

# Switch-reference in the Southern Hill Nisenan of Bill Joe

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# Introduction

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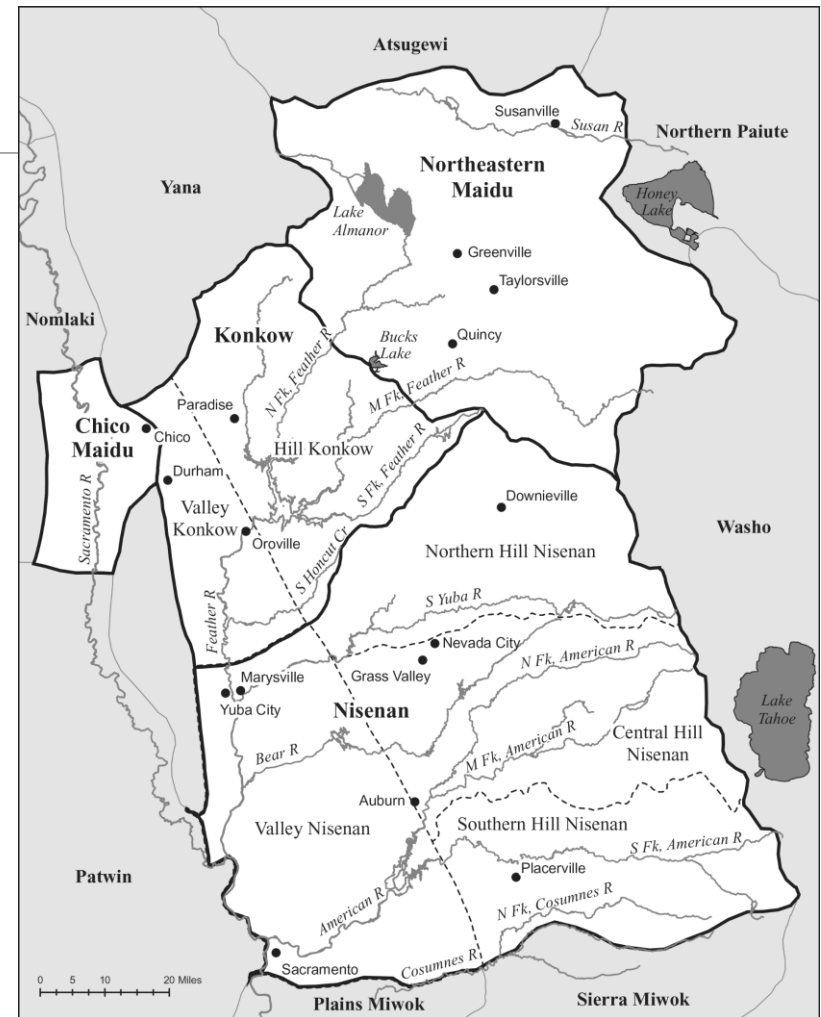
- I describe the **switch-reference** morphology of Southern Hill Nisenan, as exemplified in a corpus of William Joseph's (a.k.a. Bill Joe's) oral narratives from the 1930s (Uldall and Shipley 1966).
- Southern Hill Nisenan uses **5 different-subject suffixes** that encode the **person** and **number** of the subject of the affixed verb.
  - Fewer have been described for Central Hill Nisenan, but a reexamination of the Central Hill data suggests that the two systems are actually very similar.
- In his narratives, Bill Joe also uses switch-reference suffixes to perform “non-canonical” functions, i.e. **to track (dis)continuity of a wider range of elements than verbal subjects (e.g. narrative topic).**

# Background on Nisenan

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# The Nisenan language

- **Nisenan** (nsz) is a **Maiduan** language, spoken in CA's Central Valley + w. Sierra Nevada foothills.
- Nisenan comprises **4** dialects (Golla 2011:138-139):
  - Valley Nisenan
  - Northern Hill Nisenan
  - Central Hill Nisenan
  - **Southern Hill Nisenan**
- Efforts to revitalize the Nisenan language are ongoing and are primarily **document-based**.
  - Revitalization efforts at the **Shingle Springs Rancheria** focus primarily on **Valley and Southern Hill Nisenan**.



Map of Maiduan languages (Golla 2011:137)

# Switch-reference in Nisenan

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- Nisenan is a heavily-suffixing language that uses a set of suffixes to indicate whether the subject of one verb differs from that of another verb that occurs in the same sentence (**switch-reference**) (e.g. Eatough 1999, Oswald 1976).

