THE SYNTAX OF AGREEMENT AND CONCORD

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CAMBRIDGE STUDIES IN LINGUISTICS

The Syntax of Agreement and Concord

THE SYNTAX OF AGREEMENT AND CONCORD

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This book is dedicated to the three wonderful children – Catherine, Nicholas, and Julia – that God has given me to enliven my journey through this life. I only ask that they not fight about who gets to be the noun, who the verb, and who the adjective.

Contents

Acknowledgments

As I get older, I seem to be losing my sense of history. As in many families, I have fewer pictures documenting every developmental stage of my youngest child than I do of my oldest child. In the same way, I feel like I have less to say by way of preface and acknowledgments with each book that I write. But there are still plenty of people to thank, so here goes.

I do not think that I would have started another book so soon after finishing *Lexical Categories* (Baker 2003a) if Andrew Winnard of Cambridge University Press had not approached me about the possibility of publishing some manuscripts he had seen on my website. Talking to him made me realize that there was in fact a common theme underlying many of those studies of particular languages, which I had not fully realized, and that common theme had to do with agreement. I further realized that my theory of lexical categories raised some huge unanswered questions about agreement – questions that had not been answered by other people's theories either. So I decided to delve into this topic with some gusto. As I sought to write a capstone essay that would draw together my little discoveries about agreement in particular languages (Mapudungun, Kinande, Lokaa, Icelandic), the outlines of a broader theory began to emerge, and the capstone essay took over the book as a whole. I fear that some of the original papers are still unpublished (or published in less-visible venues), but I hope that the final book is more consistent and unified, and paints a bigger picture than it otherwise would have. It was also personally rewarding for me to dive back fully into pure linguistic research after some time spent as department chair and being involved in some cognitive science projects. I thank Andrew and Cambridge University Press for the excuse to do this.

Of course, one needs not only a project worth working on, but also some time to work on it. For meeting that need, I thank Rutgers University for providing a sabbatical leave and a competitive leave fellowship, and the American Philosophical Society for awarding me a sabbatical leave fellowship (funded by the Mellon Foundation) for 2005–2006. I would not have had the freedom

to do the survey of 108 languages reported in chapter 5 if I had not received this special support.

One also needs some facts to work with, and it is nice when some of them are new ones that people have not had access to before. In this most recent period of my career, I have been privileged to work with native-speaker linguists on their fascinating languages in ways that have been inspiring and helpful to me. This group includes Elisa Loncon (Mapudungun), Alexander Iwara (Lokaa), Willie Udo Willie (Ibibio), and – of special significance to this particular study – Philip Mutaka (Kinande). Kinande gets the most press in what follows, but meditating on the challenges and wonders of all of these languages has provided the impetus to do this work. I also wish to thank many linguists who have generously answered email questions arriving from me "out of the blue" about the languages that they know when I felt some small but crucial piece of a puzzle was missing. These are acknowledged individually at the relevant points in the text, but here I single out Halldór Sigurðsson for service beyond the call of duty, since Icelandic turned out to be particularly important at several points.

And one needs some inspiring colleagues, who can stimulate you, challenge you, and help you put your ideas to the test. I have been lucky enough to present this material in a number of colloquiums and more extended forums, including graduate seminars at Rutgers University in spring 2005 and fall 2006, an LSA summer institute class at MIT in 2005, extended colloquia at UCLA and Georgetown University in 2006, and week-long classes at the University of the Basque Lands and the LOT summer school at the University of Amsterdam in 2006. I thank all of these audiences for their encouragement and input, including José Camacho, Liliana Sanchez, Roger Schwarzchild, David Pesetsky, Esther Torrego, Seth Cable, Hilda Koopman, Anoop Mahajan, Philippe Schlenker, Carson Schütze, Raffaella Zanuttini, Bob Franks, Michael Diercks, Itziar Laka, Javier Ormazabal, Myriam Uribe-Extebarria, Hans Broekenhuis, Jenneke van der Wal, and others that I forgot – or whose names I never even learned. I thank Jessica Rett and Cedric Boeckx for sending me written comments on parts of the manuscript. I thank my students who have also been interested in issues of case and agreement, including Vita Markman, Natalia Kariaeva, Jessica Rett, and Carlos Fasola. Three people stand out for special thanks in this category. First, I thank Chris Collins for early collaborative work on what we originally called "the Bantu Parameter." This provided the seeds for what became chapter 5, once I was finally able to investigate how that parameter might apply to other languages. Second, I thank Ken Safir for his enormous influence on chapter 4, helping me to get up to speed (or at least closer to speed) on the issues of binding, person, and pronoun interpretation that are crucial there, and showing me how to

say what I wanted to say in a much cleaner and more straightforward way. Third, I thank Carlos Fasola, who in the guise of being my research assistant helped me to discover the properties of many of the 108 languages discussed in chapter 5, and helped to nurture in us both a common pleasure in grammar-reading.

One might not literally *need* a loving and supportive family in order to write a book like this, but I certainly would not want to do it any other way. Many thanks to my wife Linda and my three children for much help, support, prayers, and companionship along the way.

Finally, I am convinced that I needed the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit to do something like this. I thank my God for providing all of the people and resources listed above, and everything else besides.

Abbreviations and conventions

In this book, I cite examples from a large number of languages, some of which I do not know well. This presents certain challenges for effective glossing. The safer course would be to simply follow the glossing practice of the source that the example is taken from. The problem with this is that it multiplies greatly the number of abbreviations used, and can obscure comparison by giving similar morphemes very different glosses. This problem could be addressed by trying to impose a uniform system of glossing on all of the languages considered. But that creates other problems: in particular, languages might have morphemes that are similar in their usage but not identical in all respects, and I might not know enough to do it accurately. I have tried to strike a middle path between these two courses, making the glosses more uniform when I thought I could do it with reasonable accuracy and when the morphemes are relatively important to my topic – in particular, when they are agreement morphemes. I am not fully satisfied with the results, and experts on the relevant languages may be even less so. But that is what I did.

