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## Missing Agreement: Where is it Dialect and Where Deficit?

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# Missing Agreement: Where is it Dialect and Where Deficit

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## I. Can we define "Possible Disorder" in UG?

1. Deficit = deviance unlike a Delay
2. Missed Formal Feature Hypothesis  
= Premature fixation of lexical item

## II. Missed Formal Features and Normal Lexical acquisition

A. Why does normal child not say: "Me can do it"  
=> learn Nominative => change to "I can do it"

B. Normal Child: Maximize Formal Features

1) I saw the boy => [the: +sing,+masc,+def,+acc]  
ich sah den Mann

2) The girls arrived => delete: ,masc,sing, acc  
German: no change (den => correct (idealized))

C. Normal acquisition of Modal:

can => modal meaning => Understood before used  
search for Tense, Agr, Case, Selection properties  
"John can sing" => no case information

1. Constraint on Normal Acquisition:

Do not insert item into grammar until all domains checked

D. Deficit Grammar: fix item in grammar without AGR or CASE

E. Dialect: AGREEMENT present as Universal Grammar Option

=> Check each domain separately  
=> AAE requires nominative in "I can sing"  
AGR carried by Modal

"categories lacking interpretability should be disallowed"(Chomsky (1998))

a. Conclusion: [-interpretable] => Formal Features (AGR, Case)

E. General Hypothesis: Fix lexical item without  
[-Interpretable features]

1. In productive grammar => No Retreat  
(Clahsen, Vainikka, Eisenbeiss (1994))

## III. Case-Study: Missed Formal Features

A. AGR = FF not a node

Hypothesis: missing in NP "two lobster"  
and IP at same time "Daddy like"

Munn (to appear, LI): Genitive = Agreement morpheme "them eyes"

B. JC 4.4-46yrs (Ramos and Roeper (1994))

3) That why them put a lot of sand in (Note: CP-why) Genitive (in NP-of):

4) Me Daddy like mustard  
Me sister name Dawn  
He family. He lost he family  
He shovelled him truck  
Them Mom could let them play outside

5) Nominative (in IP):  
Me like ketchup  
Me don't know  
Me said me gotta hurry up  
Her can cook something  
Them have a party

6) Discourse: "Me sister name Dawne. Her give me Dad a lobster, a two lobster,  
Me Mom put in here, cook them, forgot to take them eyes out.  
and then it give it to Mom He say put it down. And then her say ahh, and then her put on  
the floor, and we scare her.. Her say, ahh it's moving, and then them cook them up, and it  
swcared Mom, so we gonna put him to trouble. And then he be trouble....you can't eat eyes.  
Only you can eat skin. And me did eat it. "

We find occasional nominatives here, but wide-ranging absence of agreement in both verbal and nominal contexts.

While in normal acquisition the emergence of agreement and other Formal Features happens so quickly, it is difficult to separate out which factors are independent, we find that there is ample evidence for other kinds of complex syntax, while precisely agreement phenomena remain unmastered.

Evidence for the presence of Inflectional information can be seen in these cases:

Me can have this  
her can cook something  
it don't have a mouth  
then me no have to go bath  
it can poke somebody  
me don't have a cat on a bed  
Only you can brush your teeth very good  
No her can put up here  
I see he shadow....I can make see my shadow

In addition just the kinds of structures associated with raising over negation are found:

Me never have them real big  
Me never take a shower

There are also extensive examples of CP-level phenomena:

When me go outside to play, me go like that  
that because them Mom don't let them  
that why them put a lot of sand  
Why him don't have eyes  
when him crack tiny pieces up, and then put (unintelligible)  
why her need this  
what's I talking about  
I don't know where her can cook

In addition other signs of complex syntax co-exist with the absence of agreement.  
For instance, the presence of reflexivization:

her standing and her see herself

Also there is evidence of wh-movement and Operator-movement:

lobster to eat for lunch  
I don't know what he saying  
What's I talking about

Some of these sentences show evidence of Agreement as well, although it is absent in the majority of cases. The mixture can be analyzed along the lines of multiple grammars advocated by Roeper (to appear) and Yang (1999), which has been argued for the history of English as well by Kroch and Taylor ( ). The crucial point is that there are clear absences of agreement while other features are present, arguing for their independent representation.

A broad picture of ten recordings can be found in these

7) 10 weekly recordings:

- a. 386 instances had "me" as possessive in 56% of cases,
- b. "them" 100%
- c. "he" 60%, "him" 40%.

7) Comprehension experiment: Choose

[picture of me painting] [picture of my bucket of paint]

"the girl saw me paint"

"the girl saw my paint".

