

Replicative and anti-replicative processes in the (morpho-)syntax

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- **Core observation:** There is a fundamental tension in the nature of dependencies in (morpho-)syntax, yielding two types of dependencies:

(i) Those that serve to make grammatical objects more similar to one another. E.g. replicative processes like ϕ -agreement (Chomsky, 2001), long-distance pro-form dependencies (Giorgi, 2010; Sundaresan, 2012, a.o.).

$$(1) \quad T[\phi:] \dots DP[\phi: \alpha] \rightarrow T[\phi: \alpha] \dots DP[\phi: \alpha]$$

$$(2) \quad DP_i [CP \dots DP_i \dots]$$

(ii) Those that serve to distinguish grammatical objects from one another. E.g. dependent case assignment (Marantz, 1991; McFadden, 2004; Baker, 2015), local anaphoric dependencies (Faltz, 1977; Lidz, 2001; Reuland, 2011).

$$(3) \quad DP \dots DP \rightarrow DP \dots DP[\text{acc}]$$

$$(4) \quad DP_i \dots DP_i \rightarrow DP_i \dots DP_i\text{-self} \text{ (contrast with 2)}$$

- **Research Goal:** To investigate what these two seemingly opposed grammatical dependencies have in common and to what extent they involve the same underlying components in grammar.
- **Hypothesis 1:** There is a ban on having two syntactic objects in the same local domain that are not sufficiently distinct (to a degree to be made more precise) from one another at the interfaces (a general OCP effect) (see also Richards, 2010).
- **Corollary:** Information replication (modelled via Agree) will only be possible if the two grammatical objects are already distinct in a way that won't be obliterated by the replication process (e.g. categorially distinct, as with ϕ -Agree or semantically and morphologically distinct as with local pro-form dependencies).
- **Implementational issues:** What is the derivational counterpart to Agree (i.e. "Dis-Agree") that yields informational distinctness in a local domain – and do the two operations have a common core?
- **Hypothesis 2:** There is a single syntactic process which merely links two objects in a dependency and also flags them as being distinct or non-distinct at this stage. A later, potentially post-syntactic, mechanism then creates either distinctness or replication of information based on this flag.
- This bears a clear resemblance to the two-stage Agree model proposed by Nevins (2014), but goes one step further in allowing the second step to create informational distinctness.

Research methodology and questions: The project will involve a typological study of the morphosyntactic means used to create distinctness in two grammatical domains: dependent case and local anaphora. These will be contrasted with a typological study of the inputs to agreement processes and the ways in which agreement targets and controllers are arguably already distinct before they enter Agree. Of particular interest here will be agreement processes between elements of the same category, as in cases of nominal concord, and between those of clearly distinct categories, as with subject/object-verb agreement.

The following questions will be explored:

1. What precisely counts as “sufficiently distinct”, under the hypothesis above, and are there different senses of distinctness at categorial, phonological, and semantic levels?
2. Is there evidence to support the idea that information replication and distinguishing operations share a common core?
3. How can the latter be implemented formally and where in the grammar do they apply?
4. There is only one way to be the same, but potentially infinite ways to be distinct: how is the particular form of distinctness chosen for a specific phenomenon (e.g. the addition of a body-part morpheme with local anaphors, or a particular case marker with dependent case assignment)?
5. What is the role of locality in the determination of identity/distinctness between two objects?
6. Are there different notions of locality that are relevant for the LF and PF domains (see e.g. Hicks, 2009)?

Preliminary work: The project will build on prior work done on the syntactic implementation of long-distance anaphora, control, and interactions between anaphora and verbal agreement (Sundaresan, 2012, 2013, 2014, To Appear) and work done in collaboration with Thomas McFadden on case (Sundaresan and McFadden, 2009; McFadden and Sundaresan, 2011).

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