- **Same-subject -in** marks continuity of subjects:

1. ...*poohó tuyín wóot'omatoy nisenáanim manayím.*

pooho	[tuy-in]	woo-t'omatoy	nisenaan-im	manay-im
night	[sleep-SS]	cry-PST	Indian-ATTR	boy-NOM

'At night the Indian boy<sub>i</sub> cried [while he<sub>i</sub> slept].' (Southern Hill; Uldall and Shipley 1966:30-31)

- **Different-subject -ic'e** marks discontinuity of subjects:

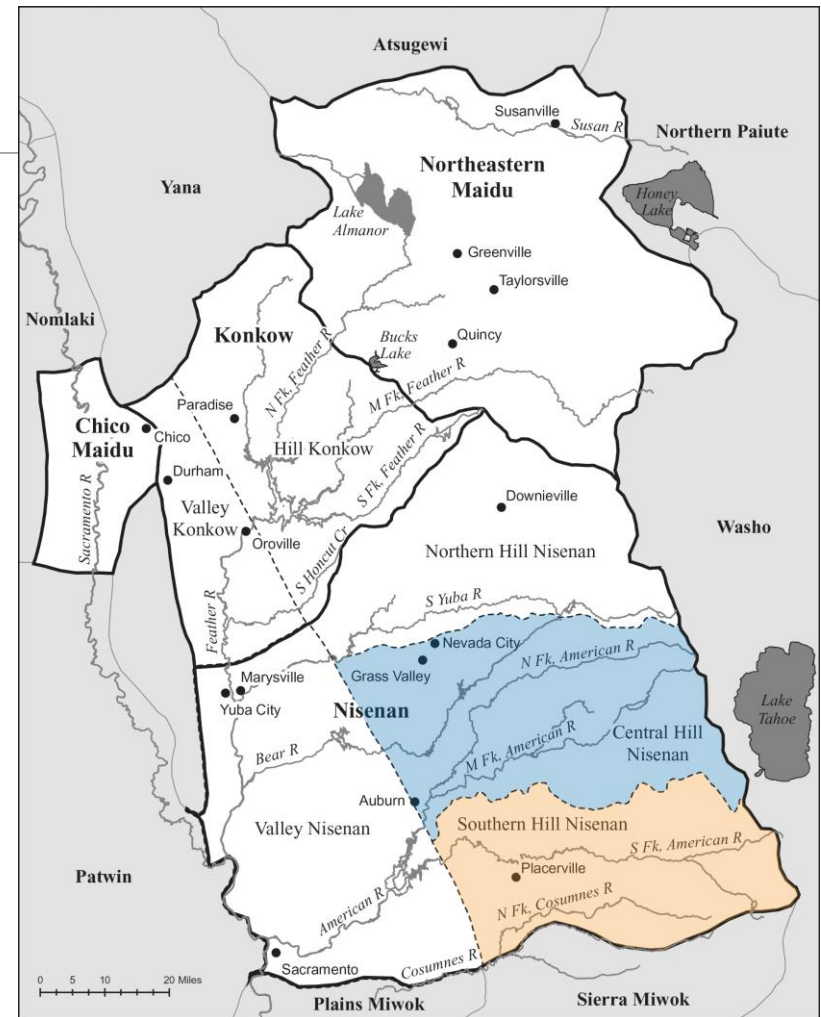
2. ...*'éet'omatoy kilém wosak'atím tuyic'é.*

'ee-t'omatoy	[kile-m	wosak'ati-m	tuy-ic'e]
see-PST	[woman-ATTR	pretty-NOM	sleep-DS]

'He<sub>j</sub> saw [(her) while the pretty woman<sub>i</sub> slept].' (ibid:162-163)

# Switch-reference in Nisenan

- Switch-reference is surely an important part of Nisenan grammar, both for descriptive purposes and language revitalization purposes.....
  - .....switch-reference occurs frequently in **multi-clausal utterances, connected speech**.....
- .....but the documentation of multi-clausal utterances is limited to **2** dialects: **Central Hill** (as spoken by Lizzie Enos) and **Southern Hill** (Bill Joe).
- There has been very little published analysis of Southern Hill Nisenan (cf. Oswalt 1976), whereas Eatough (1999) describes switch-reference and other components of Central Hill grammar.....



