

Grammatical Agreement

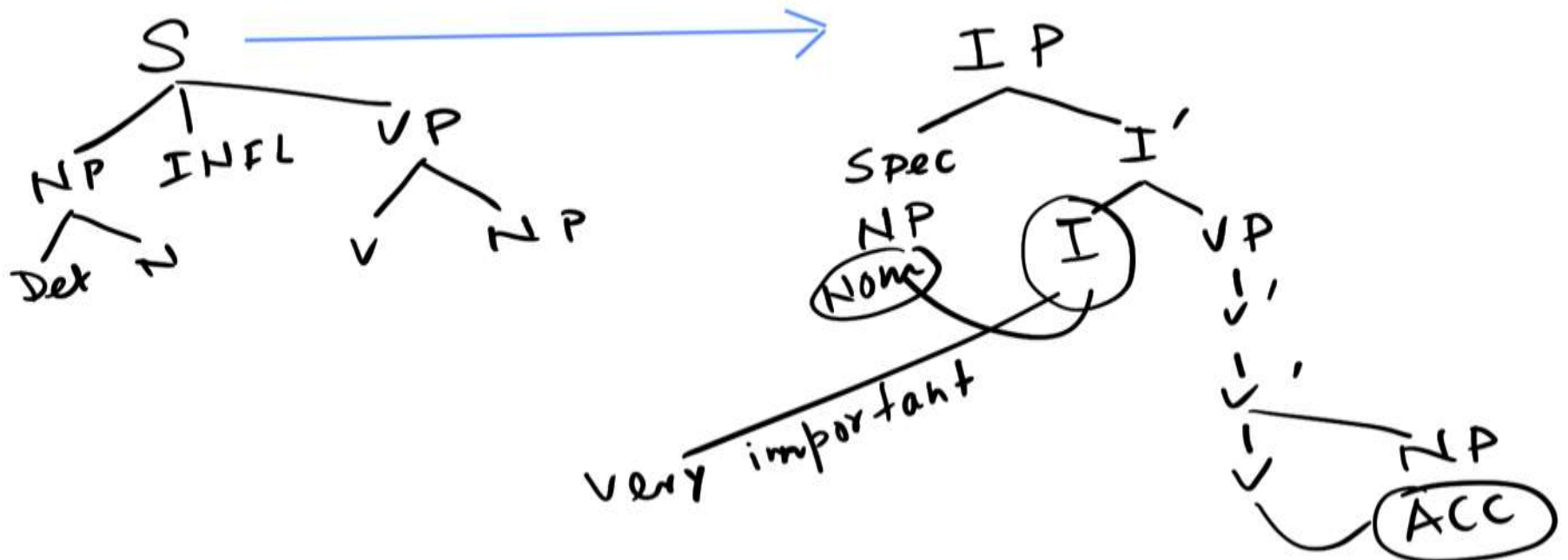
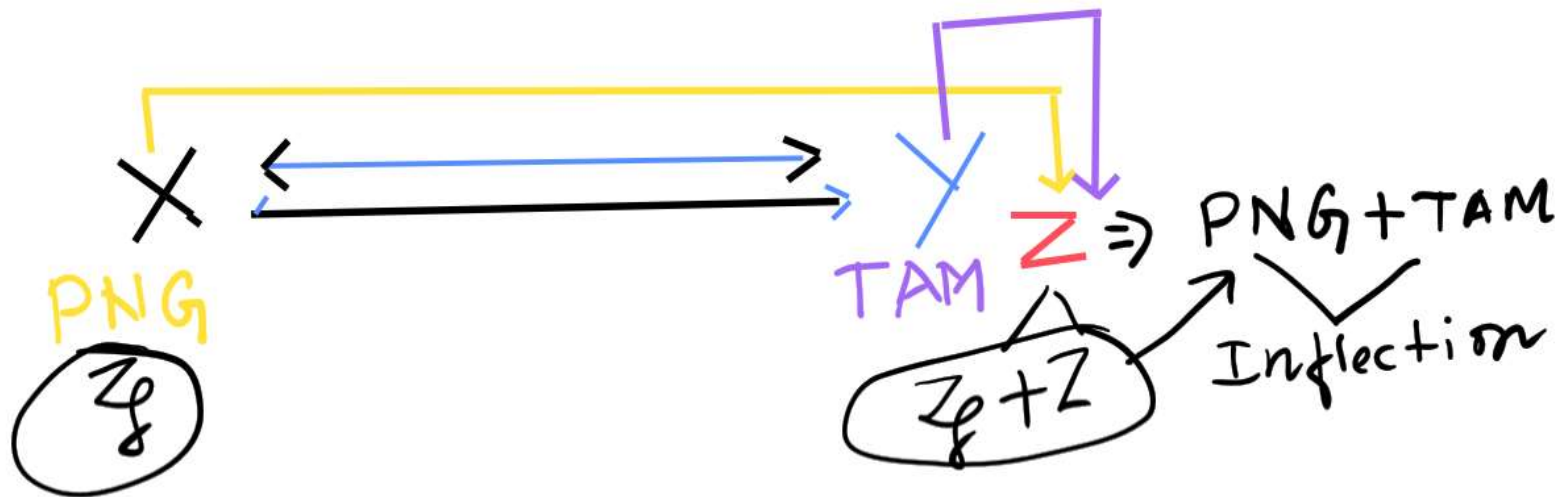


