

# The case of accusative embedded subjects in Mongolian

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## 1 Introduction

In Mongolian there are a number of subordinate clauses in which the form of the embedded subject alternates between the morphologically unmarked nominative case and the morphologically marked accusative case. Guntsetseg and Klein (2009) argued that this alternation depends on the adjacency of matrix and embedded subject and on the referentiality of the embedded subject. They claimed that this NOM/ACC alternation on embedded subjects is an instance of differential subject marking, based (i) on the assumption that this alternation involves the same grammatical function being morphologically marked differently, and (ii) on the fact that the referentiality of the embedded subject is a conditioning factor in this case alternation (cf. de Hoop and de Swart (2008) on the factors conditioning differential subject marking).

The question that Guntsetseg and Klein (2009) did not address is whether this case alternation can also be analyzed as an alternation of two different constructions: one in which the embedded subject is raised to object position and consequently marked as accusative, and the other one in which the embedded subject is not raised and consequently remains in the morphologically unmarked form, as proposed for Japanese in Kuno (1976). Although there is convincing evidence that the embedded accusative subjects in Japanese should be analyzed as constituents of the matrix clause, Sells (1990) argues that the grammatical function of these accusative marked arguments cannot be that of direct objects of the matrix clause.

In this paper we argue against analyzing these embedded accusative subjects as being raised to object. First we briefly present the morphological marking of arguments in the main clause (section 2), and then we turn to the morphological marking of arguments in subordinate clauses (section 3),

showing that the embedded accusative subjects can be found in a number of different subordinate constructions. In section 4 we show that the embedded accusative subject may but need not be a constituent of the matrix clause. Given that in general there is no one-to-one mapping between position in constituent structure and grammatical function we provide additional evidence from passivization and causativization that these embedded accusative subjects cannot be analyzed as being direct objects (section 5). In section 6 we show that accusative subjects have different binding properties from direct objects. Section 7 concludes.

## 2 Argument encoding in Mongolian

The basic word order in Mongolian is SOV. Main clause subjects in Mongolian are in general morphologically unmarked.<sup>1</sup>

- (1) a. Zagdaa ene deeremchn-ig bari-san.  
 police this thief-ACC catch-PST  
 ‘The police caught this thief.’  
 b. Ene deeremchin zagdaa-d bari-gd-san.  
 this thief police-DAT catch-PASS-PST  
 ‘This thief was caught by the police.’

The direct object is morphologically marked by the suffix *-ig* or its allomorph *g*. The suffix can also cause preceding syllables to shorten, as the contrast between *deeremchn-ig* (thief-ACC) and *deeremchin* in (1a) and (1b) shows. The morphological marking of the direct object depends among other things on the referentiality of the argument (see Guntsetseg (2009) for a detailed presentation of differential object marking in Mongolian). If it is expressed by a pronoun, name or a demonstrative NP, then it occurs in the accusative case.

- (2) a. Bold namaig/\*bi har-san.  
 Bold 1SG.ACC/1SG.NOM see-PST  
 ‘Bold saw me.’  
 b. Bold Tuya\*(-g) har-san.  
 Bold Tuya-ACC see-PST

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<sup>1</sup>The glosses are as follows: 1SG: 1st person, singular, 3. POSS: 3rd person possessive, ACC: accusative, CAUS: causative, COM: comitative, CVB: converb, DAT: dative, FUT: future, GEN: genitive, INF: infinitive, INST: instrumental, NOM: nominative, PASS: passive, PRS: present tense, PST: past tense, Q: question particle, REFL.POSS: reflexive-possessive, TOP: topic marker.

- ‘Bold saw Tuya.’
- c. Bold ene deeremchn\*(-ig) har-san.  
 Bold this thief-ACC see-PST  
 ‘Bold saw this thief.’

If it is expressed by an indefinite NP, then it may be suffixed with *-(i)g*, as in (1a), or it may occur in the same unmarked form as a (main clause) subject (3).