Map of Maiduan languages (Golla 2011:137)

# Switch-reference in Central Hill Nisenan

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- Eatough (1999:26-28) identifies **5 switch-reference suffixes in Central Hill**, based on a corpus of Lizzie Enos's speech from 1960s (13 texts + elicitation).
  - **Same-subject -in** marks continuity of subjects:
    3. *Hiilawim nem tuke nenmit'in 'ismukum.*  
hiilaw-im                      [ne-m              tuke    nenmit'-in]              'is-mukum  
ground.squirrel-NOM    [big-ATTR    hole    move.into-SS]              stay-PST  
'The ground squirrels, moving into a big hole, stayed there.' (Central Hill; Eatough 1999:33)
  - **Same-subject resultative -isan** also marks continuity of subjects AND that the main verb refers to the result of the action of the marked verb:
    4. *P'usso deesan pooloyhaa mi.*  
[p'usso              dee-san]              pooloy-haa    mi  
[acorn.soup    eat-SS.RES]              get.sick-PST    2SG.NOM  
'You got sick from eating acorn soup.' (Central Hill; ibid:27)

# Switch-reference in Central Hill Nisenan

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- Eatough (1999:26-28) identifies **5 switch-reference suffixes in Central Hill**, based on a corpus of Lizzie Enos's speech from 1960s (13 texts + elicitation).
  - **First-person different-subject -se** marks change from first-person subject:
    5. *K'amhisse mim mæspəm k'amnani wennem.*  
[k'amhis-**se**] mi-m mæspə-m k'amnan-i wenne-m  
[weave-**1.DS**] those-ATTR drinking.basket-NOM inside-ACC be.good-REAL  
'When I<sub>i</sub> would weave those drinking baskets, they<sub>j</sub> were good on the inside.' (ibid:114)
  - **Different-subject -ic'e** marks change from second/third-person subject:
    6. *Hïpwis dani yoowom nik meec'e.*  
hïp-wis dani [yoowo-m nik mee-**c'e**]  
believe-FUT do.1SG [thunder-NOM 1SG.ACC get-**DS**]  
'I'll<sub>i</sub> believe it when [Thunder]<sub>j</sub> gets me.' (ibid:35)
  - **Different-subject purposive -won** marks purpose clauses.



# Switch-reference in Central Hill Nisenan

- Eatough (1999:26-28) identifies **5 switch-reference suffixes in Central Hill...**

**Table 1. Switch-reference suffixes in Central Hill Nisenan (Eatough 1999)**

	Same-subject		Different-subject
Non-resultative	<i>-in</i>	1st person	<i>-se</i>
Resultative	<i>-isan</i>	2nd/3rd person	<i>-ic'e</i>
		Purposive	<i>-won (?)</i>

- Do **other Nisenan dialects** use the same switch-reference morphology?
  - This is relevant to language revitalization efforts at the Shingle Springs Rancheria, where our efforts focus primarily on **Valley and Southern Hill**.
- I analyze switch-reference morphology in **Southern Hill Nisenan.....**

# Switch-reference in Southern Hill

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# Switch-reference in Southern Hill: Methods

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- I analyzed switch-reference morphology in **71 oral narratives** that were shared by **Southern Hill Nisenan speaker William Joseph (a.k.a. Bill Joe) in the 1930s**.
  - Bill Joe's oral narratives were published, unanalyzed, in Uldall and Shipley (1966).
  - Bill Joe was a renowned storyteller. His texts, which span a range of genres from stories from Creation Time to personal recollections, are an invaluable resource.
- I segmented and glossed each of Bill Joe's oral narratives in order to produce a text-based database that is searchable **by morpheme**.
- I tagged **4,820 instances of switch-reference morphology**, including **1,798 uses of switch-reference morphology on verbs**, across ~21,000 total words.
  - This is an underestimate, as I treated many adverbial elements that may contain SR morphology as unanalyzed units (e.g. *wentin* 'well' = *wen-ti-n* 'be.good-CAUS-SS').

