

Move & Agree: Forum on the Formal Typology of A'-agreement

Date: May 31 – June 04, 2021

Venue: Online

1) **Forum description.** The minimalist research program (Chomsky 1995 et seq.) creates a paradox for movement operations: Merge is conceptually necessary, but Move – and its accompanying Agree relation – is not. Yet there are many natural language phenomena which are insightfully analyzed using the metaphors of movement and agreement. We wish to theorize the paradox of Move/Agree (Keupdjio 2020), namely why does Move/Agree exist at all, if it is conceptually unnecessary? This forum focuses on the syntactic contexts that can be analyzed as instances of A'-movement and which are also associated with A'-agreement; e.g. content questions, relativization, information-structure operations like topicalization and focus. The agreement morphology that arises with A'-movement is known under various names:

- **A'-agreement** (Schneider-Zioga 1995, Chen 2017, Keupdjio 2020);
- **wh-agreement** (Chung 1994, Carstens 2005, Reintges, LeSourd & Chung 2006, Hedinger 2008, Schneider-Zioga 2009, Lochbihler & Mathieu 2010);
- **wh-copying** (Fanselow & Mahajan 2000, Felser 2004);
- **extraction morphology** (Zentz 2016);
- **complementizer agreement** (McCloskey 2001, Carstens 2003);
- **reflex of successive cyclic movement** (van Urk 2015, Georgi 2017).

Grouping these various morphological reflexes of A'-movement together as instances of A'-agreement, this forum explores the connection between A'-movement and A'-agreement with two goals in mind:

- a) to gain a broader and deeper **empirical coverage of A'-agreement** via case studies of typologically distinct languages from a variety of language families;
- b) to **move forward the theory of A'-agreement** defined as a non-local morphosyntactic feature-sharing mechanism that correlates with A'-movement (Baier 2018).

2) **Location and dates:** This online forum, jointly hosted by The University of British Columbia (Vancouver) and McGill University (Montréal), will take place over a period of 5 days: Monday 31 May through to Friday 04 June 2021. For details on the format of the workshop, see below.

3) **Confirmed invited speakers:**

Confirmed tutorial speakers:

Cedric Boeckx	<i>Thinking big: biolinguistics</i>
Amy Rose Deal	<i>How agreement works, with special reference to A'-features</i>
Marcel den Dikken	<i>Copular constructions, A'-movement and A'-agreement</i>
Mara Frascarelli	<i>Move and Agree as discourse-related dependencies</i>
Hedde Zeijlstra	<i>The syntax and semantics behind A'-agree and A'-movement</i>

Confirmed forum presenters:

Nico Baier	formal typology:	<i>On the Nature of Complex A/A'-Probes</i>
Chris Hammerly	psycholinguistics:	<i>Processing relativization in Ojibwe</i>
Chris Reintges	diachrony:	<i>Coptic hidden movement configurations</i>
Béjar Susana and		
Arsalan Kahnemuyipour	Armenian and Persian:	<i>Agreement in binominal copular clauses</i>
Victoria Chen	Austronesian:	<i>What agrees, why and how: A view from Austronesian</i>
Michael Hamilton	Algonquian:	<i>Agreement and discourse-configurationality in Algonquian</i>
Marianne Huijsmans	Salishan:	<i>ʔayʔaʃuθəm subject agreement</i>
Carol-Rose Little	Mayan:	<i>Subextraction and Agree: A Mayan perspective</i>
Martina Martinović	Atlantic-Congo:	<i>Exhaustivity and Predication in A'-extraction in Wolof</i>
Astrid van Alem and		
Marjo van Koppen	Germanic:	<i>The effect of A'-contexts on A-agreement</i>
Jenneke van der Wal	Bantu:	<i>Information structure as A-syntax</i>
Coppe van Urk	Nilotic:	<i>Feature-driven movement and the syntax of successive cyclicity</i>
Nicholas Welch	Na-Dene:	<i>TBA</i>

4) **Call for papers:** We welcome contributions addressing the formal analysis of A'-movement as it relates to A'-agreement.

