

Inclusivity in Mam morphosyntax¹

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Updated: January 4, 2020

1 Introduction

- In Mam, first person plural “inclusive” is really just a general first person plural, following argumentation and conclusions from Little (2018).
- I adopt and adapt the binary feature approach in Little (2018) to account for the person split in Mam:
 - 1st/2nd person exclusive pattern together and 1inclusive patterns with 3rd person.
 - The morphology: =i tracks 1/2 excl only
 - The syntax: there is a person restriction in transitive clauses: *3 > 1/2 excl only
- Analysis:
 - 1st person exclusive is specified [-hearer]; 2nd person is specified [+hearer].
 - 3rd person and general 1st person do not have [hearer] features.

2 Little 2018

- Main claim: In Ch’ol, the “inclusive” is not a traditional inclusive form (speaker *and* hearer)- it is a general first person plural, unspecified for hearer. Conversely, the exclusive is morphologically and semantically specified to exclude the hearer.
 - Main argument: general 1st plural appears in more contexts

¹These are informal notes regarding my analysis of inclusivity in Mam. These are not the full ideas or data, just supplemental material to my LSA 2020 poster. This handout is a living document that will continue to be updated.

Table 1: Uses for first person plurals (adapted from Little 2018:153)

Form	Label	Usage
<i>oñ=la</i>	inclusive (general 1st pl)	generic contexts, speaker + hearer contexts, default possession with inalienable nouns, certain lexical items
<i>oñ=loj-oñ</i>	exclusive	To exclude hearer

- The 1st plural exclusive is built from the general first person plural in the morphology

Table 2: Absolutive markers in Ch’ol

1	2	3	1 INCL	1 EXCL	2 PL	3 PL
<i>-oñ</i>	<i>-ety</i>	∅	<i>-oñ</i> =la	<i>-oñ</i> =loj	<i>-oñ</i> -ety=la	<i>-ob</i>

Table 3: Schema for 1st plural

General first person plural	1 +	pl	
First person exclusive plural	1 +	pl	+ 1

- Little argues that this should be modeled with binary features as opposed to privative features. In addition to +/- values, features can be absent.
 - General first person lacks [hearer] altogether.

Table 4: Table updated to reflect general first person

General first person	[+participant,+speaker]
First person exclusive	[+participant,+speaker,-hearer]
Second person	[+participant,-speaker,+hearer]
Third person	[-participant,-speaker,-hearer]

- Morphological analysis
 - Each cell in the paradigm has a π node which inserts for person and a # node which inserts for number.
 - In first person plural exclusive, an extra π node is inserted with the features [+spkr, -hearer]

– The subset principle inserts the general first person morpheme again.

- In other words, the syntax adds a π node *specifically to exclude the hearer*, but the morphology doesn't have something unique for it. So you get multiple insertion of one underspecified morpheme.

3 General first person in Mam [Under construction!]

In this section, I'll show that the “inclusive” in Mam shows a very similar distribution as the general first person form in Ch'ol and I take this as evidence that the general first person in Mam also lacks a [hearer] feature.

4 Extension to Mam inclusivity

4.1 Mam person morphology

- Set A (ergative, possessive)

Table 5: SJAMam set A

	SG	PL
First person exclusive	n-/w-	q-
General first person	-	q-
Second person	t-	ky-
Third person	t-	ky-

- Set B (absolutive)

Table 6: SJAMam set B

	SG	PL
First person exclusive	chin	qo
General first person	-	qo
Second person	∅/tz-	chi-
Third person	∅/tz-	chi'-

- [HEARER]enclitic

Table 7: SJAMam [hearer] enclitic

	SG	PL
First person exclusive	=i	=i (qi)
General first person	-	∅
Second person	=i	=i (qi)
Third person	∅	∅

- Core pronouns

Table 8: SJAMam pronouns: (roughly) set B morphology + enclitic

	SG	PL
First person exclusive	(a) qini	(a) qi qo
General first person	-	(a) qo
Second person	ay	(a) qi
Third person	(a) [CLF]	(a) [qa CLF]

- Oblique pronouns

Table 9: SJAMam pronouns: set A morphology-e-enclitic

	SG	PL
First person exclusive	wiy	qiy
General first person	-	q-e
Second person	tiy	kyiy
<i>Third person</i>	t-e [CLF]	ky-e [qa CLF]

4.2 Syncretism as motivation for features

- In Ch'ol, =la is a plural marker that only occurs in the context of participants.
 - This motivates a [+participant] feature.
 - Thus, =la realizes [+plural] in the context of [+participant]
- In Mam, =i occurs on all participants except the general 1st plural (traditionally “inclusive”).²

²Due to person restriction patterns in transitive clauses, this syncretism should be handled in the syntactic feature structure of the pronouns, not through morphological operations like impoverishment.

