The use of the dual in some Inuit dialects: the importance of *tirliaq*[1]

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1. Introduction

Grammatical number is an inflectional contrast which marks number in languages. Number here does not refer to cardinal (1, 2, 3…) nor ordinal number (first, second, third…). Grammatical number refers to a finite set of markers associated with nominals that express the quantity of individuals referred to. Languages vary as to whether or not they express grammatical number, and if so, to what degree of complexity. We are familiar with the singular/plural distinction in English, as in (1).

(1)a.   dog (singular) vs. dog-s (plural)

Corbett (2000) discusses the typology of grammatical number systems across languages. Number can be found marked on nouns, pronouns, and also on verbs and adjectives, depending on the language. Some languages have grammatical marking that goes beyond a simple singular/plural distinction. Languages can mark paucal (a few), as in the Bayso (Cushitic) example in (2a) from Corbett (2000: 11). Languages can also mark just

two/a couple, as in the Gangalidda example cited by Mathie (2014: ex. 7a) in (2b). The latter distinction is termed dual.

(2)a. *lubanjaa foofe*
      luban-jaa   foofe
      lion-PAUCAL   watch.1S
      'I watched a few lions.'

   b. *dangkarringga warra,*
      dangka-rr-ingg-a   warra,
      man.ABS-3D.NOM-PAST-REALIS go

      [warurrungurlurrgrri janija]
      [warurrung-urlu-rr-ga-rri   jani-ja]
      turkey-COM-3D.NOM-TRANSITIVE-PRES-REALIS   search-INDICATIVE
      'Those two men have gone out looking for a plains turkey.'

In this paper we will discuss questions revolving around the use of dual number in the Inuit language. A grammatical dual is relatively rare across language systems. It can be found in Hebrew, Slovenian, Sanskrit, etc. (see Corbett 2000). The dual provides challenges for our understanding of linguistic systems. Is it more marked than the plural, as commonly thought (see Nevins 2011)? Is the dual the same thing across languages? The meaning of the dual has received little in-depth study, but see Dvořák and Sauerland (2006) on the formal semantics of the Slovenian dual.

Within the Eskimo-Aleut language family, dual is a common feature. Fortescue, Jacobson and Kaplan (2010: 487) report that some varieties within the language family have lost dual, and these include Kalaallisut in the Inuit branch and East Greenlandic, both members of the Eastern Inuit branch, and also Sirenikski Yupik in the Yupik branch. Some modern varieties of the related language Unangax̂ (Aleut) no longer have dual (Bergsland 1997: 48); however it is interesting that Bergsland (1997: 53) reports the occasional use of dual forms with a paucal meaning ('a few'), as in *anaĝi-king* 'my few things' which is marked with POSS.1S/D. This paper focuses predominantly on the Canadian dialects of the Eastern Inuit branch of the language. The dialects we will touch upon are a) Labrador Inuttitut, spoken in Nunatsiavut, northern Labrador in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, b) the South Baffin dialect, spoken in Iqaluit, Nunavut c) Salliq and Aivilingmiut, both Eastern Canadian dialects, but spoken in the more western regions of this group, and finally d) the

Qairnirmiut dialect, an Eastern Canadian dialect which is spoken in Baker Lake (inland from the west coast of Hudson Bay). Qairnirmiut has been undergoing dialect coalescence over the last half century with the many dialects that were spoken there, including western ones.

We provide examples of the use of the dual in Labrador Inuttitut in (3).

(3)a. *inok*
        inu-Vk
        person-D
        'two people/Inuit' (cf. *inuk* singular; *inuit* plural)

   b.   *savekka*
        savi-Vkka
        knife-POSS.3S/D
        'my (2) knives' (cf. *savik* 'knife'; *saviga* 'my knife'; *savikka* 'my (≥3) knives')

   c.   *illumengitok*
        illu-me-ngi-tu-Vk
        house-LOC.be-NEG-PART.3D
        'They (two) weren't in the house.' (cf. *-tuk* PART.3S; *-tut* PART.3P)

In (3a) we see the nominal meaning 'person' or 'Inuk' (Inuit ethnicity) in the dual inflection, meaning that there are two entities. The singular and plural are given for comparison. Morphological expression of dual in the example is manifested through lengthening of the final vowel from /u/ > /uu/ (written short 'u' and long 'o') plus /k/. In the second example we see another nominal, this time with a singular possessor, but dual possessum. Again vowel lengthening is involved, this time short /i/ > /ii/ (written short 'i' and long 'e'). Finally in (3c), from Holwell (2007: 29), we see verb inflection expressing dual. The verb specifically refers to two entities not being home (the story teller was referring to her parents).

