The Activity Condition as a microparameter
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Proposal. According to Chomsky’s (2000, 2001) Activity Condition (AC), a DP whose Case has been valued is no longer eligible for agreement. For Chomsky, the AC is an inviolable principle, but Baker (2008, 2013) proposes that it is instead a parameter: agreement is subject to the AC in some languages but not others. Baker regards this “Case Dependency of Agreement Parameter” as a macroparameter that “governs languages as wholes” (2013:28). In this paper, however, I argue, based on Algonquian data, that the AC is instead a microparameter whose value can vary among individual functional heads.

Outline of the argument. The central observation of this paper is that the Algonquian clause contains two probes (Asp and T) that can both target a 3rd-person DP (henceforth DP[3]). Intransitive forms with a single DP[3] argument thus give rise to a conflict between the two probes: after the lower probe, Asp, agrees with DP[3], can the higher probe, T, agree with DP[3] as well? For Baker, the answer is predicted to be no if the AC applies in Algonquian (as Asp-agreement will make DP[3] ineligible for T-agreement) and yes if the AC does not apply (as DP[3] will remain eligible). However, the facts are not consistent with either of these predictions. Instead, present-tense T agrees with DP[3] (violating the AC) while past-tense T does not agree with DP[3] (obeying the AC), creating a different agreement pattern in the two tenses. Since T[Pres] can violate the AC while T[Past] cannot, sensitivity to the AC must be a property of a particular probe rather than a macroparameter that applies to the entire grammar.

Two probes in the Algonquian clause. The two probe-bearing heads, Asp° and T°, are realized by overt morphology known by Algonquianists as the “theme sign” and “formative” respectively (Goddard 2007). Asp° hosts the articulated person probe posited in Béjar & Rezac’s (2009) Cyclic Agree analysis of Ojibwe. For this presentation, it is sufficient to say that Asp° probes for [uPerson]. T° hosts a probe that agrees only with 3rd-person DPs, a restriction that results from the diachronic origin of T° as a 3rd-person nominalizer (Goddard 2007). I will represent the probe on T° as [u3], assuming, with Béjar & Rezac (2009) and Lochbihler (2012), that 3rd-person is overtly marked in Algonquian. Present-tense T° has several agreeing forms: -w ↔ 3.animate, -n ↔ 3.inanimate, -hm when T° finds no 3rd-person goal (assuming, following Preminger 2009, that failure to agree results in default morphology, here -hm, rather than a crash), and glottalized -w’ (Pentland 1999) in a special context discussed below. Past-tense T° has only the form -ntay (Goddard 2007). The two probes are shown in the schematic representation of the clause in (1), which omits projections that are not relevant to the present discussion.

Other agreement morphology on the Algonquian verb is dependent on the values of these probes: the person proclitic (PCI) and agreement suffix (Agr) share the features of Asp° while the enclitic (ECI) shares the features of T°. Since the features of these dependent agreement morphemes are predictable from the features of Asp° and T°, I propose that the dependent morphemes are generated postsyntactically (i.e. at PF) on the basis of the Case features assigned by Asp° and T° (cf. Bobaljik 2008). I will refer to these Case features simply as Asp-Case and T-Case (cf. Pesetsky 2012). The resulting analysis of Algonquian agreement is sketched in (2).
**Probe interaction and the AC.** We can assess the status of the AC in Algonquian by considering the goals targeted by Asp⁰ and T⁰ in different contexts. The goals are indicated most clearly by the postsyntactic agreement morphemes discussed above, shown in (3) for various Proto-Algonquian forms. The *proclitic* and *Agr suffix* track the goal of Asp⁰ while the *enclitic* tracks the goal of T⁰. (For simplicity I omit the stem and Asp⁰, as their forms do not bear on the point at hand. The allomorphs of T⁰ are described on the previous page. “3” = a less topical “obviative” 3rd person. “V” = position of the verb stem.)

(3) Proto-Algonquian examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PRESENT TENSE</th>
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<th>PAST TENSE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PCI (Asp)</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Agr (Asp)</td>
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<td>(V)</td>
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<td>(w)</td>
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<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>Transitive 1pl subj, 3pl obj</td>
<td>ne-1</td>
<td>-w</td>
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<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>Transitive 2pl subj, 3pl obj</td>
<td>ke-2</td>
<td>-w</td>
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<td>c.</td>
<td>Transitive 3pl subj, 3’pl obj</td>
<td>we-3</td>
<td>-w</td>
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<td>d.</td>
<td>Intransitive 1pl subj</td>
<td>ne-1</td>
<td>-hm</td>
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<tr>
<td>e.</td>
<td>Intransitive 2pl subj</td>
<td>ke-2</td>
<td>-hm</td>
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<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>Intransitive 3pl subj</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>-w’</td>
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In (3a-e), the pattern is uniform: Asp-related morphology (*proclitic, Agr suffix*) agrees with the subject while T-related morphology (*enclitic*) agrees with the object if one is present. This pattern indicates the nested agreement relations in (4) (cf. Baker 2013:26 on Nez Perce). However, in the 3rd-person intransitive forms in (3f), a conflict between the two probes arises: after Asp⁰ agrees with DP[3], can T⁰ do so as well? The answer differs in the two tenses. In the *present* form, DP[3] is indexed by the *enclitic agreement* associated with T⁰, which indicates that T⁰[Pres] does agree with DP[3], overriding the previously-assigned Asp-Case (shown in (5a)). (The special form of T⁰ here, -w’, occurs only in such override contexts and can thus be regarded as an overt “AC override” marker.) In the *past* form, however, DP[3] is instead indexed by the usual Asp-agreement, which indicates that T⁰[Past] *does not* override Asp-Case (shown in (5b)).

(4) Transitive form

T

DP[1] has Asp-Case

DP[3] has T-Case

T[Pres] violates AC

Conclusion. T⁰[Pres] can violate the AC and “steal” the goal of Asp⁰, thus causing present-tense intransitive DP[3] subjects to be tracked by T-agreement (like transitive objects). T⁰[Past] cannot violate the AC, thus leaving past-tense intransitive DP[3] subjects to be tracked by Asp-agreement (like transitive subjects). Since the applicability of the AC in Algonquian depends on the choice of T⁰, sensitivity to the AC must be a property of individual probes rather than of the grammar as a whole.

**REFERENCES**