and function

- Overt anaphors (slightly) prefer subject antecedents to objects
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Antecedents of null object anaphora by distance and function

- Null anaphora strongly prefer object antecedents
- Syntactic mechanism of argument sharing/reduction?
- In line with Luraghi’s results, I interpret these numbers as there being two types of object null anaphora
  1. Discourse licensed anaphora (disappearing in NT Greek)
  2. (Quasi-)syntactically licensed anaphora
- We will focus on the latter type here
We will focus on two of Luraghi (2003)’s types

1. Conjunction reduction in sentence coordination
2. Argument sharing between predicate participle and matrix verb

But notice that sentence coordination itself is not easy to define purely syntactically, since the distinction between two coordinated and one sentence followed by another introduced by ‘and’ is largely artificial.
(Quasi-)syntactically licensed anaphora

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Reduction in coordination

Anaphoric

exele auton kai bale apo sou remove.IMPV it.ACC and throw.IMPV from you

‘Take it out and throw (it) away from you.’ (Mt 18:9)
Reduction in coordination

Cataphoric

nun de kai heôrakasin kai memisêkasin kai eme kai now PTC and see.PFV.3P and remember.PFV.3P and me.ACC and ton patera mou my father.ACC

‘Now they have both seen and hated both me and my father’

- Anaphoric conjunction reduction is common (105 examples), whereas cataphoric conjunction reduction is very rare and associated with strong discourse marking
Participles

Argument sharing

kai labôn tous hepta artous eukharistêsas eklasen kai and taking.AP the seven bread.ACC blessing.AP break.3S.AOR and edidou tois mathêtais autou hina paratithôsin give.3S.IMPF his disciples.DAT that put forth.3.PL

‘Taking the seven bread and blessing (them), he broke (them) and gave (them) to his disciples, that they may serve (them)’

- Relatively common (44 examples)
Participles

Overt anaphor

καὶ προσκαλεσάμενος παιδίον ἐστῆσεν αὐτό 
and calling. AOR child. ACC make stand. 3S. AOR in their midsth

ἐπὶ μέσοι αὐτῶν καὶ εἶπεν 
and say. 3S. AOR

‘And he called a child and put him in their midst and said’

- Much rarer (10 cases)
- Notice that auton could be resumptive
Null + anaphor

kai labontes apekeinon auton kai exebalon auton exô tou
and taking. \textit{AP} killed. \textit{3P.AOR} him. \textit{ACC}
ampelônos

‘And they took (him) and killed him and threw him out of the vineyard’

- Never found with full NPs in matrix
- Resumptive again? or clitic climbing?
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- Armenian and (to a lesser extent) Latin avoids participle sharing
- OCS and Gothic pretty much follow the Greek
Translation strategies

Voice alternation

qui adprehensum eum ceciderunt et dimiserunt
who take.PPP.ACC him.ACC beat up.3PL.PFV and send away.3PL.PFV
vacuum
empty-handed.ACC

‘They took him, beat him up and sent him back empty-handed’
Translation strategies

Absolute construction

et accepto calice gratias agens dedit eis
and take. PPP.ABL cup.ABL thank. PP.NOM give them DAT

‘Taking the cup, he thanked and gave (it) to them’
Translation strategies

Coordination

nemo lucernam accendit et in abscondito ponit
no-one lamp. ACC light and in hidden put

No-one lights a lamp and hides (it)
Translation strategies

Finite subordinate clause

quam cum videret Iesus vocavit ad se et ait
whom when see.SBJ.IMPF.3S Jesus called to REFL.ACC and say.PFV.3S illi
her.DAT

‘When Jesus saw her, he called her and said to her’

- The syntactic position of *quam* is unclear: it could belong in either clause
Translation strategies

Overt pronoun

 gabindandans lesu tie.MM
 brahtedun ina at
 Jesus.ACC brought him to Pilate

‘They tied up Jesus and brought him to Pilate’