Agreement morphemes (particularly those on verbs) are glossed by a complex symbol that begins with a number indicating the person of the agreed-with phrase (1, 2, or 3), then has a lower-case letter indicating the number of the agreed-with phrase (s, singular; d, dual; p, plural), and then a capital letter indicating the grammatical function of the agreed-with phrase (S, subject; O, object; P, possessor; A, absolutive; D, dative/goal; E, ergative). Thus, 1pS means first person plural subject agreement, 3sO means third singular object agreement, and so on. Sometimes one member of this triple is missing when the corresponding category is not marked – for example, when the agreement indicates person but not number, or vice versa. When two agreement factors are expressed with a single portmanteau morpheme, their features are separated with a slash.

The reader should also note that 1, 2, and 3 have two meanings in agreement morphemes: they can mean first, second, or third person (all languages), or they can mean a third person noun phrase in class 1 (human singular), class 2 (human plural), or class 3 (singular) in a Bantu language or Lokaa. Thus 1sS

always means first person singular subject, but 1S in the gloss of a Niger Congo language means subject agreement with a noun of class 1 (third person human singular). (1S in the gloss of a non-Bantu language could mean first person subject agreement, with number unspecified.) I hope this will not be unduly confusing.

Other abbreviations used in the glosses of linguistic examples are as follows. Readers should consult the original sources for more on what these categories amount to in particular languages.

1–19	noun class (Bantu)
A,B,C	gender/number categories (Southern Tiwa)
ABS	absolutive case
ACC	accusative case
ACT	actor
ADJ	adjectival
ADV	adverbial
AFF	affirmative
AGR	agreement
AN	animate
AOR	aorist tense
APPL	applicative morpheme
ART	article
ASP	aspect
ASSOC	associative marker
AUG	augmented
AUX	auxiliary
BEN	benefactive applicative marker
CAUS	causative
CL	noun class (Bantu), classifier (Tariana)
COMP	complementizer
COMPL	completive
COND	conditional
CONJ	conjunction
CONT	continuous aspect
CONTR	contrastive
CS	construct state (Berber)
DAT	dative case
DECL	declarative
DEM	demonstrative

DESID	desiderative
DET	determiner
DIR	direct
DISJ	disjunctive prefix
DR	directional
DUR	durative
DYN	dynamic
ERG	ergative case
EU	euphonic
EXT	extended aspect (Bantu)
F	feminine gender
FAM	familiar
FOC	focus
FUT	future
FV	final vowel (Bantu, indicative mood marker?)
GEN	genitive case
GER	gerund
HAB	habitual aspect
I	irrational
IMP	imperative
IMPF	imperfective
INAN	inanimate
IND	indicative
INDF	indefinite
INF	infinitive
INSTR	instrumental
INT	intentional
INTRANS	intransitive
INV	inverse
IRR	irrealis
LK	linker
LOC	locative
LOG	logophoric
M	masculine gender
N	neuter gender
NEG	negative
NI	noun incorporation
NOM	nominative case
NOML	nominalizer
NP	nonpast tense

NPST	nonpast tense
NSF	noun suffix (determiner?)
OBJ	objective case marker
OBL	oblique
OPT	optative
PASS	passive
PAST	past tense
PERF	perfective aspect
PL	plural number
POSS	possessor
PP	past perfective
PRED	predicative head
PRES	present tense
PREV	preverb
PROG	progressive aspect
PTPL	participle
Q	question particle
R	rational
RCP	recent past
REFL	reflexive
REL	relative
REM	remote past
REP	reported
RPST	recent past
SBJN	subjunctive
SG	singular number
SS	same subject
STAT	stative aspect
SUB	subordinate
SUBJ	subject
T	Tense, unspecified tense marker
TA	Transitive animate (Algonquian)
TH	thematic
THSY	hearsay particle
TOP	topic
TR	transitive
UNPOSS	unpossessed
VAL	validator
VBZR	verbalizer
VEG	vegetable gender (Mayali)

VIS	visible
X	special gender class in Burushaski

The following are abbreviations of linguistic terms: names of principles, grammatical categories, language families, and construction types.

A, AP	adjective, adjective phrase
C, CP	complementizer, complementizer phrase
D, DP	determiner, determiner phrase
DEG	degree head
ECM	Exceptional Case Marking
ECP	Empty Category Principle
EPP	"Extended Projection Principle" feature (triggers the movement of a phrase to the category that bears it)
FP	functional phrase
IE	Indo-European languages
N, NP	noun, noun phrase
NC	Niger-Congo languages
P, PP	adposition (preposition or postposition), adpositional phrase
PF	Phonological Form
PLC	Person Licensing Condition
PLC(H)	Person Licensing Condition applied to Heads
SCOPA	Structural Condition on Person Agreement
spec, XP	Specifier of XP
T, TP	tense head, tense phrase
v, vP	light verb (abstract verbal element, assigner of external argument), light verb phrase
V, VP	verb, verb phrase
VSO, SOV, etc.	Verb-subject-object word order; subject-object-verb order, etc.
WALS	World Atlas of Language Structures

Finally, the following are some conventions used in presenting examples:

(X)	The example has the same grammatical status with or without X included.
(*X)	The example is good without X, but bad when it is included.
*(X)	The example is bad unless X is included.

In some cases, an agreement morpheme and the NP that it agrees with are both underlined.