

The Locus of Variation in \bar{A} -Sensitive Agreement

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Overview

\bar{A} -sensitive φ -agreement effects have an underlying uniform syntax. Variation in these morphological, arising from operations and principles independently needed in morphology.

\bar{A} -sensitive φ -agreement effects

An instance of φ -agreement X exhibits an \bar{A} -sensitivity effect if

- i. X takes the form α for a particular set of φ -features φ_1 on nominal N when N does not have an \bar{A} -feature and
- ii. X takes the form β for φ_1 on N when N does have an \bar{A} -feature, where $\alpha \neq \beta$.

Some examples of effects meeting the above definition:

(1) *Fiorentino (Romance, Italy)*
le ragazze che { **gli** / ***le** }
 the girls C { 3SG.M / *3PL.F }
 { **ha** / ***hanno** } parlato con te
 { have.3SG / *have.3PL } spoken with you
 ‘the girls who have spoken to you?’
 (Brandi and Cordin 1989:124–125)

(2) *Abkhaz (West Caucasian, Russia)*
 wəy a-xac’a də-**{z_j/*l_j}**-bàz
 that DEF-boy 3SG.AN.ABS-**{WH.ERG/*3SG.F.ERG}**-saw
a-jyab_j
 DEF-girl
 ‘the girl who saw that boy’ (Hewitt 1979:61)

(3) *Kabyle (Berber, Algeria)*
taqcict-nni i { **i-wala-n** / ***t-wala** }
 woman-DEM C { 3SG.M-see-PTCP / 3SG.F-see }
 Mohand
 Mohand
 ‘the girl who saw Mohand’

- The exact morphological manifestation varies
 - ▷ **Fiorentino**: Default agreement and default subject clitic (3SG/3SG.M)
 - ▷ **Abkhaz**: Specialized ergative agreement (z-)
 - ▷ **Kabyle**: Default agreement (i- 3SG.M) + specialized suffix (-n)

? Why does implication in an \bar{A} -dependency affect the form of agreement referencing a DP?

? What does variation in the morphology that languages employ in the \bar{A} -context tell us about the principles underlying \bar{A} -sensitive φ -agreement?

Total vs. partial φ -impoverishment

☞ Languages differ as to how many φ -feature contrasts are neutralized in the presence of \bar{A} -features.

- Compare the Kabyle in (9) with Tashlhit in (10).

(9) *Kabyle (Berber, Algeria)*
tiqcicin-nni i { **i-ruḥ-n** / ***ruḥ-nt** }
 girls-DEM C { 3SG.M-go-PTCP / go-3PL.F }
 ‘the girls who left’

(10) *Tashlhit (Berber, Morocco)*
irgazn_i nna ffegh-**n-(in)** —_i
 man.PL C_{REL} left-PFV-PTCP-*(PL)
 ‘the men who left.’
 (Ouhalla 2005 citing Chafiq 1990:123)

- ▷ **Kabyle**: all φ -feature contrasts neutralized
- ▷ **Tashlhit**: number agreement, person/gender neutralized

- The difference between total/partial neutralization rests in the impoverishment rules active in a given language.

- ▷ **Total neutralization** → total φ -impoverishment in the context of [\bar{A}]

(11) *Kabyle partial φ -impoverishment*
 $[\varphi] \rightarrow \emptyset / [_ , \bar{A}, Agr]$

- ▷ **Partial neutralization** → partial φ -impoverishment in the context of [\bar{A}]

(12) *Tashlhit partial φ -impoverishment*
 $[PERSON, GENDER] \rightarrow \emptyset / [_ , \bar{A}, Agr]$

\bar{A} -exponence

☞ Languages differ as to whether there is there specialized morphology in the \bar{A} -context

- Some languages, like **Fiorentino** in (1), have no special morphology in the context of \bar{A} -features

☞ Default agreement, partial agreement, or lack of agreement result

☞ Use of forms already present in the paradigm

- Other languages, like **Abkhaz** in (2) and **Kabyle/Tashlhit** in (3)/(9)–(10), have specific morphology that appears *only* in the \bar{A} -context

☞ I treat such morphology as the **realization of the \bar{A} -features** remaining after impoverishment has deleted φ -features.