Let's first have a look at the working definition of agreement: (Das, P.K. 2005)

Constituent $Y_{(verb)}$ agrees with constituent $X_{(NP)}$ in a category Z iff the following conditions hold true:

- a. There is a syntactic relationship between X and Y .
- b. X is related to a subcategory z (the nominal inflections) of a grammatical category Z (the verbal inflection) and X 's relationship to z is independent of the nature or value of Y .
- c. There is a mutual sharing of the grammatical features/values between the nominal and verbal inflections in the clause.
- d. Z is expressed on Y and forms a constituent with it (i.e. VP).

What should we understand from the definition



Subject-verb-agreement

she/he/it

↓
X

sing-

↓
Y

s

↓
Z

a song.

I/ you/ we/ they

↓
X

sing-

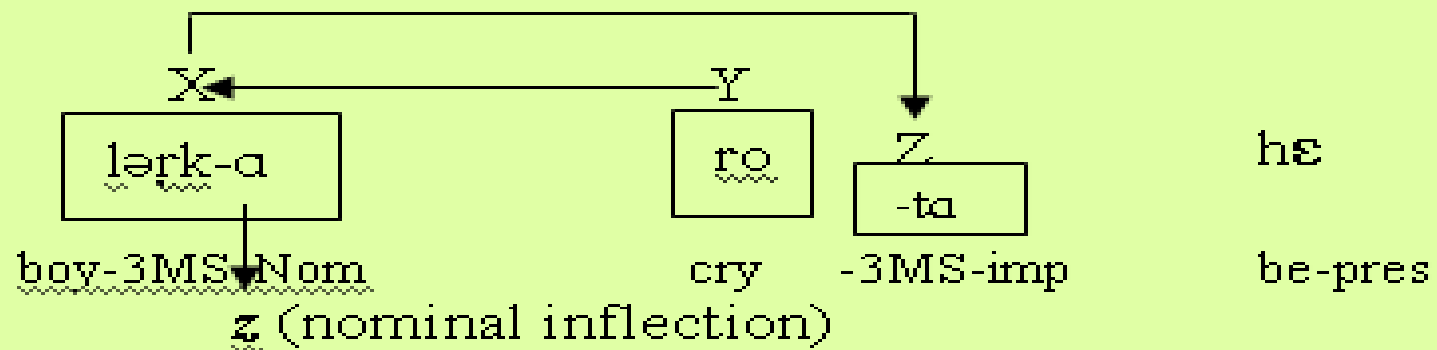
↓
Y

Ø

↓
Z

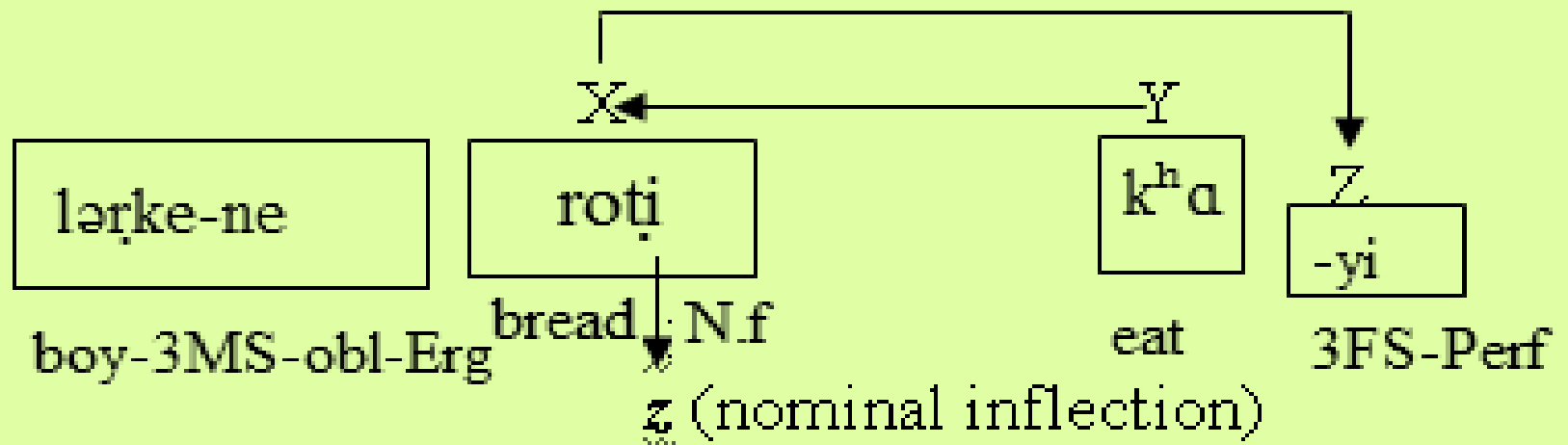
a song.

Subject-verb-agreement



‘The boy cries’.

Object-verb-agreement



The boy ate chappati. (bread).

Default-verb-agreement

ram/sita-ne	lærke/i -ko	piṭa
Ram-3 rd PMS/ Sita-3 rd PFS-Erg	boy(Obl) 3 rd PMS/ girl-3 rd PFS-Acc	beat-3 rd PMS-Asp
Ram/Sita beat the boy/girl.		

ram/sita-ne	lærke/i -ko	piṭa
Ram-3 rd PMS/ Sita-3 rd PFS-Erg	boy(Obl) 3 rd PMS/ girl-3 rd PFS-Acc	beat-3 rd PMS-Asp
Ram/Sita beat the boy/girl.		

Self-Created Form = DA

Language

