

Unusual Agreement targets: Agreement or concord?

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Agreement

Agreement is a morphosyntactic phenomenon in which there is ‘a systematic covariance between a semantic or formal property of one element [the controller], and a formal property of another [the target]’ (Steele 1978: 610). See also Corbett (2006).

- (1) Archi (Chumakina et al. 2016: 27)

ułmu	os	ḥawan	b-uq'u-li
shepherd(I).SG.ERG	one	animal(III)[SG.ABS]	III.SG-slaughter.PFV-EVID
‘The shepherd slaughtered one animal.’			

(2) Archi (Chumakina et al. 2016:)

w-is uš-mi-n oq-li-t
I.SG-1SG.GEN brother(I)-OBL.SG-GEN wedding(IV)-OBL.SG-SUPER
(I danced)'at my brother's wedding'

(3) Chimane (Ritchie 2019: 112)

a. mó' Juan-si' där-si' ococo

the.F Juan(M)-F big- F frog(F)
'Juan's big frog'

b. mu' Juan-tyi' där-tyi' ịtsiquij

the.M Juan(M)-M big-M jaguar(M)
'Juan's big jaguar'

In some languages, other types of head agree with controllers that are selected by that head, such as adpositions agreeing with their complements, and (arguably) nouns agreeing with their possessors:

(4) Welsh (Indo-European, Celtic) (Borsley 2009:228)

- | | | | | | |
|----------|----|----------|-----|-----------|------|
| a. arno | fo | b. arni | hi | c. arnyn | nhw |
| on.3SGM | he | on.3SGF | she | on.3PL | they |
| 'on him' | | 'on her' | | 'on them' | |

(5) Central Alaskan Yupik (Eskimo-Aleut, Eskimo) (Miyaoka 2012: 723)

- | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|---------------|
| a. May'a-m | pani-a | b. angi-i-gemta | pani-kek |
| Mayaq-REL.SG | Da-ABS.3SG.SG | MoBr-EV-REL.1PL.DU | Da-ABS.3DU.PL |
| 'Mayaq's daughter' | | 'our (two) uncles' daughters.' | |

Agreement with a non-selected argument

(6) Avar (Boris Ataev, p.c.)

tusnaq-al-da	žani-w	t'amuna	niže-c:a	Rasul
prison(N)-SG.OBL-SUP	in-M.SG	put.PST	1PLEXCL-ERG	Rasul(M)SG.ABS
'We put Rasul in prison.'				

Locality

- All major theoretical models of syntax make use of the concept of locality to delimit and define the syntactic domain within which processes occur.
- Within the generative tradition, locality is typically understood as a description of the structural proximity of two nodes in a syntactic structure.
- The most local relationship possible is sisterhood between phrases (see Zwart 2006, Alexiadou, Kiss and Miller 2012 for discussion).

Argument structure and locality

- Syntactic heads impose selectional restrictions on the types of arguments and adjuncts they can occur with.
- This observation has given rise to another way of thinking about locality: because selectional restrictions of a head must be satisfied within the maximal projection of that head (and not some other head), the arguments of a predicate must be considered local to (i.e. in a proximal syntactic configuration with) the head that selects them.
- In LFG, agreement is modelled at the level of functional structure: a local domain consists minimally of a predicate, together with the grammatical functions it governs.

Locality and agreement

- Agreement is generally thought of as a clause bounded dependency; we take any agreement phenomena that does not respect clausal boundaries as being **non-local at the level of the clause**.
- We take any agreement phenomena that does not respect minimal predicate/argument structures as being **non-local at the level of predicate/argument structure**.
- Any agreement relation where controller and target are not sisters is **non-local at the level of sisterhood**.

