Converb Constructions in Darma—A Tibeto-Burman Language

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1 Introduction

Cross-linguistically languages are found to mark verbs in dependent clauses differently than verbs in matrix clauses. There are special verb forms that mark relative clauses, complement clauses, and adverbial clauses. In this paper, I will examine a morpheme that marks an adverbial clause in Darma a Tibeto-Burman (TB) language spoken in India.

Chaining clauses using nonfinite verbal markers is an areal feature of South Asian Languages (Masica 2005). These markers have several terms associated with them. For example, in Hindi pedagogical grammars, the clause-chaining marker is called a 'conjunctive particle' (Snell 1992: 128), while some linguists call it a converb (Haspelmath 1995: 2; 2002: 67):

(1)　banie ke　　beṭe　ne　ciṭṭʰii　　　likʰ-**kaṛ**
　　　grocer POSS　son　ERG　letter(F).SG　write-**CONV**

　　　ḍaak mẽ　ḍaal-ii
　　　box　in　put.PAST-F.SG
　　　The grocer's son wrote and posted a letter.
　　　(LIT: 'having written a letter, posted (it).')
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(Haspelmath 1995: 2; 2002: 67)

These constructions are well documented in the Indo-Aryan and Dravidian languages of the subcontinent (Masica 2005). While there are many TB languages in South Asia, many are not well documented, so it is difficult to determine whether they share this areal feature. The focus of this paper is an underdocumented TB language, Darma, which shares the areal feature of linking verbs and clauses using 'converbs' with its Indo-Aryan and Dravidian neighbors.

The Darma data presented in this paper were collected during three separate fieldtrips to Dharchula, India[1]. I am in the process of analyzing the data gathered, in an effort to complete a descriptive grammar of the language. All analyses presented here are representative of a work in progress.

This paper is organized as follows: The first section will provide a brief sketch of the Darma community and the linguistic situation of the area, and a brief overview of the structure of the language; section two introduces the term 'converb' and presents a working definition for the discussion; in section three, I will outline data from Darma that supports the hypothesis that there is a converb in the language; section four will examine data that does not fit within the parameters of a 'converb'; in section five, I will introduce the term 'switch reference' and reexamine the Darma data with this analysis. In section six, I will examine data that does not fit the definition of switch reference as presented in Longacre (1985) and Haspelmath (1995). In sections seven and eight, I will reconsider switch reference using a re-analysis of the definition from Mithun (1993). Finally, I will conclude with a summary of my findings and suggest future research.

2   The Darma Language and its People

Darma[2] is a Tibeto-Burman language spoken in the area of the Himalayan town of Dharchula, which is on the border of Nepal, close to Tibet. Darma is a verb final language, with postpositions. Agents are case marked with an ergative morpheme, although this morpheme is sometimes omitted following the pattern in Hindi, where ergative case is marked only in the simple past.

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[2] Darma is sometimes called Darmiya in the literature. It is also sometimes lumped together with its sister languages Byansi and Chaudangsi under the term Rangboli. While only preliminary work has been done with all three varieties, it is believed that Darma is distinct from Byansi and Chaudangsi (Gordon 2005; Trivedi 1991; Krishan 2001).

According to the Government of India's 2001 census data, the population of Darma people[3] is approximately 2,600. Based on my personal experience within the Darma speaking community, not all of the people who identify themselves as Darma speak the traditional language. The local varieties of Nepali and Kumauni are spoken by most locals, and Hindi is taught in the schools. I have met many school age children who speak Hindi, but do not understand or speak Darma. The children who do speak Darma fluently and who use it as a daily form of communication are often from families that are not financially secure.

Historically, the Rang people were the dominant population in the Dharchula area. After China invaded Tibet, and almost took over the region of India where the Rang people live in 1962, a large military presence was established in the Dharchula area. Additionally, in the last five years the government has been working on a small dam in the lower regions of the Darma Valley. These circumstances have brought many Hindi speaking people from the plains to this mountain community. I was told that this influx of outsiders has altered the community both culturally and linguistically.

The main consultant[4] throughout my research project was Bishan Singh Selal, a 25 year old male who was educated in both English and Hindi. He has a BA and is working on a Masters of Education. He teaches at the local army outpost elementary school, where he instructs in English. His mother speaks minimal Hindi, which is one reason why Darma is still the primary language of the household. Based on interviews and personal interactions with Darma speakers, I have found that the majority of monolingual Darma speakers in the community are those women who received no formal education.

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[3] The government of India classifies the Darma people, along with their sister clans the Byansi and Chaudangsi, under the term Bhotiya. Darma is a self-referent, while the term Bhotiya is resented by the people. The self-referent for the Darma, Byansi, and Chaudangsi as a group is Rang.