- (3) a. Zagdaa **neg deeremchin** bari-san.  
 police a thief catch-PST  
 ‘The police caught a thief.’
- b. **Neg deeremchin** zagdaa-d bari-gd-san.  
 a thief police-DAT catch-PASS-PST  
 ‘A thief was caught by the police.’

Obligatory arguments which are neither subject nor direct object are suffixed e.g. with the dative (4a), or comitative (4b) affixes.

- (4) a. Tuya nadad nom ug-sun.  
 Tuya 1SG.DAT book give-PST  
 ‘Tuya gave me a book.’
- b. Tuya bagsh-tai uulz-san.  
 Tuya teacher-COM meet-PST  
 ‘Tuya met with the teacher.’

Note that although the constituent *neg deeremchin* occurs in the same form in (3a) and (3b), which we will refer to as the morphologically unmarked form, it has different grammatical functions. In (3a) it is the direct object, whereas in (3b) it is the subject of the clause. In order to adequately describe the generalizations about the morphological marking of direct objects expressed by noun phrases, we need to refer to (i) the grammatical function ‘direct object’, (ii) the referential properties of the NP, and (iii) the form of the NP (either morphologically unmarked or suffixed with *-(i)g*). It is of course usual (see e.g. Binnick (1979) or Svantesson (2003)) to refer the morphologically unmarked form as the nominative case, and to the form suffixed with *-(i)g* as the accusative case of a noun phrase, but it is important to note that unlike e.g. in Latin, no generalizations are lost if we replace reference to ‘(morphologically) nominative case’ with ‘morphologically unmarked form’, since we do not need to generalize over inflectional classes (cf. Spencer (2006)). The same applies for the notion of ‘syntactic case’. Of course it is possible to claim that despite the morphologically unmarked

form the direct object in (3a) is in the syntactic case accusative (in some syntactic frameworks it is assumed that every NP has syntactic case), but it appears that no language-specific generalization is lost if we simply replace ‘syntactic accusative case’ with ‘direct object’ (unlike e.g. in German, where agreement between the head noun and its modifiers requires the respective grammatical rule to refer to a notion of ‘syntactic case’). Since the notion ‘direct object’ is independently needed, the notion of ‘syntactic case’ appears to be dispensable for the analysis of differential object marking in Mongolian.

### 3 Argument encoding in subordinate constructions

Mongolian is a head-final language, so that not only NP complements but also clausal complements and modifiers precede their head. In this section we present ways in which the arguments (in particular the subjects) of an embedded predicate may be encoded. Like e.g. Turkish (see e.g. Kornfilt (2008)), Mongolian also displays a nominative/genitive alternation on subjects of subordinate clauses, and like Japanese (see e.g. Kuno (1976)), it also displays a nominative/accusative alternation. As we will show, while embedded genitive subjects are restricted to nominalized complement clauses, embedded accusative subjects are not so restricted, since they can also appear in complementizer and adverbial clauses, in which the genitive is not possible.

To begin with, consider the following sentence:

- (5) Bi Bold-in neg deeremchn-ig bari-sn-ig har-san.  
 I Bold-GEN a thief-ACC catch-PST-ACC see-PST  
 ‘I saw Bold catch a thief.’

In (5) the nominalized complement clause *Boldin neg deeremchnig barisnig* (‘Bold catch a thief’) is the direct object of *harsan* (‘saw’), and is suffixed like a simple direct object NP.

- (6) Bi neg deeremchn-ig har-san.  
 I a thief-ACC see-PST  
 ‘I saw a thief.’

Secondly, note that the subject *Boldin* of the nominalized clause in (5) is encoded the same way as the possessor of an NP (7):

- (7) Bi Bold-in duu-g har-san.  
 I Bold-GEN younger.sibling-ACC see-PST

‘I saw Bold’s younger sibling.’

Thirdly, the non-subject arguments of the nominalized clause in (8a) are encoded the same way in which the non-subject arguments of a main clause are encoded (8b):

- (8) a. Bold Tuya-gin nadad nom ug-sn-ig har-san.  
Bold Tuya-GEN 1SG.DAT book give-PST-ACC see-PST  
‘Bold saw Tuya give me a book.’  
b. Tuya nadad nom ug-sun.  
Tuya 1SG.DAT book give-PST  
‘Tuya gave me a book.’

