

Agreement Shift and Complementizer Interaction in Assamese

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KEY CONTRIBUTIONS: In this paper, the presence and the main features of Agreement Shift (AgrShft) in Assamese are shown along with the interaction of the complementizers *ze* and *buli* with AgrShft. AgrShft occurs with a logophoric pronoun and the *buli* complementizer in Assamese and hence the Logophor agreement and OP_{LOG} are used to account for these facts in Assamese.

§1 **AGREEMENT SHIFT IN ASSAMESE:** AgrShft refers to the phenomenon where [1P] agreement appears on the verb although the subject is a [3P] or a [2P] pronoun/anaphor. Assamese, an Indo-Aryan Language shows AgrShft, (1) & (2), which is again optional. In both the examples, it is seen that there is [1P] agreement on the embedded verb in the sentence but the subject of the sentence is a [3P]/[2P] pronoun. These utterances are indirect speech and not direct speech which we can test by inserting a *wh*-phrase into the embedded clause that takes matrix scope, (3). However there is also a direct reading of (3), where it means *Did you say, "I'll eat."* if it is said with an uttered intonation of a pause after the *wh*-phrase. So, AgrShft in Assamese is similar to the Dravidian languages like Tamil [S12] & Telugu [M16], (4). However, there is no Indexical Shift in Assamese as the [1P] pronoun inside the embedded clause still refers to the utterance speaker, (5).

§2 **FOUR PROPERTIES OF AGRSHFT IN ASSAMESE:** a) There is selectional variation among the verbs that show AgrShft. Speech and thought verbs like *ko* 'say' and *bhab* 'think', (6) & (7) allow AgrShft whereas a knowledge verb like *zan* 'know' (8) doesn't allow AgrShft. b) Besides, under attitude verbs, rationale clauses also allow AgrShft to happen, (9). c) The *pro* in the embedded clause is logophoric, which means that it cannot refer to anyone else other than the subject of the matrix clause (6)-(9) and, d) AgrShft doesn't happen with an overt pronoun, (10).

§3 **ROLE OF COMPLEMENTIZER IN AGRSHFT:** All the examples till now had the complementizer *buli* in them which is one of the two complementizers present in Assamese. *Buli* is a quotative complementizer, just like the Telugu/Tamil *-ani/nna*. It subcategorizes for both [+decl] and [-decl] clauses (2) & (3). From the discussion so far it is seen that *buli* allows AgrShft; AgrShft with an overt pronoun is bad with *buli*; the *pro* present in the embedded clause with *buli* is logophoric in nature as it refers to none other than the attitude holder.

THE COMPLEMENTIZER *ze*: The other complementizer in Assamese *ze* subcategorizes only for a [+decl] clause (11), and not a [-decl], (12). As opposed to *buli*, *ze* doesn't allow any AgrShft and allows only an overt pronoun and that pronoun has no logophoricity, which means that it may refer to the attitude holder or someone else other than him/her, (11). But still, *pro* and AgrShft are bad with *ze*, (13).

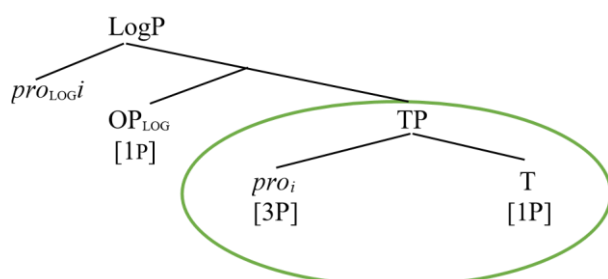
CONTRAST BETWEEN *ze* AND *buli*: Contrasting *ze* and *buli*, it is seen that the first doesn't allow *pro* and AgrShft while the later does and there is logophoric *pro* in case of *buli* while *pro* is bad with *ze*. There is one similarity between these two: the overt pronoun present in the embedded clause of these two complementizers shows no logophoricity. To summarize, overt pronouns have no logophoricity as opposed to covert pronouns which are logophoric. AgrShft occurs only in the presence of logophoric *pro*.

***de se* AND *de re* IN ASSAMESE:** The difference between *de se* and *de re* constructions in Assamese is not crystal clear, but still distinction can be made out, (14). A *de se* interpretation is better with AgrShft as opposed to *de re* interpretation, (14a) & (14b).