[4] I would like to thank the Darma people who graciously helped me gather data, and allowed me to record conversations, songs, personal narratives, and stories. So many people contributed to my project by answering my endless stream of questions regarding the language and culture. There are too many names to list here, but the kind people in Gothi and Kalika must be recognized. I would especially like to thank my primary consultant Bishan Singh Selal, who worked with me in addition to working another job fulltime.

3 Converbal Constructions Defined

The first issue that must be addressed is how I will classify the structures under investigation. In Darma it is possible to have a sentence with multiple verbs as illustrated in (2) below.[5]

(2) **hã   ʈi-lən   jo   hre-nu   ni-n-cɯ.**
     then   lead-CONV   down   bring-ADJR   be-1pl-PST
     Then, we brought (the yak) down leading (it).   T0018:020

There has been much debate over what a converb construction is (Haspelmath 1995), in part because the term 'converb' is not used consistently in the literature; what would be called a 'converb' by one scholar may be called a 'gerund*',* 'conjunctive participle', or 'adverbial participle' by another in the literature.[6]

In an attempt to clarify the question of converbs, Haspelmath and Koenig (1995) present a collection of papers wherein a formal definition of converbs is proposed, and the distribution of the morpheme is explored cross-linguistically. In the introductory chapter, Haspelmath defines a converb as 'a nonfinite verb form whose main function is to mark adverbial subordination.' Converbs lack tense, aspect, mood and agreement markers, and are thus nonfinite (1995: 3-4). The typical structure of a converb is STEM + AFFIX and they are commonly found in verb final languages (Longacre 1985: 264; Haspelmath 1995: 9).

Haspelmath (1995) discusses the fact that converbal constructions have been analyzed in varying ways in the literature. In addition to different terms to describe the same phenomenon, there are other constructions that

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[5] The data presented in this paper are in the IPA. The format of presentation is three lines: the top line is the phonemic transcription with morpheme boundaries; the second line contains the morpheme gloss; and the third line is the free translation. The numbered code that follows is a reference to the source text for the data. Some of the data are not from natural discourse. I will indicate that those data are from elicitation sessions. The abbreviations are as follows: ADJR = adjectivalizer; ASP = aspect; CONV = converb; ECHO = echo formation; EMPH = emphasis; ERG = ergative; FOC = focus; FUT = future; GEN = genitive; (H) = a Hindi word; INF = infinitive; INTJ = interjection; LOC = locative; NEG = negative; PL = plural; POSS = possessive; PRS = present; PST = past; number is marked 1sg, 1pl, 2sg, 2pl, 3sg, 3pl. Terms such as ASP and PST may change after further analysis.

[6] Longacre (1985) refers to 'clause chains' to describe what Haspelmath calls a converbal construction as in example (1). Haspelmath (1995: 45-46) explicates which term might be used where: The term 'conjunctive participle' is used in descriptions of South Asian languages; the term 'gerund' is used in descriptions of Romance languages; and the term 'adverbial participle' is used in descriptions of Slavic languages.

are similar to converbs, but don't meet all of the criteria Haspelmath outlines in his definition of the term. These other constructions include:

- copredicative participles;
- medial verbs;
- clause chaining;
- absolute constructions;
- infinitival constructions.

The structure presented in (1) is identified as a converb by Haspelmath (1995: 2; 2002: 67). According to Longacre (1985), the structure in (1) would be classified as a 'clause chain'. Haspelmath (1995: 8) claims that 'clause chaining' is a structure that is very similar to the converbal construction, but the two are not the same. What differentiates the two is that converbs are subordinate clauses, while clause chained constructions are not.

Longacre states that the structures in clause chains consist of 'sentence margins' and 'sentence nuclei'. The verbal element in a sentence margin is termed a medial verb and is usually marked with morphology that indicates its status as a medial verb. Medial verbs also have morphology that indicates a switch of reference, which will be discussed further below. The 'sentence margins' in clause chains are subordinate to the 'sentence nuclei', while the 'sentence nuclei' are independent clauses and contain the main meaning of the utterance. The verbs in sentence nuclei are more complete than the medial verbs, meaning the verbs in the nuclei contain all of the tense, aspect, and agreement morphology required by the syntax.

According to Longacre, another feature that distinguishes clause chains from similar formations like conjoined clauses is that temporal overlap and temporal succession are features of clause chains (1985: 264). In summary, both Haspelmath and Longacre suggest that these constructions are part of a subordinate clause. Haspelmath requires that the converb bear no tense, aspect, or agreement morphology, and Longacre requires that the clause chain bear a morpheme identifying the subject of the following clause as being the same or different from the preceding clause.

Clause chains as defined by Longacre and converbs as defined by Haspelmath are so similar that the dueling definitions serve as an example of the confusion that multiple terms for the same phenomenon can cause. Both constructions have a nonfinite verb in a subordinate clause, which is associated with a matrix clause that contains a fully inflected verb.