Unusual targets, unexpected domains

Unexpected domains:

- target and controller are in a non-local relationship and
- the controller is not a sub-constituent of a local controller

Unusual targets

“verbs are consistently the most prolific agreers...adjectives clearly participate in agreement, but they do so more modestly.... nouns do not need to agree with another NP in their environment” (Baker 2008:1)

Some examples of unusual targets

Target	Language	Location
Adpositions	Archi, Avar, Andi, Khwarshi... Kwarandzey Marind	Daghestan Algeria Papua New Guinea
Adverbs	Archi, Khwarshi, ... Gujarati Tundra Nenets,	Daghestan India Siberia
Nouns	Andi, Avar, Tokita Karata, (Tanti) Dargwa Romance	Daghestan Italy
Pronouns	Archi	Daghestan
Focus particles	Archi	Daghestan

Adpositions

(7) Archi (Nakh-Daghestanian, Lezgic)

zari	gəzət	o b k <small>l</small> ni	jarχul-ma-k	e b q'en
1SG.ERG	newspaper(III)[SG.ABS]	⟨III.SG⟩read.PFV	the.middle-IN-LAT	⟨III.SG⟩up.to
'I read the newspaper up to the middle.'				

(8) Gujarati (Indo-European, Indic) (Hook & Joshi 1991: 1)

e	maaraa	saam-o	aavy-o;	e	maaraa	saam-i	aav-i
he	my.OBL	before-M.SG	came-M.SG	she	my.OBL	before-F.SG	came-F.SG
'He came before me. She came before me.'							

- (9) Coastal Marind (Anim)(Olsson 2017:104)

isala ti \emptyset - \emptyset -e-hihi-n
platform(III) with.I/II.PL neut-3SG.A-1PL-FALL.PL.A-1.U
'We fell with the sitting platform.'

- (10) Kwarandzey (Songhay), (Souag 2015:79)

izkədda=γu, ks y-aʃam-dzyəy y-indz-a
child=this let 1PL-FUT-talk 1PL-com-3SG
'This little kid, let's talk with him.'

Adverbs

- (11) Archi (Nakh-Daghestanian, Lezgic)

tu-w-mi	is	mišin	allij< t'> u
that-1.SG-SG.ERG	[IV.SG]1SG.GEN	car(iv)[SG.ABS]	for.free<IV.SG>
mua-r-ši	i		
[IV.SG]repair-IPFV-CVB	[IV.SG]be.PRS		
'He is repairing my car for free.'			

(12) Khwarshi (Nakh-Daghestanian, Tsezic)

a. kad^j a<j>di go^he

girl(II)[SG.ABS] <II.SG>HERE COP.PRS

‘The girl is here.’

b. ziⁿhiⁿ adi go^he

cow(III)[SG.ABS] <III.SG>here COP.PRS

‘The cow is here.’

(13) Tundra Nenets (Uralic) (Nikolaeva 2014: 179)

- a. mən'° s'it° m'in°xə-n'i/*m'in°xə-nt° xanaə-dəm-s'°
1SG you.ACC quickly-1SG/quickly-2SG take-1SG-PST
'I quickly took you away.'

- b. m'in°xə-n'i/*m'in°xə-t'ih mən'° xo-we-xəyu-n°
quickly-1SG/quickly-3DU 1SG find-PASS-DU-1SG
'They (DU) were quickly found by me.'

Nouns

(14) Andi (elicited)

a. ilu-b-o q'inkom hago
mother(II)-III.SG-AFF bull(III)[SG.ABS] see.AOR
'Mother saw a bull.'

b. ilu-r-o c'ul hago
mother(II)-V-AFF stick(V)[SG.ABS] see.AOR
'Mother saw a stick.'

(15) Tokita Karata (Magomedova & Khalidova 2001: 449)

waxja-š:u-ba b-iʃi-dak'a
son(I)-SG.OBL-III.SG.AFF III.SG-know-PRS
'The son knows.'

