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Towards a diachronic typology of individual person markers

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Abstract: In this introduction we propose an agenda for working towards a diachronic typology of individual person markers. Rather than tracking the development of entire paradigms, our goal is to arrive at a better understanding of the diachronic pathways of those source constructions that end up as a conventionalized means of marking a particular person or person scenario, i.e. the specific (di)transitive person configuration. We discuss how this diachronic typology will need to consider certain types, or characteristics, of person markers, such as free vs. bound forms; SAP vs. 3rd person forms; or the status of person scenario markers. With respect to the source constructions and pathways, it is useful to distinguish between category-internal (e.g., person shift) and category-external (e.g., impersonal constructions) sources that give rise to person forms. We further offer a brief summary of the types of motivations that have been argued to lie behind the observed changes. Other issues of interest involve the stability vs. susceptibility for change as well as the optionality and synchronic variation of person forms, which may precede diachronic change.

Keywords: diachronic typology; impersonal; person; person scenario; SAP

1 Introduction

Person markers generally enjoy the reputation of being particularly stable forms. Independent (free) pronouns are among the first items in Swadesh lists and are part of the basic vocabulary that is regularly used to prove phylogenetic relationship. Bound verbal person indexation, both in segmental shape and through position vis-à-vis the verbal stem, is treated as the most distinguished type of evidence for phylogenetic relationship as contact-induced changes are considered nearly impossible in this domain. Nevertheless, we already have some knowledge

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that diachronically, person forms can go astray, that paradigms can get reshuffled, and that synchronically, person reference is not as stable and unambiguous as we tend to assume.

While paradigms of person markers may undergo certain diachronic developments (e.g., in the evolution of new dependent forms, analogical levelling, etc.), a typologically larger variety of changes, possibly of a more universal type (Bickel et al. 2015), affects individual person markers. Based on large-scale approaches such as Helmbrecht (2004) and Siewierska (2004) and a number of specific studies, we are now in a position to tackle the beginnings of a diachronic typology of individual person markers: which person markers are innovated and how?

Specifically, we can break this question down into a few particular points of interest. A preliminary question is whether certain groups of types of person markers tend to change in the same ways, for example independent pronouns on the one hand and bound forms on the other hand, or speech act participant (SAP) forms on the one hand and 3rd person forms on the other hand (Section 2). Clearly, a major component of this diachronic typology is a detailed investigation of the sources and source constructions of innovative person forms (Section 3). Next, we consider the types of motivations that are commonly argued to be behind the changes of particular person forms (Section 4). While there are a number of other issues of interest for this diachronic typology, we have to limit ourselves to just two: the factor of overall stability vs. susceptibility for change, and the issue of optionality and variation in person forms, as a synchronic precursor for change (Section 5). The particular contributions in this special issue that help us break new ground on many of these issues are outlined in Section 6.

2 Types of person markers involved in change

An important question is whether there are recurrent patterns of change affecting certain types of person markers. In particular, it is important to identify the differences in diachronic behavior of independent or free forms on the one hand, and of bound person indexes on the other hand (Section 2.1). Further, a traditional domain of inquiry is what general differences may exist between speech act participants (SAP's) as opposed to third person forms, here applied to diachronic development (Section 2.2). We will also discuss the status of person scenario markers, which we argue need to be part of the same diachronic typology (Section 2.3).

Clearly other subsets of individual person markers are also very much worth investigating (further). Two such subsets in particular need to be at least

mentioned. First, singular and non-singular person forms may change along different trajectories, and there are also well-documented diachronic interactions between different number sets (see, e.g., the number shifts in Bates, this volume). Second, syntactic role is an important factor in the diachronic developments of person forms. This is argued, for example, in a recent study of the evolution of bound verbal indexes by Haig (2018). Haig claims that object forms typically do not fully grammaticalize and remain in the state of differential object indexation, unlike subject forms.

2.1 Independent pronouns and bound indexes

Siewierska (2004: § 2.1; § 3.4.1) provides a thorough typological introduction to the differences between independent pronouns on the one hand, and bound indexes on the other hand. For a variety of reasons, independent pronouns are typically treated as being the primary type of person markers. That is to say, starting with their morphophonologically free status, independent pronouns are also virtually universal across the languages of the world (i.e., much more so than bound indexes), and, if the paradigms of independent and dependent forms differ, independent paradigms tend to be richer, typically displaying more semantic distinctions (e.g., clusivity, number, or gender).

Also taking a diachronic perspective, the traditional view suggests that independent forms are primary, with bound forms being reduced versions of the independent forms (i.e., the commonly cited scenario for the evolution of verbal person markers in Givón [1976], also termed Givón's Cycle in Seržant, this volume).

However, Mithun (2013) provides a compelling argument that especially a diachronic perspective may also yield a very different insight. By providing a case study of Mohawk (Iroquoian, northeastern North America), she shows that it may be the bound verbal indexes that represent a semantically differentiated and functionally consistent person paradigm, while independent forms are the opposite, displaying fewer semantic distinctions and occurring in a scattered set of different discourse functions.

There is also robust cross-linguistic evidence that either whole paradigms or individual person forms have originated in the direction of bound > independent, rather than in the grammaticalization-conforming direction of independent > bound forms (Siewierska 2004: § 7.1.3; cf. also Mushin and Simpson 2008).

Besides developments between the two types of paradigms (independent vs. bound), it is obvious that there must additionally be other kinds of diachronic changes differentially affecting the two types. As DeLancey (this volume) proposes for the Trans-Himalayan language family, bound 2_{SG} forms may experience a

significant pressure for avoidance not experienced by their free 2_{SG} pronoun ‘counterparts’, due to the bound forms’ obligatory morphological status.