For this paper, I will follow the definition of converbs outlined by Haspelmath, in part because it the most recent source. Haspelmath states that the difference between a clause chain and a converb is that converbs are subordinate clauses, while clause chains are not. While Longacre claims

that clause chains are subordinate clauses, he does not demonstrate subordination with any tests. Haspelmath, on the other hand, proposes some tests to determine whether the construction in question is in fact a subordinate clause or not. Per his definition, only those constructions that are subordinate can be classified as true converbs.

The decision to follow Haspelmath's definition is rather arbitrary since his definition is so close to Longacre's, but Haspelmath and Koenig have attempted to unify the theory of these constructions and do away with multiple terms for the same phenomena, and I think this is the right step toward both furthering our understanding of converbs cross-linguistically and developing a unifying theory of this phenomenon. I will, however, revisit Longacre's definition later in the discussion and suggest that some components of his definition need to be incorporated into Haspelmath's account of this cross-linguistic phenomenon. I will use examples from Darma to support Genetti's suggestion that the term 'converb' needs to be revised (2005: 81).

4 Converbs in Darma: [-lən]

I will consider the structures found in Darma, like example (2) above, to be converbs as defined by Haspelmath (1995). The converb[7] in Darma is an affix on a verb stem: V_{STEM} + [-lən], as is the case cross linguistically. In this section, I present data that supports this claim.

According to the working definition for this paper, converbal constructions are subordinate clauses. Haspelmath (1995) states that subordinate clauses can:

- embed in the superordinate clause;
- come before or after the superordinate clause;
- be focused with 'only' and 'also' particles;
- be extracted; meaning it is possible to form a question based on a subordinated clause.

Additionally, in subordinate clauses:

- there is backward pronominal anaphora and control.

Converbal constructions in Darma are found primarily in narratives. This is logical considering the purpose of this type of construction is to move the narrative forward (Saxena 2004). Because most of the converb

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[7] There is another suffix found in Darma, [-ṭhe], which I have also identified as a converb. The [-ṭhe] is not used as frequently as [-lən], but it is used in a similar fashion. My consultant states that the two are always interchangeable, but further investigation is needed to make this claim. I will not include [-ṭhe] in the discussion here.

data I have in Darma come from natural discourse, I do not have examples of sentences for each of Hasplemath's tests outlined above. In fact, during elicitation sessions, manipulating converbal constructions was a frustrating task for me and my consultant. I will address this issue later in the paper.

The data that I have for Darma suggest that the constructions in question are true converbal constructions; meaning they are subordinate clauses. Of the five tests proposed by Haspelmath, I have data to support two tests: Darma converbal clauses can be placed before and after the superordinate, or matrix, clause; and Darma converbs can take a focus particle. This is shown in examples (4-7). In example (3), we see a structure similar to the one presented in (2) above. The converb precedes the matrix verb in the utterance. Here we have an echo formation, and each component of the echo[8] bears the converb morpheme.

(3) hã   bakca   tʰʉŋ-lən   tʰaN-lən   de-ɕjɛn,
     then   wedding dance-CONV ECHO-CONV   go-1pl.PRS

     iḍo   sʉ.
     after_that
     Then, we go to the wedding dancing and everything after that.
     T0013:013

In examples (4-5), we find the converb in a sentence final position, where it has been extraposed. Darma is a verb-final language, and as we saw in examples (2-3), the converb usually precedes the fully inflected verb (i.e. the verb with tense, aspect, and agreement morphology).

(4) **mi-ɟən**   **kʰe**   **mə-ra-yəŋ**   **wi-lɛn.**
     person-PL   some   NEG-come-FUT   invite-CONV
     Some of the people will not come after being inivted. T0037: 019

(5) **ɟjadu**   **le**   **ɟa-n**   **ni-n-ɟʉ**   **darma**   **ra-lən.**
     a_dish.food   also   eat-ADJR   be-1pl.PST   Darma   come-CONV
     We also used to eat flour porridge after coming to Darma (Valley).
     T0021:015

The examples in (6) and (7) have the converb with a focus particle, [-na],

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[8] Echo formations are an areal feature of South Asian languages. A word is paired with a rhyming word, and contributes a meaning 'and everything that goes along with that'. For example in Hindi 'chai vay' means 'tea and everthing that goes with that', like biscuits and conversation. Here 'chai' means 'tea', and the second word 'vay' holds no meaning on its own. In Darma both the stem that has meaning and the echo element are marked as converbs.

which is usually translated as 'also' or 'only'.

