

Can Object Agreement Constraint be extended to honorific agreement?

Symmetrical object languages in which both internal arguments are available for syntactic operations (e.g., passivisation, A-scrambling) sometimes show restrictions with the verb coding agreement with only one internal argument (IO/DO), (e.g., structurally highest goal/definite/human/1st/2nd person goal). This cross-linguistic observation, formulated as the **Object Agreement Condition** (OAC) by Ormazabal and Romero (2007) also accounts for typical PCC-effects (*IO-DAT - 1st/2nd DO-ACC; see Béjar and Řezáč 2003; Nevins 2011). In this paper, we explain restrictions on honorificity agreement through the OAC, focusing on non-argumental addressees.

Of interest for this discussion are two Eastern Indo-Aryan languages, Maithili (Dharbhanga, Madhubani dialects) and Magahi (Munger dialect), both object agreement (OA) languages, where a transitive verb agrees with both the subject and a 3p honorific object (1); (Kumari et al forthcoming; Verma 1991 respectively). These languages show OAC effects such that a ditransitive verb agrees either with the 3p honorific DO-ACC or the 3p honorific IO-INS (2).

- 1) *həm hun-ka dekh-ne chh-əl-iəinh*
 I **he-acc(H)** see-PRF be-PST-1+3.H
 ‘I had seen her/him’ (Maithili: neutral/non addressee)
- 2a) *həm principal-ke bacca-sa pehchan kare-l-iəinh*
 I **principal-ACC(H)** child-INS(NH) introduce do-PRF-1+3.H
 ‘I had introduced the principal to the child’ (Maithili: neutral)
- b) *həm bacca-ke principal-sa pehchan kare-l-iəinh*
 I child-ACC **principal-INS(H)** introduce do-PRF-1+3.H
 ‘I had introduced the child to the principal’ (Maithili: neutral)

This OAC-complying agreement pattern is also observed with the agent/theme of causatives (3a), ditransitive passives (3b), and applicative constructions (3c). In all cases in (1)-(3), object agreement is licensed by the [HONORIFIC]-feature on the internal argument (as opposed to a structurally highest goal). As such, Maithili and Magahi align with other OA languages in which only one of the two internal arguments is licenced by a discourse specific agreement feature (e.g., Swahili, Spanish).

- 3a) *John principal-sa baccca-ke / bacca-sa principal-ke kh-uye-l-kainh*
 John **principal-inst(H)** child-acc / child-inst **principal-acc(H)** eat-caus-prf-3.NH+3.H
 ‘John had made the principal feed the child/the child feed the principal’.
 (neutral)
- 3b) *master-ke bacca-sa / baccaa-ke master-sa pehchan kar-æl gel*
chh-əl-əinh
Teacher-ACC child-INS/ child-ACC **teacher-INS** introduce do-PRF pass be-PST-3.H
 ‘The teacher/The child was introduced to the child/the teacher’ (neutral)
- 3c) *John principal-ke-lel/bacca-ke-lel khana bane-l-kai(nh)*
 John **principal-acc-for**/child-acc-for food make-prf-3.NH(+3.H)
 ‘John made the food for the principal/for the child’ (neutral)

In multiple object configurations, Maithili and Magahi also show PCC-like effects in the sense that the object agreement with the 3p-[HONORIFIC] internal argument (IO/DO) is blocked in the presence of the 2p-[(Non)HONORIFIC] referent/argument IO/DO (4), and the non-argument ALLOCUTIVE (5). In both cases, it is the presence of the additional argument, here the discourse addressee, that triggers the PCC-like effects originally observed for the IO.