This type of nominalization in which the embedded subject is encoded like a possessor and the non-subject arguments are encoded like in a main clause is classified as ‘possessive-accusative’ in Koptjevskaja-Tamm (1993).

The subjects of nominalized complement clauses can appear not only with genitive case, but also with the accusative case (9a) or in the morphologically unmarked form (9b).

- (9) a. Bi Bold-ig neg deeremchn-ig bari-sn-ig med-sen.  
I Bold-ACC a thief-ACC catch-PST-ACC know-PST  
‘I knew that Bold caught a thief.’  
b. Bi Bold neg deeremchn-ig bari-sn-ig med-sen.  
I Bold a thief-ACC catch-PST-ACC know-PST  
‘I knew that Bold caught a thief.’

According to Kullmann and Tserenpil (2001), “some linguists” suggested as a “rule” that the subject “tends” to be in the genitive if the predicate is transitive, and accusative if the predicate is intransitive.<sup>2</sup>

Note that unlike in Japanese (see Sells (1990)) accusative subjects in Mongolian are not restricted to unaccusative predicates, but are perfectly acceptable also with transitive predicates like *barisnig* (catch.PST.ACC).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Kullmann and Tserenpil (2001, 393) are “not too happy with [this rule], but lack a better explanation”. As our findings indicate (cf. Klein et al. (to appear)) the occurrence of accusative subjects appears to depend on the adjacency of matrix and embedded subject as well as on the referentiality of the embedded subject.

<sup>3</sup>This is important in view of the fact that the explanation suggested in Sells (1990) for the accusative form in e.g. Sells’ example (1b) is that “arguments can appear showing their ‘deep’ or ‘logical’ relations directly in the case marking.

- (1.b) John ga [Mary o] [hannin da to] omotteiru.  
John NOM [Mary ACC] [culprit COP-PRES COMP] think-PROG-PRS  
‘John thinks Mary to be the culprit.’

Accusative subjects can also occur in complementizer clauses, like (10), where the complementizer is realized by *gej*, literally ‘say so’. This construction is widespread and not only restricted to verbs of saying.

- (10) Bi Bold(-ig) neg deeremchn-ig bari-san gej hel-sen.  
 I Bold-ACC a thief-ACC catch-PST that say-PST  
 ‘I said that Bold caught a thief.’

Accusative subjects also appear in converb clauses, like (11), where the embedded verb is *bariqdtal* (catch.PASS.CVB) is suffixed by the passive marker and a converb suffix. The semantic relation between the converb clause and the matrix clause is not overtly expressed, but must be reconstructed.

- (11) Bi ene deeremchin(-ig) bari-gd-**tal** hulee-ne.  
 I this thief-ACC catch-PASS-CVB wait-PRS  
 ‘I wait until this thief is caught.’

Finally, accusative subjects can also occur in adverbial clauses (12). These clauses take case that is governed by a postposition.

- (12) Bi Tuya(-g) bagsh-tai uulz-san-i daraa yav-san.  
 I Tuya-ACC teacher-COM meet-PST-GEN after go-PST  
 ‘I left after Tuya met with the teacher.’

In Klein et al. (to appear) we investigated the factors conditioning the nominative/accusative alternation on embedded subjects in nominalized and adverbial clauses. What we found is that in both subordinate clause types there is a clear preference for an embedded accusative subject over a morphologically unmarked subject, if (i) the embedded subject immediately follows the matrix subject, or if (ii) the embedded subject is high on the referentiality scale. This indicates that this preference for accusative over morphologically unmarked subjects appears to be independent of the subordinate clause type.

Embedded subjects marked by the genitive *-in* (or its allomorphs *-i* and *gin*) appear to be restricted to nominalized complement clauses (13a), as illustrated by the ungrammaticality of the complementizer clause (13b), the converb clause (13c) and the adverbial clause (13d).