(6)   **ɟil-lən-na   hre-mu.**
        rub- CONV-FOC   bring-INF
        You should bring (it) while rubbing only.   T0042:elicited sentences:237

(7)   **gəni   bʰarəṭ   kʰəχtɯ   nagrikṭa**
        2pl   India   from   citizenship

        kʰaṭ-lən-na   hre-ni,   or   ḍo   ɟɯ nagrikṭa
        sever-CONV-FOC   bring-2sg and here of citizenship

        ɟoynḍ   gani.
        join   do-2sg
        *"You should just sever your citizenship with India and then come
        here and become a citizen."*   T0025:066

These data demonstrate that the clause with the converb in Darma is indeed subordinate per the tests proposed by Haspelmath (1995); based on these data, I will conclude that Darma does have converbal constructions.

5   Contradictory Data

Considering that part of the definition of converbs is that they are nonfinite constructions, it is puzzling that I find data as in (8) and (9) with the morpheme [-ɟɯ][9] that marks past tense in Darma. [10]

(8) (i)   ṭo   ɛsa   he   ɟo   ʔu   sɯ   ɟo ni-ni
            then   of_this_type.(H) be.(H)   that 3sg   ERG   um
    (ii) kʰrapat   ḍimag   ga-lən-ɟɯ,   ʔu   sɯ
            mischievous_idea   mind   do-CONV-PST 3sg ERG

    (iii) gaṭʰo   me   po-lən-ɟɯ,   pulis   sɯ   ɟo nini,
            flour_mill fire   start-CONV-PST police ERG   INTJ

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[9] The morpheme [-ɟɯ] alternates with [-cɯ] when attached to a verb stem (see Table 1 in Section 6 below) and with [-cɯ] and [-ɟaŋ] when attached to a converb.

[10] Thank you to Carlota Smith for pointing out the problem of introducing this morpheme [-ɟɯ] as a past tense marker. I am not certain that it is in fact tense, but until I have an analysis that I find satisfactory, I will call it past tense. The utterances that contain this morpheme are consistently translated to past in both Hindi and English. I revisit this issue later in the paper.

(iv) <u>tuɯm-lən-ɟɯ</u>   ɟo nini,   raɟa   ḍərosar
       catch-CONV-PST   INTJ   king   near   deliver

(v) pu-kur-suɯ.
    ASP-take_away-3sg.PST
    So it is like this, after he thought the mischievous thoughts, after he
    started the mill fire, after the police, um, caught him, uh, they de-
    livered him to the king.   T0025:019-020

(9)   ɟi   pe-lən-ɟɯ   geɟe-o.
        1sg   slip-CONV-PST   fall_person-1sg.PST
        I slipped and fell.   T0042 Elicited:367

    Considering the meaning of (8) and (9), it appears that the past tense marker on a converb construction imparts a sense of completion and should be interpreted to mean 'after'. An analysis such as this would actually suggest that the morpheme meaning 'after' has been grammaticalized as the past tense marker. We can see that interpreting [-ɟɯ] as 'after' would make sense in an example like (8) where a series of events are occurring in a sequential order. First the hero gets a mischievous idea in his head, and after that he burns down the mill, and after that he is caught by the police.

    But then it is necessary to consider examples like (10-11) where there is no past tense marker [-ɟɯ] on the converb, and each sentence still has a sequential interpretation.

(10)   hã   niŋ   ḍa   ɟo nini re   ru   ɟɯ   ja
        yes   1pl   EMPH   that_is field in from tuber_wild

        <u>kwɛ-lən</u>   ɟa-nu   ni-n-ɟɯ.
        boil-CONV   eat-ADJR   be-1pl-PST
        Yes, we even, that is, we ate the wild yams from the field after boil-
        ing them.   T0021:003

(11)   ɟjaḍu   vol   tsjokpa   ga-lən
        a_dish_food greens veg_cooked   make-CONV
        ɟan   ni-n-ɟɯ.
        eat-ADJR   be-1pl-PST
        We would make the flour soup and the fried vegetables and eat.
                                                      T0021:004

In both (10) and (11), it is necessary for the food to be made or boiled prior to consumption. The act of boiling the yams in (10) needs to be finished before they are eaten, and the soup and cooked vegetables must be prepared before they are consumed. While we could imagine a possible world where half-cooked food would be eaten, or imagine a possible world where one tastes food for flavor before it is actually finished, this is not the correct reading of either construction presented here. The speaker and his family are gathering yams from the field, boiling them, and then eating them. They are preparing soup and cooked vegetables and then eating them.

This inconsistency leads me to believe that my initial interpretation of the [-ɟɯ] marker in converbal constructions is not telling the right story. While I will not abandon the interpretation that the past marker has grammaticalized to contribute meaning to these constructions, I will explore other ways to account for the [-ɟɯ] marker in these constructions.[11] In the next section, I will discuss the term 'switch reference', which may help with the analysis of [-ɟɯ] in converbal constructions.

Before I explore other explanations for the occurrence of [-ɟɯ] in these constructions, I would like to demonstrate that utterances with [-ɟɯ] are indeed like other converb constructions. In the texts I have examined to date, I find the STEM-lən-ɟɯ construction in an extraposed position as shown in examples (12) and (13).