There must also be clear differences in source constructions from which independent pronouns and bound indexes originate. A case in point are complex nominal expressions, which may give rise to independent pronouns, such as Spanish *Vuestra Merced* ‘your grace’ > *usted* 2_{SG.HON} (Siewierska 2004: 224). Clearly, such a nominal expression would not be able to give rise to a bound person marker, at least not immediately without first becoming an independent pronoun.

Nonetheless, there are also interesting parallels in sources that can give rise both to independent pronouns and bound indexes. For example, items expressing spatial deixis can make it into both, the paradigm of independent pronouns (consider demonstrative origins of independent pronouns, for all three persons, see the following section) as well as the paradigm of bound person indexes, where cislocative (venitive) markers are known to develop into SAP object indexes (Konnerth 2015; Mithun 1996). Of course, the morphosyntactic statuses of demonstrative pronouns and cislocative markers are different and so are the actual source constructions and diachronic pathways, but it is still interesting to see the analogous metaphorical correspondences.

2.2 SAP vs. 3rd person

Person marker paradigms in languages often consist of SAP forms and 3rd person forms. Clearly, any typological approach needs to keep all person forms in mind. At the same time, our diachronic approach agrees with previous literature (see, e.g., Siewierska 2004: 5–8) that there are substantial differences between all SAP forms on the one hand and third person forms on the other hand.

First, on a more general cross-linguistic level, there are patterns of diachronic development that either affect SAP forms or third persons. A good example are various pathways that lead to so-called Hierarchical Alignment or Inverse Alignment in verbal person indexation (Gildea and Zúñiga 2016), which may involve differential morphosyntactic treatment of SAP’s as opposed to 3rd person participants, although more specific configurations are also common. Another example is that zero forms in bound verbal person indexes more commonly arise for third person rather than SAP forms (Bickel et al. 2015; Cristofaro, this volume).

Cross-linguistic tendencies for differences in diachronic development of SAP vs. third person forms also correlate with different motivations and triggers for change. SAP forms experience sociopragmatic pressures, both in the form of reference avoidance as well as in special highlighting for reasons of seeking empathy (Section 4.1). Such sociopragmatically motivated pressures do not apply

in the case of third person forms, which refer to participants outside the sphere of you-and-me. Loss or renewal of third person forms are more commonly tied to language contact, and other typical internal variation and change developments also found in grammatical domains other than person.

Second, considering particular developments in single languages, it is common to find attestation of more idiosyncratic changes that affect all SAP forms yet not third person forms, or vice versa. For example, Ciucci (this volume) shows how the realis/irrealis distinction in Chamacoco was first neutralized for SAP forms only. Another example is that object indexes may only ever develop for SAP's but not for third persons (Konnerth 2015), i.e. a special case of the above-mentioned greater likelihood to find zero expression in third person rather than SAP's.

Despite the differences, there are also some intriguing similarities we find in the diachronic developments of SAP and third person forms. For example, both types of person forms may originate from the same conceptual source category. This is particularly evident in forms originating in spatial deixis, such as cislocative markers for SAP object forms (Gildea and Zúñiga 2016; Konnerth 2015; Mithun 1996) or the commonly attested case of demonstrative elements turning into regular third person pronouns.

2.3 Person scenario markers, including inverse markers

While clear 1sg forms, for example, may be identified across all bound and independent paradigms of some languages, other languages may have person markers that are only used as verbal bound indexes occurring with (di)transitive verbs. Specifically, we have in mind markers that do not refer to a single person (group) but to one or a set of person 'scenario(s)' where arguments act on one another. An example is (1) from Yakkha (Trans-Himalayan/Sino-Tibetan), where *-nen* is a person scenario marker that occurs whenever a first person acts on a second person (conventionally represented as '1→2').

- (1) Yakkha (Trans-Himalayan)

piʔ-nen=na

give[PST]-1→2=NMLZ.SG

'I gave it to you.'

(Schackow 2015: 221)

Another example is the cislocative suffix *-(i)m* in Nez Perce, which has conventionalized as a person scenario marker for 2→1 (Gildea and Zúñiga 2016; see also Mithun 1996; Rude 1985) in (2).

(2) Nez Perce (Sahaptian)

<i>Ø-’ewii-m-e</i>	<i>’iine</i>
SAP.S/A-shoot-CIS-PST	1SG.P
‘You (SG) shot me.’	

(Noel Rude, p.c., cited from Gildea and Zúñiga 2016: 494)

The fact that innovative forms for particular person scenarios develop shows that there are diachronic pressures that act at that level of specificity. In the literature, we find discussion on (certain types of) such forms mostly within the framework of inverse marking and hierarchical indexation. Heath’s (1991, 1998) discussion of a wide variety of changes occurring in person forms in SAP→SAP scenarios also provides fascinating evidence for the need to take person scenarios seriously. There are other, particular proposals that fall under this line of research. For example, Mithun (1996: 428–429), citing data from Northern Iroquoian languages, suggests that an innovative, cislocative-derived 2→1 marker specifically in imperative forms finds a plausible explanation in the sociopragmatics of this specific speech act. DeLancey (2018a) finds a common pattern of innovative 1→2 markers in Trans-Himalayan, as well as argues that there are recurrent cases of 2→1 marking to merge with 3→1 in this language family, both of which he explains with reference to sociopragmatics (cf. Section 4.1). Note that the latter merger of 2→1 and 3→1 may result in unified first person object marking. This clearly shows that pure person markers sometimes develop from person scenario markers as well as crucially based on person scenario specific motivations.