# Switch-reference in Southern Hill: Results

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- Southern Hill uses **the same same-subject suffixes** as does Central Hill:
  - **Same-subject -in** marks continuity of subjects ( $N=1,322$ ):
    7. ...*muk'uyéetín satín payyót'omatoy*.  
[muk'uyeetin sa-ti-n] payyo-t'omatoy  
[greatly burn-CAUS-SS] dance-PST  
'They<sub>i</sub> made a great fire and [they]<sub>i</sub> danced.' (Southern Hill; Uldall and Shipley 1966:16-17)
  - **Same-subject resultative -isan** marks continuity of subject/action ( $N=17$ ):
    8. ...*doosihím kiyisí payelisán woonót'omatoy*.  
[doos-ihim kiyisi payel-isán] wono-t'omatoy  
[roast-NMLZ-ATTR meat eat-SS.RES] die-PST  
'He<sub>i</sub> died because he<sub>i</sub> ate roast meat.' (ibid:164-165)
- Southern Hill **does not use** Central's different-subject purposive *-won*.

# Switch-reference in Southern Hill: Results

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- Southern Hill uses a **wider range of different-subject suffixes** that more precisely indicate the **person/number** of the subject of the affixed verb:

- **First-person singular different-subject -ise** marks change from 1SG ( $N=24$ ):

9. ...*sikaalú c'owisé saawó wokittít'om.*

[sikaalu c'ow-ise] saawo wokitti-t'om

[cigarette win.bet-1SG.DS] flint bet-PST

'When I<sub>i</sub> had won all the cigarettes he<sub>j</sub> put up a flint.' (ibid:156-157)

10. ...*woontiyat'át'om nik k'alədawisé kan...*

woon-ti-yat'a-t'om nik [k'alədaw-ise] kan

die-CAUS-nearly-PST 1SG.ACC [come.back-1SG.DS] again

'(They<sub>j</sub>) nearly killed me again when I<sub>i</sub> came back...' (ibid:148-149)

# Switch-reference in Southern Hill: Results

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- Southern Hill uses a **wider range of different-subject suffixes** that more precisely indicate the **person/number** of the subject of the affixed verb:

- **First-person dual different-subject -hase** marks change from 1DU (*N*=5):

**11.** ...*peení túyhasé 'idáwt'om 'elikím.*

[peen-i      tuy-**hase**]                      'idaw-t'om      'elik-im  
[two-ACC    spend.night-**1DU.DS**]    arrive-PST      Alec-NOM

'When we [Bill Joe + wife]<sub>i</sub> had been there two nights, Alec<sub>j</sub> arrived.' (ibid:124-125)

**12.** ...*'idikhasé dimpaytiménbene...*

['idik-**hase**]                      dimpay-ti-men-bene  
[arrive-**1DU.DS**]      hug-CAUS-NEG-2SG.OPT

'When we<sub>i</sub> get there you<sub>j</sub> must not let (them) hug (you)...' (ibid:32-33)

# Switch-reference in Southern Hill: Results

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- Southern Hill uses a **wider range of different-subject suffixes** that more precisely indicate the **person/number** of the subject of the affixed verb:
  - **First-person plural different-subject -hese** marks change from 1PL (N=8):
    - 13.** ...*nii heentémisém halemeyhesé, “wayní dootíp,” hát’om...*  
nii heente-mise-m [halemey-hese] wayn-i dooti-p ha-t’om  
1SG.GEN fellow-PL-NOM [lose-1PL.DS] wine-ACC buy-SG.IMP say-PST  
‘When we<sub>j</sub> lost, my fellows<sub>j</sub> said, “Buy some wine!” ...’ (ibid:158-159)
    - 14.** ...*bəhəpím payelí méyt’om nisek’é misé híná ’uno-hesé.*  
bəhəp-im payel-i mey-t’om nisek’e [mise hi-na ’uno-hese]  
all.kinds-ATTR food-ACC give-PST 1PL.ACC [3PL.GEN house-ALL go-1PL.DS]  
‘...they<sub>j</sub> gave us all kinds of food when we<sub>j</sub> went to their houses.’ (ibid:178-179)

# Switch-reference in Southern Hill: Results

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- Southern Hill uses a **wider range of different-subject suffixes** that more precisely indicate the **person/number** of the subject of the affixed verb:
  - **Second-person different-subject -menc'e** marks change from 2(SG?) (N=13):
    - 15.** ...*sapwíypay miim 'oo bendoyménc'e yaawek'óywesi...*  
[sapwi-y-pay mi-i-m 'oo bendoy-**menc'e**] yaawek'oy-wesi  
[three-time that-ATTR rock kick-**2.DS**] open-FUT  
'If you [Sison]<sub>i</sub>, kick that rock three times (it)<sub>j</sub>, will open...' (ibid:26-27)
    - 16.** ...*k'úynowes ni min beydím hatimenménc'é...*  
k'uyno-wes ni min beydim [hati-men-**menc'e**]  
swallow-FUT 1SG.NOM 2SG.ACC right.now [stop-NEG-**2.DS**]  
'...I<sub>j</sub> will swallow you right now if you [Field Mouse]<sub>i</sub>, don't stop...' (ibid:18-19)
- There are no examples where -menc'e unambiguously refers to 2DU or 2PL subject.