(12)   məʈləb   gɛ   vastəro   gɛ   ɟi   tsʰi-mə-gu,
        meaning 2sg   really   2sg   1sg   meet-INF-GEN

        kuc ne kuc   ɟo nini   gɛ   sɯ   ʈa   rasʈa
        s.thing_or_other.(H) that_is   2sg   ERG   one   path

        nikə-len-ɟɯ.
        solve-CONV-PST
    "That means you really, you'd do anything to meet me, that is, you found the only way."   T0025:030

(13)   aako-aŋ-ḍəni   ḍe-lən-ɟɯ.
        call_names-FUT-2pl go-CONV-PST
        You'll talk about me after I go.   T0032:264

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[11] This needs to be reworked. Carlota Smith has suggested that I attempt another approach to account for this morpheme, which I will do in future work.

6 Switch Reference

Within the context of subject reference, Haspelmath (1995: 10) describes three types of converbs:

- those with implicit subjects, where the subject cannot be overt;
- those with explicit subjects, where the subject must be overt;
- those with free subjects, where the subject may be overt, but is not required to be.

In Darma we find that the subjects are free: They may be overt, but they are not required to be overt. We find an overt subject/agent in both types of converb construction.

We find the plain converb with an overt pronoun as in (14) below.

(14)   ɟi   kʰwi   ʈəŋ-lən   ɟɛr-hi.
       1sg   dog   see-CONV   be_afraid-1sg.PRS
       After seeing the dog, I got scared.   T0042 Elicited: 338

We also find an overt subject/agent in the converb construction with the [-ɟɯ] marker, as in example (8) above. Looking at lines (ii) through (v), we find that the converb 'start' (e.g. light a fire) has an overt agent, 'he', and that the converb 'catch' also has an overt agent, 'the police', who catch the hero of the story and deliver him to the king. Referring back to (3) above, we find a verb stem with a converb morpheme and no overt subject/agent. The final verb in (3), 'go', is marked for first person plural present.

In example (15), we have another construction with a transitive verb stem marked with a converb morpheme, but here the transitive verb has no overt agent. The verb of the matrix clause is marked as first person plural, but an overt nominal agent is not required in either clause.

(15)   hã   re   ru   kur-lən-ɟɯ   kuŋ   ru
       then   field   in   take_away-CONV-PST   grave   in
       lʊb   ni-n-ɟɯ.
       bury   be-1pl-PST
       Then after we take the body to the field we bury it in a grave.
                                                                T0018:005

That a subject is not required in the matrix clause or in the subordinate converbal clause raises the question: How do we know who is doing what in a narrative? How do I know who is bringing the body to the field and

burying it in example (15)? One clue is on the finite verb. In Darma, 1pl, 2sg/pl agreement is encoded on the verb. For 3sg and 3pl there is no overt agreement marker, but the tense marker is distinct. This is shown in Table 1.

1sg	ɟa-Ø-jo[12]	**1pl**	ɟa-n-cɯ
2sg	ɟa-n-cɯ	**2pl**	ɟa-n-cɯ
3sg	ɟa-Ø-sɯ	3pl	ɟa-Ø-sɯ

Table 1: A paradigm for 'eat'

The verb takes the same marker for 1pl and 2sg/pl, while the verb form for 1sg is distinct in Darma, and 3sg and 3pl verb forms are identical.

According to Haspelmath (1995), if the converbal construction has no overt subject, the subject of the matrix clause is the subject of both clauses, which we find in example (2).

In (2) there is not an overt subject in either the matrix or subordinate clause. This does not pose a problem, however, because the matrix verb has a 1pl agreement marker after the stem. Thus, we know that the subject of both clauses is 'we'.

This type of encoding works quite well if the subject of both clauses is the same. But what about sentences with multiple converbal constructions where each clause has a different subject, such as example (8)? The utterance starts out with the hero having a mischievous thought, then he sets the mill on fire, then the police catch him, and he is taken to the king. Each of the converb markers is followed by the [-ɟɯ] marker, which I have labeled past tense. Upon closer investigation, this marker appears to be what Haspelmath (1995) and Longacre (1985) call a 'switch reference' marker.

Longacre includes switch reference as part of his definition of a 'clause chain'. Haspelmath does not go this far, but certainly includes a discussion of 'switch reference' in his discussion of converbal constructions. A 'switch reference' marker alerts the interlocutor to a change of subject for the next clause. So, in example (8) we start off talking about the hero of the story, and then talk about the police catching him. To indicate that the agent or subject is changing, the converb bears the 'switch reference' marker [-ɟɯ]. It should not be alarming that the first clause has our hero as a subject and the converb has the 'switch reference' marker on it even though there is not switch. In natural discourse there are false starts and stops, and this could be an example of an intended switch that doesn't take place. The speaker states that the hero has a mischievous idea, and before switching to the

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[12] The verb is in the following format: STEM-NUMBER-PERSON.

topic of the police, as planned, he decides to state that the hero set the mill on fire, so he says 'he lights the mill on fire' before shifting to a discussion of the police.