The diachronic connection between pure person markers and person scenario markers also surfaces in other developments. A case in point is the recently discussed innovation of inverse marking (specifically, the combination of 3→SAP plus 2→1 marking) from antipassive origins via a reconstructed first person object marking stage (Konnerth 2021).

All of the just-mentioned cases of person scenario markers are innovations within the person paradigms where they are found. This is typical, and as a result, person scenario markers commonly have a morphosyntactic status that is in some way or another non-paradigmatic (e.g., occupying a different morphological slot). However, this is not anything unique to person scenario markers, as pure person markers can likewise be innovated from extra-paradigmatic material and remain non-paradigmatic. An example is a second person prefix preliminarily reconstructed as **tV-* by Pons (to appear) for Proto-Trans-Himalayan (see also DeLancey 2014). In many modern languages, a reflex of this prefix has become a conventionalized index for second person, remaining in prefixal position among otherwise suffixal verbal person indexes.

3 Sources and source constructions of innovative person markers

Ultimately, a diachronic typology of person markers will need to provide a comprehensive account of the sources that give rise to innovative forms. Ideally, we want to know both what particular constructions lead to innovative forms as well as details about the diachronic pathways that person markers travel along. At our current state of knowledge, we distinguish between internal (Section 3.1) and external (Section 3.2) sources, i.e. from within the person category or outside the person category, while a third type are forms that represent fusions between person markers and other elements (Section 3.3).

3.1 Internal sources

Innovative person markers may derive from category-internal sources either by being ‘re-purposed’ from already existing person markers through person shift, or else through fusion of already existing person markers.

3.1.1 Person shift

By ‘person shift’ we have in mind the change in reference of a particular person marker. That is, what used to be a third person form may shift to become a second person form; or a 1_{PL} form may shift to a 1_{SG} form; or an inclusive (speaker plus addressee(s) and optional 3rd person participants) may shift to a 2_{SG} form or a 1_{SG} form.

Such shifts have been documented by Helmbrecht (2004: 252–266, 2015), who differentiates between shifts solely in number and those in person. For the first type, he proposes that unidirectionality may hold from $PL > DU > SG$, while for the latter type, he proposes unidirectionality from $3 > 2 > 1$ (Helmbrecht 2015: 185).

Heine and Song (2011), in a study on the evolution of independent pronouns, also discuss person shifts and, likewise, group them in two analogous types: “shift in deixis” and “plurification”. While the first type involves shifts in person value, the latter type refers to the shift from a plural to a specifically honorific singular form.

A new survey of data on this topic is reported by Bates (this volume). He finds that $1_{PL} > 1_{SG}$ is a particularly common change in his data, and also finds a number of cases that call the unidirectionality hypotheses of Helmbrecht (2015) into

question. Bates also adds a third type of shift, namely between clusive forms and general 1PL forms.

Person shift in SAP forms, specifically involving the inclusive, is also the topic of Ozerov and Konnerth's (this volume) study. They combine a diachronic with a synchronic study to provide a better picture of how such person shifts may actually proceed. At least in case of the primarily discussed shift from inclusive > 1SG, it seems that a shift can be initiated simply by reframing actions, events, and statements involving a 1SG as additionally involving the addressee(s) for particular sociopragmatic purposes. There are no obvious morphosyntactic factors correlating with this shift.

3.1.2 Fusion of two person markers

Another way new person markers can come about is through fusion of originally two different person markers. One such case is the innovation of inclusive independent pronouns through fusion of 1SG and 2SG pronouns, potentially together with an additional number marker. For example, LaPolla (2005: 300) claims this to have occurred in several Trans-Himalayan (Tibeto-Burman) languages of different branches, i.e. Idu, Lahu, and Newar.

Also transitive person scenario markers may originate in fusions of forms for the two participants involved in the scenario. As Heath (1998: 90) reports, based on a hypothesis by Koontz (p.c. to Heath 1994), 1SG→2SG scenario markers, which exist in many Siouan languages, such as Lakota, Ponca, or Hoocąk (Winnebago), derive from a fusion of separate first person agent and second person patient markers. Heath discusses these cases of innovative 1SG→2SG scenario markers within the framework of his two seminal papers (Heath 1991, 1998), which detail the many types of alterations that may occur in those person-marked transitive verb forms where a speech act participant (SAP) acts on another SAP (cf. Section 4.1). Within this framework, Heath makes sense of these cases of fusion as such fusion of person markers helps disguise reference to the SAP's involved. As Heath notes, even if such fusion were to have occurred simply due to phonetic sound change, it is remarkable that "the languages have not undertaken restructurings to restore morphological transparency [...] and indeed seem to have actively selected for rapid-speech mutations that accentuated the opacity" (Heath 1998: 90).

3.2 External sources

The main external sources for person markers attested across languages include impersonal and valency-decreasing constructions, as well as demonstratives/

spatial deictic expressions, nominal expressions, and intensifiers/reflexives. As will be shown below, there are recurrent pathways of change through which each source type is preferentially reinterpreted as a specific person marker, based on the specific conditions that foster such a process of reinterpretation. The motivations for these pathways of change will be discussed in more detail in Section 4.

3.2.1 Impersonal constructions

Impersonal and valency-decreasing constructions may be used in discourse to refer to specific persons. This usage pattern may eventually result in the reinterpretation of the impersonal construction as a personal one, and in the reanalysis of certain building blocks of the former impersonal construction as person markers. Such a process of reanalysis may involve the impersonal pronoun, which may develop into an independent person marker, or the valency-decreasing/impersonal bound morpheme, which may be reinterpreted as a bound person marker. Both cases are attested in well-documented languages, resulting mostly in 1st person plural markers.