Corbett (2000: 42) states that in some languages the dual is facultative or optional and in other languages it is obligatory. This is our central question for the Inuit language. We must ask this question of each dialect, since we already know that dialects can vary as to whether or not they have a dual. Our question is articulated in (4).

(4)   If a particular Inuit dialect has a dual in its grammatical system, is it obligatory to use the dual every time the conditions on uttering the dual are met, i.e. dual entities are being referred to?

In other words, if the speaker is talking about two entities, can the plural sometimes be used instead of the dual? Could a speaker be talking about her/his parents but use the plural? In Corbett (2000)'s terms, are there any Inuit dialects where the dual is facultative? In our terms, are there dialects which have a variable dual? Plank (2006: 134) asks similar questions about languages with duals and finds "reliable information on the obligatoriness or optionality of the duals is not always easy to obtain."

2. Number Variability

Before we discuss further the issue about whether or not dual is variable in Inuit dialects, we will look at some examples from languages where plural is variable. Our first example is Yucatec Maya (a Mayan language) from Butler (2012: 13-14), shown in (5).

(5)a.   *le xch'úupalo'*
      le   x-ch'úupal-o'
      DEF FEM-girl-D2
      'the girl (there)' or 'the girls (there)'

   b.   *le xch'úupalo'obo'*
      le   x-ch'úupal-o'ob-o'
      DEF FEM-girl-P-D2
      'the girls (there)'; not: 'the girl (there)'

In (5a) we see that a nominal unmarked for plural may be interpreted as either singular or plural. If the plural marker is present, as in (5b), the nominal is unambiguously plural. Now consider another example from Halkomelem, a Salish language, from Wiltschko (2008: 642), shown in (6).

(6)a.   *te lhíxw swóweles*
      DET three boy.P
      'the three boys'

   b.   *te lhíxw swíweles*
      DET three boy
      'the three boys'

In (6a) we see that the number meaning 'three' and plural marking (indicated by ablaut) may co-occur in the same noun phrase. In (6b), however, we see that in Halkomelem, the number 'three' may occur without the plural marking, yet with the same meaning and grammaticality. Thus in both Yucatec Maya and Halkomelem, plural inflection is not

obligatory when plural meaning is present. Similarly, we want to know whether dual meaning is sometimes possible in Inuit dialects with robust dual, but when dual inflection is absent.

In colloquial English, there is sometimes variability in the use of the plural. In some dialects, if a speaker intentionally wishes to not specify the gender of a single individual, they use the plural, even though the context explicitly shows that only one entity is under discussion, as in (7).

(7)   *That student forgot to pick up their exam.*[2]

This sentence exemplifies variability in that, under specific conditions, the plural form in English may denote singular, or at least not denote plural. We wonder whether the plural form in Inuit dialects with robust dual inflection could sometimes appear with dual meaning.

Slovenian has dual number. Corbett (2000: 43) describes it as obligatory in all two-entity contexts, as in (8a), except with nouns that come in inherent pairs, e.g. hands. Nouns which are inherent pairs are marked with plural inflection when referring to two, as shown in (8b). A dual marker is only allowed with inherent pairs if an extra quantifier such as 'both' is present, as in (8c). Examples are from Dvořák and Sauerland (2006: examples 1b, 6a and 7).