Table 10: Mam [hearer] enclitic

	SG	PL
First person exclusive	=i	=i
<i>General first person</i>	-	∅
Second person	=i	=i
Third person	∅	∅

- Remember that in Ch’ol and in Mam general first plural lacks a [hearer] feature.
- The proposal: Mam =i is realizing [hearer] with any value.

$$(1) \quad =i \leftrightarrow [\text{hearer}]$$

- Setting aside third person for the moment, all local person cells ([+participant]) *except general 1st plural* are specified for [hearer] and have =i.

Table 11: Mam phi features

	SG		PL		
First person exclusive	[+spkr]	[-hearer]	[+spkr]	[-hearer]	[+pl]
<i>General first person</i>	-		[+spkr]		[+pl]
Second person		[+hearer]		[+hearer]	[+pl]
Third person					[+pl]

- In Table 11:
 - First persons are [+speaker] and all other persons do not have a speaker feature.
 - Only two (of three) participant rows are specified for [hearer]:
 - * 2nd = [+hearer]
 - * 1st exclusive = [-hearer]
 - Third persons do not have [speaker] or [hearer] features.
- A note on third person: many people have claimed 3rd “person” is actually a *lack* of person features (Nevins 2007). This intuition is captured here not with negative values for speaker and hearer, but with a total lack of person features.

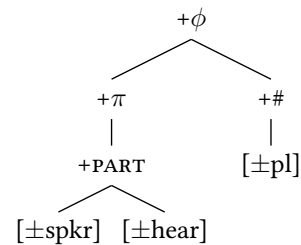
4.3 Mam feautres

- Full feature sets for each person/number combination are given below. Table 12 represents Table 11 with entailed features added.

Table 12: Full ϕ feature sets

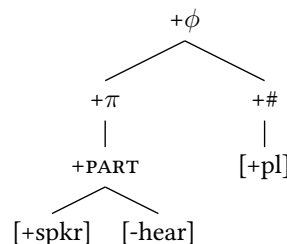
		pers				num	
First excl. sg	[+ ϕ]	[+ π]	[+part]	[+spkr]	[-hear]	[+#]	
Second sg	[+ ϕ]	[+ π]	[+part]		[+hear]	[+#]	
Third sg	[+ ϕ]	[+ π]				[+#]	
First excl. pl	[+ ϕ]	[+ π]	[+part]	[+spkr]	[-hear]	[+#]	[+pl]
<i>General first pl</i>	[+ ϕ]	[+ π]	[+part]	[+spkr]		[+#]	[+pl]
Second pl	[+ ϕ]	[+ π]	[+part]		[+hear]	[+#]	[+pl]
Third pl	[+ ϕ]	[+ π]				[+#]	[+pl]

- (2) ϕ feature geometry: lower features entail higher features

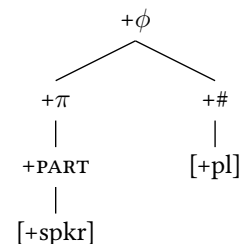


- Now that we see these geometries we can better visualize the difference between first person plural exclusive and general first person plural:

(3) First person plural exclusive



(4) General first person plural



4.4 Mam Vocabulary items

4.4.1 Set A and set B

- First, we must distinguish set A and set B morphology. I will simplify the distinction here as simply the features [A] and [B], though this is a deeper question about syntactic agreement and cliticization.
 - We only need to reference [A].
 - One syncretism pattern that is important to point out is that first person plural set A and set B markers are almost homophones.
 - * Set A: *q-* // Set B: *qo/qw-*
 - I’ll analyze first person plural markers as realizing the same features. (They will be differentiated by the [HEARER] enclitic.)
- Set A and B only references [A], [spkr], and [pl].