(16) Aqusha Dargwa (Lion and Hare)

ža[‘]w zamunt-a-zi-b-ad nuša-la wac'-urb-a-z-ib
very time.PL-OBL-IN-N.SG-EL 1PL-GEN forest-PL-OBL-IN.N.SG
ħer**b**ir-ul=ri arslan
<N.SG>live.IPFV-CVB=PRET lion(N)[ABS]

‘A very long time ago, a lion used to live in our forests.’

(17) Avar (Alekseev & Ataev 1998: 48)

- a. hel-gi tusnaq-al-u<r>e r-it'e
dem.ABS.PL-ADD prison(N)-SG.OBL-<PL>INLAT PL-send.IMP
'And send them to prison.'
- b. hew-gi tusnaq-al-u<w>e w-it'e
DEM.ABS.M.SG-ADD prison(N)-SG.OBL-<M.SG>INLAT M.SG-send.IMP
'And send him to prison.' (Boris Ataev, p.c.)

In **Ripano** (Romance; Italy), direct objects, indirect objects and noun phrases functioning as clausal adjuncts can agree in number and gender with the subject of the clause. This is only attested with certain nouns which typically have locative or temporal semantics and have specific, indefinite reference.

(18) Ripano (Paciaroni 2019)

- a. Gianni s' ha cumbratə la casə
Gianni(M) REFL.3 have.PRS.3 buy.PTP.N.SG DEF.F.SG house(F)SG
- b. Gianni s' ha cumbratə la casu
Gianni(M) REFL.3 have.PRS.3 buy.PTP.N.SG DEF.F.SG house(F)M.SG
'Gianni has bought the house'

Diachrony of noun agreement

An agreeing case in a ‘core case’ paradigm is a rare phenomenon. In the Nakh-Daghestanian family it is found only in one branch (Andic), and not in all varieties of this branch. Other Andic languages have a frozen agreement marker for affective case: Bagwalal -ba (N), Tindi -ba (N), Gigatli Chamalal -ba (N), Godoberi -ra (IV), etc.

In Andi, the agreeing affective also can be used in the locative function; this is probably the common grammaticalization path for quirky subjects in Nakh-Daghestanian; they generally start as locatives:

- (19) Andi (Alisultanova 2010)

qala- ^I ːi-w-o	Lerdi	w-ugwo-d <u>ː</u> u	se-w	oloqan wošo
castle(iv)-SG.OBL-I-AFF	before	I-come-PRF	one-I	young boy(I)[SG.ABS]
'A young boy appeared before the castle.'				

The agreeing locatives, in their turn, most likely have their origin in locative copulas.

Agreement?

It is problematic to consider these instances proper Agreement:

- controller and the target are not in the predicate – argument relations
- in case of postpositions, the agreeing ones do not form a natural class so major syntactic theories will have a problem ascribing the agreeing property (such as bearing an unvalued and uninterpretable feature)
- in case of agreeing nouns, there is a clash of their ability to be controllers and targets at the same time or, in Minimalist terms, they carry an interpretable and valued feature (their lexical gender), and have an ability to carry an unvalued and uninterpretable feature in certain cases.

Concord?

The behaviour of adverbs in Tundra Nenets (Uralic) have been analysed as concord (Nikolaeva 2014: 178-180): the occurrence of agreement on the adverb is only possible if the same category is expressed on the verb:

(20) Tundra Nenets

- a. [ti-m xada-°] s'en'ana-nt°/*s'en'ana-n'i s'iqm'i tab'ida-nə-s°
reindeer-ACC kill-MOD earlier-2SG/earlier-1SG I.ACC force-2SG-PST
'In the past you ordered me to kill the reindeer.'

- b. *[ti-m s'en'ana-n'i xada-°] s'iqm'i tab'ida-nə-s°
reindeer-ACC earlier-1SG kill-MOD I.ACC force-2SG-PST
Intended: 'In the past you ordered me to kill the reindeer.'

however...

