

A TALE OF TWO TAQS: AN OT-LFG ACCOUNT OF PLURALS AND
DISTRIBUTIVES IN K'ICHEE' MAYAN

LACHLAN DUNCAN, UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY, SUNY NY

K'ichee' Mayan is an ergative, pro-drop, head-marking language that marks agreement on the finite verb with ergative and absolutive agreement markers. Possessed nouns agree in person and number with their genitives. Complex prepositions agree in person and number with their object complements. Canonical word order is: [_S V⁰ XP*]

The facts about the K'ichee' particle *taq* are as follows. *Taq* denotes two concepts: *plurality* (PL) and *distributivity* (DISTR). To indicate the plurality of nominals, *taq* follows attributive adjectives, interrogatives, prepositions, non-numerical quantifiers, the heads of possessed nouns, and non-verbal predicates. Restrictions on the phrasal distribution of *taq* are substantial: *taq* can never be phrase-initial or phrase-final, can never follow determiners, cardinals, or unpossessed nouns. *Taq* can only follow the initial word of a phrasal compound. Preferred usage of *taq* is one per clause:

- (1) a. Lee leej. *Lee **taq** leej. *Lee leej **taq**. ***Taq** lee leej
 DET tortilla DET PL tortilla DET tortilla PL PL DET tortilla
 ‘The tortilla.’ (‘The tortillas.’) (‘The tortillas.’) (‘The tortillas.’)
- b. Lee saq-a **taq** jaa. *Lee **taq** saq-a jaa
 DET white-ATT PL house DET PL white-ATT house
 ‘The white houses.’ (‘The white houses.’)
- c. Lee tz'i' pa **taq** lee tinamit *Lee tz'i' **taq** pa lee tinamit
 DET dog PREP PL DET town DET dog PL PREP DET town
 ‘The dogs in the towns.’ (‘The dogs in the towns.’)
- d. Lee u-tz'ii' **taq** lee tinamit. *Lee tz'i' **taq** r-ee lee tinamit
 D 3SPOS-dog PL D town D dog PL 3SPOS-Pos D town
 ‘The dogs of the towns.’ (‘The dogs of the towns.’)
- (2) PP → P⁰ , DP
 DP → D⁰ , \widehat{PL} , NP
 NP → N⁰ , \widehat{PL} , Adj , DP_{Poss}

Unordered phrase-structure rules for the pluralizer *taq* are shown in (2). But it is impossible to determine linear word order for the pluralizer *taq* using PS-rules alone. With OT-LFG, however, we can straightforwardly model the distribution of *taq* with a minimum of constraints: *Taq* may not be initial in a -V constituent (NP, DP, PP): *INITIAL(*taq*) ⇒ *INITIAL. *Taq* may not be final in a -V constituent (NP, DP, PP): *FINAL(*taq*) ⇒ *FINAL. Align left edge of *taq* with right edge of an adjective: ALIGN(*taq*, L, Adj, R) ⇒ ALIGN-ADJ. Align left edge of *taq* with right edge of a -V lexical category (Adj, N, P): ALIGN(*taq*, L, X_[+lexical], R) ⇒ ALIGN-LEX.

Constraints are ranked according to the hierarchy in (3):

- (3) *INITIAL ≫ *FINAL ≫ ALIGN-ADJ ≫ ALIGN-LEX

An OT account of the order of *taq* in the PP [P *taq* Adj N] is shown in tableau **A**.

An OT account of the order of *taq* in the PP [P *taq* Det N] is shown in tableau **B**.

An OT account of the order of *taq* in [N *taq* [NP_{Poss}]] is shown in tableau **C**.

An ineffability issue exists with a simple NP that consists of [Det N], in which case no output is good. Ineffability can be addressed using Prince and Smolenski's (2004) MPARSE, which states that all candidates compete with a null parse candidate ∅ and it satisfies all candidates except the candidate MPARSE (tableau **D**).