- (13) a. Bi Bold-**in** neg deeremchn-ig bari-sn-ig har-san.  
 I Bold a thief-GEN catch-PST-ACC see-PST  
 ‘I saw Bold catch a thief.’  
 b. \*Bi Bold-**in** neg deeremchn-ig bari-san gej hel-sen.  
 I Bold-GEN a thief-ACC catch-PST that say-PST  
 Int.: ‘I said that Bold caught a thief.’

- c. \* Bi ene deeremchin-**i** bari-gd-tal hulee-ne.  
 I this thief-GEN catch-PASS-CVB wait-PRS  
 Int.: ‘I wait until this thief is caught.’
- d. \* Bi Tuya-**gin** bagsh-tai uulz-san-i daraa yav-san.  
 I Tuya-GEN teacher-COM meet-PST-GEN after go-PST  
 ‘I left after Tuya met with the teacher.’

The non-subject arguments of the complementizer, converb and adverbial clauses are encoded like in main clauses.

- (14) a. Bold Tuya(-g) bagsh-tai uulz-san gej hel-sen.  
 Bold Tuya-ACC teacher-COM meet-PST that say-PST  
 ‘Bold said that Tuya met with the teacher.’
- b. Bold Tuya(-g) bagsh-tai uulz-tal hulee-ne.  
 Bold Tuya-ACC teacher-COM meet-CVB wait-PST  
 ‘Bold waits until Tuya met with the teacher.’
- c. Bi Tuya(-g) bagsh-tai uulz-san-i daraa yav-san.  
 I Tuya-ACC teacher-COM meet-PST-GEN after go-PST  
 ‘I left after Tuya met with the teacher.’

To sum up, while all four types of subordinate constructions (i) express non-subject arguments like in a main clause and (ii) allow for accusative or morphologically unmarked subjects, only the nominalized complement clauses allow for genitive subjects.

In the next section we explore in more detail the properties of subordinate constructions with accusative subjects. In particular, we investigate the position of the accusative and morphologically unmarked subjects in constituent structure, and then we turn to the question of what grammatical function these embedded subjects have.

## 4 Constituent structure of accusative subjects

Many arguments for raising to object constructions both in English (cf. Postal (1974)) and in Japanese (cf. Kuno (1976)) aim at showing that the embedded accusative subject does not form a constituent with the embedded predicate, but is a constituent of the matrix (or superordinate) clause. In this section we show that while in at least some instances embedded accusative subjects may be analyzed as constituents of the matrix clause, this is not always possible. In other words, there are instances in which accusative subjects have to be analyzed as being part of the embedded clause itself.

## 4.1 Adverbial clauses

As a first instance in which accusative subjects cannot be analyzed as raised to object, consider sentence (12), repeated below.

- (15) Bi ene deeremchin(-ig) bari-gd-san-i daraa ir-sen.  
I this thief-ACC catch-PASS-PST-GEN after come-PST  
'I came after this thief was caught.'

In this sentence the accusative NP *ene deeremchin-ig* ('this thief-ACC') is subject of an adverbial clause. Since raising to object from an adjunct is not a viable option, we can only conclude that in (at least) this subordinate clause type, the embedded accusative subject is a constituent of the adjunct and not the matrix clause. As we will see below, for other types of subordinate clauses there are other reasons for not analyzing the embedded accusative subject as a direct object.

## 4.2 Position of adverbs

Another way of testing whether subjects of embedded clauses are constituents of the matrix clause is to insert a matrix adverb after it. If this is possible, it indicates that the embedded subject is outside the embedded clause, and thus a constituent of the matrix clause. For example, Kuno (1976) showed that in Japanese a matrix adverb can be placed after an ACC-marked subject of an embedded clause (16a), but not after a NOM-marked embedded subject (16b).

- (16) a. Yamada wa Tanaka o, **orokanimo**, tensai da to  
Yamada TOP Tanaka ACC stupidly genius is that  
omotte ita.  
thinking was  
'Stupidly, Yamada thought that Tanaka was a genius.'
- b. \*Yamada wa Tanaka ga, **orokanimo**, tensai da to  
Yamada TOP Tanaka NOM stupidly genius is that  
omotte ita.  
thinking was  
Int.: 'Stupidly, Yamada thought that Tanaka was a genius.'

