LINGUISTICS 105:

Morphology

October 15, 2012:
Agreement

Administration

- You should have read Halle (1973) read by now.

- HW 2 also due right now.

- Sections this week will definitely discuss the Halle paper.

- Grades SNAFU has been un-FU'ed.

- We are one day behind; schedule has been updated on the website already.

- HW 3 is up (Swahili); due next Monday.

From the [Workshop](#)

- From this weekend's workshop on allomorphy: "It's like a dissimilation process driven by its .... obstruenticity."

  - cf., "obstruent-ness"

- "Maybe there IS a difference between derivation and inflection!"

- "Many parents spend several minutes -- even hours -- planning the names of their children."

High-Level Perspective

- *So far:* We have looked at some basic distinctions in morphology and how they can be captured in a theory adopting the modular Y-Model.
- *Here on out:* we will look at several different kinds of morphological phenomena and ask how they can be integrated into our theory.
- We will have two primary goals during this process:
  1. to give you examples of lots of different empirical phenomena so that you understand morphological typology.
  2. to ask what our theory has to look like to account for these new empirical issues.

Agreement

Tracking Argument Relations

Agreement: Preliminaries

- AGREEMENT $=_{def}$ when a grammatical item **co-varies** based on features of another grammatical item (Φ-FEATURES).
- All kinds of agreement is found in natural language:
  1. Subject-verb agreement
  2. also object-verb agreement and indirect object-verb agreement.
  3. POSSESSOR - POSSESSUM agreement
  4. Adjective - noun agreement (sometimes called CONCORD).
  5. Preposition - prepositional object agreement
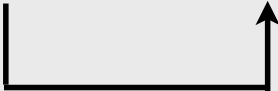 6. Complementizer - NP agreement.

Preliminaries, II

- Agreement TARGET =_{def} the grammatical item (verb, preposition, etc.) that varies in an agreement relation.

- Agreement CONTROLLER =_{def} the grammatical item whose grammatical features determine the morphology on the agreement target.

  The ocelot love-s his tufted ears.

- Informally, agreement is usually talked about as though the controller gives (copies) of its features to the target.

  The ocelot loves his tufted ears.

  AGREE

Examples: Subject Agreement

- Very easy to understand intuitively, but: *what defines a subject?*
  - Encompasses a lot of different θ-roles: agent, patient/theme(in passives), experiencer, recipient/source (in passives of ditransitives), …
  - In our theory: subject is DP in [Spec, TP] (or NP daughter of S).
- Empirically, this is a very commonly found trait in languages, though:
  - not all languages identify the same features of the target on the controller.
  - not all languages require all their verbs to agree in the same way.

Subject Agreement, II

(1) KiLega ([−TONE] (Bantu; PDR Congo):

   a.   Mupunga u-ku-yik-u-a   mu-nyumba.
        3.rice   3.SUBJ-PROG-cook-PASS-FV 18-9.HOUSE
        "Rice is being cooked in the house."

   b.   Bana   ba-ku-yik-u-a   mu-nyumba.
        children.2 2.SUBJ-PROG-cook-PASS-FV 18-9.HOUSE
        "Children are being cooked in the house."

Subject Agreement, III

(2) Maltese (Semitic; Republic of Malta):

a. Marija   kien-et   ti-xrob
Maria(3.FEM.SG) was-3.FEM.SG 3.FEM.SG-drinking
fuq Sibt.
on   Saturday
"Maria was drinking on Saturday."

b. Marija u   Matthias kien-u   ji-xorb-u   fuq
Maria and Matthew was-3.PL 3-drinking-PL on
Sibt.
Saturday
"Maria and Matthew were drinking on Saturday."

Object Agreement

- *Sometimes:* Cover term for instances where a non-subject argument controls agreement.
- For us: distinguishing two kinds of internal argument:
  - DIRECT OBJECTS (patients, themes, etc.)
  - INDIRECT OBJECT (goals, sources, *ficiaries, etc.)
- *Somewhat* rarer than subject agreement.
  - {Nearly all, all} languages with object agreeement *also have subject agreement.* (WALS lists 24/378).
- **An unclarity:** sometimes "subject" agreement is the term used when a non-subject controls the actual morphemes that subject agreement uses.
  - In this worldview, it's not true object agreement if there is not a separate series of affixes

Object Agreement, II

(3) Swahili (Bantu; Mozambique Channel)

  a. Mimi ni-ta-wa-penda   wao.
        I   1.SG.SUBJ-FUT-3.PL.OBJ-like them.
        "I will like them."

  b. Mimi ni-ta-ku-penda   wewe.
        I   1.SG.SUBJ-FUT-2.SG.OBJ-like you(.SG)
        "I will like you."

