

## The PCC, the no-null-agreement generalization, and clitic doubling as long head movement

Omer Preminger

University of Maryland

It has become commonplace in syntactic theory to posit feature-valuation relations, such as agreement between a verbal head and a nominal argument, even in cases where there is no associated morpho-phonological covariance. Let us refer to such hypothesized feature-valuation relations, where the assumed exponents are all null, as “abstract” agreement. In the first part of this talk, I use the cross- and intra-linguistic distribution of Person Case Constraint (PCC) effects to argue that natural language does not allow abstract agreement in phi-features (PERSON, NUMBER, and GENDER/NOUN-CLASS).

Next, I turn my attention to clitic doubling. As far as PCC effects are concerned, clitic doubling behaves as though it were equivalent to overt agreement. In fact, the distribution of the PCC is hard to state unless we collapse the two. This is surprising because, quite simply, clitic doubling is not agreement; it behaves like movement, and unlike agreement, in crucial respects (most notably, in creating new antecedents for binding). Nor can this be because clitic doubling, *qua* movement, is contingent on prior agreement – since the claim that all DP movement depends on prior agreement is demonstrably false.

I propose that clitic doubling necessarily involves a preliminary agreement step because it is an instance of non-local head movement – and movement of  $X^0$  to  $Y^0$  always requires a prior syntactic relationship between  $Y^0$  and  $XP$ . In cases of maximally local head movement (à la Travis 1984), this requirement is satisfied by c-selection. But in non-local cases, it is phi-agreement that fills this role. Thus, wherever clitic doubling is found, agreement has to have occurred, explaining why the two are interchangeable when it comes to conditioning the PCC.

I conclude by discussing the nature of the ban on abstract phi-agreement. Viewed as a grammatical principle, this ban would require simultaneous reference to syntax and morpho-phonology, mixing information from different grammatical modules into one constraint. Instead, I suggest that this ban is not a grammatical principle at all: it arises as the result of the acquisition strategy learners engage in when it comes to the placement of unvalued phi-features on functional heads.