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graph TD; Language[Language] --> NoAgreement[Languages that don't have]; Language --> HaveAgreement[Languages that have agreement;]; HaveAgreement --> SingleSystem[Languages that have Single-system of agreement i.e. only Subj-Verb-Agreement]; HaveAgreement --> DualDoubleSystem[Languages that have Dual/Double-system of agreement i.e. Subj-Verb and Obj-Verb agreement in complementary syntactic environment]; SingleSystem --> SingleSystemSubject[Languages with Single-system of Agreement have only Subject marking its inflection on the verb]; SingleSystem --> SingleSystemOtherNP[Languages with Single-system of Agreement may allow other NPs to mark their inflection on the verb besides the Subject in the same syntactic environment.];
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Languages that don't have

Languages that have agreement;

Languages that have **Single-system** of agreement i.e. only Subj-Verb-Agreement

Languages that have **Dual/Double-system** of agreement i.e. Subj-Verb and Obj-Verb agreement in complementary syntactic environment

Languages with **Single-system** of Agreement have only Subject marking its inflection on the verb

Languages with **Single-system** of Agreement may allow other NPs to mark their inflection on the verb besides the Subject in the same syntactic environment.

No PNG or phi-feature agreement in Liangmai, and many others

<u>i-niu</u>	<u>tarua</u>	<u>tiu</u>	ø	e
I.1PS-ERG	bread-Acc	eat	PRES	<u>Decl</u>

‘I eat bread.’

<u>əliu-niu</u>	<u>c^halui</u>	<u>t^hiu</u>	ø	e
We.1Pl-ERG	song	sing	PRES	<u>Decl</u>

‘we sing a song’

<u>naŋ-niu</u>	<u>ariak</u>	<u>ken</u>	ø	e
You.2PS-ERG	book-Acc	read	PRES	<u>Decl</u>

‘You read book.’