In French, for instance, the impersonal pronoun *on*, ultimately deriving from Latin *homo* ‘man’ (cf. Giacalone Ramat and Sansò 2007) and forming impersonal constructions with both a generic and a specific reading (cf. [3a]), has evolved into a personal pronoun referring to 1st person plural, replacing *nous* (‘we’) almost completely in the informal spoken language (Coveney 2000):

(3) French (Romance)

- a. *Pendant que tu étais occupé à dormir, on*
 while you be.IPFV.2SG busy.M at sleep.INF IMPERS
nous a volé notre maison
 to.us have[AUX].3SG steal.PST.PTCP our house
 ‘While you were engaged in sleeping, they/someone took away our house.’
 (Giacalone Ramat and Sansò 2007: 103)
- b. *Au premier coup de canon qui nous a*
 at.ART first shot of cannon REL us have[AUX].3SG
réveillés à 2 hs du matin on
 wake_up.PST.PTCP at 2 hours of.ART morning IMPERS
s’ est dressé
 REFL be[AUX].3SG dress.PST.PTCP
 ‘At the first cannon shot that woke us up at 2 o’clock in the morning we got dressed.’
 (Grafström 1969: 272–273)

A similar case is the development of *a gente* (lit. ‘the people’) in European and Brazilian Portuguese as an equivalent of a 1st person plural pronoun. Unlike French *on*, *a gente* can appear in both subject and object position with an impersonal meaning. Its current state in this on-going process of reinterpretation is that of a 1st person plural quasi-pronoun that can appear in both subject and object position (cf. Posio and Vilkuna 2013):

(4) Portuguese (Romance)

- a. *A gente está cansados*
 ART people be.3SG tired.M.PL

‘We/People are tired.’

(Posio and Vilkuna 2013: 206–207)

- b. *Eles viram a gente*
 they see.PST.2/3PL ART people

‘They saw us.’

(Posio and Vilkuna 2013: 206–207)

The mirror image of the French case is the reinterpretation of antipassive markers derived from generic nouns meaning ‘man’/‘people’ (cf. Sansò 2017: 182–184) as 1st person object markers. As Bickel and Gaenszle (2015) discuss, in several Kiranti languages such antipassive markers have developed into 1st person object markers. One case in point is Belhare, where the lexical noun *maʔi* “is found in antipassive constructions as well as in the function of a regular marker for first person (exclusive) objects” (Bickel and Gaenszle 2015: 68). In the latter case, the status of the reinterpreted antipassive marker as a 1st person object marker is testified by ergative marking on the agent noun or pronoun (as in [5b]), which contrasts with the nominative marking of the agent in antipassive constructions (as in [5a]):

(5) Belhare (Mahakiranti)

- a. *un maʔi ni-yu* (antipassive)
 3SG.NOM person 3SG.see-NPST

‘S/he sees people.’

(Bickel and Gaenszle 2015: 68)

- b. *un-na maʔi-ni-yu* (first person object agreement)

3SG-ERG 1.OBJ-see-NPST

‘S/he sees us (excl).’

(Bickel and Gaenszle 2015: 68)

A process of reinterpretation involving a different impersonal construction has taken place in Italian, where the reflexive marker *si* employed in the so-called reflexive impersonal has been reinterpreted as “an unspecified set of people including the speaker” (Cinque 1988: 542; see also D’Alessandro 2007; Giacalone

Ramat and Sansò 2011: 212–214; Pescarini 2015). In this case, it is debated whether *si* can be considered as an impersonal subject pronoun (as postulated, for instance, by Cinque 1988) or simply as a grammaticalized verbal marker of impersonality derived from the reflexive marker. Although this issue goes far beyond the scope of the present survey, the result of this process is not different from the one leading from impersonal *on* to 1st person plural *on* in French:

(6) Italian (Romance)

Quindi, secondo lei, si è stati troppo precipitosi?
 then according.to You REFL be[AUX].3SG been too rash

‘Then, according to You, were we too rash?’

(Giacalone Ramat and Sansò 2011: 213)

A case of on-going reinterpretation of the impersonal bound marker as a bound person index with speaker-inclusive reference is provided by Finnish. In colloquial Finnish, the so-called impersonal passive has grammaticalized as the first person plural form (Posio and Vilkkuna 2013: 215–217). The following examples show that the impersonal passive alone (glossed IMPERS) is used with a directive function (cf. [7a]), whereas in non-directive uses the form can be preceded by the independent pronoun *me* ‘we’ (cf. [7b]):

(7) Colloquial Finnish (Finnic)

a. *pannaan keppi sinne*
 put.IMPERS stick there
 ‘Let’s put a stick there.’

(Posio and Vilkkuna 2013: 215)

b. *me pantiin keppi sinne*
 we put.IMPERS.PST stick there
 ‘We put a stick there.’

(Posio and Vilkkuna 2013: 215)

As strategies to demote a participant (be it subject or object) when it corresponds to a group of people varying in size and composition according to the context, impersonal and valency-decreasing constructions can be used whenever the speaker wants to avoid direct reference to a group of people including her/himself for pragmatic reasons, and this is the key factor in the reinterpretation of an impersonal or valency-decreasing construction as a 1st person plural construction (with concomitant reanalysis of its building blocks as 1st plural independent/bound markers).¹

1 The reverse scenario, i.e. the one whereby specific person forms come to be used as impersonal markers is also attested (cf. among many others Creissels 2013; Gast et al. 2015; Kitagawa and Lehrer 1990; Siewierska 2010; Siewierska and Papastathi 2011).