(8)a.   *Kópat' sva se šla*
     kópat'   sv-a   se   š-la
     bath.SUPINE AUX1-D REFL PPA.go-D
     'We (2) went out to swim.'

   b.   *Umij si roke*
     umij   si   rok-e
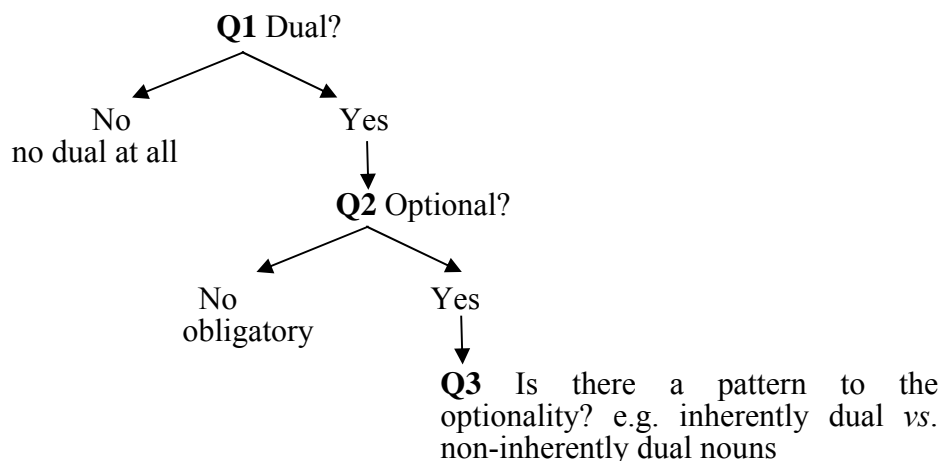   wash.IMP REFL.DAT hand-P
     'Wash your hands!'

   c.   *Umij si obé roki!*
     umij   si   obé   rok-i
     wash.IMP REFL.DAT both   hand-D
     'Wash both hands!'

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[2] This example is from Alana Johns, and is an example of the long-attested singular *they*. It seems that the possessive form *their* is even more readily used than *they* – see Liberman (2013). While definite antecedents are less common, they exist, as in *The person I was with said they hated the film.* (Huddleson and Pullum 2005: 104).

We see that the use of Slovenian dual inflection does vary, but it appears that the variability is tightly controlled by specific semantic contexts.

We elaborate on our question regarding potential variability in Inuit dialects through the schema in (9).

(9)   Is there a dual in the particular Inuit dialect?

Q1 Dual?

No   Yes
no dual at all

Q2 Optional?

No   Yes
obligatory

Q3 Is there a pattern to the optionality? e.g. inherently dual *vs.* non-inherently dual nouns

Q1 simply ask whether there is any evidence of a dual in the variety in question. The majority of varieties of Eskimo-Aleut are reported to have the dual. As mentioned previously, Kalaallisut (or West Greenlandic) is considered to have lost dual inflection. Dorais (2010: 304, footnote 47) states that the dual is present "in a limited number of inflections" in northern areas where Kalaallisut is spoken. Kleinschmidt (1851: 18) discusses Kalaallisut usage, as in (10).

(10)   The endings in dual – both with subjects and with objects – that make up about half of the total number, are here all included for the sake of completeness and because they occasionally (namely in books) are found, in spite of the fact that they in reality only seldom, and many of them as good as never, are used cf. §14 note.
[We are grateful to Per Langgård (p.c.) for the translation of Kleinschmidt's observation about the dual in Kalaallisut, as well as for pointing out the significance of it.]

It seems therefore that the dual was known to exist in Kalaallisut in 1851, but was actually rarely used.[3] This was long before Danification began in the 1950's, the first major contact with an outside language. This fact about

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[3] Marc-Antoine Mahieu (p.c.) informs us that Greenlandic linguists report that the dual can still be heard in Kalaallisut outside the main standard dialect "under circumstances which need to be clarified". This is exactly the issue we are discussing – the lack of precise information on usage.

Kalaallisut tells us that any reduced use of the dual in Canadian dialects may not necessarily be a direct result of bilingual English influence. It could instead result from language-internal factors. The dual in Kalaallisut was either variable or it was already starting to disappear by 1851. We should view these two scenarios as distinct. There could have been a time when there was stable variation, as in modern Slovenian.

