

Upward Agree is Superior

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1. Upwards vs. Downwards Probing: the Debate

Downwards Agree (DA)
(Chomsky, 1998)



uninterpretable features **probe downwards**
(values passed upwards)

Upwards Agree (UA)
(Zeijlstra, 2012; Wurmbrand, 2011)



uninterpretable features **probe upwards**
(values passed downwards)

Preminger (2014): UA is **unable** to account for some cases of long-distance agreement (LDA), i.e. in Tsez and Basque.

Our Proposal: a slightly modified theory of Upwards Agree can **better** account for known asymmetries between LDA and local agreement.

2. Asymmetries in Long Distance Agreement

Long-distance Agreement (LDA) = Finite agreement with a lower DP

For DA, LDA is the **core case** of φ -agreement: Agree without Move.

However asymmetries in φ -agreement with higher vs. lower DPs:

I. Where both are available, LDA is often **defective**

- ▶ e.g. English (optional with expletive *there*); Icelandic (limited to number: Sigurdsson, 1996; Taraldsen, 1996); Arabic (limited to person and gender Fassi Fehri, 1993 et seq.).

II. LDA appears to always be **dependent** on features of the DP (e.g. Case, Topic).

By contrast, φ -agreement with higher DPs can be independent of Case / other Fs.

- ▶ Baker (2008): DA always Case-dependent → only possible with nominative or absolutive DPs.
- ▶ In other cases Topic- or Focus-dependent → e.g. Tsez, Algonquian.

Defectivity and dependency are **surprising** from a DA perspective.

DA also requires **EPP** features to account for all non-LDA φ -agreement.

Can UA do better?

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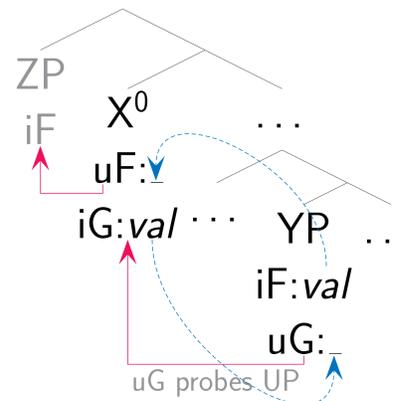
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For further detail, an earlier draft paper can be found at ling.auf.net/lingbuzz/002350.

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3. Modifying Upwards Agree

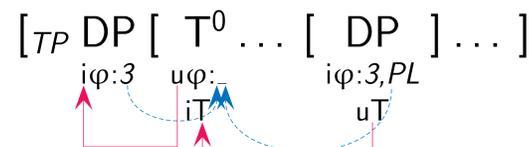


- ▶ Chomsky's **Activity Condition**: DA possible only if lower goal bears [uG] → all Agree relations are **bidirectional**
- ▶ (Upwards) Agree as a mechanism of **checking** → **valuation** occurs separately (and after) (cf. Pesetsky & Torrego, 2006; Arregi & Nevins, 2012).
- ▶ Valuation restricted to features on elements that are accessible:
 - Accessibility**: α is accessible to β iff α and β are members of an (Upwards) Agree-chain, where $\langle x_n, \dots, x_1 \rangle$ is an Agree chain iff every chain member x_{i+1} stands in an Agree relation with x_i .
- ▶ Accessibility drives not only valuation but also **movement** (i.e. EPP effects):
 - ▶ e.g. [u φ] on T^0 must be checked by [i φ] that either Merges or Moves to a higher position.
 - ▶ if possible, Merge [i φ]; if not, Move accessible [i φ]; if none accessible, wait for later Merge.

4. Three Subtypes of LDA

Case-linked LDA: e.g. Icelandic

- (1) Henni leiddust strákarnir.
3SG.FEM.DAT bored.3PL the.boys
"She found the boys boring."



- ▶ [u φ] is **checked** by [i φ] on dative DP in Spec-TP.
 - ▶ ideally this would allow full valuation (i.e. Earliness) → but following Rezac (2008, a.o.), assume dative DP is **defectively** φ -valued only for person.
- ▶ [u φ] is **valued for number** by DP_{obj}, accessible due to UA for [uT] (= [uNOM], Pesetsky & Torrego 2002).

Mediated Case-linked LDA: e.g. Hindi-Urdu

- (2) Vivek-ne [kitaab paṛh-nii] chaah-ii
Vivek-ERG book.FEM read-INF.FEM want-PFV.FEM.SG
"Vivek wanted to read the book."

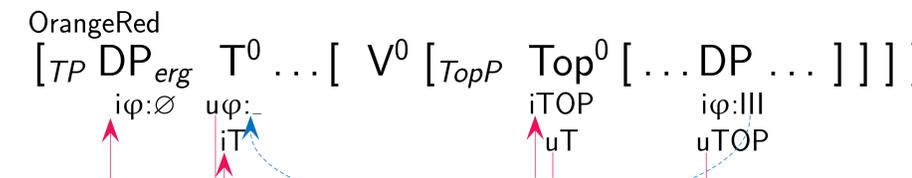
- ▶ Bhatt (2005): LDA with embedded DP_{abs} reflects Agree between matrix and embedded T^0 (which converts embedded T^0 to a probe).
- ▶ Alternative: restructuring complement = vP (Wurmbrand, 2003, a.o.)
 - ▶ embedded v^0 marked as dependent via [uT]
 - ▶ embedded v^0 checks [uv] on DP_{abs}
 - ▶ matrix T^0 checks [uT] of embedded v^0
 - ▶ indirect relationship makes ABS accessible to T^0
- ▶ Any additional embedded head would disrupt LDA (e.g. Appl⁰, cf. dative intervention in Basque LDA: Ettxepare, 2006; Preminger, 2009).



Topic-linked LDA: e.g. Tsez

- (3) eni-r [už-ā magalu b-āc'-ru-ii] b-iy-xo
mother-DAT boy-ERG bread.III.ABS III-eat-PST.PTC-NMZ III-know-PRS
"The mother knows that (as for the bread), the boy ate it."

- ▶ Polinsky & Potsdam (2001) demonstrate that LDA in Tsez targets only absolutive **topics** (similarly Algonquian: Branigan & MacKenzie (2002); Hamilton & Fry (2014))
- ▶ If an **embedded topic**: (alternative account possible if matrix topic)
 - ▶ [uTOP] checked by head in embedded left-periphery: Top⁰.
 - ▶ embedded clause marked as dependent via [uT]
 - ▶ [uT] on highest embedded head checked by matrix T^0
 - ▶ indirect accessibility arises iff Top⁰ = highest embedded head



5. Conclusions

- ▶ UA **can** account for LDA phenomena.
- ▶ Also has further advantages:
 1. Accounts for **dependency** and **defectivity** of LDA.
 2. Dispenses with need for EPP features.
 3. Unification with other cases of feature licensing. (e.g. negative concord, inflection doubling, etc.)
- ▶ UA thus has **broader coverage** than alternative DA accounts.

Challenge for DA:

Show that DA can account equally well for the same **range** of data, without additional theoretical machinery.