5/10 instances, "me paint" interpreted as "my paint"

C. Prediction: If "can" = [-case]], Nom => [-case]

a. Anecdotal Evidence: "I sure" or "I" = default (T. Wyatt)

Background: Abdul-Karim (1994) "who has a hat"

=> me (2yrs)

=> "I do" (2 3/4 yrs)

=> \*"I" never

b. Symmetry: can=> does not project Case

I => does not receive Case

Conclusion:

1. not simply mispronunciation of "my" as "me"

2. Not a Choice of AGR or Tense (Wexler (1998) for normals)
3. Supports Chomsky's semantic view of categories
4. AGR = a FF in NP and IP
5. Deficit: fix FF of lexical items without [-interpretable] FF  
(see deVilliers and Johnson (1999))

#### IV. Searching for AGR: Relational PP as Deletable AGR-element

Disordered: (Seymour and Roeper (1994))

Subjects: 17 Disordered Children

1. How did the mother decide to sweep?

"with a broom" 121 cases

"broom" 26 cases

Normal children: rare deletion of "with"

##### A. Lexical level => Compounds

Incorporation => Relational Prep deletion (Roeper and Siegel (1978))

1. made at home => home-made
2. made by hand => hand-made
3. made in a factory => factory made
4. eaten by moths => moth-eaten
5. eaten with a fork => \*fork-eaten

6. swept with a broom => broom swept (instrument "with")

Compare: swept with a friend => \*friend-swept (accompaniment "with")

Lexical Prepositions:

1. go through tunnel => \*tunnel-gone
2. found around flowers => \*flower-found
3. stand beside the barn => \*barn-stood

##### B. Discourse Level Deletion

1. Default case

- a. Who has a hat? Me

\*me has a hat

2. Prep deletion

- a. where do you live? San Francisco

\*I live San Francisco

- b. where are you going? Detroit

\*I am going Detroit

- c. when are you playing chess? noon

\*I am playing chess noon

3. Non-deletable:

- a. when did it seem odd to you? \*night  
at night

- b. how are you playing? \*bat  
with a bat
- c. How did you get to the other side of the river \*tunnel  
\*I went to the other side the tunnel  
through the tunnel
- d. why was the game cancelled \*accident  
because of an accident
- e. where does it hurt? \*stomach  
in my stomach  
\*in stomach
- f. where did you put it? \*arm  
\*on arm  
on my arm

C. Bresnan (1989): Cross-linguistic arguments about unmarked locative  
Klein (1992) Extensive study of L2 Prep-deletion

D. Conclusion: Discourse, Lexical levels => deletability  
Syntactic level => non-deletable  
Explanation: syntax requires case-assigner  
Lexical: incorporation requires no case  
Discourse: not clear

#### V. Early Child Relational-Prep Deletion (Brennan (1991))

- A. we colored crayon (=with)  
Shirley get meat dinner (=for)  
I cut it a knife (=with)  
Richard bring snack Shirley (=for)  
I went party (=to)  
feed baby fork (=with)  
Shirley cut fork (=with)  
I sleep big bed (=in)  
Save some later (=for)

Some children will use argument PP's:

- B. I played with Joan  
Jim was at Cooperstown  
putting Daddy in wagon

46 prepositions for arguments,  
3 for adjuncts for three children.

Brennan:

"3 of 4 children studied, it was true that adjuncts never surfaced with PP's,"

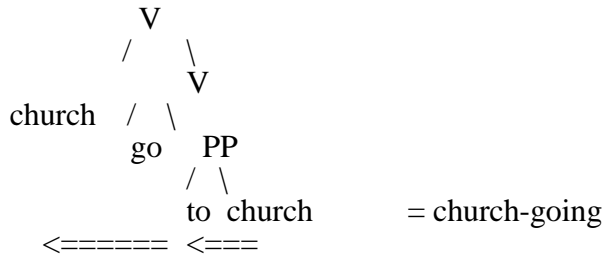
- C. Hypothesis: Verb carries LOC selection, Prep agrees with it
  - a. John runs => NP[+sing] => V[+sing] via Agree

Relational Prep = Agreement between

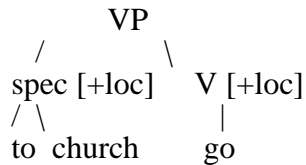
VERB    PREP  
 [+loc] [+Loc]

D. Representations:

Head-Complement Selection:

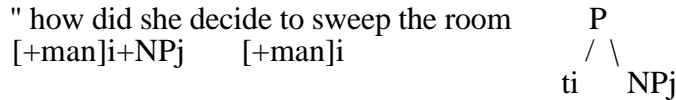


Kayne (1994) Adjuncts = Specs => Spec-Head Agreement



[+loc] is present on the verb itself=> Prep-loc = AGR marker, deleteable

E. Disordered Perspective: all AGR of the same type =FF



Child assumption: how = verb [man+] P[+man]  
 Agreement

VI. Is Concord Agreement? No, a totally different system that may be more available

- a. feetses
- b. I don't got none

VII Conclusion:

- a. Defined notion of "Possible Trigger" in UG
- b. Defend AGR as FF
- c. Unified theory of Agreement => Relational-Prep = Agreement
- d. Predicts: deletion of AGR in IP,DP, and VP for disorder
- e. AAE: deletion in DP, IP,VP of number agreement, case  
 retention: case agreement in IP = Nominative
- f. Conclusion: (Wyatt ) Nominative Agreement is a better marker  
 for disorders in AAE
- g. Conclusion: Possibility that AGR as a formal Feature could be  
 missing as a defect of UG