Impersonal constructions used with particular person reference are also attested with persons other than 1_{PL}. Aikhenvald (2018), for instance, argues that in Arawak languages a generic person marker reconstructed as **pa-* has developed specifically into a 1st person inclusive rather than into a 1_{PL} tout court. Ciucci (this volume) provides a case where a generic form has been reanalyzed as a 1_{SG} bound possessive person marker in Chamacoco (Zamucoan). Similarly, Sun (2014) has shown that generic person marking prefixes in Tshobdun (Rgyalrongic, Trans-Himalayan) may have a referential interpretation as 1st person singular. Finally, Pons (to appear) discusses the details involved in a case of development from an impersonal construction into a 2_{SG} person marker in Trans-Himalayan.

3.2.2 Other sources

Heine and Song (2011) discuss a number of other external sources of personal pronouns. They include demonstratives and spatial deictic expressions, nominal expressions, and intensifiers and reflexives. These sources may give rise to different pronouns.

Demonstratives and spatial deictic expressions may evolve into (i) 3rd person singular pronouns, as shown by the well-known case of French *il*, derived from the Latin demonstrative *ille* (see Carlier and De Mulder 2010); (ii) 2nd person pronouns, as in the case of Japanese *anata* ‘you’, which can be traced back to a Late Old Japanese expression meaning ‘over there’ (Heine and Song 2011: 607); and (iii) 1st person pronouns, as in the case of Korean *i jjog* lit. ‘this side’ (cf. Heine and Song 2011: 610). Proximal demonstratives and deictic expressions are more easily recruited to serve as 1st person pronouns, whereas distal demonstratives and deictic expressions typically evolve into 2nd or 3rd person pronouns.

Nominal expressions too may develop into pronouns for all persons. Names meaning ‘man’ or ‘person’ may give rise to 3rd person pronouns, as in Zande (Ubangi), where *kó*, the masculine gender pronoun, derives from *kumba* ‘man’, ‘male’ (cf. Heine and Reh 1984: 223). Names meaning ‘master’/‘lord’ typically give rise to 2nd person pronouns (as in Indonesian, where *tuan* ‘you’ is said to originate in an Arabic loan meaning ‘master’, or Japanese *kimi* ‘you’, whose original meaning was ‘emperor’/‘lord’; cf. Heine and Song 2011: 607). Names used to designate humble professions such as ‘servant’ or ‘slave’ are often the source of 1st person pronouns, as in *sahāya* ‘servant’/‘I’ in Classical Malay (Heine and Song 2011: 611). The developments regarding 2nd and 1st person pronouns, according to Heine and Song (2011), presuppose an asymmetric model of speaker-hearer interaction whereby the speaker manifests deference to the hearer by using forms of respect and at the same time humbling himself in self-reference: in various

languages, 1st and 2nd person pronouns are equally derived from this model of reference.

Finally, intensifiers may give rise to (i) 3rd person pronouns (as in the development from Ancient Greek *autós* ‘self’ to Modern Greek *aftós* ‘he’); (ii) 2nd person pronouns (as in Amharic, where *ərswo* ‘you’ is likely to derive from **əras-wo* ‘your (respectful) head’, which is also used as a 2nd person intensifier; cf. Heine and Song 2011: 604); and (iii) 1st person pronouns (as in Korean *jeo*, an intensifier that is also used as a 1st person low honorific pronoun; cf. Heine and Song 2011: 611).

3.3 Fusion of person markers and other elements

New person markers may develop through fusion of original person markers with elements they were bound to. For example, Siewierska (2004: § 7.1.4) documents the innovation of person markers based on conjugated verbal forms, apparently typically conjugated copulas or other auxiliaries, although other verbs may also enter this diachronic path. The result may be new independent pronouns and specifically new emphatic forms. Moreover, the result may also be new verbal person indexes, when larger periphrastic verbal constructions fuse. This latter pathway to new verbal person indexes is also discussed by Seržant (this volume). Third, Siewierska also mentions the innovation of possessive person markers resulting from fusion and reanalysis of conjugated forms of possessive verbs ‘to have’ or ‘to own’.

Elsewhere, Siewierska also mentions another case of innovation through fusion. In Teribe, a Chibchan language of Costa Rica, we find the innovation of specific case forms of independent pronouns through fusion of person marker plus adposition (Siewierska 2004: 48, based on Quesada 2000: 46).

One also comes across hypotheses that new person markers may derive from fusion with information structure markers (e.g. in different Trans-Himalayan languages, see Benedict 1995; DeLancey 2018b: 79, this volume), and, perhaps similarly, with a “morpheme of identification” in Yaouré, a Mande language of the Ivory Coast (Siewierska 2004: 69, discussing data from Hopkins 1986: 196).

4 Motivations for change

The phenomena discussed in Section 3 show that change and restructuring of both independent and bound pronominal paradigms are ubiquitous. The motivations for these processes are various: the most compelling motivation behind changes involving SAP’s appears to be avoiding reference to the dyad of conversation, as

will be discussed in Section 4.1. Changes fueled by areal effects are also attested and discussed in the literature (cf. Section 4.2).

4.1 Sociopragmatics

Sociopragmatic considerations (in the sense of DeLancey 2018a) appear to be an essential factor of change in the realm of person marking involving the SAP’s. Avoiding direct reference to specific participants is the reason why impersonal and valency-decreasing constructions are recruited to refer to speech act participants in the first place, but is possibly at work also in other scenarios.