Turning to Mongolian, we see first in (17) that a temporal adverb modifying the matrix clause cannot intervene between the embedded subject and the embedded predicate.

- (17) \* Bold Tuya(-g) **margaash** yav-sn-ig med-eh bol-no.  
Bold Tuya-ACC tomorrow go-PST-ACC know-INF will-FUT

Int.: ‘Tomorrow, Bold will know that Tuya went (away).’

On the other hand, if a temporal adverb is placed before the embedded clause it can modify both the embedded as well as the matrix clause (with the two readings being distinguished by different intonation patterns):

- (18) Bi **uchigdur** ene deeremchin(-ig) bari-gd-la        gej  
I yesterday this thief-ACC        catch-PASS-PRS that  
sons-son.  
hear-PST  
‘I heard that this thief was caught yesterday.  
Or: Yesterday I heard that this thief was caught.’

Based on data like this, it would appear that the embedded accusative subject is always a constituent of the embedded clause. There are, however, other constructions in which the embedded accusative subject can occur outside the embedded clause, as illustrated in (19) where the constituent *haramsaltai-gaar* (sadly-INST) modifying the matrix verb separates the embedded accusative subject from its predicate.

- (19) Bold Tuya-g        **haramsaltai-gaar** teneg gej bod-son.  
Bold Tuya-ACC sadly-INST        stupid gej think-PST  
‘Bold thought with sadness that Tuya is stupid.’

If the embedded subject is morphologically unmarked (20), it cannot be separated from its predicate by a constituent modifying the matrix predicate. This indicates that unlike embedded unmarked subjects an embedded accusative subject may occur outside the embedded clause.<sup>4</sup>

- (20) \* Bold **Tuya** haramsaltai-gaar teneg gej bod-son.  
Bold Tuya sadly-INST        stupid gej think-PST  
Int.: ‘Bold thought with sadness that Tuya is stupid’

To sum up, embedded accusative subjects cannot always be analyzed as being constituents of matrix (or superordinate) clauses, thus casting considerable doubt on the idea that these accusative marked subjects are raised to object position. In the next section we will show that embedded accusative subjects lack properties which direct objects have, so that the only viable conclusion is that despite the accusative form of these NPs, they are not direct objects of the main clause, but subjects of the subordinate clauses.

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<sup>4</sup>The precise conditions under which this is possible need further investigation.

## 5 Grammatical function of accusative subjects

Having discussed the position of embedded accusative subjects in the constituent structure, we now turn to the question whether these embedded accusative subjects should be analyzed as raised direct objects. We will provide three arguments showing that embedded accusative subjects should not be analyzed as raised direct objects.

### 5.1 Passivization

One of the reasons for a raising to object analysis in e.g. English is that raised arguments can be passivized.

- (21) a. John believed her to be clever.  
 b. She was believed to be clever.

In Mongolian, however, embedded accusative subjects do not passivized, as shown by the ungrammaticality of (22a) which is the result of passivizing the embedded accusative subject in (22b).

- (22) a. \***Ene deeremchin** bari-gd-san-ig med-egd-sen.  
 this thief catch-PASS-PST-ACC know-PASS-PST  
 Int: ‘This thief was known to have been caught.’  
 b. Bi **ene deeremchn(-ig)** bari-gd-san-ig med-sen.  
 I this thief-ACC catch-PASS-PST-ACC know-PST  
 ‘I knew that this thief was caught.’

What can be passivized in (22b) is the nominalized clause as a whole, as shown in (23).

- (23) Ene deeremchin bari-gd-san ni med-egd-sen.  
 this thief catch-PASS-PST 3.POSS know-PASS-PST  
 ‘That this thief was caught was known’.

As expected the passivized nominalized object clause is not suffixed with the accusative if it is passivized. Instead it is obligatorily marked by the particle *ni*, which in addition to its function as third person possessive suffix may also function as topic marker (cf. Bittigau (2003, 174)).

