Lexical case as an Anaphor Agreement Effect: The view from Inuktitut

- 1. Overview. The Anaphor Agreement Effect (AAE) is the cross-linguistic inability for anaphors to co-vary with ϕ -agreement (Rizzi 1990, et seq.), with languages making use of a variety of strategies that conspire to circumvent this effect. This talk identifies an otherwise unattested AAE strategy based on novel fieldwork from Inuktitut (Inuit; Eskimo-Aleut). I argue that anaphors in Inuktitut obligatorily bear *lexical case*. Because ϕ -Agree in Inuktitut is *case-discriminating*, able to target only ERG and ABS arguments, encountering a lexical case-marked element leads to *failed Agree* (Bobaljik 2008; Preminger 2014), thus satisfying the AAE. This interaction is reflected in the loss of ϕ -morphology in Inuktitut, as well as in the appearance of defective intervention effects. I also show how the AAE can be used as a window into other properties of Inuktitut syntax, such as reflexivity and ergativity.
- **2. The AAE.** Languages display a wide range of strategies which conspire to avoid ϕ -agreement with anaphors (Rizzi 1990; Woolford 1999; Tucker 2012; Patel-Grosz 2014; Sundaresan 2015, a.o.). It has been observed that anaphors in certain languages are *lexically specified* to surface in larger structural material, which serve to "protect" anaphors from ϕ -Agree processes. This is illustrated in Selayarese, in which anaphors obligatorily occur in possessive DPs (the true targets of ϕ -agreement), (1). I will argue that Inuktitut's AAE strategy analogously involves additional *PP-structure*, realized as lexical case morphology, thus providing further evidence for the existence of this type of AAE strategy.
- (1) a. ando?-na mother-3 'his mom'

b. ku-jañjang-**i** kaleng-ku 1s.erg-see-3.abs self-1s 'I saw myself.' (Selayarese)

In Inuktitut, each clause contains two ϕ -probes, both located in the CP-domain (Johns 2007; Compton 2017). In a transitive (bivalent) construction, ϕ -agreement typically encodes the subject and highest internal argument, which surface with ERG and ABS case, respectively. However, anaphoric constructions display a different patterning: the anaphor is marked with MOD ("modalis") case, the subject is ABS rather than ERG, and there is no object ϕ -morphology, (2a-b).

- (2) a. *Miali-up **ingmi** suak-tanga Miali-ERG self.ABS scold-3S.S/3S.O Intended: 'Miali scolded herself.'
- b. Miali **ingmi-nik** suak-tuq Miali.ABS self-MOD scold-3s.S 'Miali scolded herself.'
- **3. Lexical case on Inuktitut anaphors.** In previous literature on the Inuit languages, the patterning in (2b) has been analyzed as due to a detransitivizing reflexivization process (e.g. Marantz 1984; Bok-Bennema 1991; Nowak 1996). Against this, I argue that (2b) arises *solely from the presence of lexical case on the anaphor*, as anaphors are lexically specified to enter the derivation with a PP-layer; anaphoric constructions are not detransitivized. Evidence for lexical case on anaphors comes from the novel observation that this morphology is preserved even in complex DPs. In (3a), MOD case on the anaphor co-occurs with case morphology assigned to the entire possessive DP (due to case concord), yielding the effect of *case-stacking* (**bolded**). In contrast, (3b) shows that this pattern is not attested for non-anaphoric nominals in the same position. Note also that the suffixal modifier *-nnguaq*

'proxy/representation of' obligatorily *follows* the MOD case morpheme on the anaphor (boxed), though it normally precedes case morphology. This reveals that anaphors are *immediately dominated* by a PP-layer, such that modifiers cannot intervene.



- (3) a. ajjinnguar-**mut** ingmi-ni-nnguar-mut picture-DAT self-MOD-proxy-DAT '(She is looking at) a picture of herself.'
- b. ajjinnguar-**mut** Taiviti-nnguar-**mut**picture-DAT David-proxy-DAT
 (She is looking at) a picture of David.'

That lexical case serves to circumvent the AAE is most clearly illustrated with constructions containing the transitivizer -gi, which introduces an internal argument associated with otherwise intransitive predicates (e.g. noun incorporation predicates). These -gi-constructions are normally obligatorily ERG-ABS, with both arguments encoded by ϕ -morphology, (4). However, when the internal argument is anaphoric, we exceptionally find an ABS-MOD case frame with no object ϕ -agreement, (5a); this patterning is not possible with non-anaphoric internal arguments, (5b). The presence of -gi in (4b)-(5a) offers crucial

evidence against detransitivization-based accounts of anaphoric constructions, showing that they have the *same argument structure* as their non-anaphoric counterparts.