In a pioneering paper, Heath (1991) has drawn attention to the fact that person markers that refer to speech act participants frequently have shapes that are unpredictable from the rest of the paradigm. In many Australian languages of the Northern Territory where affixes index the subject and the object at the same time, for instance, the combinations 1→2 and 2→1 (*I saw you; you saw me*) display unusual features. While in configurations involving 3rd persons and speech act participants (3→1; 1→3; 3→2; 2→3) the verb complex is regularly marked as inverse if the object ranks higher than the subject (i.e. in 3→1 and 3→2 scenarios), the same does not hold true when both speech act participants are involved (i.e. in 1→2 and 2→1 configurations). In the latter cases, we also find rampant morphological irregularity, including special allomorphs for 1st or 2nd person, unanalyzable portmanteau morphs, zero forms for one or the other participant or for both, cases of number and person shift, or combinations thereof. An instructive case is that of Ngandi. A partial paradigm of subject/object combinations in Ngandi is provided in (8):

(8) Ngandi (Gunwinyguan Bak)

a. Intransitive	prefixes	b. Transitive prefixes	with 3Sbj/Obj
1SG	<i>ŋa-</i>	1SG→3SG.M	<i>ŋanu-</i>
2SG	<i>ŋu-</i>	1SG←3SG.M	<i>ŋaguni-</i>
3SG.M	<i>ŋi-</i>	2SG→3SG.M	<i>ŋunu-</i>
1PL.INCL	<i>ŋar-</i>	2SG←3SG.M	<i>ŋuguni-</i>
2PL	<i>ŋar-</i>	2DU/PL←3SG.M	<i>ŋarguni-</i>
3PL	<i>ba-</i>		

(Heath 1978: 67–69)

The prefixes in (8) can be decomposed into smaller morphemes quite straightforwardly: in scenarios involving 3rd person and SAP’s, for instance, *ŋa-* is an exponent of 1st person singular, *ŋi-* is an exponent of 3rd person singular masculine (losing retroflexion when appearing non-initially), etc. On the contrary,

the 1_{SG}→2_{PL} and 1_{PL}→2_{SG/PL} prefix *gura-* exemplifies the kinds of irregularities listed above that characterize combinations involving SAP's. The form can be analyzed as *gur-na-*, where *na-* is possibly the 2_{DU/PL} morpheme (as in *ɲarguni-*, 3_{SG}→2_{DU/PL}): given that in all other configurations 1st person morphemes precede other person morphemes, we shall conclude that *gur-* is an exponent of 1st person. A look at the regular combinations in (8), however, shows that exponents of 1st person are *ɲa-/ɲar-*, and thus *gur-* (perhaps decomposable into *gu-r*, with *-r-* as plural) must be taken as a special allomorph of 1st persons limited to 1→2 forms. Another interesting case is 2_{SG}→1_{SG} *ñunu-*, with an unexpected shape with respect to the expected **ɲanu-*. In other languages, mood and reality status morphs are recruited in 1↔2 configurations: this is the case of Jawoyn (Western Gunwinyguan) *wal-*, 1↔2, which is the same as 3rd person irrealis *wal-*. In this case, an irrealis (polite, non-factual) form unmarked for person has been taken as a substitute for person morpheme combinations involving speech act participants irrespective of the reality status of the clause (Heath 1991: 83).

These irregularities are ultimately motivated in terms of the “pragmatic delicacy and dangerousness of using first and second person pronouns (particularly singulars), and the particular delicacy of combining them in a noun phrase or sentence in a manner overtly specifying their relationship to each other” (Heath 1991: 78). Similar phenomena are attested across Native American languages, as discussed by Heath (1998), and in Tibeto-Burman languages (DeLancey 2018a). As DeLancey (2018a: 354) argues, avoiding reference to the agent is the motivation behind all deviant 1→2 and 2→1 configurations: these scenarios are particularly likely to be sensitive to face issues, since “a 1→2 scenario is likely be a promise or a threat [...], and 2→1 is the realm of requests, demands and accusations” (DeLancey 2018a: 354), and avoiding reference to the agent is notoriously one of the commonest politeness strategies across languages (Brown and Levinson 1987).

Sociopragmatic motivations for changes in the person marking domain are also discussed in contributions by DeLancey (this volume) and Ozerov and Konnerth (this volume).

Note, however, that the opposite of reference avoidance, which we may term ‘reference emphasis’ can similarly be a politeness strategy. Mithun (2013: 302) states that the overt use of the first person free pronoun in Mohawk, which is rare and only occurs in less than 10% of sentences involving a first person participant, is in fact a politeness strategy: “<This is just my opinion or experience or feeling, not necessarily shared by you or others.>”

Another interesting phenomenon is person shift connected with specific expressive needs in narrations. As discussed by Margetts (2015), in many languages 3rd person referents are indexed by 1st or 2nd person pronouns in events that are highlighted for some reason. These person shifts function as attention-

getting devices. In Saliba-Logea (Oceanic), for instance, characters in narration can be indexed by a second person index (*ku-*) instead of the 3rd person one (*ye-*) to mark the narrative peak (e.g. sudden and unexpected events). Although 2-to-3 and 1-to-3 shifts in person marking are not described in Helmbrecht's (2015) survey (and are similarly not attested in Bates' survey, this volume), it is a fact that cases of 1/3 and 2/3 homophony in singular paradigms are widely attested (see Cysouw 2003: 41–48), and at least some of these cases might be explainable as the long term result of expressive shifts such as those described by Margetts (2015).

4.2 Areal effects

Areal effects are likely to shape person markers paradigms. As is well-known, the use of a 2nd person plural pronoun for polite 2nd singular appears to be a Standard Average European phenomenon (cf. Helmbrecht 2005). Cysouw (2003) mentions various cases in which the configuration of the person paradigm may depend on areal contact. A case in point is the cross-linguistically quite rare 1/3 non-singular homophony, i.e. the use of the same form for 1st and 3rd person plural, which is attested in a handful of only distantly genetically related languages on the south-eastern tip of Papua New Guinea (Cysouw 2003: 134–135). Authier (this volume) shows that in East Caucasian there is a tendency to retain clusivity (or to renew it after loss) that is likely to depend on areal effects in an area where this distinction remains predominant.