- Example 1**: The Kabyle/Tashlhit ‘participle’ suffix is the spell out of an \bar{A} -feature on a head with [Agr]:

(13) *Kabyle/Tashlhit \bar{A} -exponence*
 $-n \leftrightarrow [\bar{A}] / [_ , Agr]$

- Example 2**: The ergative *wh*-agreement prefix z- in Abkhaz is the spell out of an \bar{A} -feature on v:

(14) *Abkhaz \bar{A} -exponence*
 $z- \leftrightarrow [\bar{A}, Agr, v]$

Lack of impoverishment?

⚠ **Prediction**: There should be languages that exhibit \bar{A} -exponence while lacking φ -impoverishment.

- Kobiana** (Atlantic, Guinea-Bissau) → verbs agree with their subjects for person/number. Subject focus triggers a second set of subject agreement prefixes.

	SG	PL		SG	PL
(15) <i>Kobiana φ-agreement</i>	1 má-	ngéé-	(16) <i>Kobiana \bar{A}-agreement</i>	1 mé-	ngéena-
	2 á-	káa-		2 ée-	káana-
	3 à-	náà-		3 áma-	nààná-

- There are two crucial observations:

- ① Subject focus in (16) **retains all φ -feature contrasts** present in (15).
- ② Subject focus morphemes are not transparently segmentable.

- Analysis**: Kobiana has no φ -impoverishment in the context of \bar{A} -features, but it does exhibit \bar{A} -exponence

- Kobiana has two distinct sets of φ -agreement VIs, (17).

(17) *Kobiana agreement VIs*
 a. má-, á-, à-, ... $\leftrightarrow [\varphi, Agr]$
 b. mée-, ée-, áma-, ... $\leftrightarrow [\varphi, \bar{A}, Agr]$

- Such a system is expected under the theory discussed here.

The Proposal

☞ \bar{A} -sensitive agreement have a unified underlying source

① Syntax

φ -probes copy $[\varphi]$ and $[\bar{A}]$ from their goals

(4) $[H_{[\varphi]} \dots [\dots DP_{[\varphi, \bar{A}]} \dots]]$

(via Interaction/Satisfaction model of Agree, Deal 2015)

② Morphology

After agree with an \bar{A} -marked DP in (4), H has both $[\varphi]$ and $[\bar{A}]$. Also includes a feature [Agr].

(5) *Features on H in morphology*

a. DP w/o $[\bar{A}] \Rightarrow [H, \boxed{\varphi}, Agr]$

b. DP w/ $[\bar{A}] \Rightarrow [H, \boxed{\varphi, \bar{A}}, Agr]$

③ \bar{A} -triggered impoverishment (Baier 2018)

\bar{A} -features may trigger impoverishment of φ -features on the same probe, (6).

(6) $[\varphi] \rightarrow \emptyset / [_ , \bar{A}, Agr]$

④ Vocabulary Insertion

Impoverishment leads to the realization of an unexpected **underspecified** exponent.

(7) a. $x \leftrightarrow [\varphi, Agr, H]$ \Leftarrow no insertion

b. $y \leftrightarrow [\bar{A}, Agr, H]$ \Leftarrow specialized \bar{A} -agreement

c. $z \leftrightarrow$ elsewhere \Leftarrow default agreement

Morphological variation

☞ **Variation** arises from how a given language’s morphology manipulates and realizes feature bundles of the type in (5b)

Two dimensions of variation

▷ How many φ -feature contrasts are expressed in the \bar{A} -context? (variation at step ③)

▷ Is there specialized morphology that occurs only in the \bar{A} -context (variation at step ④)

- These dimensions are **independent of one another**, as shown in table (8).

(8) *Typology of \bar{A} -exponence and impoverishments*

		φ -impoverishment		
		TOTAL	PARTIAL	NONE
\bar{A} -exponence	YES	Abaza	Tashlhit	Kobiana
	NO	Fiorentino	Lubukusu	Spanish