The constituent *ene deeremchin* in (23) cannot appear in the accusative form.

- (24) \*Ene deeremchn-ig bari-gd-san ni med-egd-sen.  
 this thief-ACC catch-PASS-PST 3.POSS know-PASS-PST  
 Int.: ‘That this thief was caught was known.’

Despite this, *ene deeremchin* cannot be analyzed as the matrix subject. First, it may occur in the genitive case, whereas matrix clauses cannot.

- (25) Ene deeremchin-i bari-gd-san ni med-egd-sen.  
 this thief-GEN catch-PASS-PST 3.POSS know-PASS-PST  
 ‘That this thief was caught was known.’

Secondly, this constituent cannot be placed in front of the matrix predicate (26a), whereas matrix subjects can (26b).

- (26) a. \*Bari-gd-san ni **ene deeremchin(-i)**  
 catch-PASS-PST 3.POSS this thief-GEN  
 med-egd-sen.  
 know-PASS-PST  
 Int.: ‘That this thief was caught was known.’  
 b. Ene deeremchn-ig zagdaa bari-san.  
 this thief-ACC police catch-PST  
 ‘The police caught this thief.’

Thirdly, this constituent may occur after an adverb modifying the embedded predicate, indicating that it is indeed part of the nominalized object clause.

- (27) Uchigdur ene deeremchin(-i) bari-gd-san **ni**  
 yesterday this thief-GEN catch-PASS-PST 3.POSS  
 med-egd-sen.  
 know-PASS-PST  
 ‘That this thief was caught yesterday was known.’

## 5.2 Causativization

If, as argued in the previous section, the clause containing the embedded predicate in (22b) is a direct object, then the embedded accusative subject cannot also have the function of direct object, since it can be shown independently that Mongolian clauses cannot have more than one direct object.

If a verb has an oblique object (28a), and we increase the valency of the verb by suffixing the causative marker *-uul* (28b), then the causee argument is a direct object.

- (28) a. **Bi** bagsh-tai uulz-san.  
**I** teacher-COM meet-PST  
 ‘I met with the teacher.’  
 b. Bold **namaig** bagsh-tai uulz-**uul**-san.  
 Bold **I.ACC** teacher-COM meet-CAUS-PST

‘Bold let **me** meet with the teacher.’

If the verb has a direct object (29a), then the causee cannot be a direct object (29c), but has to be an oblique object (29c).

- (29) a. Bi ene nom-ig unsh-san.  
I this book-ACC read-PST  
‘I read this book.’
- b. \*Bold namaig ene nom-ig unsh-uul-san.  
Bold I.ACC this book-ACC read-CAUS-PST  
Int.: ‘Bold let me read this book.’
- c. Bold nadaar ene nom-ig unsh-uul-san.  
Bold I.INST this book-ACC read-CAUS-PST  
‘Bold let me read this book.’

This ban against two direct objects holds irrespective of the morphological case, as shown by the fact that (30b) is ungrammatical, although the direct object *nom* is in the morphologically unmarked NOM case.

- (30) a. **Bi** nom unsh-san.  
I book read-PST  
‘I read a book.’
- b. \*Bold **namaig** nom unsh-uul-san.  
Bold I.ACC book read-CAUS-PST  
Int.: ‘Bold let me read a book.’
- c. Bold **nadaar** nom unsh-uul-san.  
Bold I.INST book read-CAUS-PST  
‘Bold let me read a book.’

If, as we have argued, the nominalized clause in (31a) is a direct object and a predicate can have at most one direct object, we predict that if the matrix verb is causativized, the causee argument is not a direct object. This prediction is confirmed (31b).

- (31) a. Bi ene deeremchin(-ig) bari-gd-san-**ig** hel-sen.  
I this thief-ACC catch-PASS-PST-ACC say-PST  
‘I said that this thief was caught.’
- b. \*Tuya **namaig** ene deeremchin(-ig) bari-gd-san-ig  
Tuya I.ACC this thief-ACC catch-PASS-PST-ACC  
hel-uul-sen.  
say-CAUS-PST  
‘Tuya let me say that this thief was caught.’