In closely related Forest Enets, the adverbs agree even in the non-finite clause:

- (21) tʃike ſize kasa εd^juku-r tɔmini-d^ji? tɔ
this two man child-NOM.SG.2SG just-OBL.SG.3DU that
εε-d^ji? nɔl^jkusʃ kuraxad
mother-OBL.SG.3DU pursue(IPFV).CVB then
'While these two boys were just running after their mother....'

Keenan proposes an analysis of ‘agreement spreading’ for agreeing adverbs in Avar (2014: 396)

Similar solution is proposed by Testelec (2001)

however...

(22) Archi, biabsolutive construction (Chumakina&Bond: 2016:97):

- a. Pat'i dit:au q'wib b-o<r>klin-ši d-i
Pati(II)[SG.ABS] early<III.SG> potato(III)[SG.ABS] III.SG-<IPFV>dig.IPFV-CVB II.SG-be.PRS
'Pati is digging the potatoes out early.' (It is too early for the potatoes to be ready.)
- b. Pat'i dit:a<r>u q'wib b-o<r>klin-ši d-i
Pati(II)[SG.ABS] early<II.SG> potato(III)[SG.ABS] III.SG-<IPFV>dig.IPFV-CVB II.SG-be.PRS
'Pati is digging the potatoes out early.' (Pati got up early.)

Archi, biabsolutive construction, two adverbs:

- (23) zon abbadlij<w>u allij<t'>u gudum-mi-n nok'
- 1SG.ABS always<I.SG> for.free<IV.SG> that.I.SG-OBL.SG-GEN house(IV)[SG.ABS]
- mu a-r-ši w-i
- be.good [IV.SG]do-IPFV-CVB I.SG-be.PRS
- 'I am forever fixing his house for free'

Archi, agreement with the ergative (NEEDS FURTHER CONFIRMATION):

- (24) zari abbadlij<w>u allij<t'>u gudum-mi-n nok'
- 1SG.ERG always<I.SG> for.free<IV.SG> that.I.SG-OBL.SG-GEN house(IV)[SG.ABS]
- mu ar
- be.good [IV.SG]do.IPFV
- 'I am forever fixing his house for free'

Tanti Dargwa

In Tanti Dargwa, the choice of the controller for the adverbial depends on the transitivity of the clause and on the properties of both A and P argument as well as on the position of the adverbial.

Note that the verb in (25) agrees with both A and P.

- (25) Tanti Dargwa (Sumbatova and Lander 2014: 464)
- | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| ma ¹ ha ¹ mmad-li-š <u>2</u> :u-b | rasul-li | dig |
| Magomed(1)-OBL-AD-N.SG | Rasul(1)-ERG.SG | meat(III)[SG.ABS] |
| b-uk: ³ -un-ne=sa-j | | |
| N.SG-eat.IPF-PRS-CONV=COP-M.SG | | |
- ‘Rasul eats meat at Magomed’s (house).’

Tanty Dargwa (Sumbatova 2019)

- (26) a. dars-li-ja-w / dars-li-ja-b musa-li gezet b-uč'-a
class-OBL-SUPER-M / class-OBL-SUPER-N Musa-ERG newspaper N-READ:IPFV-TH
‘During the class, Musa will be reading a newspaper.’
- b. dars-li-ja-w / dars-li-ja-b musa-li gezet ma-b-uč'-ab
class-OBL-SUP-M / class-OBL-SUPER-N Musa-ERG newspaper PROH-N-read:IPFV-OPT
‘During the class, Musa will be reading a newspaper.’
- c. dars-li-ja-w / dars-li-ja-b žuž b-uč'-en
class-OBL-SUPER=M / class-OBL-SUPER=N book N-read:IPFV-IMP
‘During the class, read a book!’

Questions for the future

- Is the range of morphosyntactic features (and their values) involved in ‘unusual’ agreement the same as the range involved in predicative agreement in any given language?

- Do unusual targets have the same exponents of agreement as observed on non-local targets (e.g. verbs and nouns that agree with their arguments)?

- Do dependencies exist between the realization of agreement features across different targets of the same controller?

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