# Switch-reference in Southern Hill: Results

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- Southern Hill uses a **wider range of different-subject suffixes** that more precisely indicate the **person/number** of the subject of the affixed verb:
  - **Third-person different-subject *-ic'e*** marks change from third-person (*N*=409):
    - 17.** ...*miyé bendayic'é buum búut'omatoy.*  
[miye benday-**ic'e** buu-m buu-t'omatoy  
[that.ACC break.using.foot-**3.DS**] skunk-NOM break.wind-PST  
'When he [Jay]<sub>i</sub> broke that, Skunk<sub>j</sub> broke wind.' (ibid:16-17)
    - 18.** ...*máydikmisém we pintanót'om, henimménte kilémisém 'əwwiitoc'é...*  
maydik-mise-m we pintano-t'om henim-men-te [kile-mise-m 'əwwiito-**c'e**  
man-PL-NOM just listen-PST speak-NEG-CONTR [woman-PL-NOM quarrel-**3.DS**]  
'The men just listened without talking when the women quarreled...' (ibid:146-147)
- *-ic'e* unambiguously occurs with 3SG and 3PL subjects, but is unattested with 3DU subject.

# Switch-reference in Nisenan: Summary

- Southern Hill (Uldall and Shipley 1966) does not use the same switch-reference morphology as does Central Hill Nisenan (Eatough 1999):

Table 1. SR in Central Hill (Eatough 1999)

	SS		DS
Non-result.	<i>-in</i>	1st	<i>-se</i>
Result.	<i>-isan</i>	2nd/3rd	<i>-ic'e</i>

Table 2. SR in Southern Hill Nisenan

	SS		DS
Non-result.	<i>-in</i>	1st sing.	<i>-ise</i>
Result.	<i>-isan</i>	1st dual	<i>-hase</i>
		1st plural	<i>-hese</i>
		2nd	<i>-menc'e</i>
		3rd	<i>-ic'e</i>

- Southern Hill *-hase* versus *-hese* is part of a broader system of alternation between dual *a* versus plural *e* (e.g. *naas* 'we (dual)' versus *nees* 'we (plural)').
- A reanalysis of the Central Hill data may suggest that **the two systems are more similar.....**

# Switch-reference in Central Hill: Revisited

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- Central Hill shows evidence of **at least two other different-subject suffixes**.
  - **First-person dual different-subject -haase** marks change from 1DU ( $N=3$ ):
    - 19.** *'tdikhaase tuylemaayi.*  
[ʔidik-**haa-se**]      tuy-lemaa-yi  
[arrive-**PST-1.DS**]    sleep-manage-PERF  
'When we [two]<sub>i</sub> arrived, she<sub>j</sub> had just gone to sleep.' (Central Hill; Eatough 1999:27, 119)
    - 20.** *'Uk'oyhaase tuyc'e kisa meetadik'ii naas kolte.*  
[[ʔuk'oy-**haa-se**]    tuy-c'e    kisa]    meetadik'-ii      naas      kolte  
[[go-**PST-1.DS**]    sleep-DS again]    arrive.to.fetch-PERF    1DU.NOM    in.vain  
'When we [two]<sub>i</sub> left, she<sub>j</sub> was sleeping again; the two of us had come...' (ibid:199)
- Eatough analyzes “haase” as consisting of past tense *-haa* and first-person different-subject *-se*, which is problematic: Otherwise, tense does not co-occur with SR morphology.....

