**Introduction:** Previous semantic analyses of shifted indexicals (SIs) have focused almost exclusively on cases involving singular indexicals. We present newly collected data about plural indexicals in Amharic that challenges these analyses, and develop modifications for existing theories to account for the facts. Building on evidence from reciprocity and cumulativity, we propose that plural SIs in Amharic are always treated as semantically plural, going against the trend to treat SIs and other De Se pronouns as semantically singular even when anteceded by a plural NP (Stechow (2002), Schlenker (2012), i.a.).

**Background:** The thesis that plural De Se pronouns are semantically singular came from considerations about a well-known ambiguity in plural attitude reports.

(1) John and Mary said that they were sick

(1) can either have a group reading “John and Mary each said ‘John and Mary are sick’” or a dependent reading (1b) “John and Mary each said ‘I am sick’”. The dependent reading invites the conclusion that the embedded pronoun can be treated as singular, and has led some to adopt rules like Feature Deletion (Stechow (2002)) which essentially removes the plural features of such bound pronouns so that they are interpreted as singular.

**Data:** To start, we show that Amharic plural SIs are indeed SIs and not a case of (partial) quotation, using data from extraction (in line with data showing that singular SIs in Amharic are indirect speech; Schlenker (2003)). Evidence for treating plural SIs as semantically plural, even for dependent readings, comes from essentially plural predicates that appear in the embedded clause with the indexical. For instance, reciprocals are generally assumed to require local and plural antecedents; thus we expect that if a SI were to antecede a reciprocal, then the SI should be interpreted as plural. Crucially, reciprocals can appear even in dependent reading reports, the very case that motivated the singular treatment (cf. Higginbotham (1980) on English). We found that Amharic allows dependent reading reports with a plural SI anteceding a reciprocal in the lower clause (marked by a special anaphoric verbal stem).

(2) 

\[
\text{ɨnsäsa-wofʧʧ-u inni-ggaddil-all-än al-u}
\]

animal-PL-DEF 1PL-kill.RECIP-AUX-1PL say-3PL

‘The animals said we will kill each other.’

We address previous analyses of reciprocals in attitude reports which suggest that they may search outside of their local clause for an antecedent and thus that the embedded pronoun may be treated as singular, such as Heim et al. (1991). We will review several counterarguments to this (Williams (1991), Dalrymple et al. (1994), Dotlačil (2010)) that suggest that reciprocals indeed require local and plural antecedents, thus supporting our thesis that even for dependent readings, the SI is semantically plural.

A similar argument comes from cumulativity in attitude reports, where sentences like (3) can express that each candidate said he would dance with only his wife and no one else (‘with’ is a circumposition).

(3) 

\[
\text{täwädadari-wocc-u kā-Michelle-na Ann gar inni-däns-all-än al-u}
\]

candidate-PL-DEF with-Michelle-and Ann with 1PL-dance-AUX-1PL say-3PL

‘The candidates said we will dance with Michelle and Ann.’

As Beck and Sauerland (2000) observed, the possibility for cumulation in such reports is dependent on an embedded pronoun that is coreferential with the attitude holder NP (e.g. a SI), and is unavailable otherwise (4). This rules out a general cumulation strategy between attitude holders and the content expressed by embedded clauses.

(4) *Max and Peter said that Bill will marry Ann and Amy, respectively*

We draw on the conclusions of Beck and Sauerland and others that cumulation is a local phenomenon that arises when there are multiple plural NPs in a clause. This provides evidence that the indexical in (3) is plural; and like reciprocals, cumulative readings are still possible under dependent construals.
Outline of Analysis: Our analysis draws on the following consequence of treating plural SIs as semantically plural: since the embedded clause is associated with a proposition concerning a plurality of individuals, dependent readings involve a proposition that does not hold of any single accessible world/context of a single attitude holder. This speaks against the standard approach of using universal quantification in the truth conditions of attitude reports, at least for the cases that we focus on here. Consider (5) under the dependent construal, where each candidate says “I will win”.