<u>nəliu-niu</u>	<u>zao</u>	<u>sak</u>	ø	e
You-2PL-ERG	wine	drink	PRES	<u>Decl</u>

‘You drink wine’

<u>pa-niu</u>	<u>ariak</u>	<u>zon</u>	ø	e
S/he.3PS-ERG	book-Acc	sell	PRES	<u>Decl</u>

‘S/he sells book.’

pəliu-niu	c ^h agan	lan ø	e
They.3PL-Erg	curry-Acc	cook PRES	Decl
‘They cook curry.’			

jon-niu	əpal	tiu ø	e
John.3PS-ERG	apple-Acc	eat PRES	Decl
‘John eats an apple.’			

Thus, Liangmai shows such a strong marking of ‘ergative case’ and thus, it is called as a full-fledged ergative language.

But the agreement feature is not that strong because except for the tense, aspect and mood, no other agreement marker shows up on the verb.

Malayalam

kutti ammaye viliccu
child mother-ACC call-PAST
'The child called the mother.'

kuttikkə amma paal koṭuttu
child-DAT mother milk give-PAST
'The mother gave the child milk.'

kuttiyute amma vannu
child-GEN mother come-PAST
'The child's mother came.'

kuḷattil veccə jaan raamane kanṭu
pond-Loc. at I Raman-ACC see-PAST
'I saw Raman at the pond.'

kutti enikkə peena tannu
child I-DAT pen give-PAST
'The child gave me the pen.'

jāan puuccakkə paal koṭuttu
I cat-DAT milk give-PAST
'I gave milk to the cat.'

A.

The order of the constituents is not sensitive to languages we are dealing here.

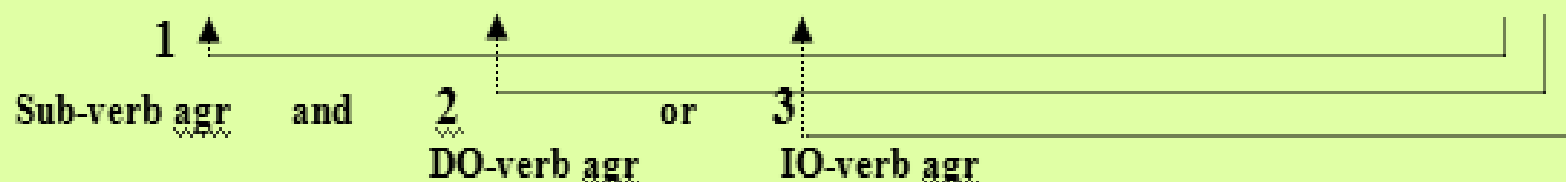
Subject+ \emptyset > Direct object+ \emptyset > Indirect object > Oblique objects VERB



CM: Case marker enforces this alternative system.

B.

Subject+ \emptyset /CM > Direct object+ \emptyset /CM > Indirect object+CM > Oblique objects VERB



SINGLE-SYSTEM OF AGREEMENT

CM: Case marker does not play any crucial role in the agreement system. The subject necessarily triggers agreement on the verb. The verb can also inflect for other arguments in the clause by taking a referential marker of that argument in such a system but can not evolve an alternative system by surpassing the sub-verb agreement.

Type-I

There are languages where Case markers put constraint for the verb to agree with the nominals they occur with.

So, the verb selects one of the arguments which is not overtly case marked.

Thus, languages can have Sub-verb Agr and Obj-verb Agr as two different systems **in different syntactic environments.**

Agreement in Hindi:

ram	roṭi	k ^h ata	hε
Ram-nom-3 rd PMS	bread-Acc-FS	eat-3 rd PMS	Asp
Ram eats the bread.			

sita	b ^h at	k ^h ati	hε
Sita-nom-3 rd PFS	rice-Acc-MS	eat-3 rd PFS	Asp
Sita eats rice.			

ram-ne	roṭi	k ^h ayi
Ram-Erg-3 rd PMS	bread-Acc-FS	eat-FS-Asp
Ram ate the bread.		

sita-ne	b ^h at	k ^h aya
Sita-Erg-3 rd PFS	rice-Acc-MS	eat-MS-Asp
Sita ate rice.		

ram/sita-ne	lərke/i –ko	piṭa
Ram-3 rd PMS/ Sita-3 rd PFS-Erg	boy(Obl) 3 rd PMS/ girl-3 rd PFS-Acc	beat-3 rd PMS-Asp
Ram/Sita beat the boy/girl.		