§4 **OUR ANALYSIS:** Since AgrShft is happening only with a logophoric pronoun, the Logophor agreement (1P Logophoricity) and an OP_{LOG} in the left periphery is used to account for the Assamese facts. The LogP in Assamese is outside the spell out domain of CP and the OP head has a [1P] feature that it transfers to T via C-to T transfer. When this happens the agent- Θ role gets transferred from T to OP_{LOG} , from which it is assigned to pro_{LOG} . Due to this reason, only agent pronouns can co-refer with pro_{LOG} while non-agent pronouns cannot. When a pronoun in Spec TP co-refers with the pronoun in Spec LogP, it triggers a C-to-T transfer of [1P] and that shows up as verbal agreement and hence AgrShft. This [1P] is not any indexical and hence not interpreted as the utterance speaker. Thus, there is no indexical shift in Assamese and hence, no Index-shifting monster (☹). The clause is presented from first person perspective of whoever binds pro_{LOG} and activates OP_{LOG} , and is also the subject of the clause as pro_{LOG} and the subject pronoun are co-referential. In this analysis AgrShft happens due to a Logophoric operator in the left periphery which triggers [1P] agreement on the embedded verb via C-to-T transfer (15). [3P] pronoun which has a [-LOG] feature cannot be bound by the *pro* of LogP and hence it refuses to occur under LogP and doesn't show AgrShft. The LOGP is merged in Assamese in the left periphery at such a height that SPEECH verbs << THOUGHT verbs can embed it, but not KNOWLEDGE verbs. In case of rationale clauses also logophoricity is seen as in all these cases the mental perspective of the context speaker is represented. Now comes the interaction of the complementizer with LogP. The *ze* complementizer cannot embed a *pro* which has the feature [+LOG]. The reason behind this is that *ze* cannot embed a LogP under it. *ze* also cannot embed interrogatives, it can only embed small sized CP's and these CP's are not of that size that can accommodate a LogP or an interrogative hosting complementizer. *Buli* on the other hand can embed a LogP under it and a *pro* which has a [+LOG] feature can be embedded only by *buli*.

§5 **CONCLUSION:** The CP of *buli* has a larger left periphery which allows it to embed a LogP under it and thus allows AgrShft to take place but the CP of *ze* has a smaller left periphery compared to *buli* and thus it cannot embed a LogP under it and hence doesn't allow agreement shift to take place.

(15)



- (1) hi ghor-oloi za-m / za-b-o buli ko-isil-e
 3P-NOM home-DAT go-FUT.1P go-FUT-3P that say-PST-3P
 ‘He_i said that he_i would go home.’
- (2) tumi ghor-oloi za-m / za-b-a buli ko-isil-a
 2P-NOM home-DAT go-FUT.1P go-FUT-2P that say-PST-2P
 ‘You_i said that you_i would go home.’
- (3) hi ki kha-m buli ko-isil-e
 3P-NOM what eat-FUT.1P that say-PST-3P
 ‘What did he_i say that he_i would eat?’
- (4) rani [tanu exam pass ajj-aa-n-ani] nam-mu-tundi (Telugu){Example taken from Messick (2016)}
 rani [3SG exam pass happen-PST-1SG-COMP] believe-PST-F.SG
 ‘Rani believed that she passed the exam.’
- (5) hi moi za-m buli ko-isil-e
 3P-NOM 1P-NOM go-FUT.1P that say-PST-3P
 ‘He_i said that I_j would go.’
- (6) hi_i pro_{i/*j} kha-m buli bhab-isil-e
 3P-NOM eat-FUT.1P that think-PST-3P
 ‘He_i thought that he_i would eat.’
- (7) tumi_i pro_{i/*j} kha-m buli ko-isil-a
 2P-NOM eat-FUT.1P that say-PST-2P
 ‘You_i said that you_i would eat.’
- (8) *hi_i pro_{i/*j} ghor-loi za-m buli zan-e
 3P-NOM home-DAT go-FUT-1P that know-PRES.3P
 ‘*He_i knows that he_i would go home.’
- (9) hi_i pro_{i/*j} mar-im buli go-isil-e
 3P-NOM beat-FUT.1P that go-PST-3P
 ‘He went with the purpose of thrashing/beating.’
- (10) hi_i za-b-o buli hi_{i/j} ko-isil-e
 3P-NOM go-FUT-3P that 3P-NOM say-PST-3P
 ‘He_i said that he_{i/j} would go.’
- (11) hi_i ko-isil-e ze hi_{i/j} za-b-o
 3P-NOM say-PST-3P that 3P-NOM go-FUT-3P
 ‘He_i said that he_{i/j} would go.’
- (12) *hi_i ko-isil-e ze hi_{i/j} ki kor-ib-o
 3P-NOM say-PST-3P that 3P-NOM what do-FUT-3P
 ‘*He_i said that what he_{i/j} would do.’
- (13) *hi_i ko-isil-e ze pro_i za-m
 3P-NOM say-PST-3P that go-FUT.1P
 ‘*He_i said that he_i would go.’
- (14) Context: A person is watching the video a chess game on the television where he is the loosing and is reporting that event to an utterance speaker. Now, there are two conditions: one is where the person is fully aware of the fact that the loser is himself (*de se*) and the second is that the person is not aware of the fact the person losing the game is himself (*de re*). The utterance speaker can now report that incident in two ways:
- a. hi_i pro_i har-is-u buli ko-isil-e (*de se*)
 3p-nom lose-pst-1p that say-pst-3p
 He_i said that he_i was losing.
- b. hi_i pro_i har-is-e buli ko-isil-e (*de re*)
 3p-nom lose-pst-3p that say-pst-3p
 He_i said that he_i was losing.

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