Another example of this phenomenon is given in (16). Based on context, we know that the utterance starts off in the first person plural. Following the converb [de-lən-ɟaŋ], the subject switches to the third person singular.

(16) **hã**   **bakca**   **de-lən-ɟaŋ**   **ido sɯ,**
      then   wedding   go-CONV-PST   after_that

      ta **çjahi** **le-ni,**   **niŋ-gu** **çjahi** **do**
      one relative be-3sg.PRS   1pl-POSS relative here

      ru **niŋ-gu** **tsʰɛtəŋ**   **ga-da.**
      LOC 1pl-POSS alter   do-3sg.PRS

      Then after going to the wedding, after that there is one relative,
      our relative from here does the alter.   T0013:014

Reviewing the data, I find that the pattern for switch reference is most robust in narrative discourse. Elicited utterances sometimes contradict the hypothesis that [-ɟɯ] is a switch reference marker. While I find examples of switch reference in the data examined, many examples that contain the converb + [-ɟɯ] construction have no switch of referent. This is an issue that I will address in the next section.

7   The 'Switch Reference' Marker [-ɟɯ] that Defies the Generalization

Informal discourse has the complicating factor of being spontaneous speech. We often start to say something and then decide to say something else mid-sentence. This may be a factor in cases where [-ɟɯ] does not actually mark a switch in natural discourse texts. While I was sensitive to the notion of pauses and other cues in the recorded texts as I worked with my native-speaker consultant, I was not considering an analysis of the [-ɟɯ] as a switch reference marker in these contexts. In fact, reflecting on interviews with my consultant, he was not cognizant of the role of the [-ɟɯ] marker in a way that allowed him to explicate its use. He provided several examples during elicitation sessions that I interpreted as contradictory; these examples have confounded my understanding of [-ɟɯ] in converbal constructions. My consultant is a native speaker of Darma and speaks the language

at home on a daily basis. At one point I wondered if Hindi, his dominant language outside the home, was interfering with his judgements. Mithun (1993) faced a similar dilemma, but she made a point of stating that her consultants were not only excellent speakers, but that we cannot attribute data that is troublesome for our analyses to speaker error.

It is still puzzling to find constructions like (9) and lines (iii) through (v) in (8) where calling [-ɟɯ] a switch reference marker does not fit the proposed generalization. A switch reference marker is needed when there is a change in subject or agent from one clause to the next; the marker serves as a discourse marker, alerting the audience that the subject/agent is changing in the following clause.

In (9), we have a matrix verb that is marked for 1sg and an overt pronoun subject in the dependent converbal clause that is also 1sg. There is no need to indicate a change in subject, and yet we find the [-ɟɯ] marker on the converb. This is an example from an elicitation session, so perhaps this example was provided in error. But if we look back at an example from natural speech, we find that this type of construction is also available.

In lines (iii) through (v) of example (8), we find [-ɟɯ], the hypothesized switch reference marker, on a converb, but in the following clause there is no switch. In this last portion of (8), we see that there is a switch reference marker on 'catch', but there is no switch of subject/agent in the next clause. The matrix verb is 'take away', and it is a transitive verb that would take an ergative agent if the noun were overt as in (17) below (the bracketed portion of the utterance contains the relevant information).

(17) ṭo radza sɯ ṭɯɯm-lən ɟi ɟo nini,
then king ERG catch-CONV 1sg that_is

həḍo kor-aN-ḍa [ɟo niniraɟa ḍəro
3sg take_away-FUT-3sg.PRS [that_is king near

ṭɯɯm-lən kur-aN-ḍa pulis sɯ].
catch-CONV take_away-FUT-3pl.PRS police ERG]
"Then the king will catch me, and uh take me away to him, that is the police will catch me and take me away to the king."

T0025: 017

In (17), we find the same verb 'take away' in a future form with an overt agentive noun marked with the ergative morpheme. We know from the story that it is the police who catch the hero and take him to the king,

and that the marker on 'catch' in (8) cannot reasonably be termed a switch reference marker if the switch refers to the subject.

Another sentence to consider in this discussion is (18):

(18)   niŋ   ɟaʈi   ga-lən   ʔui   ɟani.
1pl   food   make-CONV   3pl   eat-3pl.PRS
Upon our making the food they eat.   T0042 Elicited: 524

In (18), we find a 1pl subject in the converbal clause and a 3pl subject in the matrix clause. This is a construction where we would expect to find a switch reference marker on the converb, but we do not. We could hypothesize that if both subjects/agents are overt, then there is no need for a switch reference marker. This hypothesis can be quickly rejected if we recall that in (8) above we found overt subjects with the switch reference marker [-ɟɯ]. In (8), both 3sg ERG and 'police' ERG are overt, and yet we find the [-ɟɯ] marker in both clauses.

