

## From competing theories to fieldwork: the challenge of an extreme agreement system

### Topic 1: *The domain problem*

In contemporary theories agreement is defined in terms of syntactic domains. Archi adverbs, pronouns and particles therefore present challenges, because they lack a clear syntactic link to a controller. This involves two levels of complexity: adverbs and particles have been accounted for as having syntactic and semantic scope over the whole clause, whereas there are other problems, such as the one with dative pronouns (9)-(10), which have never been addressed by syntactic theories.

Adjective and verbs.

Adjectives and verbs as agreement targets do not necessarily present a difficult problem for the theory. The first thing we need is an account of how the theories cope with ergative-absolutive alignment noting the point that, outside of the noun phrase, it is the absolutive which controls agreement.

Please put up an analysis of 1-7 on the wiki as soon as you are able. Then move on to tackle more difficult examples, of which we suggest doing examples (9) and (12) first.

### Adjectives

- (1) **ba-la-tu-t** ac'i  
be.difficult-ATR-IV.SG<sup>1</sup>disease(IV)[SG.ABS]  
'bad disease'

Note that regarding the **case**, the adjective stays in this form irrespective of the case of the noun. Adjectives do not inflect for case.

### Verbs

#### *Intransitive*

- (2) **buwa** **d-aq'a**  
mother(II)[SG.ABS] II.SG-come.PFV  
'Mother came'
- (3) **zon** **d-irχ:win**  
1SG.ABS II.SG-work.IPFV  
'I work.' (woman speaking)

Note that the personal pronoun in (3) does not have a lexical gender.

#### *Transitive, ergative-absolutive*

- (4) **zari** **no's̥** **darc'-li-r-ši** **e-bt'ni**  
1SG.ERG horse(III)[SG.ABS] post-OBL.SG-CONT-ALL <III.SG>tie.PFV  
'I tied the horse to the post.'

#### *Transitive, dative-absolutive*

- (5) **to-w-mi-s** **Ajša** **d-ak:u**  
that.one-I.SG-OBL.SG-DAT Aisha(II)[SG.ABS] II.SG-see.PFV  
'He has seen Aisha (female).'

### Pronouns

#### *First person singular pronoun in the genitive*

- (6) **w-is** ušdu  
I.SG-1SG.GEN brother(I)[ABS.SG]  
'my brother'

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<sup>1</sup> Recall that I, II, III, IV are genders and 1, 2, 3 are persons

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- (7) **d-is** došdur  
II.SG-1SG.GEN sister(II)[ABS.SG]  
'my sister'

Note that regarding the **case**, the pronoun stays in this form (the genitive) irrespective of the case of the noun, compare:

- (8) **w-is** uš-mi-n oq-li-t zon qebu-li e(ɾ)di.  
I.SG-1SG.GEN brother(I)-OBL.SG-GEN wedding(IV)-OBL.SG-SUP 1SG.ABS dance.PFV-CVB1 <II.SG>be.PAST  
'I (female) was dancing at my brother's wedding.'

### *First person singular pronoun in the dative*

- (9) to-r-mi **b-ez** χ<sup>ʰ</sup>ošon a·b·u  
that.one-II.SG-ERG III.SG-1SG.DAT dress(III)[SG.ABS] <III.SG>make.PFV  
'She made me a dress.'

- (10) b-is χ<sup>ʰ</sup>ele **b-ez** dit:a·b·u e·b·χni  
I/II.PL-1SG.GEN guest(I)[PL.ABS] I/II.PL-1SG.DAT soon<I/II.PL> forget<I/II.PL>PFV  
'I quickly forgot my guests.'

### *First person plural inclusive pronoun in the ergative*

- (11) **nen a·b·u** hanžugur ʃummar b-a·ɾ·ča-r?  
<III.SG>IPL.INCL.ERG how life(III)[ABS.SG] III.SG-<IPFV>carry.out-IPFV  
'...how (should) we spend our life?' (Kibrik, T3:4)<sup>2</sup>

Note that while (6)-(8) present a familiar picture of agreement within a noun phrase (genitive pronoun agrees in gender with the head), (9)-(11) show dative (9-10) and ergative (11) arguments agreeing with the absolutive argument where there is no syntactic dependency between the target and the controller. In (9) the dative argument is not obligatory (does not belong to the verb's argument structure) whereas in (10) the pronoun *bez* is the argument of the verb 'forget'.

## Adverbs

- (12) o·b·q<sup>ʰ</sup>a-t:u-b balah **dit:a·b·u** b-erχin  
<III.SG>leave.PFV-ATR-III.SG trouble(III)[SG.ABS] **soon<III.SG>** III.SG-forget.IPFV  
'Past trouble gets forgotten quickly.' (Kibrik et al. 1977a: 186)

Here the adverb *dit* *abu* 'quickly' modifies the verb 'forget' (or the whole clause) but agrees with the absolutive 'trouble'.

## Postpositions

- (13) to-w-mi ʃ:wak-du-t duχriq<sup>ʰ</sup>a-k **e·b·q'en**  
that.one-I.SG-SG.ERG near-ATR-IV.SG village(IV).SG.INTER-LAT <III.SG>**up.to**  
deq<sup>ʰ</sup> a·b·u  
road(III)[SG.ABS] <III.SG>make.PFV  
'He made (built) the road to the next village.' (based on Kibrik et al. 1977a: 227 with thanks to Bulbul)

Here the postposition 'up to' is linked to the noun 'village' (IV gender) both semantically and syntactically (it governs the interlative localisation), but agrees with the absolutive 'road' (III gender).

<sup>2</sup> These are the old Kibrik's texts, from 1977, glossed by Misha Daniel for the LangueDoc project, available online at <http://www.philol.msu.ru/~languedoc/eng/archi/corpus.php>, T3:4 should be read as 'Sentence 4 in text number 3'.

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### Particle

(14) arša                    horo:k            ej·b·u            iškul                    dabtu  
Archi.IN.ESS    long.ago    **very**<III.SG> school(III)[SG.ABS]    open.PFV  
'A school was opened in Archi very long time ago.' (Kibrik et al. 1977a: 326)

Note: we need more information on the particle (what other particles there are, what our reasons to believe them separate word class rather than adverbs are, what its syntactic distribution is), I am working on it.

Note that the numerals also have a morphological slot for agreement but more field work need to be done on them before we can present them for an account.