Type-I: Hindi, Punjabi, Marathi, Nepali etc.

Hindi:

ram	čay	pi	rəha	he
Ram-3MS-Nom	teat-F	drink	stay-cont-3MS	be-prest
'Ram is taking tea'.				

ram-ne	čay	pi
Ram-3MS-Erg	teat-F	drink- perf-3FS
'Ram had tea'.		

ram-ne	šyam-ko	c ^h əri-se	piṭa
Ram-3MS-Erg	Shyam-3MS-Acc	stick -Inst	beat-perf-3MS
'Ram beat Shyam with a stick'.			

Case and agreement in Punjabi

Punjabi shows a different requirement for the split-ness of ergativity.

Let's examine the nature of agreement and the role of case in Punjabi:

a.	<u>munda</u> boy-3MS-Nom 'The boy runs'.	<u>dɔɾda</u> run-3MS	ε be-pres	
b.	<u>kuri</u> girl-3FS-Nom 'The girl runs'.	<u>dɔɾdi</u> run-3FS	ε be-pres	
d.	<u>mẽ-ø</u> I-1MS-Erg 'I saw you on the road.	<u>te-nũ</u> you-Acc	<u>səɾk-te</u> road-Loc	<u>vekⁿ-ya</u> see-perf-3MS
c.	<u>o-ne</u> he-3MS-Erg 'He saw me on the road'.	<u>me-nũ</u> I-Acc	<u>səɾk-te</u> road-Loc	<u>vekⁿ-ya</u> see-perf-3MS

g.	mẽ-ø	te-nũ	kıtab	<u>deti-si</u>
	I-1MS-Erg	you-Dat	book-F	give-3FS-perf
	‘I gave you a book’.			

e.	<u>tusi-ø</u>	me-nũ	kıtab	<u>deti-si</u>
	you-2MS-Erg	I-Dat	book-F	give-3FS-perf
	‘You gave a book to me’.			

f.	onq-ne	me-nũ	kıtab	<u>deti-si</u>
	they-3MP1-Erg	I-Dat	book-F	give-3FS-perf
	‘They gave me a book’.			

Gujarati:

kīṣor d^hime bol-y-o
 Kishor-3MS-Nom slowly speak-perf-3MS
 ‘Kishor spoke slowly’.

mār-e gUjrati b^haśa bol-v-i c^he
 I-1MS-Erg Gujarat language-F speak-Inf-F be-pres-3P
 ‘I want to speak Gujarat’.

šīlaa-e _i	raaj-ne _j	jagaaD-y-o* _{i/j} ✓
S.(F)-ERG	R.(M)-Acc	awake-PF-M
‘Sheela woke up Raj.’		

Gujarati special ☺

šīlaa-e _i	raaj-ne _i	jagaaD-y-o* _{i/j} ✓
S.(F)-ERG	R.(M)-Acc	awake-PF-M
‘Sheela woke up Raj.’		



raaj-e _i	šeela-ne _i	jagaaD-y-i* _{i/j} ✓
R.(M)-ERG	S.(F)-Acc	awake-PF-F
‘Raj woke up Sheela.’		

Nepali

čitrakar-le	d ^h erqi	čitrə	bəṇa-yo		
painter-3S-Erg	many	picture	make-pst-3S		
‘The painter made many pictures.’			[Poudel, T. (2008)]		

Marathi

madhəv unca ahe

Madhav tall Be-PRES

‘Madhav is tall.’

mina wedi ahe

Mina(F) crazy(F) Be-PRES

‘Mina is crazy.’

mi ek wed-i mulgi pahy-l-i.

I a crazy-FSG girl-FSG see-PERF-FSG

‘I saw a crazy girl.’

mi ek unca manus pahi-l-a.

I a tall man-MSG see-PERF-MSG

‘I saw a tall man.’

tya-nə kam sampw-un tak-l-ə

he-ERG work-3NSG finish-COMPL V2-PERF-3NSG

‘He brought the work to a finish.’

..
mi bhat kha-ll-a

I-ERG rice (M) eat-PERF-3MSG-PRES Ø

'I ate rice'.

mi bhat kha-ll-a ahe

I rice (M) eat-PERF-3MSG Be-PRES

'I have eaten rice (= so I won't eat anything now).'

ti-ne kal bhat kha-ll-a

she-ERG yesterday rice-MSG eat-PERF-3MSG-PRES Ø

'She ate rice.'