Instead, the causee argument has to occur either in the instrumental form.

- (32) a. Tuya **nadaar** ene deeremchin(-ig) bari-gd-san-ig  
 Tuya I.INST this thief-ACC catch-PASS-PST-ACC  
 hel-uul-sen.  
 say-CAUS-PST  
 ‘Tuya let me say that this thief was caught.’

So our analysis of the nominalized clause as a direct object and of the embedded accusative subject as not having raised to object is corroborated by this prediction.

To sum up, in this section we have first shown that, unlike direct objects, embedded accusative subjects do not passivize (instead the whole subordinate clause can be shown to passivize), and secondly that a verb which already has a nominalized complement clause as direct object cannot have a second direct object (as this would violate one of the generalization underlying causativization, namely that a predicate cannot have more than one direct object).

## 6 Binding

As a final argument against analyzing embedded accusative subjects as raised direct objects, we will show that the binding properties of direct objects differ from the binding properties of embedded accusative subjects. This difference would remain unexplained if we assumed that embedded accusative subjects have been raised to object position.

### 6.1 Binding of *ni*-marked secondary predications

The possessor (or bearer) of a secondary predication is indicated by a suffix attached to the predication. If the secondary predication is suffixed with the reflexive possessive marker *-aa*, then the possessor of the secondary predication must be the subject (33a), whereas if it is followed by the possessive particle (e.g. the third person possessive *ni*) the possessor must not be the subject (33b).

- (33) a. Bold Tuya-g sogtuu bai-hd-**aa** uns-sen.  
 Bold Tuya-ACC drunk be-CVB-REFL.POSS kiss-PST  
 Only: ‘Drunk Bold kissed Tuya.’  
 b. Bold Tuya-g sogtuu bai-had **ni** uns-sen.  
 Bold Tuya-ACC drunk be-CVB 3.POSS kiss-PST

Only: ‘Bold kissed drunk Tuya.’

The first binding difference between direct objects and embedded accusative subjects is that the possessor of a secondary predication marked with *ni* can be the direct object of the control verb in (34a), but it cannot be an embedded accusative subject (34b).

- (34) a. Bat Bold-ig Tuya-g uns-eh-ig sogtuu bai-had  
 Bat Bold-ACC Tuya-ACC kiss-INF-ACC drunk be-CVB  
**ni** yatga-san.  
 3.POSS persuade-PST  
 Only: ‘Bat persuaded drunk Bold to kiss Tuya.’
- b. \*Bat Bold(-ig) Tuya-g uns-sen-ig sogtuu bai-had  
 Bat Bold-ACC Tuya-ACC kiss-PST-ACC drunk be-CVB  
**ni** med-sen.  
 3.POSS know-PST  
 Int: ‘Bat knew that drunk Bold kissed Tuya.’

This difference in grammaticality cannot be explained if in both (34a) and (34b) *Bold(-ig)* is assumed to be the direct object of the respective verbs. This difference can, on the other hand, be explained if we assume that despite its accusative form, *Bold(-ig)* in (34b) is not a direct object of the matrix verb, but the subject of the embedded verb – given that the secondary predication immediately precedes the matrix predicate, its possessor must be a non-subject argument of the matrix predicate; and since *Bold(-ig)* is not a direct object of the matrix clause, there is no available possessor, resulting in ungrammaticality.

## 6.2 Binding of embedded objects suffixed with *-aa*

The second binding difference between direct objects and embedded accusative subjects is that direct objects of control verbs do not block a matrix subject from binding the possessor of an *-aa*-marked embedded direct object, whereas embedded accusative subjects do. Note first that in (35) the possessor of the *-aa*-marked embedded direct object cannot be the matrix subject – it can only be the embedded accusative subject.