(4) Hungarian (Uralic; Hungary)

  a. Lát-ok   egy madar-at.
        see-1.SG.INDEF a   bird-ACC
        "I see a bird."

  b. Lát-om   a   madar-at.
        see-1.SG.DEF the bird-ACC
        "I see the bird."

Indirect Object Agreement

- These are cases where a "second" object controls agreement.

  Mark baked a cake for Jeremy.

  Mark baked Jeremy a cake.

- Very rare cross-linguistically.

  - Sometimes (*e.g.*, in Georgian), indirect object agreement only shows up some of the times (when regular object agreement is impossible).

- Very common for languages with this property to also have agreement with subjects and direct objects.

IO Agreement, II

(5) Basque (Isolate; Basque Country):

Guraso-e-k   niri   belarritako ederr-ak
parent(s)-the-SUBJ me.IO earring(s)   beautiful-the(.OBJ)

erosi   d-i-zki-da-te.
bought 3.OBJ-have-PL.OBJ-1.SG.IO-3.PL.SUBJ
"(My) parents bought be beautiful earrings."

Possessor Agreement

- Two definitions:
  - POSSESSOR: the thing doing the possessing.
  - POSSESSUM: the thing possessed.

  Hans ate Jeremy's Sarah Lee.

- Possessor agreement $=_{def}$ when features of the possessor appear elsewhere in the DP possessum.
  - usually, this is marking on the possessum, but it need not be in principle.
- Typically expressed with affixes distinct from subject/object/IO agreement, but also sometimes seen with affixes used for subject agreement.
- Very rare; more common is attachment of the possessor as a pronoun to the possessum.

Poss Agreement, II

(6) Finnish (Uralic; Finland):

a. (Minu-n) vaimo-ni voitt-i auto-n.
(I-GEN) wife-1.SG.POSS win-PAST.3.SG car-ACC
"My wife won a car."

b. (Sinu-n) vaimo-si voitt-i auto-n.
(You-GEN) wife-2.SG.POSS won-PAST.3.SG car-ACC
"Your wife won a car."

Question: could we be sure this is possessor agreement if we never saw the optional pronouns?

Complementizer Agreement

- COMPLEMENTIZER $=_{def}$ word which introduces an entire clause (*usually* only found in embedded clauses).

  {that, whether, if, because, ... }

- COMPLEMENTIZER AGREEMENT $=_{def}$ when a complementizer shows morphology controlled by the features of a DP.
  - Usually the **embedded** subject, sometimes the **matrix** subject (*e.g.*, Lubukusu).
  - Also sometimes just **any** argument inside the clause with certain properties (*e.g.*, Nez Perce).
- Like possessor agreement in terms of rarity and possible confounding factors.

C Agreement, II

(7) West Flemish (Dialect of Dutch):

  a. Kpeinzen dan-k   (ik) morgen   goa-n.
      think.1.SG COMP-1.SG (I) tomorrow go-1.SG
      "I think that I'll go tomorrow."

  b. Kpeinzen da-j   (gie) morgen   goa-t.
      think-1.SG COMP-2.SG (you) tomorrow go-2.SG
      "I think that you'll go tomorrow."

Default Agreement

- **Question**: What happens when agreement "fails"?
  1. The utterance is ungrammatical.

     *Tarzan love Jane.

  2. A non-varying "default" agreement appears.

     There{'s, 're} a lot of bastards out there.

- This is commonly seen when agreement is blocked for independently observed reasons:
  - The would-be controller is not a thing which can control agreement.
  - There is another possible controller around whose presence "blocks" agreement by the real controller.

Default Agreement, II

(8) Italian (Nonstandard):

  a. A loro   piacc-io   io.
      to 3.PL.DAT please-1.SG I.NOM
      "They like me."

  b. *Mi piacc-io   me stesso.
      me please-1.SG myself
      "*Intended:* I like myself."

  c. ?Mi piac-e   me stesso.
      me please-3.SG myself
      "I like myself."

pro-Drop (Languages)

- So far: agreement recognized by the co-presence of an affix with varying features and its controller.
- But: sometimes the controller does not appear overtly:

  No habl-o español!
  NEG speak-1.SG Spanish
  "I don't speak Spanish"

- One way of thinking about these languages: there *is* a controller, but you can't hear/see it.
  - This is called *pro* (which is not PRO).

    No *pro* habl-o español!
    NEG speak-1.SG Spanish
    "I don't speak Spanish"

- Another way: the agreement itself *is* the subject (or: is pronominal).