5 Other issues of interest

5.1 Stability vs. susceptibility for change

Some person markers are reported to be diachronically more stable than others. Personal pronouns, for instance, “are on all the lists of relatively stable lexemes” (Nichols 2003: 292), but cases of restructuring due to paradigmatic pressures are also widespread across languages. Nichols (2003: 292–295) discusses the cases of restructuring that can be reconstructed in the development of Nakh-Daghestanian languages: these cases appear to be driven by the principle of resonance, whereby forms that are phonologically rather different from one another tend to develop similar phonological traits (e.g. in terms of rhyme or syllabic structure).

Nichols (1995) includes the inclusive/exclusive opposition in her list of diachronically stable morphosyntactic features, and discusses whether such stability is indicative of areal or genetic tendencies (see also Bickel and Nichols 2005).

While the lack of clusivity oppositions in Indo-European languages might speak in favor of genetic inheritance of this specific trait (especially if we consider the rampant presence of such distinctions in the Caucasus), the universality of these distinctions in Australia might be indicative of areal effects. Moreover, clusivity distinctions display a clinal distribution (almost 100% in Australia, around 50% in the Americas, near zero in Europe and Africa), which shows that “if there were any appreciable tendency for [them] to be spontaneously innovated, [their] worldwide frequency would be more even” (Nichols 2003: 304). In other words, inclusive/exclusive oppositions seem to be generally inherited, with a residual possibility to be created *ex nihilo* under areal influence. Wichmann and Holman’s (2009) measures of diachronic stability of inclusive/exclusive oppositions confirm a high degree of stability for this feature, with no significant differences between independent and bound pronouns.

Authier (this volume) discusses the history of East Caucasian inclusive and exclusive indexes and shows that while inclusive indexes are more prone to be maintained or renewed (possibly due to areal influence), their exclusive counterparts may be lost due to avoidance strategies. The result of these dynamics is that clusivity distinctions may disappear as the result of the loss of one member of the inclusive/exclusive pair, resulting in reinterpretation of the surviving member as a general 1st person plural marker.

Seržant (this volume) also turns to the question of stability, but particularly in light of the possible loss of a whole indexing system. Counter to the well-known account by Givón (1976), which assumes loss of verbal person indexation followed by new grammaticalization from independent forms, Seržant argues against a universal bias for reduction/attrition of pronominal indexes, finding it very rare in the world’s languages.

5.2 Optionality and variation

Synchronic variation in the use of person markers may be indicative of on-going change. The process through which *on* in French has become a 1st person plural independent pronoun has been gradual: *on* was used since Old French as a stylistically marked substitute for other personal pronouns, but its use as a 1st person plural pronoun “was [not] general in the Paris area before the nineteenth century” (Coveney 2000: 450).² Similarly, the 1st person plural interpretation of the reflexive

² Similar developments involving elements originally meaning ‘man’ involved in impersonal constructions are attested in various European languages. The personal use of these elements, however, is less systematic than in French (see Giacalone Ramat and Sansò 2007: 104–106 for a survey).

impersonal construction in Italian (see Section 3.2) is already available in texts from the 14th and 15th century, but it is not before the end of the 18th century that this use gains ground, even though it has not become obligatory in contemporary Italian (Giacalone Ramat and Sansò 2011: 220–223). In Sango (Ubangi), the optional use of *álà* (2nd person plural) as a polite 2nd person singular form, fostered by contact with French, is determined by social and demographic factors and is likely to survive in the foreseeable future (Heine and Song 2011: 609). In varieties of European Portuguese, *a gente* may trigger 1st person plural agreement, which is not possible in Standard European Portuguese: this means that in these varieties its process of reinterpretation as a 1st person plural pronoun is far more advanced than in the standard variety (Posio and Vilkuna 2013: 207).

All these facts show that changes leading to the emergence of new person markers follow the usual steps of grammatical change in terms of becoming obligatory after rather long periods of free variation. Looking at individual and discourse variation in the use of person indexes is thus crucial to capture the mechanisms of change in this realm. Ozerov and Konnerth (this volume) show by means of a synchronic analysis of Anal Naga discourse that the inclusive form in this language may be shifting towards a 1st person singular index, with contexts in which it is used to express shared responsibility and involvement acting as potential bridging contexts in the sense of Heine (2002).

6 Contributions in this special issue

This special issue contains two parts. First, we have three contributions that take a diachronic typological approach. Second, there are four case studies that deal with the diachrony of individual person markers in the Zamucoan languages of South-America, in Trans-Himalayan languages of Southeast Asia, and in the East Caucasian languages of Central Asia.

The first contribution is by Sonia Cristofaro, who examines the well-known pattern of bound verbal person indexes whereby zero forms are more commonly found in third person than in first or second person. Cristofaro argues for a source-oriented approach that seeks to identify the motivation for this pattern in the sources that give rise to it. She surveys both recurrent cases where bound third person indexes never develop and therefore remain unexpressed, as well as cases where bound third person indexes disappear due to different types of diachronic mechanisms. Altogether then, this study goes into a wide variety of differences in properties and behaviors between third person and the speech act participants.