Priority will be given to abstracts focused on the following research questions:

- a) **Which contexts** condition A'-agreement? A'-movement is associated with a variety of operator-sensitive contexts (Chomsky 1980, Cinque 1990). The correlated A'-agreement may occur in some or all of these contexts leading to this question: what determines where A'-agreement occurs?
- b) What is the **realization of A'-agreement** in a given language?
 - What is the form of A'-agreement? Does it involve an overt morpheme in the form of concordial agreement (Chung 1994; Carstens 2005; Zentz 2016) or a particle (Epée 1976), allomorphy (Keupdjio 2020), a change in linear order (e.g. French stylistic inversion, cf. Kayne and Pollock 1978, 2001), a change in tone (Clements 1979; Zaenen 1983; Korsah and Murphy 2015; Georgyi 2017; Keupdjio 2020), a change in phonological phrasing, intonation, or something else?
 - What is the locus of A'-agreement? Is A'-agreement realized on functional heads (e.g. T, Neg, C) or on lexical heads (e.g. V, N)? (Keupdjio 2020); at the extraction site (e.g. as a resumptive pronoun or clitic) or at the landing site?; as a single exponent (i.e. realized once only) or as multiple exponents (i.e. realized several times across the A'-dependency)? (Georgi 2017; Keupdjio 2020).
- c) How is A'-agreement modelled as a kind of **agreement**?
 - Which theories of agreement generalize to A'-agreement? For example, mechanisms of feature-sharing and feature-inheritance are compatible with full interpretation of all features (Pesetsky & Torrego 2006; Chomsky 2008; Gallego 2014). In contrast, mechanisms of feature-checking, feature-transfer, or feature-deletion require that some features be uninterpretable, which is incompatible with full interpretation (Pesetsky & Torrego 2001; Gallego 2009; Carstens 2016).
 - How does A'-agreement interact with other types of φ-feature agreement such as number or gender? (Deal 2015; Carsten 2005; Baier 2018).

- d) How does A'-agreement bear on the debate about how to formulate **derivation by phase**? The major difference is whether phases are static or dynamic (Gallego 2009: 112).
- Static treatments include treating every Merge or XP as a phase (Epstein & Seely 2002; Müller 2010), treating only vP as a phase (Rakowski and Richards 2005), and treating only vP and CP as phases (Chomsky 2000, 2008; van Urk 2015; Georgi 2017).
 - Dynamic treatments attend to phonological, morphological, or semantic correlates of (in)dependence (Fox & Pesetsky 2005, Den Dikken 2007, Gallego 2007, Wurmbrand 2012, Harwood 2015, Ramchand & Svenonius 2014, Bošković 2014, Sailor 2014, Aelbrecht & Harwood 2015, Keupdjio 2020).
- e) What does the formal syntax of A'-agreement reveal about **interface** issues?
- What does the syntax of A'-agreement reveal about the interface between phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics? Does A'-agreement depend **on any other phenomena**? Does A'-agreement develop **from other grammatical phenomena**?
 - What does the syntax of A'-agreement reveal us about formal language typology, language variation, and language change? Is A'-agreement associated with specific language families? Is A'-agreement associated with specific language areas? Does A'-agreement occur accidentally or is it a historical tendency? Is A'-agreement rare or just underreported?
 - What does the syntax of A'-agreement reveal about human cognition relative to language acquisition and language processing (including perception, production, and lateralization)?

Format of the Forum: This forum is — a public space of open discussion — for leading-edge research on the formal syntax of A'-agreement. As such, it combines three activities distributed across the 5 days of the forum as follows:

- On Monday and Tuesday, one hour tutorial sessions on topics relating to movement and agreement.
- On Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday:
 - invited talks with panel discussions on A'-movement and A'-agreement in general and on specific language families (Algonquian, Austronesian, Indo-European, Mayan, Na-Dene, Niger-Congo, Nilotic and Salishan) and languages;
 - talks from anonymous abstract submissions on research related to A'-movement and A'-agreement.

Abstract guidelines:

Abstracts should not exceed two pages, including data, references, and diagrams. Abstracts should be typed in 11-point font, with one-inch margins (US letter or A4). Abstracts must be anonymous; remove or hide any author-identifying information. Only electronic submissions will be accepted. Please submit your abstract using EasyChair.

Important dates:

Conference start date: May 31, 2021
 Conference end date: June 04, 2021
 First Call for papers: January 18, 2021

Abstract submission deadline: March 05, 2021

Second Call for papers: February 19, 2021
 Notification of acceptance: March 15, 2021

Abstract submission link: <https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=moveagree2021>

Webpage: <http://blogs.ubc.ca/agree/>

Venue: Online

Cities: Montréal and Vancouver

Country: Canada

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