- 4) *John principal-ke to-ra-sa / to-ra principal-sa bhent*
 John **principal-acc(H)** **you-dat-inst(NH)** / **you-acc(NH)** **principal-inst(H)** introduce
kare-l-kau
 do-prf-3.NH+2.NH
 ‘John had introduced the principal to you/ introduced you to the principal’ (neutral)

5) *hum hun-ka dekh-ne chh-al- aũh*

I him-acc(H) see-PRF be-prf-1+Alloc.NH

‘I had seen her/him’

(Non-Honorific Addressee)

Thus, if (4) and (5) are indeed instances of PCC/OAC, Maithili and Magahi seem to provide additional empirical support for the recent work on PCC/OAC arguing for PCC-effects, (i) triggered by a (language specific) discourse participant identifying features; here we extend the inventory to [HONORIFIC] (for animacy, gender, see Ormazabal and Romero 2007 and Foley and Toosarvandani 2022); and, (ii) as syntactic in nature, rather than a morphological (case) phenomenon; here we show the neutralisation of the IO-INS/DO-ACC contrast (for case, see Stegovec 2020). But these data equally raise a concern for the PCC/OAC stated in terms of a restriction on multiple OA with the two *internal* arguments as it excludes the possibility for a non-internal argument to trigger PCC/OAC-effects, a prediction otherwise confirmed in other languages by the non-argumental ETHICAL DATIVE merged above the thematic/case domain, (6) and (7), (Ormazabal and Romero/OR 2007, Jouiiteau & Rezac/JR 2008).

6) *Peruk ni kolean ikusi na-i-k-Ø*

Peter-erg me-abs street-the-in see 1abs-aux-2mas.dat(alloc)-3erg.

‘Peter saw me in the street (I am addressing you-male)’

(Basque: OR 2007: 331)

7) *Demain je (me) vous emmene en vacances*

tomorrow I 1p.DAT 2p.ACC take in vacations

‘Tomorrow I will take you to vacations’

(French: JR 2008)

From this perspective, (5) is particularly puzzling as ALLOCUTIVE in the two EIA languages has consistently been analysed as merged in higher projections (Fin/Force/MoodP) as a null argument DP (Kumari *ibid*, Alok 2021); and, here, it is this non-argumental ALLOCUTIVE that acts as an intervener for 3p-[HONORIFIC] object agreement triggering PCC-like effects.

Our aim is, then, to inquire into the presence of a lower (external merge) position for the agreeing ALLOCUTIVE, as we question whether the higher ALLOCUTIVE position, in contrast to the existing literature, is one resulting from an internal merge. An alternative is to assume a higher position for ALLOCUTIVE, but that, in return, requires an extension or reduction of the OAC/PCC to structural dominance independent of the first/external merge position of the arguments, hence operating over arguments and non-arguments with discourse addressee/[HONORIFIC]-feature.

Evidence supporting a thematic base-generated position for allocutive DPs are cases where they vary from ethical datives. (8), for instance, gives a possessive reading to ‘the hand’, also referring to the addressee’s hand; in contrast, ethical datives obligatorily block possessive and benefactive readings. In addition, allocutive agreement co-occurs with overt vocative markers (9) - ethical datives vary on this point as well.

8) *o bachha-ke principal-ke haath-me de-l-kau/de-l-kain*

She child-acc/dat principal-acc.dat hand-loc. give-pst-3.NH+Alloc.NH/give-pst-3.NH+Alloc.H

‘She has allowed the principal to give the child in the hand (your hand/someone else’s hand)’

9) *ge bohini! o sochal chhain ki o kail baazaar jebain*

voc.F.H sister-in-law! He think.prf. be.3NH+Alloc.H. that he tomorrow market go.fut.3NH+Alloc.H

‘Hey sister-in-law! He thinks that he will go to the market tomorrow’

With data such as these as evidence, we propose that the addressee is a phonetically null DP, externally merged in the specifier of an applicative vP; this explains its argument-like OAC-triggering behaviour.

Selected Reference Alok, D. 2021. The Morphosyntax of Magahi Addressee Agreement. *Syntax* 24(3), 263–296. Béjar, S. & Řezáč. M. 2003. Person licensing and the derivation of PCC effects. *Romance Linguistics: Theory and Acquisition*: 49-62. Jouiiteau M. & M. Řezáč.

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