Anti-Agreement Effect as C-Agreement

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Since Ouhalla's 1993 seminal work, Anti-Agreement Effect (AAE), which is the lack of subject-verb agreement when the subject is locally A-bar moved, has been an important issue for any theory of agreement. In this paper I will revisit this topic and propose that AAE results from inhibiting T from establishing an Agree relation with the subject in Spec-vP which would normally proceed as in (1). Adopting Chomsky's (2004) proposal that C is the locus of phi-features which are then passed on to T by inheritance, I will argue that in all cases of local subject A-bar extraction in Tamazight Berber, C retains these phi-features and establishes an Agree relation with the subject as schematized in (2). This Agree relation is morphologically marked by an overt obligatory Comp. Since T never receives the phi-features from C, it never establishes an Agree relation with the subject, and this is morphologically reflected by the impoverished or default agreement on the verb.

Tamazight, akin to all Berber varieties, exhibits obligatory subject verb agreement (3). However, there are three contexts where agreement is inhibited (i.e. AAE). These are: Subject wh-clauses (4) vs. (5), Subject relative clauses (6) vs. (7), and Cleft constructions (6) vs. (7).

One of the main questions that I will address is: how can one account for these facts under a derivational approach especially the Probe-Goal model where agreement is a result of Agree operation? Note that Agree holds between T which is specified for a full set of unvalued φ-features and the subject which is specified for valued φ-features and unvalued case feature; and according to Chomsky's analysis the case feature of the DP gets valued and deleted as a "reflex" or a result of full agreement in φ-features between the probe T and the goal DP. If full agreement is a pre-requisite for case valuation and deletion, how can one derive the Berber subject extraction facts where T presumably is not specified for a full set of φ-features?

In (4), (6), and (8) I argue that C is specified for phi-features and a left periphery feature (for example the wh-feature in (4)). T, which only bears the tense feature (Chomsky 2004, Ouhalla 2005b for Berber) does not inherit the phi-features from C, something that only happens in declarative sentences where C is not specified for any left periphery feature. As a result, there is no syntactic T-Subject agree, hence no morphological subject-verb agreement, and there is a syntactic C-Subject agree, hence a morphological obligatory Comp. This analysis has a number of advantages over the previous analyses namely Ouhalla (1993, 2005), Phillips (1998), Richard 2001, Schneider-Zioga (2007) and Baker (2008). Ouhalla (1993) relies on the distribution of *pro* and a binding approach whose status is unclear within current Minimalism. Ouhalla (2005) takes a different approach; he proposes that lexical items are not inherently specified for syntactic categories such as [V] and [N]. They are merely "Roots" that acquire these categorical features by virtue of being selected by a head bearing certain features including Agreement features. The verbal feature reduces to the feature [Person] and the nominal feature reduces to [Class]. When selected by the head Pred[0] (in Ouhalla's analysis), the root is realized as a verb if Pred is specified for [Person], [Number], and [Class]. If Pred is only specified for [Number] and [Class], the root acquires the categorical status of "participle", the form usually found in AAE environments, and only in these cases can the subject A-bar move. I will show that Ouhalla's analysis falls short when it comes to long distance extraction such as (10) where the subject presumably A-bar moves to the intermediate Spec,CP prior to moving to the matrix Spec,CP but

we still get obligatory subject-verb agreement on the embedded verb as shown by the ungrammaticality of (11). I will also show that Berber facts such as (10) and (11) also present problems for Phillips (1998), Richard (2001), Schneider-Zioga (2007) and Baker (2008).

Data from Tamazight Berber

Subject-Verb agreement configuration

(1) [C [T   [vP Subject [V]]]]

AAE Configuration

(2) [C [T   [vP   Subject [V]]]]
                  AAE

(3) **θəʕla**   θməttut   araw
    3sf.seePER   woman   boys
    'The woman saw the boys'

(4) mani θamttut   ag   ʕla**n**   araw
    which woman   COMP   see.PER.Part   boys
    'Which woman that saw the boys'

(5) *mani θamttut   ag   **θʕla**   araw
    which woman-this   COMP   3sf.see.PER   boys
    'which woman saw the boys?'

(6) θamttut   ag   ʕla**n**   araw
    woman   COMP   see.PER.Part   boys
    'The woman who saw the boys'

(7) *θamttut   ag   **θʕla**   araw
    woman   COMP   3sf-see.PER   boys
    'the woman who saw the boys'

(8) θamttut -a   ag   ʕla**n**   araw
    woman-this   COMP   see.PER.Part   boys
    'It was this woman that saw the boys'

(9) * θamttut -a   ag   θʕla   araw
    woman-this   COMP   3sf-see.PER   boys

(10)   mani θaməttut**i** ag   inna   ʕli [t**i**   θʕla   argaz-nəs]
        which woman comp 3sm.say.PER Ali [t**i**   3sf.see.PER   man-her   ]
        'which woman did Ali say saw her husband'

(11)   *mani θaməttut**i** ag   inna   ʕli [t**i**   ʕla**n**   argaz-nəs]
        which woman comp 3sm.say.PER Ali [t**i**   see.PER.Part   man-her   ]