Tunumiisut (East Greenlandic) also does not mark the dual, according to Tersis (2008). Within Canadian dialects, we note that Spalding's 1969 grammar of the Salliq dialect does not make any mention of the dual, nor does he provide any dual forms. Due to its prevalence across dialects and languages, it is assumed that the dual existed in Proto-Eskimo-Aleut (Fortescue, Jacobson and Kaplan 2010: 487). As such, it is somewhat surprising that there are no relic forms in the varieties which have lost the dual.[4] In Hebrew, where there is no longer a productive use of dual, it can still be found on approximately a dozen nominals (Corbett 2000: 95-96)

We move now to Q2 from (9). This asks if there are dialects where you have to use the dual obligatorily in every appropriate context. Within grammars of Inuktitut, there seems to be a common assumption that this is the case. Dual forms are provided without any mention of alternative forms or usage (with the exception of Bergsland 1997 and Kleinschmidt 1851). If no alternative is ever possible, the use of dual is what in sociolinguistics is termed *categorical.* This is equivalent to a deterministic rule which will apply in every context that meets the conditions of its use (see discussion of the linguistic variable in Denis 2015: 29-33). It may in fact be true for most Inuktitut dialects that use of dual inflection is categorical, but it has never been proven scientifically through careful study of natural speech. Speakers of any language are often unreliable reporters of their own usage, especially where speakers are conscious of the linguistic property in question and have an opinion about its "correctness" (Labov 1966: 455). Under these circumstances, speakers are known to over-report the preferential. This would lead to over-reporting of the dual inflection.

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[4] In Kalaallisut 'my eyes' is *isikka* eye.POSS.1S/P (revision of Schultz-Lorentzen 1927: example 3192). In Labrador Inuttitut, it is *ijekka* eye.POSS.1S/D (orthographic 'e' = /ii/). Lengthening of the vowel here before the first plural possessive *-kka* marks dual. Had Kalaallisut kept relics of dual number, we perhaps might expect irregular plurals in inherent pair body parts, e.g. the unattested Kalaallisut form *isiikka*.

Sociolinguistics terms a general system of preferential speech as the *standard*.[5] Yet linguistic evidence shows that "correctness" is more a social construct than linguistic fact. A closer study of the use of dual in Inuit dialects may show that dual in Inuktitut is indeed categorical, i.e. the linguistic system requires it. In a language where the dual must be used obligatorily, the plural form logically entails 'three or more entities.' Sanskrit is an example of such a language (Corbett 2000: 43). This issue remains to be examined in the Inuit language.

We now move to Q3 from (9) which addresses the nature of an optional dual with further questions. A number of these are shown in (11). There are undoubtedly many more.[6] These questions formulate hypotheses that probe the nature of the optionality/variability of the use of the dual. The assumption behind these questions is that optionality may not be random, but have some predictable correlate(s).

(11)a.   Is the dual used for both same types and mixed types dual?
        e.g. hats (2) vs. dog and bird (2)

    b.   Is the dual used more in verbs than in nouns (or vice versa)?

    c.   Are there dialects where the dual is only found in a subset of words?

       e.g. only things that are inherent pairs, or only animates? Conversely, are there dialects where dual is never found with inherent pairs?

    d.   Are there grammatical paradigms that do not allow dual? If so, can this be explained through morphological loss or perhaps grammatical factors?

The hypothesis in (11a) asks that we ascertain whether the two entities referred to by the dual must be restricted to two tokens of the same type, or whether the two may consist of mixed types. The second hypothesis (11b) asks if the dual is found more on verbs than nouns, or vice versa. The third hypothesis (11c) asks if there is any noun class which restricts the presence of dual, e.g. dual could be restricted to things that inherently pairs (the opposite of Slovenian), or perhaps only to animates. The fourth hypothesis (11d) asks if there are certain areas of the grammar of the language/dialect

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[5] Kalaallisut has a standard, due to the long history of common writing, used in education and publications.

[6] Ron Smyth (p.c.) suggests the use of psycholinguistic methodology to see if any optionality results from production errors, where differing contexts could trigger alternatives (see Bock and Miller 1991 on varying use of *is/are* in English). At this stage we remain neutral as to whether psycholinguistic or sociolinguistic methods (or both) should be used.

where dual/plural is neutralized and only plural surfaces. The neutralization might allow only the dual form in certain contexts, making the dual in these instances ambiguous between a dual or plural interpretation (Mathie 2015).

An example of the type of neutralization referred to in (11d) is found in North Baffin Inuktitut paradigms. Certain contexts have no means to express a dual/plural contrast. One of these contexts is reflexive third person in the Atautsikkut endings (see Alorut and Johns 2011 for some discussion). Atautsikkut (called Participial Mood in Harper 1974) is a dependent mood with a wide variety of uses. Basically it sets the time of an event as co-occurring with the time of a main event. The North Baffin examples in (12) show Atautsikkut forms of the verb root *taku-* meaning 'see' from Harper (1974: 23 – orthography updated). We observe that third person reflexive (i.e. third person subject identical to the main event third person subject) can only express a plural distinction, shown in bold.