Modeling Agreement: Syntax

- Traditionally, agreement has been modeled syntactically.
- *Idea:* There is some relation to a verb (in a tree) which a nominal can bear; when it bears that relation, agreement takes place.
    - *Cf.,* Form rules that say "pronounce a verb with a 3.sg subject with the ending /-s/."
- We will survey two different ways:
    1. SPECIFIER-HEAD AGREEMENT.
    2. AGREE under C-COMMAND.
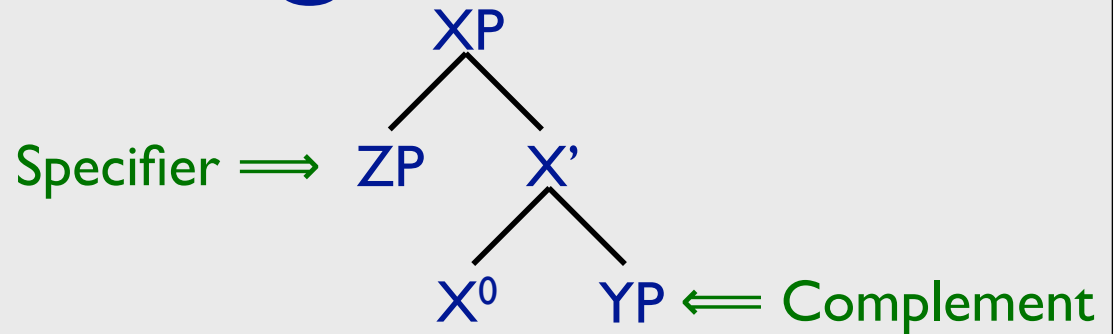- **(A very good) Question:** Why does syntax need to care about agreement?

An Agreement Asymmetry

(9) a. Qadim-**at**/*qadim-**ataa**   al-bint-aani.
came-**3.FEM.SG**/*came-**3.FEM.DUAL** the-girl-DUAL
"The two girls came."

b. ʔal-bint-aani qadim-**ataa**/*qadim-**at**.
the-girl-DUAL came-**3.FEM.DUAL**/*came-**3.FEM.SG**
"The two girls came."

- SV ⟹ Full agreement.

- VS ⟹ Partial agreement (*number agreement)

Spec-Head Agreement

- Recall X-bar Theory:

```
                                      XP
                                     /  \
          Specifier ⟹  ZP          X'
                                  /    \
                                X⁰      YP ⟸ Complement
```

- *Idea:* Agreement takes place between a controller and some target head when the noun is in a specifier relationship with that head.
  - In some languages, this appears as morphology on the head (*i.e.*, verb).
  - But in all languages, features of the noun controller are copied to the head.
- One empirical problem for this approach: when a specifier-head relationship cannot be motivated, yet agreement maintains: There are bastards out there.

Excursus: C-Command

- C-COMMAND =_{def} A node α *c-commands* a node β iff:
  1. α does not DOMINATE β.
  2. β does not dominate α.
  3. The first branching node which dominates α also dominates β.
- **Question**: What c-commands what in this tree?
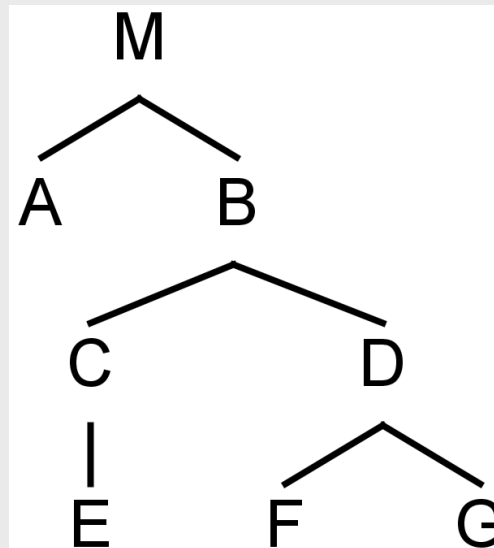
AGREE

- AGREE $=_{def}$ A possible target α AGREES with a controller β iff:
  1. α c-commands β.
  2. β has the kind of features α needs.
  3. There is no node γ such that α > γ > β and γ has the ability to AGREE.
- This is the modern approach, and is very useful for:
  - V-initial languages (VSO, VOS)
  - Existential Constructions
  - Non-subjects which control subject agreement.
- **Question:** what kind of data is this definition not that great for?

Modeling Agreement: Morphology

- All these syntactic mechanisms do is copy features around, and features ≠ morphemes!

- *Idea:* Write vocabulary insertion/form rules which reference the features copied in the syntax.

- Morphemes are then *inserted* to *realize* these features.

- Agreement is therefore *morphosyntactic* in character: we can't describe the phenomenon without both modules of grammar.

An Example

(8) Italian (Nonstandard):

   a. A loro   piacc-io   io.
       to 3.PL.DAT please-1.SG I.NOM
       "They like me."

   b. *Mi piacc-io   me stesso.
       me please-1.SG myself
       "*Intended:* I like myself."

   c. ?Mi piac-e   me stesso.
       me please-3.SG myself
       "I like myself."