The Nature of Clusivity Features: Insights from two Syncretism Case Studies

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1 Clusivity

Exclusive: author (and potential others) ***without*** addressee
Inclusive: author (and potential others) and addressee

Underlying research question: How should the property '*without* addressee' be specified?
with the absence of a feature → (1) with the presence of a feature → (2)

Privative Clusivity Features

(1) Privative features (e.g. Harley & Ritter 2002; Béjar 2003; Moskal 2018)
a. 1SG: [author]
b. 1EXCL: [author, plural]
c. 1INCL: [author, plural, addressee]

Binary Clusivity Features

(2) Binary features (e.g. Noyer 1992; Harbour 2016; Pertsova 2022)
a. 1SG: [+author, −plural, **−addressee**]
b. 1EXCL: [+author, +plural, **−addressee**]
c. 1INCL: [+author, +plural, +addressee]

2 *ABA

(e.g. Wiese 2008; Bobaljik 2012; Moskal 2018; Müller 2020; Pertsova 2022)

Background assumptions:
- same form is treated as systematic syncretism (vs. accidental homophony)
- post-syntactic Vocabulary Insertion lead by the Subset Principle

Privative Features ⇒ *ABA (in 1SG–1EXCL–1INCL)

(10) Containment Hypothesis (clusivity): (Moskal 2018, 10)
The inclusive always properly contains the exclusive.
(cf. Bobaljik 2012 for the Comparative-Superlative Generalization)

(11) Exemplary VIs for a privative clusivity feature inventory
a. A ↔ [author]
b. B ↔ [author, plural]

☞ (11-b) blocks (11-a) in the inclusive ⇒ *ABA

Binary Features ⇒ ABA (in 1SG–1EXCL–1INCL)

(e.g. Pertsova 2022)

(12) Exemplary VIs for a binary clusivity feature inventory
a. A ↔ [+author]
b. B ↔ [+author, +plural, **−addressee**]

☞ (12-b) does not block (12-a) in the inclusive ⇒ ABA

3 Didinga (Surmic/South Sudan) ABA

(3) a. h-à-ìrìt-í **X / (A)**
1-ASP-cough-1SG
'I am coughing'
b. h-à-ìrìt-ta **B**
1-ASP-cough-1PL.EXCL
'We (excl.) are coughing'
c. h-à-írìt-ì **A**
1-ASP-cough-1PL.INCL
'We (incl.) are coughing'

(4) à-írìt-ì
ASP-cough-3
'He/she/it/they is/are coughing'

(5) Didinga subject agreement, intransitive verbs, incompletive

	Singular		Plural
1	h- -i	(excl.)	h- **-Ca**
		(incl.)	h- -I
2	-i		-Cu
3	-I		-I

(Data come from own fieldwork, see also Lohitare et al. 2012)

1INCL-3RD syncretism: 1PL.INCL, 3SG and 3PL don't share a single feature
⇒ -I represents a radically underspecified default exponent -I ↔ [ ]

Didinga & Privative Features:

(6) VIs Didinga, privative features
a. -I ↔ [ ] **A**
b. **-Ca** ↔ [author, plural] **B**

☞ (6-b) would block (6-a) in the inclusive ↯

🔍 Didinga exhibits an underlying **ABA** scenario
– -I **(A)** not showing up in the 1SG is a mere accident of the lexicon
– which includes an exponent (*-i*) that blocks -I **(A)** in the 1SG

Work-around for privative clusivity features:

(7) Nullify containment Impoverishment Rule #1
[plural] → ∅ / [author, addressee]
(cf. Noyer 1992 and Moskal 2018 for Dolakha Newar)

(8) Feature specification after the application of (7)
a. 1SG: [author]
b. 1EXCL: [author, plural]
c. 1INCL: [~~author~~, ~~plural~~, addressee]

– After the application of (7): 1EXCL doesn't contain 1INCL anymore, cf. (8)
☞ (6-b) doesn't block (6-a) in the inclusive anymore
⇒ privative clusivity features may derive the Didinga data

COST: ABA becomes possible for 1SG–1EXCL–1INCL with privative features

Didinga & Binary Features:

(9) VIs Didinga, binary features
a. -I ↔ [ ] **A**
b. **-Ca** ↔ [+author, +plural, **−addressee**] **B**

☞ (9-b) doesn't block (9-a) in the inclusive
⇒ binary clusivity features derive the Didinga data straightforwardly

↪ The ABA pattern illustrates the presence of the feature **[−addressee]** in the 1EXCL.

4 Huehuetla Tepehua (Totonacan/Mexico) B(BA)A

(13) a. waa **k**-talhtanan
FOC 1-scared(IMPFV)
'I'm afraid.'
b. juu luw+ch **k**-jun-**aw** **BA**
ART snake+ALD 1-call(IMPFV)-1PL
'We (excl.) call it 'snake'.'
c. mapay-ni-y-**aw** juu ki-7asqat'a-7an **A**
love-DAT-IMPFV-1PL ART 1POS-child-PL.POS
'We (incl.) love our children.'
(Kung 2007, 177-178, glossing adapted)

B (14) Huehuetla Tepehua subject agreement, intransitive verbs

	Singular	Plural
1	**k-** V	**k-** V **-w**
		V **-w**
2	V'	V'-t'it
3	V	ta- V (animate)
		lak-V (inanimate)

(Kung, 2007, 223, adapted)

V' = glottalization of stops/affricates (Kung, 2007, 179)

Huehuetla Tepehua & Privative Features:

(15) VIs Huehuetla Tepehua, privative features
a. **k-** ↔ [author] (↯) **B**
b. **-w** ↔ [plural] **A**

☞ What blocks (15-a) in 1INCL if it is not blocked in 1EXCL? (→ B(BA)(BA))

Applying the Impoverishment rule in (7) would make it even worse:
– it deletes the common feature of 1EXCL and 1INCL which is important to specify **-w (A)** to the exclusion of 1SG
– it does not lead to a feature that can be used to specify **k- (B)** so that it is not compatible with 1INCL anymore

Another work-around fails too:

(16) Nullify Containment Impoverishment Rule #2
[author] → ∅ / [plural, addressee]

(17) a. 1SG: [author]
b. 1EXCL: [author, plural]
c. 1INCL: [~~author~~, plural, addressee]

– (17) could work if one would consider only the 1st person
– however, the specification of 1INCL is now the same as 2PL
– this means that the exponent in 2PL would block (15-b) in the 1INCL ↯

Huehuetla Tepehua & Binary Features:

(18) VIs Huehuetla Tepehua, binary features
a. k- ↔ [+author, **−addressee**] **B**
b. -w ↔ [+plural] **A**

☞ (18-a) fits only in the 1SG and 1EXCL (and not in the 1INCL)
⇒ binary clusivity features derive the Huehuetla Tepehua data straightforwardly

↪ The B(BA)A pattern illustrates that 1SG and 1EXCL share **[−addressee]**.

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