8   The Properties of Switch-Reference Revisited

While I have data to support the notion that [-ɟɯ] is a switch-reference marker, I have a lot of data that demonstrates that switch reference cannot be the only role of this morpheme. The fact that it does not always indicate a switch is problematic, but any account of the [-ɟɯ] marker must also account for the apparent switch in some constructions. In an effort to find a solution to this puzzle, let us look to Central Pomo (CP) and the analysis provided by Mithun (1993).

CP has three pairs of markers that appear to mark switch-reference. The role as a switch-reference marker is most evident in elicited constructions. In natural speech, however, the markers don't always follow the same pattern (Mithun 1993). Upon further investigation, Mithun concludes that the markers actually encode how many events are taking place under the matrix clause; switch-reference as classically defined is not the primary function of these morphemes.

She demonstrates with the three pairs of markers in CP that each switch reference morpheme that encodes the same subject in the matrix and dependent clauses is used in constructions where the action of the dependent clause and the action of the matrix clause are together interpreted as being one event. The morpheme that marks switch-reference is used when the event in the dependent clause and the event in the matrix clause are two separate events. The primary function of the switch reference marker is not to encode a switch of referent in terms of subject/agent, but rather the marker is marking 'same versus different eventhood' (Mithun 1993: 134).

The examples[13] in (19) (Mithun 1993: 126) exemplify her argument:

(19) ʔá   mkʰe   kʰčéʔel   dóčhi
      ʔá   mkʰe   kʰçé=ʔel   dó-č-<u>hi</u>
      1.AGT   2.AGT   bridge=the   make-SML-<u>SAME</u>

      míli   ma   ʔdĩmʔkʰe
      mí=li   ma   ʔdí-m=ʔkʰe
      that=with   2.PAT   take.PL-across=FUT

*I will build the bridge for you <u>and</u> on that you'll take them (across)
= I will build you a bridge to take them across on.*

(20) m̥to   mul   smá   m̥tíčkayahlạ
      m̥to   mul   smá   m̥tí-č-ka-ya=hlạ
      2.PAT   that   sleep   lie-INCH-CAUS-DEFOC=DIFF

      m̥to   q'óʔti   madúmač'kʰe   t̥ʰĩn
      m̥to   q'ó=ʔti   madú-mač'=kʰe   t̥ʰí-n
      2.PAT   what=even   awake-AFF-INCH=FUT   not-IP

If you were put to sleep, you'd never wake up at all.

In example (20) the subject is the same in both clauses, yet we find a switch reference marker on the medial verb.

The switch reference markers in CP are not found in the same constructions as the potential switch reference marker in Darma. The markers termed switch-reference markers according to Mithun do not occur as part of a converb construction. In fact, Mithun states that the switch-reference markers themselves play a role in the linking of clauses in CP (1993: 119). However these morphemes are identified, they are found in dependent clauses[14] and can either mark a switch of reference or mark the event in the dependent clause as distinct from the event in the matrix clause. Also, Darma does not have an alternation between a 'same' marker and a 'different' marker as Mithun found in CP. Despite these differences, let us revisit the Darma data and reanalyze it following the pattern found in CP. In our

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[13] Mithun uses the following abbreviations: AFF = emotional affect; AGT = agent; CAUS = causative; DEFOC = defocus; DIFF = different—distinct events; FUT = future; INCH = inchoative; IP = imperfective aspect; PAT = patient; PL = plural; SAME = same—simultaneous actions; SML = semelfactive.

[14] While Mithun does not provide tests for subordination, and claims that these constructions may not be semantically subordinate, she does state that the clauses marked with the switch reference marker are 'grammatically dependent insofar as speakers do not feel they constitute complete sentences in themselves' (124).

reanalysis we will consider the switch reference marker [-ɟɯ] in Darma to be a morpheme that relates events rather than subjects. We will consider the overt marker to index different events. Under this analysis, I claim that the overt 'different events' marker [-ɟɯ] alternates with a zero marker that indexes 'same events'.

9   Switch-Reference in Darma Revisited

Let us reconsider the example from (8) above that was problematic under each analysis considered to this point. In this example, the first two clauses have the same overt referent (3sg referring to the hero of the story), and yet we find the overt switch reference marker on the converb.

If we reanalyze the switch reference marker according to Mithun's analysis, we can reexamine the utterance to consist of four separate events. First, the hero has a mischievous idea, the second event is that he lights the fire, the third event is the police capture the hero, and the final event is that the police deliver the hero to the king.