- (35) Tuya Bold-ig ah-ig-aa zod-oh-ig  
 Tuya Bold-ACC older.brother-ACC-REFL.POSS hit-INF-ACC  
 har-san.  
 see-PST  
 ‘Tuya saw Bold<sub>i</sub> hit his<sub>i</sub> older brother.’  
 NOT: ‘Tuya<sub>j</sub> saw Bold hit her<sub>j</sub> older brother.’

It is, however, not generally the case that an embedded subject blocks a higher subject from being the possessor, as illustrated in (36).

- (36) Tuya Bold-ig ah-ig-**aa** zod-oh-ig  
 Tuya Bold-ACC older.brother-ACC-REFL.POSS hit-INF-ACC  
 yatga-san.  
 persuade-PST  
 ‘Tuya persuaded Bold<sub>i</sub> to hit his<sub>i</sub> older brother.’  
 Or: ‘Tuya<sub>j</sub> persuaded Bold to hit her<sub>j</sub> older brother.’

Here the possessor of the *-aa*-marked embedded direct object is either the matrix subject or the embedded subject.<sup>5</sup> The difference in the available readings of (35) and (36) can be explained if we assume that subjects which are also direct objects can pass on the binding of the possessor of an *-aa*-marked NP. As subject of the nominalized clause in (36) *Bold-ig* can be the possessor of the embedded direct object *ahigaa*, allowing thus for the reading in which Bold hit his own older brother. And as direct object of the matrix predicate *yatgasan* (‘persuaded’) it can pass on the binding to the matrix subject. If *Bold-ig* in (35) is not direct object of the matrix predicate but only the subject of the embedded clause, then it cannot pass on the binding of the possessor, and we predict that the only available reading of (35) is that Bold hit his own older brother. Put differently, if we do not postulate such a difference in binding behavior, it is not clear how this difference in available readings between (35) and (36) can be explained.

What these examples have established is that embedded accusative subjects differ from direct objects in their binding properties, so that this difference would be left unexplained if embedded accusative subjects are analyzed as (raised) direct objects.

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<sup>5</sup>Despite the accusative marking of the nominalized complement of the object control verb *yatgasan* (‘persuaded’), the sentence (36) is not a counterexample to the ban against two direct objects. While direct objects have to be questioned with *yu-g* (‘what-ACC’), the nominalized clause cannot be so questioned (1) – it must be questioned with *yu-nd* (‘what-DAT’), as illustrated in (2).

- (1) \*Tuya Bold-ig yu-g yatga-san be?  
 Tuya Bold-ACC what-ACC persuade-PST Q  
 Int.: ‘What did Tuya persuade Bold of?’
- (2) Tuya Bold-ig yu-nd yatga-san be?  
 Tuya Bold-ACC what-DAT persuade-PST Q  
 ‘What did Tuya persuade Bold of?’

## 7 Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to investigate the properties of embedded accusative subjects in order to address the question whether these arguments can be analyzed as instances of raising to object. We have shown first that unlike genitive subjects, accusative subjects are not restricted to nominalized complement clauses, but can occur even in adverbial clauses. Secondly, we have shown that while it is possible to analyze some instances of accusative subjects as being constituents of the matrix clause, this is by no means always possible. And thirdly, we have shown that despite the accusative form, there are a number of reasons why they should not be analyzed as direct objects: they do not passivize, they have different binding properties, and due to the ban against two direct objects they cannot also be direct objects in at least some constructions which can be shown to already have a direct object.

We therefore conclude that the accusative marking on embedded subjects is a genuine instance of differential subject marking, and suggest that the use of the accusative has extended to indicate that the NP it marks is not the matrix subject. What this means is that the accusative is not only used to distinguish arguments within a clause but also arguments across clause boundaries.

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**Titel** The case of accusative embedded subjects in Mongolian

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Dear Klaus,

I still didn't hear anything from the second (who was actually the third) reviewer, it's a real shame. So, I decided to ask yet another reviewer (the fourth) who came up with a review very quickly. I hope it's helpful. Thanks for your patience. You will get the revised paper by Andrej and me pretty soon (finally...) ;-). But first, I'm off to a conference in Tallinn for a couple of days and I'm still in the middle of the teaching semester.

Best,  
Helen.

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