

I would like to attend the Crash-Proof Conference and give a talk, "Connecting DP-syntax and clausal agreement".

There is a general disconnect between, on the one hand, syntactic approaches to clause-level agreement such as subject agreement; and on the other hand, the findings of researchers on DP-syntax regarding the locus of the various intrinsic phi-features. Agree treats number, person, and gender as features of the DP as a whole, but there are good reasons to think that in fact person is the feature of D, gender of N, and interpretable number originates in a mid-level functional projection between DP and NP.

One way of reconciling this picture is to assume something like Hiraiwa's Multiple Agree applies between T and the various heads in DP, or alternatively that Num Agrees with N, D agrees with Num, and then T agrees with D through a linking process along lines that Pesetsky & Torrego have proposed in recent work. But I will present evidence from cross-linguistic variation that these approaches cannot capture. I will show that in languages where N systematically adjoins to D, gender is included in the features of subject agreement; otherwise, it is excluded. This follows naturally from a more constrained conception of Agree: because D intervenes between T and N, D's person feature generally blocks T's access to N's gender, rendering subject agreement in gender unavailable except in languages where N-raising places the gender feature in D.

There are several consequences to this analysis. First are the implications for Agree itself, which can be refined and restricted in important ways. Second, the contrasts among languages cannot be captured without syntactic adjunction of one head to another, reaffirming the existence of head-movement in grammar (readily conceptualized as in Matushansky 2006). Third, I will show that there is a related parameter of valuation which emerges naturally once variation in the features of subject agreement are taken seriously in this way. The languages which include gender in subject agreement allow iterating subject agreement on every verbal element of a clause. Assuming grammatical gender is a valued but uninterpretable feature, D has an extra means of satisfying the requirement that goals be "active" in [+gender], [+N-to-D] languages, beyond the usual feature of structural Case. This makes iterating subject agreement possible.