

## An argument for genuine object $\phi$ -agreement in Inuit: Evidence from mood variance

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**Claim:** I argue that  $\phi$ -indexing morphology in Inuit includes genuine cases of object agreement exponence, contra recent work (see below) that has called into question the existence of object agreement cross-linguistically and recast apparent instances thereof as pronominal clitics (and thus clitic doubling when an object is present). Evidence for the status of Inuit object-agreement is drawn from mood-variance and portmanteau subject-object agreement morphemes.

In particular, it is shown that while tense-variance—proposed by Nevins (2011) as a diagnostic for differentiating agreement from clitics—is inadequate to diagnose the status of Inuit  $\phi$ -indexing morphology, mood-variance can instead serve to distinguish real agreement. Finally, I propose that these facts obtain because C—not T—is the locus of agreement in Inuit.

**Background:** Recent work by Preminger (2009), Woolford (2010), Arregi & Nevins (2008), Nevins (2011), and Kramer (to appear) has recast a number of apparent cases of agreement as actually being clitics. In particular, Kramer suggests that further instances of “purported object agreement” (p.30) cross-linguistically may in fact also be clitics. Nevins (2011) goes further, suggesting “an analysis of all cases of object agreement as pronominal clitics in languages with agreement with both subject and object” (p.967). For Inuit, such analyses would mean that the subject/object  $\phi$ -indexing elements in (1)-(2) would consist (at least in part) of object clitics:<sup>1</sup>

- |     |                                  |                     |       |     |                     |
|-----|----------------------------------|---------------------|-------|-----|---------------------|
| (1) | arna-up                          | niri-ja-ŋa          | aapu  | (2) | taku-ja-git         |
|     | woman-ERG.SG                     | eat-DECL.TR-3SG.3SG | apple |     | see-DECL.TR-1SG.2SG |
|     | ‘The woman is eating the apple.’ |                     |       |     | ‘I see you (sg.).’  |

While Nevins (p.959) argues that “morphophonological clitic-hood and morphosyntactic clitic-hood are orthogonal” and that phonological criteria should not be used to establish syntactic clitic-hood, he proposes that pronominal clitics can be distinguished from agreement using the criterion of tense-invariance (along with Person-Case Constraints and Omnivorous number). If pronominal clitics belong to the category D, as argued by Nevins and a number of other works cited above (or perhaps pro- $\phi$  heads as argued by Déchaine & Wiltschko 2002), we do not expect them to be sensitive to tense. Conversely, genuine agreement can be conditioned by tense (e.g., *she walks* vs. *she walked*).

However, the structure of the polysynthetic verbal complexes found in Inuit is such that tense markers are separated from these  $\phi$ -indexing morphemes by mood (as in exs. 1–2 above) and may be further separated by additional elements such the perfective marker and negation:

- |     |   |
|-----|---|
| (3) | puijjuraa(q)-gunna(q)-ŋaa(q)-lauq-sima-ŋjit-tu-ŋa |
|     | swim-can-instead-DIST.PAST-PERF-NEG-DECL.INTR-1SG |
|     | ‘I was not able to swim instead.’                 |

Despite the lack tense-variance, which Nevins identifies as crucial to identifying genuine agreement, I argue that all this  $\phi$ -indexing morphology is agreement—object agreement included.

**Evidence from mood:** While Inuit  $\phi$ -indexing morphemes are invariant with respect to tense, we instead observe that they are variant with respect to mood. For example, in Eastern Inuktitut we find distinct agreement morphology for 2SG.1SG in the indicative and interrogative moods:

- |     |                      |     |                        |
|-----|----------------------|-----|------------------------|
| (4) | taku-va-rma          | (5) | taku-viŋa              |
|     | see-INDIC.TR-2SG.1SG |     | see-INTERR.TR.2SG.1SG  |
|     | ‘You (sg.) see me.’  |     | ‘Do you (sg.) see me?’ |

While some  $\phi$ -indexing morphemes are stable across moods, others exhibit distinct forms in particular moods, as illustrated in the following tables summarizing a small subset of the combinations of mood and subject/object in Arctic Quebec Inuktitut and Kangiryuarmiut dialects:

<sup>1</sup>(1)-(3) elicited from Baffin Inuktitut, Quebec data from Dorais (1988), Kangiryuarmiut from Lowe (1985).

