

## Probing for C-AGR: What Germanic can learn from Galician

**GOAL:** In this investigation, I show how complementizer agreement (C-AGR) can be unified cross-linguistically by focusing on the feature specification of the probe on C. Using data from Galician, I show that C-AGR cannot always be accounted for a post-syntactic feature copying mechanism (*pace* Fuß 2005, 2013, 2014) and that valuation within the syntax proper is necessary in order to account for cross-linguistic C-AGR phenomena.

**DATA:** Although the C-AGR phenomenon in Germanic is the most widely studied (van Koppen 2017), recent discoveries show that this is a cross-linguistic phenomenon. While typologically unattested elsewhere in Romance, Galician boasts a main-clause C-AGR phenomenon headed by a small group of presentative complementizers *velaqui/velai/eis* ('Behold') (Author 2019) (1). The agreement marker on C always agrees with the postverbal subject in GENDER and NUMBER and takes the form of accusative clitics in Galician (2).

- (1) **Velaquí** o vén Xan  
 behold CL<sub>MASC.SG</sub> come.PRS.3SG Xan  
 'Here comes Xan.'
- (2) **Velaí** **as<sub>i</sub>** van [as rapazas]<sub>i</sub>  
 behold CL<sub>FEM.PL</sub> go.PRS.3PL the girls  
 'There go the girls.'

The underspecification for PERSON of the agreement morpheme is shown by the fact that the postverbal subject may be represented by 1<sup>st</sup>- and 2<sup>nd</sup>-person subjects (3). Obeying the coarseness property of clitic doubling as presented in Preminger (2014, 2019) which states that a doubled clitic must have the full  $\phi$ -set of its doubled DP, this morpheme must be that of subject agreement. Moreover, the fact that this construction is only available with intransitive verbs (Freixeiro 2006) assures us that this is not an argument clitic of the verb.

- (3) a. **Velaquí** **os** estábamos nós (os gaiteros)  
 behold CL<sub>MASC.PL</sub> be.IMPF.1PL we the bagpipers  
 'Here we were (the bagpipers).'
- b. **Velaí** **as** ides vós (as dúas)  
 behold CL<sub>FEM.PL</sub> go.PRS.2SG you<sub>PL</sub> the two  
 'There you (two) go.'

Much of the C-AGR literature surrounding Germanic would seem to benefit from the post-syntactic C-T copying strategy proposed by Fuß (2005, 2013, 2014), due to observations such as the similarity of the morphological composition of these agreement markers to those of the verb. However, this strategy cannot possibly account for C-AGR phenomena found in other languages. Deal (2015) shows that Nez Perce may show C-AGR for both the subject and the object, but, much like Galician, the C-AGR features do not always match those found on the verb. In (4) the subject controls verbal agreement but the C-AGR morpheme is that of the 1<sup>st</sup>-person object.

- (4) ke-x kaa A.-nim hi-cewcew-téetu *pro*<sub>obj</sub>  
 C-1SG then A.-ERG 3SUBJ-telephone-TAM PRO.1SG  
 'When A. calls me'

In the case of Galician, T cannot be the goal of the probe on C due to the fact that T in Romance is underspecified for GENDER and specified for PERSON, a direct mismatch of what we have seen from the data above. Therefore, were the  $\phi$ -set on T copied to C post-syntactically, we would expect results that overgenerate such as the agreement morphemes to mirror those of the 1<sup>st</sup>- and 2<sup>nd</sup>-person accusative pronouns (SG: *me, te*; PL: *nos, vos*) (5).

- (5) a. \***Velaquí** **nos** estamos *pro*<sub>1PL</sub>  
 behold CL<sub>1PL</sub> be.PRS.1PL PRO.1PL  
 Intended: "Here we are."

- b. \*Velaí vos andades os nenos  
 behold CL<sub>2PL</sub> walk.PRS.2PL the boys  
 Intended: “There you boys walk.”

In the next section, I offer solution to these data in an attempt to unify C-AGR phenomena under a probe-goal approach.

**THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION:** In order to account for the Galician data above, I follow the feature-geometric probe-goal valuation mechanism laid out in Preminger (2011, 2014). Building on work by Béjar (2003) *a.o.*, this author proposes that the probe undergoes a relativized search (Rizzi 1990) for a goal that meets its exact feature specification. Per the restrictions of relativized probing, if a probe Y does not find the featural specification ( $[\pi]$ ) it searches for upon encountering the first available goal XP with  $\phi$ -set  $[\gamma]$ , it continues to search (until it reaches ZP with  $\phi$ -set  $[\pi]$ ) (5).

(5) ...  $Y^o_{[\phi:s:(\pi)]}$  ...  $XP_{[\phi:s:\gamma]}$  ...  $ZP_{[\phi:s:\pi]}$  ...

This notion of relativized probe is necessary in order to account for both the Nez Perce and Galician data. In Galician, the probe in C searches for a  $\phi$ -set specified for GENDER and NUMBER, for which it systematically bypasses T (only specified for PERSON and NUMBER). Upon reaching the postverbal subject DP, however, these features are found, copied, and valued. Its agreement with a 1<sup>st</sup>- or 2<sup>nd</sup>-person DP as in (3) shows that the probe’s featural specification may be a subset of that of the goal’s, an important detail for all varieties of C-AGR (particularly for defective C-AGR paradigms). Fuß shows that Bavarian C-AGR is specified for 2<sup>nd</sup>-person singular and plural only. From this, we may conclude that the probe is specified for the feature ADDRESSEE as in (6). Preminger (2011, 2014) notes that failure of a probe to find a viable goal does not cause a derivational ‘crash’ but simply does not result in agreement, which explains why C-AGR does not surface in Bavarian when the subject is 1<sup>st</sup>-/3<sup>rd</sup>-person but there is no ‘crash’.

- (6) a. ob-st du noch Minga kumm-st  
 whether-2SG you to Munich come-2SG  
 b. ob-ts ees/ihr noch Minga kumm-ts  
 whether-2PL you<sub>PL</sub> to Munich come-2PL

This relativized probing strategy also accounts for the C-AGR phenomenon proposed by Haegeman & van Koppen (2012) for Limburgian, for which they show that C and T must have their own probes based on data such as (7).

- (7) Ich denk de-s [toow en Marie] kump.  
 I think that-2SG you and Marie come.PL  
 “I think that you and Marie will come.”

Although the verbal agreement is plural, these authors show that C-AGR only surfaces for 2<sup>nd</sup>-person singular DPs, from which we may assume that the C probe is specified for SINGULAR and ADDRESSEE nodes of a feature-geometric valuation mechanism.

**CONCLUSION:** Similarly to Cartstens (2003) and van Koppen (2005), I show that complementizer agreement is a phenomenon that must be accounted for in the narrow syntax proper. Differently from these authors, however, I opt for a feature-geometric relativized probing mechanism as proposed in Preminger (2011, 2014). This strategy accounts for C-AGR cross-linguistically without resorting to post-syntactic mechanisms and owing to the observations that C-AGR must be true agreement.

**SELECTED REFERENCES:** DEAL, A.R. 2015. Interaction and satisfaction in  $\phi$ -agreement, 1-14. In Bui, T. & Ozyildiz, D. (eds.) *NELS* 45. FUB, E. 2005. *The Rise of Agreement: A formal approach to the syntax and grammaticalization of verbal inflection*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. PREMINGER, O. 2014. *Agreement and its failures*. Cambridge, M.A.: MIT Press. van Koppen, M. 2017. Complementizer Agreement. In Everaert, M. & van Riemsdijk H. (eds.) *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Syntax*, 1-40.