- No overt pronoun in Greek
- But obvious transmission difficulties
The evidence from the translations

- There are many cases where the translations just take over the Greek structure, in particular in Gothic and OCS
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- We will argue for the latter option.
Types of participles in Greek

Elaboration

sôson  seauton  katabas  apo  tou staurou
save.PFV.IMP.2SG  yourself.ACC  going-down.AP.NOM  from the cross.GEN

Save yourself (by) going down from the cross. (Mk. 15:30)

- Elaborate on the matrix event
- Typically get an instrumental or manner reading
- Co-temporal with the matrix event
Types of participles in Greek

Frame

egertheis de Iôsêph apo tou upnou epoiêsên

wake up.AP.NOM PTC Joseph.NOM from the dream.GEN did.AOR.3S

‘When he woke up from the dream, Joseph did . . .’

- Serve to anchor the matrix event in time
- Are always sentence-initial
Types of participles in Greek

**Independent rheme**

*egertheis*  *paralabe*  *paidion*

waking-up.AP  take.PFV.IMP.2SG  the.ACC  child.ACC

Wake up and take the child with you (Mt. 2:13)

- Denote events in narrative sequence with the matrix verb
- Can be ‘stacked’
- Are interpreted within the same embedding as the matrix (in this case the imperative mood)
Various positions

apokritheis de eipen autēi ho kurios
answer.AP.NOM PTC said.AOR.3S her.DAT the lord.NOM

⇒ ‘When the Lord answered, he said to her:’
Various positions

apokritheis  de  eipen  autêι  ho  kurios
answer.AP.NOM  PTC  said.AOR.3S  her.DAT  the  lord.NOM

⇒ ‘The Lord answered and said to her’
Various positions

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⇒ ‘The Lord said in answer’
And their c-structural realization

- Participles
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And their c-structural realization

Participle syntax

Participle structure:

- **S’**
  - **S**
    - **S1**
      - **Vptcp**
    - **S2**
      - **Vptcp**
    - **Sm**
      - **Vfin**
    - **S3**
      - **Vptcp**
    - **S4**
      - **Vptcp**

- **Participle**
  - in **SpecS’** are frames (temporal anchors)
  - left-joined to **S** are independent rhemes (typically narrative)
  - inside **S** are elaborations (typically co-eventive)
  - right-joined to **S** are independent rhemes (typically causal)
Backward control

\[ \begin{align*}
S & \rightarrow S_{adj} \Rightarrow \text{epoiesen} \\
S_{adj} & \rightarrow V \Rightarrow \text{egertheis, Joseph} \\
V & \rightarrow \text{NP}_{subj} \Rightarrow \text{apo tou hupnou} \\
\text{NP}_{subj} & \rightarrow \text{Joseph} \\
\text{PP}_{obl} & \rightarrow \text{apo tou hupnou} \\
\end{align*} \]
Discourse relations

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The ‘weird’ syntax comes from a ‘natural’ discourse phenomenon.
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- Notice that the translation strategies we looked at all follow the discourse constraint
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  - On the other hand, the discourse coordination of participles and main verbs might be an innovation of Greek.
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  - Argument sharing between discourse coordinated verbs is found in all translations and might be inherited
  - On the other hand, the discourse coordination of participles and main verbs might be an innovation of Greek
- For confirmation, we need to look at the other languages, especially Vedic
Null anaphora in non-subject function comes in two flavours: discourse conditioned and syntactically conditioned.
Summing up

- Null anaphora in non-subject function comes in two flavours: discourse conditioned and syntactically conditioned.
- The discourse conditioned ones are on the return by NT Greek, so earlier material is needed for assessment.
Summing up

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- However, the discourse coordination of participles, in spite of syntactic subordination, might not be old.
Availability

- The corpus is available for everyone to use
- We publish XML files with raw data as well
- All our data is released under a Creative Commons license
- Visit http://www.hf.uio.no/ifikk/proiel/ for details