# Switch-reference in Central Hill: Revisited

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- Central Hill shows evidence of **at least two other different-subject suffixes**.
  - **First-person dual different-subject *-haase*** marks change from 1DU ( $N=3$ ):
    - 19.** *'tdikhaase tuylemaayi.*  
[ʔidik-**haase**]      tuy-lemaa-yi  
[arrive-**1DU.DS**]      sleep-manage-PERF  
'When we [two]<sub>i</sub> arrived, she<sub>j</sub> had just gone to sleep.' (Central Hill; Eatough 1999:27, 119)
    - 20.** *'Uk'oyhaase tuyc'e kisa meetadik'ii naas kolte.*  
[[ʔuk'oy-**haase**]      tuy-c'e      kisa]      meetadik'-ii      naas      kolte  
[[go-**1DU.DS**]      sleep-DS again]      arrive.to.fetch-PERF      1DU.NOM      in.vain  
'When we [two]<sub>i</sub> left she<sub>j</sub> was sleeping again; the two of us had come...' (ibid:199)
- A more parsimonious analysis is that “haase” is first-person dual different-subject *-haase*.

# Switch-reference in Central Hill: Revisited

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- Central Hill shows evidence of **at least two other different-subject suffixes**.
  - **Second-person different-subject *-menc'e*** marks change from 2nd pers. (*N=1*):  
**21.** *'Okpeyii ni min 'idawmenc'e.*  
          'okpey-ii           ni           min           ['idaw-**men-c'e**]  
          search-PERF   1SG.NOM   2SG.ACC   [come-**NEG-DS**]  
          'I<sub>j</sub> looked all over for you when you<sub>j</sub> didn't come.' (ibid:19, 27)
  - Eatough analyzes “*menc'e*” as consisting of negative *-men* and second/third-person different-subject *-ic'e*, which is problematic: Suffix-initial vowels do not normally delete when they follow consonants (e.g. Eatough 1999:4).

# Switch-reference in Central Hill: Revisited

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- Central Hill shows evidence of **at least two other different-subject suffixes**.
  - **Second-person different-subject -menc'e** marks change from 2nd pers. ( $N=1$ ):  
**21.** *'Okpeyii ni min 'idawmenc'e.*  
          'okpey-ii           ni           min           ['idaw-**menc'e**]  
          search-PERF   1SG.NOM   2SG.ACC   [come-**2.DS**]  
          'I<sub>j</sub> looked all over for you when you<sub>i</sub> didn't come.' (ibid:19, 27)
  - An alternative analysis is that “menc'e” is second-person different-subject suffix -menc'e, but this too is tenuous: If “men” is not negative -men, then how does negation manifest in the free translation?
  - It could be that this is a mistranslation (e.g. 'I looked all over for you when you were (supposed to be) coming'), but this is sole example of “menc'e” in Eatough (1999).

# Switch-reference in Nisenan: Revised

- A wider range of switch-reference morphology is attested for Southern Hill than Central Hill, but actual differences may have been exaggerated by gaps in the documentation and problematic past analyses:

Table 1. SR in Central Hill Nisenan (revised)

	SS		DS
Non-result.	<i>-in</i>	1st sing.	<i>-se</i>
Result.	<i>-isan</i>	1st dual	<i>-haase</i>
		1st plural	(?)
		2nd	<i>-menc'e</i> (?)
		3rd	<i>-ic'e</i>

Table 2. SR in Southern Hill Nisenan

	SS		DS
Non-result.	<i>-in</i>	1st sing.	<i>-ise</i>
Result.	<i>-isan</i>	1st dual	<i>-hase</i>
		1st plural	<i>-hese</i>
		2nd	<i>-menc'e</i>
		3rd	<i>-ic'e</i>

# Non-canonical uses of switch-reference

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# Non-canonical switch-reference in Nisenan

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- Switch-reference canonically tracks the identity of verbal subjects.
- In longer discourses, the speakers of SR languages may also use switch-reference morphology to perform various **non-canonical functions**, such as to **track topical/thematic (dis)continuity** (e.g. McKenzie 2015).
- Do **any Nisenan dialects** use switch-reference **non-canonically**?
  - Again, this is relevant to language revitalization efforts at the Shingle Springs Rancheria: We want to build conversational fluency in speaking Nisenan, as well as revitalize traditional cultural practices like oral storytelling.
- Again, I turn to **Bill Joe's Southern Hill oral narratives**.....