Table 13: SJAMam VIs

1 sg	A	n-/w-	↔	[A]	[spkr]
2/3 sg	A	t-	↔	[A]	
1 sg	B	chin/chn-	↔		[spkr]
2/3 pl	A	ky-	↔	[A]	[pl]
1pl	A/B	q-/qo/qw-	↔		[spkr] [pl]
2/3 pl	B	chi/chj-	↔		[pl]

- The vocabulary items in Table 13 capture the distinctions made in set A and set B morphology:
 - First/non-first
 - Plural/non-plural
 - Set A/Set B
 - Notice that local/non-local is not a distinction in setA/B morphology. In addition, [HEARER] is not a relevant feature.
 - Now we turn to the enclitic.
 - The enclitic shows up in a wide range of contexts (agreement, clitics, possessives). I’m going to abstract away from the contexts and focus on the ϕ features that it realizes.
- (5) =i ↔ [hearer]

4.5 Summary

- Mam/Mayan morphology
 - Mam person morphological distinctions require [speaker], [hearer], and [plural] (and the features that they entail).
 - Typical Set A and Set B morphology only requires [speaker] and [plural] within each paradigm.
 - While 2nd person is [+hearer] and 1st person is [-hearer], there is a general first person which lacks [hearer] altogether, building on Little (2018).
 - * The =i marker provides evidence for the lack of [hearer] on the general first person: it realizes the presence of [hearer].

5 Implications

- Mam syntax [under construction]
 - In Ixtahuacán Mam, a person restriction on the arguments of transitive verbs prohibits, at first glance, 3rd person subjects and “local” person objects (England 1983).

(6) *3 > 1/2
 - However, we’ve seen in the morphology that Mam doesn’t make reference to a local/-nonlocal distinction.
 - It turns out that the person restriction actually prohibits subjects without a [hearer] feature and objects with a [hearer] feature.

(7) * ∅ > [hearer]

6 Geometric binary features

- Binary features and feature geometries are typically thought of as two different ways to conceptualize features. In this section, I’ll lay out a possible way to constrain a geometric binary feature analysis.
- Hypothesis 1: possible syntactic feature bundles:
 1. [+FEATURE]
 2. [-FEATURE]

3. absence of FEATURE

- This will of course have consequences, possibly very desirable consequences, on underspecification/insertion/subset principle).
- Crucially, I hypothesize that a [ϕ ?] feature can not be “underspecified but present” in the syntax.
 - * For instance, a feature cannot be [FEATURE], it must be +/- or absent.
 - * If we allowed this, we would allow a four way contrast between [+hearer], [-hearer], [hearer] and the lack of [hearer]. This seems undesirable at first glance.

(8) Hypothesis 2: possible Vocabulary items:

1. [+FEATURE]
2. [-FEATURE]
3. [FEATURE]

(9) Hypothesis Hypothesis 3: How to constrain the geometrical binary feature approach:

- If a node in the hierarchy is non-terminal, it must be +X.
 - If a node is terminal, it may be +/-.
- For instance, while [speaker] typically entails [participant], in this system, both [+speaker] and [-speaker] entail [+participant]. This means that if [+participant] always means “local person” then 3rd person cannot be specified for [speaker] or [hearer] as that would entail [+participant], meaning “local.”

Table 14: Full ϕ feature sets

		pers				num	
First excl. sg	[+ ϕ]	[+ π]	[+part]	[+spkr]	[-hear]	[+#]	
Second sg	[+ ϕ]	[+ π]	[+part]		[+hear]	[+#]	
Third sg	[+ ϕ]						
First excl. pl	[+ ϕ]	[+ π]	[+part]	[+spkr]	[-hear]	[+#]	[+pl]
<i>General first pl</i>	[+ ϕ]	[+ π]	[+part]	[+spkr]		[+#]	[+pl]
Second pl	[+ ϕ]	[+ π]	[+part]		[+hear]	[+#]	[+pl]
Third pl	[+ ϕ]					[+#]	[+pl]

References

- England, Nora C. 1983a. A grammar of Mam, a Mayan language. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Little, C. R. 2018. A feature-based analysis of the Ch’ol (Mayan) person paradigm. In Berkeley Linguistics Society (147-161).
- Nevins, A. 2007. The representation of third person and its consequences for person-case effects. *Natural Language Linguistic Theory*, 25(2), 273-313.
- Scott, T. 2019. Pronominal Licensing on Mam. NELS50 talk. MIT.

Possible alternative

- I assume above that 3rd persons in Mam are specified [+ π], though I see nothing that necessitates this.
- I also assume that all singulars are specified [+ $\#$], though, again, this seems arbitrary at this point.
- Below is a possible alternative, utilizing underspecification even further.