(12)		First Person	Second Person	Third Person Reflexive
	singular	*takullunga*	*takullutit*	*takulluni*
	dual	*takullunuk*	*takullutik*	*taku**llutik***
	plural	*takulluta*	*takullusi*	*taku**llutik***

The fact that these third person forms are reflexive is relevant because we know that reflexives often neutralize contrast in gender (as in Romance). Yet reflexive does not require neutralization, as a third reflexive dual/plural distinction occurs in the same mood in other dialects of Inuktitut, e.g. Canadian Inupiaq (Uummarmiut) as in Lowe (1985).[7]

While the North Baffin data in (12) show that there may be certain areas in the grammar where a dual/plural contrast is not possible, other questions remain. Do speakers who have access to a dual/plural contrast ever use the plural form (and not the dual form) when referring to two entities? We want to know if such uses, if they exist, are slips of the tongue (see footnote 5), or whether they are the result of systematic grammar (or possibly part of language change). As an example of what we mean, consider again Slovenian. Previously we stated that this language requires

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[7] Marc-Antoine Mahieu (p.c.) tells us that phonological word-final neutralization of /k/-/t/ has produced neutralized dual/plural contexts in Nunavik. Some speakers can no longer distinguish between -*tuguk* (PART.1D) and -*tugut* (PART.1P), etc.

dual entities which are not inherent pairs to be obligatorily marked with dual inflection (Corbett 2000). It is therefore interesting that counter-examples exist, as shown in (13), provided by Peter Jurgec (p.c.). The context of the utterance is one speaker and another speaker deciding what to do.

(13)   *A gremo v kino?*
         a   gremo   v   kino?
         whether   go.1P.PRES   in/to   cinema.ACC.S
         'Shall we go to the movies?'

Even though 1dual inflection exists in Slovenian, the speaker used 1P. We do not know the extent of this usage in Slovenian, but it shows that colloquial language use and assumptions based on the standard do not exactly match. Jurgec believes that this use of plural instead of dual can only be found in first person. Our goal is to understand the meaning and grammatical properties of the dual within a particular variety of language. We must therefore investigate what speakers actually do – not what we assume they do.

The dual number can be said to be salient within Inuit speech communities that have it. Inuktitut speakers often mention the dual when speaking in English about their language. What this means is that, unlike many other linguistic properties where you can simply ask speakers what they say, it is possible that a speaker of an Inuktitut variety with a dual will always give you a dual form when asked to translate a sentence which refers to two entities. We need to know whether they always use the dual forms consistently when they are speaking in a casual situation (not translating). This is a well-known consideration in sociolinguistics, known as the observer's paradox.[8] On the other hand, the use of the dual may simply be categorical and is used every time it can be. In order to know which of these two scenarios is correct, we must examine its usage in natural conversation. We need to provide the "reliable information" about use of the dual which Plank (2006) finds lacking in descriptions of languages with a dual. In the following section, we discuss some

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[8] Labov (1972: 43-44) showed a distinction between New York casual speech and emphatic speech, where the emphatic speech displayed more standard properties.

methodologies which bear upon the quality of evidence in such an investigation.

3. Methodological Issues

We have emphasized throughout that in the investigation of dual number in language, it is important to collect data which is as naturalistic as possible. We will now review some methods for collecting such data. The most important consideration in our methods is that we must avoid alerting people we interview to our central research question (until after the interview). If they are aware of the fact that we are studying dual, the data cannot be considered reliable. For this reason we say that we must *tirliaq* the speech of the speakers we are investigating. *Tirliaq* is an Inuktitut verb base which refers to the action of coming up to someone or something without them being aware we are approaching. It is therefore a method of conducting research.

The first method we will discuss are interviews. If we want to find out about a dialect of Inuktitut which has the dual, we need to be indirect. We should not ask them to translate 'My two sons'. The presence of the number two in English will likely trigger a dual in the Inuktitut translation. Instead we need to set up situations where discussion will naturally concern two things or people, and then ask about the situation.