With Ilja Seržant's contribution, we stay with the evolution of verbal person indexation. Seržant sets out to empirically test Givón's (1976) claim that verbal

person marking arises from independent pronouns becoming bound, while a continuous erosion leads to the loss and subsequent analogous renewal via the same route. Seržant offers a quantitative assessment of two types of changes that may occur in the evolution of verbal person marking. One termed ‘shape deviations’ measures how much the actual segments of indexes change from reconstructed to modern forms. Here the results make clear that verbal person markers undergo a lot of specific changes: the numbers are quite high. The other type termed ‘demise factor’ measures in how many languages an indexation paradigm was entirely replaced. This factor was very low, suggesting that wholesale loss and renewal of verbal person marking, as hypothesized by Givón, is actually very rare in the world’s languages. For the purposes of our special issue, this study may contribute to better understand the nature of the dynamics of person markers, specifically in the case of bound verbal indexes: first, given the typically low demise factor and high degree of continuity of (some) forms, this study helps explain why verbal person markers have the reputation for being particularly conservative. On the other hand, given the typically high rate of occurrence of shape deviations, this helps explain why nonetheless individual changes, as reported in the various contributions to this special issue, are not uncommon in the languages of the world.

Jonah Bates deals with person-number shifts, i.e. instances where a modern reflex of a person form displays a different reference (set) compared to its reconstructed ancestor in the proto-language. The investigation of a survey of 294 language varieties from five language families/branches resulted in 67 instances of person shift, suggesting that person shift is not a rare type of change in the person domain. The commonest change reported in this paper is the shift from 1_{PL} > 1_{SG} (subsuming also cases of INCL > 1_{SG}). Generally, Bates finds in his sample a large variety of cases of person shift. Previously suggested hierarchies or directionality, in particular Helmbrecht’s (2015) proposed directionalities $PL > SG$ and $3 > 2 > 1$, thus appear less clear. Beyond these survey findings, Bates also proposes to analyze person shift into two subtypes of shift: dependent shifts that represent referent restriction, and independent shifts that represent referent reanalysis.

Following these three typological studies we move to the second part of the special issue, which contains case studies from several parts of the world. Luca Ciucci provides a comprehensive account of a large variety of changes that occurred in the person marking system of Chamacoco, a Zamucoan language of northern Paraguay. This includes, among a number of other changes, the development of new 3rd person independent pronouns; the reanalysis of a generic form as a 1_{SG} bound possessive person marker; the shift from 1_{PL} > 1_{SG} in independent pronouns; and the innovation of clusivity. Ciucci chronologically tracks all these

developments, detailing with ample illustration how many individual and incremental changes may occur in the person marking system of a single language over time.

Scott DeLancey takes us to the Trans-Himalayan (also known as Sino-Tibetan) language family. He examines two different types of person forms: 1st vs. 2nd person on the one hand, and independent pronouns vs. bound verbal indexes on the other hand. In his survey of the different languages in the family, he reports an intriguing finding: 2nd person bound verbal indexes are particularly changeable, much more so than the other forms in this comparison. This is especially interesting when compared to the stability of the 2nd person independent pronoun forms in the different languages, which by and large transparently reflect the reconstructed form. DeLancey argues that this diachronic difference in bound index vs. free pronoun of the 2nd person addressee marker needs to be linked to the different morphosyntactic properties and discourse functions of these forms. While the use of second person forms is generally a sensitive issue due to face-saving and other politeness reasons, independent pronouns can simply be left unexpressed through zero anaphora ('pro-drop'). This is not the case for bound indexes, which can, and need to, be replaced in many different ways when the speaker wants to avoid overt reference.

Another Trans-Himalayan study zooms in to one particular subgroup, the South-Central (also known as 'Kuki-Chin') languages of Northeast India and adjacent regions of Myanmar and Bangladesh. Pavel Ozerov and Linda Konnerth take a closer look at the changes involving inclusive forms, i.e. those person markers that provide dedicated reference to speaker plus addressee(s) and possibly other third person participants. Their approach combines diachrony with synchrony. In a shorter diachronic section, they survey completed shifts from inclusive to other person forms, specifically first or second person forms. In order to find out what may be behind these ultimate shifts, the authors provide an in-depth study of the inclusive in a particular South-Central language, Anal Naga. Through a corpus study of natural conversation, it becomes clear that the prototypical function of referring to speaker and addressee(s) in the hear-and-now is not at all the commonest function of the inclusive in this language. More typically, the inclusive may carry a generic interpretation, or else, in a surprising turn, an exclusive interpretation: referring to just the speaker (1SG) or the speaker and others (1PL exclusive). This latter use of the inclusive is currently restricted to contexts of seeking empathy, although the quantitative distribution suggests that a shift has already been initiated in this language.

The final contribution stays with clusivity and considers East Caucasian languages. Gilles Authier provides an overview of the dynamics of inclusive and exclusive independent pronouns. Although clusivity can be reconstructed for all of

these languages, reflexes of the original forms are rare. Nonetheless, clusivity is still a robust feature of the modern East Caucasian languages, especially in the geographically central areas. Authier reports many cases of loss of clusivity, typically either by generalization of the exclusive or the inclusive to a non-distinctive 1_{PL} form. The wholesale loss of clusivity remains rare, though, as many languages subsequently renewed the category, either with language-internal means or by borrowing.

List of abbreviations

1	1st person
2	2nd person
3	3rd person
A	agentive core argument
ART	article
AUX	auxiliary
CIS	cislocative
DU	dual
ERG	ergative
EXCL	exclusive
F	feminine
HON	honorific
IMPERS	impersonal
INCL	inclusive
INF	infinitive
IPFV	imperfective
M	masculine
NOM	nominative
NMLZ	nominalization
NPST	non-past
OBJ	object
P	patientive core argument
PL	plural
PST	past
PTCP	participle
REFL	reflexive
REL	relative
S	single core argument
SG	singular

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