- Type-II
- There may or may not be **overt case marker** with the subject nominal and **yet the verb always agrees with the SUB.**
- Type-III
- There can be overt case markers with the subject, the verb agrees with the subject. Moreover, other nominals also find their references on to the verb due to certain pragmatic factor but the languages **do not have OBJ-Verb agreement as a system.**
- TYPE-I is called **a dual-system** of agreement and TYPE-II & TYPE-III are called a **single system** of agreement.

TYPE-II 'Single system of Agreement'

Remember that there is JUST one canonical requirement of this type of Agreement.

That is, the single-system of agreement means that the subject of sentence will always, and always show the agreement the verb.

So, no matter what is the case-marker i.e. covert/overt or Nominative or Ergative, the subject will show agreement with the verb.

So, the canonical feature of agreement is that the SUBJECT will show agreement with the verb no matter what is the case marker with the verb.

English, French, German in fact all the European languages have this type of agreement.

In India, Sindhi, Oriya, Bhojpuri and Tamil etc. would display this type of agreement.

Let's see some of the example;

Tamil:

kumaar ippootu tuuñku-kir-aan
Kumar now sleep-pres-3sm
'Kumar is sleeping now.'

naalalai-kku matraasu-kku-p poo-kir-een
tomorrow-dat Madras-dat go-pres-1s
'I am going to Madras tomorrow.'

<i>naan</i>	<i>van-tu</i>	<i>ull-een</i>	'I have come.'
I	come-vbp	be-1s	
<i>nii</i>	<i>va-ntu</i>	<i>ull-aay</i>	'you have come.'
you	come-vbp	be-2s	
<i>avan</i>	<i>va-ntu</i>	<i>ull-aan</i>	'he has come.'
he	come-vbp	be-3sm	

Sindhi:

mā g^hər
I-1MS-Nom home
'I go home'.

vai-yā
go-prest-3MS

t^ho
be-prest- 1MS.

ho g^hər
she-3FS-Nom home
'She goes home'.

vai-ye
go-prest-3FS

t^hi
be-prest-3FS

hu c^hokira əmb-ə
those boy-3MP1 mango-Pl
'Those boys are eating mangoes'.

k^haini t^ha
eat-3MP1 be-prest-3MP1

Oriya:

se

s/he-3S

‘S/he is laughing’.

hɔs-u-c^h-i

laugh-imp-pres-3S-Non-H

tome

you-2S

‘You are eating rice’.

b^hatɔ

rice

k^hɑ-U-c^h-ɔ

eat-imp-pres-2Sg

se-mɑne

they-3Pl

mote

to me

‘They gave me a book’.

goɽe

one-CL

bɔhi

book

de-l-e

give-pst-3Pl

[from the field-work file; Das 1995)

Bhojpuri;

1.	<u>həm</u>	g ^h ər-e	jat	bā-ni
	I-1S-Nom	house- <u>Loc</u>	go	be-Pres-1S
	‘I am going home’.			

2.	tū	g ^h ər-e	jat	bā-ṛo
	you-2S-Nom	house- <u>Loc</u>	go	be-Pres-2S
	‘You are going home’.			

3.	u	g ^h ər-e	jat	bā-ṭe
	s/he-3S	house- <u>Loc</u>	go	be-Pres-3S
	‘S/he is going home’.			

4.	un ^h <u>ĩ</u>	g ^h ər-e	jat	bā-ṛ ^ĩ n
	s/he-3HS	house- <u>Loc</u>	go	be-Pres-3HS
	‘S/he(Honorific) is going home’.			

5.	u-səb	g ^h ər-e	jat	bā-ṛe/-ṛen
	They-3Pl	house- <u>Loc</u>	go	be-Pres-3Pl
	‘They are going home’.			

Type-III ‘Single-System of Agreement with simultaneous marking of other NPs on the Verb’

In the languages of type-III too, we find the single-system of agreement.

Meaning the subject of sentence will always and always show the agreement the verb.

But, unlike the languages of type-II, type-III allows for the marking of other NPs on the verb besides the canonical ‘subject-verb-agreement’ in some specific contexts.