- (4) a. Jaani igvi-u-quuji-juq Jaani.ABS 2s-be-seem-3s.S 'Jaani looks like you.'
- (5) a. Jaani **ingmi-nik** igvi-u-quuji-gi-juq J.ABS self-MOD 2S-be-seem-TR-3S.S 'Jaani; thinks that he; looks like you.'
- b. J-up **Piita** igvi-u-quuji-gi-janga J-ERG P.ABS 2S-be-seem-TR-3S.S/3S.O 'Jaani thinks that Piita looks like you.'

 (Lit.: 'Jaani has Piita as looking like you.')
- b. *Jaani **Piita-mik** igvi-u-quuji-<u>gi</u>-juq
 J.ABS P-MOD 2S-be-seem-TR-3S.S
 Intended: 'J. thinks that P. looks like you.'

Finally, note that anaphors may also appear without MOD case in other oblique contexts, (6a). I assume that the lexical PP-layer is present, but *deleted* as a haplology effect when structurally adjacent to another case morpheme, (6b). In (3) the intervening modifier prevents haplology from applying.

- (6) a. ingmi-**nut** uqalimaa-suuq self-DAT speak-HAB.3S.S 'She talks to herself.'
- b. *Haplology rule:* self-DAT → self-DAT
- **4. Case-discrimination and failed Agree.** These data reveal two interrelated properties of ϕ -Agree processes in Inuktitut. First, Inuktitut ϕ -probes are *case-discriminating*, in that they may target ERG/ABS arguments, but cannot target MOD-marked arguments (i.e. PPs) (Bobaljik 2008). Second, and more specifically, the inaccessibility of such arguments for ϕ -agreement results in the *failure of Agree* (Preminger 2011, 2014). In the examples above, this is reflected by the absence of object agreement morphology—which, in turn, satisfies the AAE. Besides triggering the loss of ϕ -morphology, lexical case-marked arguments also block a higher ϕ -probe from targeting a lower argument, (7a). This is characteristic of *defective intervention* (DI) (e.g. Chomsky 2001): PPs are both inaccessible to ϕ -Agree and interveners for such processes. These DI effects are a corollary of Preminger's failed Agree approach: when a ϕ -probe encounters an inaccessible argument, the Agree operation is forced to abort. On this basis, I suggest that the ungrammaticality of (7a) is due to the inability for the lower argument to be licensed by ϕ -Agree. Indeed, antipassivizing the lower argument (i.e. by assigning syncretic non-lexical MOD case) rescues the derivation, (7b).
 - (7) a. *Miali-up ingmi-nik niuvi-ruti-lauq-tanga / *-tuq piruqsiat
 M-ERG self-MOD buy-APPL-PST-3S.S/3S.O / *-3S.S flowers.ABS
 Intended: 'Miali bought herself the flowers.'
 - b. Miali ingmi-nik niuvi-(Ø)-ruti-lauq-tuq piruqsiar-nik M.ABS self-MOD buy-AP-APPL-PST-3S.S flowers-MOD 'Miali bought herself the flowers.'
- **5. Further implications.** *I. Reflexivization across Inuit:* Previous treatments of anaphoric constructions have mainly been based on West Greenlandic (WG), which has a different profile. The detransitivization-based analyses were motivated by the fact that the case-marked anaphor in WG is *optional*, (8a). In contrast, the anaphor in Inuktitut cannot ever be omitted (Michael & Spreng 2014), (8b) (cf. (5a)). I suggest that this reflects different reflexivization strategies across Inuit: whereas WG reflexives are derived by true detransitivization (e.g. via θ -bundling; Reinhart & Siloni 2005), in Inuktitut reflexives are formed via *syntactic binding of an anaphor* in argument position.
- (8) a. piniartuq tuqup-puq hunter.ABS kill-3S.S 'The hunter killed himself. (WG; Marantz 1984)
- b. *Jaani igvi-u-quuji-gi-juq J.ABS 2S-be-seem-TR-3S.S Intended: 'Jaani_i thinks that he_i looks like you.' (Inuktitut)

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II. The source of ERG case. The loss of ERG case in transitivized contexts, e.g. (5a) above, demonstrates that the distribution of ERG case is not tied to argument structure or transitivity. Instead, the AAE motivates a *dependent* treatment of ERG (e.g. Marantz 1991; Baker 2015), assigned to a nominal in the presence of another case-requiring nominal (its 'case competitor'). In (5a), lexical case on the anaphor removes it from the case competition, thereby bleeding dependent ERG case assignment.