# Non-canonical switch-reference in Nisenan

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- Bill Joe (as well as Lizzie Enos) often begins sentences using a **discourse particle *ha* ‘and’ in conjunction with a switch-reference suffix**.
- Typically, this indicates **(dis)continuity of verbal subjects across sentences**:

**22.** (a) *Witteem teebeyim miskohót’omatoy.* (b) *Han peec’éwt’omatoy.* (c) *Hac’e báəppayim nisenaanim daak’mént’omatoy mihé.*

**a.** wittee-m      teebey-im      miskoho-t’omatoy  
one-ATTR      youth-NOM      be.frivolous-PST

**b.** **ha-n**              peec’ew-t’omatoy  
**and-SS**            be.mischievous-PST

**c.** **ha-c’e**          bəəppay-im      nisenaan-im      daak’-men-t’omatoy      mihe  
**and-3.DS**      all-ATTR              Indian-NOM      desire-NEG-PST              3SG.ACC

‘One young man<sub>i</sub> was frivolous. And he<sub>j</sub> was mischievous. All the Indians<sub>k</sub> disliked him.’

(Southern Hill; Uldall and Shipley 1966:36-37)

# Non-canonical switch-reference in Nisenan

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- Oswalt (1976) analyzed 100 instances of these discourse particles in Bill Joe's Southern Hill narratives, and concluded that **he uses switch-reference here to indicate (dis)continuity of verbal subjects across sentences.**
- I have found **3,022 of these discourse particles** in Bill Joe's narratives.
  - *Ha* combines with each possible switch-reference morpheme except second-person different-subject *-menc'e* (gap in documentation?).
- Typically, the selection of switch-reference suffix does correspond to whether the verbal subject is the same or different across sentences.
  - For example, *hase* (< *-ise* '1SG.DS') = change from first-person singular subject.
- But this pattern is not absolute.....

# Non-canonical switch-reference in Nisenan

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- **Bill Joe also uses switch-reference to signal topical/thematic continuity:**

23. ...*(a) kilémisém 'uutí yulúyt'om. (b) Han mi k'edémisém hunmohó k'ac'ákpáy't'om...*

a. kilé-mise-m            'uuti            yuluy-t'om  
woman-PL-NOM        acorn            pound-PST

b. ha-n        mi            k'ede-mise-m            hunmo-ho        k'ac'akpay-t'om  
and-SS    3SG.GEN    brother.in.law-PL-NOM    hunt-NMLZ        help-PST

'[When there was a Big Time they helped,] the women<sub>i</sub> pounded acorn. His brothers-in-law<sub>j</sub> helped with the hunting, [that is the way the chiefs managed...].' (ibid:80-81)

- The subjects of sentences (a) and (b) are **different** (the women versus the chief's brothers-in-law), yet Bill Joe uses **same-subject -in** because the two sentences together describe **one thematic event**: Both parties are helping the chief.

# Non-canonical switch-reference in Nisenan

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- **Bill Joe also uses switch-reference to signal topical/thematic discontinuity:**

24. ...*(a) 'əəni-n henim-mén-te túyt'om ni. (b) ha-c'e 'amakim 'okó 'alaltek'óyt'om ni.*

a. 'əəni-n            henim-men-te            tuy-t'om            ni  
be.angry-SS        speak-NEG-CONTR    sleep-PST            1SG.NOM

b. ha-c'e            'amaki-m            'oko            'alalte-k'oy-t'om ni  
and-3.DS    next-ATTR        day            plow-go-PST        1SG.NOM

'Being angry, I<sub>i</sub> slept and said nothing. The next day I<sub>i</sub> went to plow.' (ibid:150-151)

- The subjects of sentences (a) and (b) are the **same** (I), yet Bill Joe uses **third-person different-subject -ic'e** because the two sentences describe **separate thematic/temporal events**: Bill Joe's activities on two different days.

# Summary and discussion

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- Bill Joe's Southern Hill Nisenan uses a set of **5 different-subject suffixes** to encode the **person and number** of the subject of the affixed verb.
- Bill Joe also uses *ha* 'and' with switch-reference morphology to structure his narratives, including to indicate **topical (dis)continuity across sentences**.
- As one of two comprehensive corpora of connected speech in Nisenan, Bill Joe's narratives are an invaluable resource for language revitalization efforts.
  - **Switch-reference permeates connected speech**: An understanding of SR is crucial toward any effort to build conversational fluency and other language skills, such as being able to introduce oneself (i.e. due to alternations in subject).
  - An understanding of SR and its role in **structuring discourse** is crucial for following Bill Joe's narratives as well as crafting new stories that reflect traditional practices.

# Nii honi kiiipetim meem!

(Thank you all!)

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