The so called other NPs marking on the verb is simultaneous along with the subject without creating any system. (i.e. syntactic environments which is complementary to each other)

The marking of the other NPs on verb is due to some pragmatic factors.

Some of these factors may be caused due to the ‘honorific-ity’, ‘specific-ity’, or ‘the addressee orientation’.

Maithili:

o_i to-ra_j
he-3S-Nom-H you-2S-NH-Acc
'He (Hon) saw you(NonHon)'.

dek^h-əl-t^hu_i-nh_j
see-pst-3S-H-2S-NH

tō_i hūn-ka_j
You-2S-NH he-3S-H-Acc
'You(NonHon) saw him(Hon)'.

dek^h-əl-hu_i-nh_j
see-pst-2S-NH-3S-H

həm_i hūn-ka_j
I-1S-Nom he-3S-H-Acc
'I saw him (Hon)'.

dek^h-əl-iə_i-inh_j
see-pst-1S-3S-H

həm_i to-ra_j
I-1S-Nom you-2S-NH-Acc
'I saw you (NonHon)'.

dek^h-əl-iə_i-uk_j
see-pst-1S-2S-NH

həm_i əhā̃-ək_j
I-1S-Nom you-2S-H-Acc
'I saw you (Hon)'.

dek^h-əl-iə_i-nh_j
see-pst-1S-2S-H

həm_i ok-ra_j
I-1S-Nom he-3S-NH-Acc
'I saw him (NonHon)'.

dek^h-əl-iə_i-ik_j
see-pst-1S-3S-NH

K^horɬ^hɑ:

ham-ẽ _i	tɔ-rɑ _j	dek ^h -əl-i _i -yo _j
I-1S-Erg	you-2S-Acc	see-pst-1S-2S
‘I saw you’.		

ham-ẽ _i	ok-rɑ _j	dek ^h -əl-i _i -ye _j
I-1S-Erg	him-3S-Acc	see-pst-1S-3S
‘I saw him’.		

w-ẽ _i	həm-rɑ _j	bolɑ-l-k _i -e _j
he-3S-Erg	me-1S-Acc	call-pst-3S-1S
‘He called me’.		

w-ẽ _i	tɔ-rɑ _j	bolɑ-l-k _i -o _j
he-3S-Erg	you-2S-Acc	call-pst-3S-2S
‘He called you’.		

Kurmali:

The data for Kurmali is taken from Mahto, P. (1989). Some glossing are as it is given in Mahto.

gilqs-ta

Glass-Def.-Nom-3rdPFS

The glass broke.

b^hǎŋ-l-i

break-Past-3rdPFS

okər

He-Gen-3rdPMS

His glass broke.

gilqs-ta

glass-Def.-Nom-3rdPFS

b^hǎŋ-l-e-i

break-Past-3rdPFS-3rdPMS

ok^hər

They-Gen-3rdPMPl

Their glass broke.

gilqs-ta

glass-Def.-Nom-3rdPFS

b^hǎŋ-l-e-in

break-Past-3rdPFS-3rdPMPl

tohar_j

your.gen.2p

kalam-ti_i

pen.def.nom.3 s.f-

gir-

fall-

l-

pst-

o_i-

3s-

un_j

2p

‘Your (2p) pen fell down.’

Subbarao K. V. 2012

tohər_i

your

beṭa-ṭay

son-3MS.Def

ok^hər_j

their-3Pl-Gen

beṭi-ti-ke

daughter-Acc

mari

beat-V₁

de-l-ke_i-in_j

give-V₂-Pst-2S-3Pl

‘Your son beat their daughter’. (Mahto 1989) with modified IPA

Hmar: Spoken in Northeast

<u>amanu</u>	-in	a-	mi-	<u>hmuh</u>
she	-Erg.	3SAgr.	1SAgr.	see

‘She saw me’.

<u>lali</u>	-in	<u>lek^həbu</u>	a-	<u>c^he</u> / <u>c^heu</u>	<u>pek</u>
<u>lali</u>	-Erg.	book	3SAgr.	2SAgr/2Pl.Agr.	give

‘Lali gave you a book’.

<u>ram</u>	-in	<u>parte</u>	a-	mi-	<u>pek</u>
ram	-Erg.	flower	3SAgr.	1SAgr.	give

‘Ram gave me a flower’.

That’s all 😊