Sociolinguists try to get language data from speakers in the most relaxed context possible, where speakers are not self-conscious about their speech, for example in their home. One technique sociolinguists use to get people not to be self-conscious about their speech is to ask people to talk about life-threatening situations (Tagliamonte 2006: 40). This works because the person remembers the emotions of the situation and does not focus on how he or she is speaking. This, however, may trigger a lot of data which do not contain situations where a dual would be expected or possible. In order to get data with potential dual use, the interviewer will have to guide the speaker to topics where the discussion of two entities is likely. For example, if the interviewer knew that a speaker went on a trip with another person, the interview could involve questions about that particular trip.

The second method of collecting the dual in Inuktitut is through oral stories. In this instance the linguists will be getting a large quantity of natural data. The stories may be transcribed (and translated to English if necessary). The linguist can then review the stories to see if there is dual marking in every instance where there two things or two people are discussed. One concern here is that the person transcribing the data, if not properly trained, might "correct" the speech of the person. The second concern is that the context for the use of the dual might be rare, depending on the story.

Another potential method is the use of what are termed experimental situations from psycholinguistics (see footnote 5). One method would be to create a set of pictures, photos or situations, and then the speaker is asked questions about what is going on. In order to do this, the linguist could make a short movie or picture book in advance. This has the advantage that the linguist knows that the context for potential use of the dual will definitely occur. In addition, the linguist can interview a number of people, using with the exact same materials and get a reliable overview of how speakers of that dialect use or do not use the dual. We now turn to some initial findings from our own research. Our research into this topic is in a preliminary stage. The findings show only that more research is warranted.

4. Some Initial Findings

The first example we present is an interview question with a South Baffin speaker, shown in (14). The interview question is in (14). Notice in particular that the there is no dual in the Inuktitut interview question. This satisfies our *tirliaq* requirement. In an Inuktitut yes/no question with two overt nominals, there is no dual inflection because a conjoined subject agrees only with the first member of the conjunction. The response is shown in (14b), where the interviewee uses the plural to answer the question, even though the answer clearly concerns only two people.

(14)a. *Qanuippa Sean ammalu Jurgen?*
        qanuip-pa   Sean   amma-lu   Jurgen?
        be.fine-INTERR.3S Sean(.ABS)   also-and   Jurgen(.ABS)
        'How are Sean and Jurgen?'

b. *Qanuinngituit*
    qanuinngi-tuit
    be.fine-PART.3P
    'They are fine.' (dual would be -*tuuk*)

This example suggests that we need to examine more data from speakers of the South Baffin dialect. Although identifying primarily as a resident of Iqaluit (South Baffin), the interviewee spent a number of formative years also in Salliq (Coral Harbour). As mentioned previously, we do not know whether or not the Salliq dialect has a dual (see Spalding 1969).

The next example in (15) comes from a speaker of Labrador Inuttitut, who was asked over email to translate an English set of sentences into Inuttitut. The English target sentences are shown in (15a). There is no overt mention of two. The Inuttitut translation is in (15b).

(15)a. *John and Sam went to the store. They bought food and gasoline. Afterwards, they went out by boat.*

b. *John ammalu Sam niuvipviliajok.*
    John   amma-lu   Sam   niuvipvi-lia-jok
    John   also-and   Sam   store-go.to-PART.3D

    NiKitsasisimajut ammalu kiasalenitsitlutik
    NiKi-tsa-si-sima-jut   amma-lu   kiasaleni-tsi-tlutik
    food-potential-buy-perfective-PART.3P also-and   gasoline-buy-A.3REFL

    siagugiangulimmat, umiattugiattusimajut.
    siagu-gianguli-mmat   umiattu-giattu-sima-jut
    later-became-WHEN.3S   boat.by-went.out-COMPL-PART.3P

Again, the results are interesting. Labrador Inuttitut has a strong use of dual. Yet the translation shows that the first verb is marked with third person dual, but the subsequent verbs are marked with third person plural. This example illustrates why we need to get naturalistic oral data, produced spontaneously by speakers. The use of plural in (15b) be the result of the translator translating each English sentence independently. It is also possible that the translator considered that *they* in (15a) refers to a larger family group than just John and Sam. It could even be that once the dual is used, plural marking suffices for subsequent reference.