(5) täwādadari-wocc-u inn-ajānf-all-ān al-u
candidate-PL-DEF 1PL-win-AUX-1PL say-3PL
‘The candidates said that we will win.’

Here, it is not true that the proposition $\lambda c.[\text{they win in } c]$ holds of each of Obama and Romney’s SAY-accessible contexts.

We suggest a modification to the standard approach. Instead of a proposition holding of each context of a set of accessible contexts (Schlenker (1999), i.a.), we propose that it is possible for a proposition to hold of the set of accessible contexts as a group. Put differently, at least plural SI reports involve collective predication of a plurality of contexts; on par with collective predication of plural noun phrase denotations (e.g., The boys together carried the piano up the stairs). While no single context may satisfy the predicate $\lambda c.[\text{they win in } c]$, the predicate may hold of a collection of contexts if we allow $c$ to range over pluralities of contexts. Such pluralities can be understood as Groups in the technical sense of Link (1984), similar to his analysis of “the boys” in the example just mentioned.

With this idea in mind, giving denotations of attitude verbs, embedded clauses, and SIs can be done relatively straightforwardly. To implement the idea of Group predication of contexts, we give attitude verbs like say having the following semantics.

(6) $\llbracket \text{say}_{\text{de se}} \rrbracket^C = \lambda P.\lambda X.P(\uparrow C)$; where $C$ is the union of each of the $X$’s respective SAY-accessible contexts in $C^*$

We treat say as having a De Se/non-De Se ambiguity, and the De Se version is the one that uses a group operator $\uparrow$; see Landman (1989) among others for details of $\uparrow$. Since SI reports are De Se reports (Schlenker (2012), Anand (2006)), $\llbracket \text{say}_{\text{de se}} \rrbracket$ is used. If only De Se reports use $\uparrow$, then for non-De Se reports like (4) the plural predication $P(\uparrow C)$ is understood distributively; i.e., the $P$ denoted by the embedded clause holds of each SAY-accessible $c$ in $C$. This accounts for the observation that (4) being true requires each to say "Bill will marry them". Also note, uppercase variables are number-neutral (Boolos (1984) and others), thus making the account compatible for either singular or plural reports. The denotation of embedded clauses are predicates of contexts (Schlenker (1999)); with the exception that such predicates in some cases can hold of Groups of contexts. We make a slight modification to Schlenker’s analysis of SIs that $\llbracket \text{SI} \rrbracket^C = \text{AUTH}(C)$; in particular, we suggest that the author coordinate is a plural value for plural attitude reports.

For example (5), assume the author coordinate is set to Obama$\oplus$Romney. The embedded clause denotation for that example would be $\lambda C.\text{AUTH}(C) \text{ win in WORLD}(C)$; composing this with an attitude verb denotation like (6) and then with the attitude holder NP yields the following truth conditions for (5).

(7) $\llbracket (5) \rrbracket^C = 1 \text{ iff O}$\oplus$R win in the Group of O$\oplus$R’s SAY-accessible contexts in $C^*$.

Conclusion: Overall, we explore the impact of challenging new data from Amharic plural indexicals on analyses of De Se pronouns, and argue that it requires treating SIs as semantically plural. To close, we present a new finding that plural SIs in Amharic allow for inclusive reference, where the reference of the attitude holder(s) is a proper part of the denotation of the SI, similar to some other De Se pronouns like PRO and logophors (Landau (2000), Schlenker (2002)). We show how these facts can be incorporated into our account by using the feature system of Schlenker (2002).

Selected References: Beck and Sauerland 2000 “Cumulation is needed”; Dotlačil 2010 Anaphora and Distributivity; Heim et al. 1991 “Reciprocity and plurality”; Higginbotham 1981 “Reciprocal interpretation”; Landman 1989 “Groups I,II”; Landau 2000 Elements of Control; Link 1984 “Hydras” -De Se citations can be found in Schlenker 2012 “Indexicality and De Se reports”