ARCTIC QUEBEC SAMPLE FORMS				KANGIRYUARMIUT SAMPLE FORMS				
	INDIC	DECL	INTERR	DECL	INTERR	COND	CONJ	
				2S.1S	<b>-jarma</b>	<b>-viŋa</b>	<b>-guŋma</b>	<b>-bluŋa</b>
				2S.3S	<b>-jan</b>	<b>-viuŋ</b>	<b>-guŋni</b>	<b>-blugu</b>
3S.3S	<b>-vaa</b>	<b>-jaŋa</b>	<b>-vauk</b>	2S.1D	-japtiguk	-vitiguk	-guptiguk	<b>-blunuk</b>
3S.3D	-vaajjik	-jaajjik	<b>-vagik</b>	2S.3D	<b>-jakkin</b>	-vigik	-gupkik	-blugik
3S.3P	<b>-vait</b>	<b>-jaŋit</b>	<b>-vagit</b>	2S.1P	-japtigut	-vitigut	-guptigut	<b>-bluta</b>
				2S.3P	<b>-jatin</b>	-vigit	-gupkit	-blugit

Just as there is no principled reason why pronominal clitics of category D should vary with tense, it is also unexpected that they should vary with mood. Conversely, agreement is often conditioned by mood (e.g., Spanish indicative *hago* ‘I do’ vs. subjunctive *haga* ‘I do’).

**Evidence from portmanteau:** If these were clitics we expect to be able to isolate separate subject and object clitics in forms coindexing two arguments. However, many are portmanteau morphemes, as illustrated below with forms occurring after the DECLARATIVE mood markers:

SUBJECT	OBJECT									INTRANS.
	1SG	1DU	1PL	2SG	2DU	2PL	3SG	3DU	3PL	
1SG	—	—	—	<b>git</b>	ttik	tsi	<b>ra</b>	akka	kka	ŋa
1DU	—	—	—	<b>ttigit</b>	ttik	tsi	vuk	avuk	vuk	guk
1PL	—	—	—	<b>ttigit</b>	ttik	tsi	vut	avut	vut	gut
2SG	<b>rma</b>	ttiguk	ttigut	—	—	—	it	akkik	tit	tit
2DU	ttiŋa	ttiguk	ttigut	—	—	—	tik	atik	tik	tik
2PL	tsiŋa	ttiguk	ttigut	—	—	—	si	asi	si	si
3SG	aŋa	atiguk	atigut	atit	atik	asi	ŋa	aŋik	ŋit	q
3DU	aŋa	atiguk	atigut	atit	atik	asi	ŋak	aŋik	ŋit	uk
3PL	aŋa	atiguk	atigut	atit	atik	asi	ŋat	aŋik	ŋit	t

For instance, *ra* uniquely picks out 1SG.3SG, *rma* uniquely picks out 2SG.1SG, and the string *gi(t)* picks out a specific combination of  $\phi$ -features: 1(...).2SG (*n.b.* 1SG.2SG form). If these were combinations of subject and object pronominals of category D we would not expect them to form portmanteau morphemes with each other (and mood; not shown) (cf. Johns to appear).

**Discussion:** I argue that Inuit agreement is associated with mood. While Chomsky (2004) proposes that  $\phi$ -features are inherited from C in languages like English, the C head itself (or part thereof; Rizzi 1997) is the locus of agreement in Inuit. This explains (i) the position of agreement, (ii) its form being conditioned by mood, and (iii) the existence of portmanteau mood/agreement. It also accounts for Pittman’s (2009) observation that ERG case in Inuit can only be assigned by full CPs, as well as the wide scope of absolutive objects (Wharram 2003).

This paper expands on Nevins’ (2011) criteria for distinguishing agreement from clitics, adding mood-variance to the set of properties exhibited by genuine agreement. Nevins’ diagnostic of variance is crucial, but what *kind* of variance depends on the locus of agreement (Wiltschko 2011). This paper also defends the existence of object-agreement, corroborating Oxford’s (2012) arguments for the existence of object agreement in Algonquian languages. It also offers an alternative to a Pronominal Argument Hypothesis (Jelinek 1984) account of Inuit.

**Selected references:** Arregi & Nevins (2008) Agreement and Clitic Restrictions in Basque. Déchaine & Wiltschko (2002) Decomposing Pronouns. *LI* 33.3. Dorais (1988) Tukilik. Lowe (1988) Basic Kangiryuarmit Eskimo Grammar. Nevins (2011) Multiple agree with clitics. *NLLT* 29.4. Oxford (2012) Multiple Instances of Agreement in the Clausal Spine. Pittman (2009) Complex verb formation revisited. Preminger (2009) Breaking Agreements. *LI* 40.4. Woolford (2010) Active-stative agreement in Choctaw and Lokota. *ReVEL*.