Our next example in (16) is from Spalding (1998), a dictionary of predominantly Aivilingmiut dialect (Eastern Canadian) words. We see that the word meaning 'parents' is in the plural, even though parents are

normally two. One possible factor here is that the base for parent involves the root *anaana* 'mother' followed by the suffix *-kkut*, which can refer to a household of the nominal to which it attaches. So (16) could be a lexicalized form, a word that meant one thing, but has changed over time to a more specialized meaning. The singular for 'parent' was not given.[9]

(16)   *anaanakkuit*
        anaanakku-it
        parent-P
        'parents'

  Our final examples are two excerpts from a story in the Qairnirmiut dialect told by the late Marta Talerook of Qamani'tuaq (Baker Lake), a monolingual elder. The audio was transcribed by Sally Ikutaq. The story is about a man and his wife who are living on land. Their only child dies, eaten by a wolf. The example in (17) is from the beginning of the story. In it one can see the dual used to refer to the couple in both the demonstrative and the verb.

(17)   *Unipkaaqtuaq taimna nuliariiguuq taipkuak atausinaamik nutaraqaqtuk.*
        unipkaaqtuaq taimna nuliarii-guuq   taipkuak atausi-naa-mik nutara-qaq-tuk
        story   this.S   couple-REPORT this.D   one-only-MIK   child-have-PART.3D
        'The story is about this couple who have only one child.'

The story utilizes dual inflection consistently throughout. The example in (18) appears towards the end of the story, after the child dies.

(18)a. *Nutara'naangat taimna atausiq amaqqumit*
        nutara-'naa-ngat   taimna atausiq   amaqqu-mit
        child-little-POSS.3P/S this.S one   wolf-ABL
        'Because their one little child by a wolf …

    b. *nirijaulaurmat, naglingnalauqput*
        niri-jau-laur-mat   nagling-na-lauq-put
        eat-PASS-PAST-WHEN.3S tender.emotion-able-PAST-PART.3P
        … was eaten, they aroused sympathy …

    c. *taipkuak ataataalu anaanaalu. Taima.*
        taipkuak   ataata-a-lu   anaana-a-lu   taima
        those-D   father-POSS.3S/S-and mother-POSS.3S/S-and that's it
        those two, his father and his mother. The end.'

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9 Marc-Antoine Mahieu informs us that in Nunavik *anaana-kku-ka* (mother-*kkut*-POSS.1S/P) can mean either 'my mother's family' or can refer just to the speaker's mother if the speaker is addressing a sibling, similar to English 'Mom' or French 'Maman'.

The set of phrases in (18) is very interesting because the plural is used twice here to refer to the tragic couple. We see *-at* 3P/S possessive used for 'their child' in (18a). The dual 3D/S possessive form in Kangiryuarmiut (a western but related dialect) is *-ak* (Lowe 1985). We see the plural again in (18b) in the word meaning 'they were pitiable', where *-jut* 3P is found, and not *-juk* 3D (compare with the dual variant *-tuk* PART.3D in 17). In (18c) the dual is once again used on the demonstrative 'those two.' It could be that the transcriber made some mistakes, or it could be that there is some variability in the use of the dual which we do not yet understand, and which could shed light on the nature of dual in this language. We need to know whether the grammar of the speaker may (or must) suspend the use of the dual in certain circumstances.

In conclusion, we have outlined a series of questions regarding the use of the dual in Inuktitut. We have also discussed a number of methodologies which can be used for answering those questions. We have emphasized that these questions must be approached from a scientific perspective, with no preconceived views about how the dual should or shouldn't be used. This research is important because languages which have a productive dual are not that common, and we know that the dual frequently disappears or stops being productive.

Abbreviations

/=possessor/possessum;   A=atautsikkut   mood;   ABL=ablative;   ABS=absolutive;   ACC=accusative;   AUX1=auxiliary;   COM=comitative;   COMPL=completive;   D=dual;   D2=distal;   DAT=dative;   DEF=definite;   DET=determiner;   FEM=feminine;   IMP=imperative;   INTERR=interrogative;   LOC=locative;   MIK=mik case;   NEG=negative;   NOM=nominative;   P=plural;   PART=participial mood;   PASS=passive;   POSS=possessive;   PPA=past participle;   PRES=present;   REFL=reflexive;   REPORT=reportative;   S=singular

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