This analysis will allow us to explain why we find the switch reference marker in constructions where the subject remains the same in the matrix and subordinate clauses as we saw above in (15), where the subject/agent in both clauses is the first person plural, but the switch reference marker is overt. We now understand that the [-ɟɯ] is there to indicate that the taking away and the burying are two separate events.

When looking at an example like (11) using the new analysis of the switch reference marker, a new question arises: Why is there no switch reference marker on the converb 'make'?

There is a cultural explanation for this. In the Rang culture, cooking and eating are one event. If one is invited to a traditional Rang house, the eating is done around the hearth. The women of the household cook the food and serve it to the guests seated around the periphery of the kitchen. With this in mind, we can posit a semantic interpretation of the events of cooking and eating as one event. This semantic interpretation is coded on the converb as a 'same' switch reference marker, which is morphologically unmarked.

Earlier I mentioned that eliciting these constructions in interview sessions was challenging. Mithun reports that elicitation sessions did not reveal the pattern found in discourse. In interview sessions with my primary consultant, BSS, I was told that the converb and the converb + switch reference constructions were the same. Examining the data, I find that BSS did not use these constructions interchangeably. That he would report that these constructions are used in the same way when asked about them in the abstract is not surprising. Without context, it is difficult to articulate how the

plain converb is different from the converb + switch reference marker construction.

The pattern of switch reference appears to be consistent in the Darma texts analyzed to date, but there are some constructions that do not fit neatly into the analysis. For example, (8) and (17) don't fit the analysis as I have presented it here.

These two examples both have the verb 'catch' as a converb, (8) with the switch reference marker and (17) without. They both also have the fully inflected verb 'take away'. The question is why does (8) have the switch reference, and (17) does not? It may be because the tense and aspect features of the matrix verb are different.[15] The CP data presented in Mithun (1993) have three sets of markers one pair for realis events that coincide, one pair for irrealis and the third pair for realis events that are consecutive. It seems logical that Darma would also distinguish between these different aspectual cases by using the switch reference differently in differing aspectual constructions. Another factor to consider is that the matrix verb construction in (8) is a compound verb (the stem 'deliver' with the fully inflected 'take away'), while the matrix verb in (17) is not. This type of construction with compound verbs and alternations with tense/aspect, which here contradicts the switch reference analysis, must be further examined.

10 Concluding Remarks

The converbal construction in Darma adheres to the definition from Haspelmath (1995) outlined here. The converb morpheme is a verb suffix; and the resulting converbal clause is subordinate to the matrix clause. The hypothesis of a switch reference marker poses two problems: First, it appears to be a time marker, which flouts Haspelmath's definition of a converb; second, the marker itself does not function primarily as a switch reference marker as the term is traditionally defined by Longacre, Haspelmath, and others.

Examining the data available in Darma, I suggest that Haspelmath's (1995) notion of a converb needs to be revised. I am not the first to suggest this. Genetti (2005) suggests that Haspelmath's definition should be revised; specifically, she suggests that his requirement of subordination be relaxed. Additionally, cross-linguistic evidence supports this suggestion that the definition of the term 'converb' should be revised. While Longacre terms the constructions presented here 'clause chains', he does not require subordination outright. Rather he suggests that the multiple verbs in these constructions are not of the same rank. The medial verbs are not structurally

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[15] Thank you to Anthony C. Woodbury for suggesting that tense and aspect may play a role in the use of the switch reference morpheme.

the same as the final verb, which is fully inflected. In the Darma construction only the final verb is fully inflected with tense, aspect, and agreement; the preceding verbs are maximally the stem with the nonfinite morpheme and the past tense marker, which serves as a switch reference marker. Identifying a switch reference marker that does not index a switch of subject is also justified cross-linguistically. Darma and Central Pomo utilize the marker in a different sense, marking a switch of event rather than subject.

I propose that we maintain the use of 'converb' and 'switch reference' to discuss these morphemes as Haspelmath and Koenig (1995) and others have established in the literature. We should expand the definition of these terms to account for data found cross-linguistically. To date, I have found one other language, Caodeng rGyalorong (Sun 2003), that uses a past tense in converb constructions. The construction is not the same as Darma; the past form of the verb stem is reduplicated to form the converb. But it is clear that excluding tense from the converb is not the pattern found cross-linguistically. I must continue a search of the literature to see if I can locate other languages where past tense is a part of the converbal construction.

While I propose a revision of Haspelmath's definition, I do support continuing the use of the term 'converb' to categorize these constructions. Utilizing the same terminology will allow us to assert that, while the details of how the morpheme functions in a given language differ, the role it plays in general follows a pattern found cross-linguistically. The converb marks a nonfinite verb within a larger structure. A switch reference marker indexes a shift in subjecthood/eventhood within a larger structure.

Finally, I must continue to test this analysis in Darma. I must finish analyzing the remaining texts under the analysis presented here and see how robust the pattern is.

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