

The interaction of case and agreement: Global case splits and case opacity

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I propose an analysis of syntactic Case assignment and Agreement which naturally accounts for different kinds of interactions between case-marking and agreement: I discuss languages with case-sensitive agreement as well as languages with agreement-sensitive case as well as the typological distribution of agreement and case-marking.

From a theoretical point of view, I take the fact that case-marking and agreement can feed/bleed each other in different orders to suggest that Case assignment and Agree are not a single operation, but dissociated (contra Chomsky 2000 et seq.). In addition, the existence of agreement-sensitive case-marking in so-called global case splits suggests that dependent Case (Marantz 1991, Bobaljik 2008, Preminger 2014, Baker 2015) alone does not suffice to explain case-marking: phi-agreement can feed case-assignment, suggesting that functional heads are involved.

Finally, I argue that Bobaljik's (2008) predictive account of case opacity should be retained, albeit in syntax rather than morphology and I implement one such system and discuss its predictions w.r.t. possible and impossible agreement and case alignment systems.