Infinite and finite control in Mam

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In this talk, I will outline two different types of control in the Mayan language Mam. I suggest that the two constructions exploit two different routes of control, which Landau (2008) introduced as PRO-Control and C-Control.

In the first construction, the matrix predicate selects an infinitival complement, as seen in (1). The lack of agreement in the selected complement indicates that this construction is an instance of PRO-Control.

(1) Matz'-ok-n-q'o-yn-a [PRO_i, j, tx'eema-l, sii].
    ASP-2SG.ABS-DIR-1SG.ERG-give-DIR-2SG
    'I made you cut firewood'

With the predicates aj – ‘to want’ and ky'i – ‘not to want’, a different control construction has to be chosen as the infinitival control construction is ungrammatical, as seen in (2).

(2) *Ø-w-aj(b'el)-a [PRO_i, j, aq'na-al].
    3SG.ABS-1SG.ERG-want-1SG
    intended: 'I want to work.'

Instead, the matrix predicate chooses a complement with an inflected verb form. In contrast to the construction in (1), the selected complement in (3) shows overt agreement. This suggests that the control relation is mediated via C thus exhibiting an instance of C-Control.

(3) Ø-w-aj(b'el)-a [PRO_i, j, chin-aq'naa-n-a].
    3SG.ABS-1SG.ERG-want-1SG
    1SG.ABS-work-ANTIPASS-1SG
    roughly: 'I want that I work.'

In this talk, I will discuss the empirical patterns of both constructions and potential consequences for theoretical approaches to control.

References: