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Agreement in East Caucasian languages

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Agreement

Agreement is a morphosyntactic phenomenon in which there is ‘a systematic covariance between a semantic or formal property of one element [the **controller**], and a formal property of another [the **target**]’ (Steele 1978: 610). See also Corbett (2006).

Agreement operates in a certain **domain** and involves particular morphosyntactic **features**:

(1) Archi (Lezgif)

dija-mu	os	ħawan	b-uq'u-li
shepherd(I).SG.ERG	one	animal(III)[SG.ABS]	III.SG-slaughter.PFV-EVID
w-is	uš-mi-n	oq-li-t	
I.SG-1SG.GEN	brother(I)-OBL.SG-GEN	wedding(IV)-OBL.SG-SUPER	

‘Father slaughtered one animal at my brother’s wedding.’

Structure of this talk

- overview of East Caucasian agreement: features, values, domains, exponents
- properties that make EC agreement remarkable:
 - multiple exponence
 - agreement in non-finite clauses
 - long-distance agreement
 - clausal agreement on non-verbal targets

Special thanks to Steven Kaye

EC Agreement features

East Caucasian languages show agreement in **gender and number**

East Caucasian (=Northeast Caucasian, =Nakh-Daghestanian) languages

Nakh	Avar	Andic	Tsezic	Lak	Dargwa	Lezgian	Khinalugh
Chechen-Ingush Chechen Ingush Tsova-Tush (=Batsbi)	Avar	Akhvakh Andi Bagwalal Botlikh Chamalal Godoberi Karata Tindi	Bezhta Hinukh Hunzib Khvarshi Tsez	Lak	Aqusha Chirag Icari Kubachi Mehweb Tanty	Archi Aghul Budukh Kryz Lezgian Rutul Tabassaran Tsakhur Udi	Khinalugh

EC Agreement features

East Caucasian languages show agreement in **gender and number**. Some also have agreement in **person**

East Caucasian (=Northeast Caucasian, =Nakh-Daghestanian) languages

Nakh	Avar	Andic	Tsezic	Lak	Dargwa	Lezgetic	Khinalugh
Chechen-Ingush Chechen Kista Ingush Tsova-Tush (=Batsbi)	Avar dialects	Akhvakh Andi Bagwalal Botlikh Chamalal Godoberi Karata Tindi	Bezhta Hinuq Hunzib Khvarshi Tsez	Lak	Aqusha Chirag Icari Kubachi Tanty	Archi Nuclear Lezgetic Aghul Budukh Kryz Lezgian Rutul Tabassaran Tsakhur Udi	Khinalugh

Gender-number agreement: values and morphology

Verbal systems

(2) Avar (Avar)

	masculine	feminine	neuter
singular	w-	j-	b-
plural	r-		

(in one verb *ha*-GN- ‘do’ the agreement exponent is a suffix, as in *ha-b-ula* do-N.SG-PRS, Rudnev 2015: 43)

(3) Aqusha Dargwa (Dargwa)

	masculine	feminine	neuter
singular	w-, <w>	r-, <r>	b-,
plural	b		d-, <r>, -r

(4) Khwarshi (Tsezic)

	I	II	III	IV	V
SG	Ø- , w- , <w>	j- , <j>	b-, 	l-, <r>	j-
PL	b-		l-, <r>		

(Khalilova 2009:42)

Examples

I	II	III	IV	V
es 'brother'	Ɂini 'woman'	miši 'calf'	zi ⁿ hi 'cow'	Ɂwan 'tree'
iho 'shepherd'	išu 'mother'	Ɂi 'milk'	sajro 'horse'	u ⁿ ž 'axe'
obu 'father'	ka ⁿ d 'girl'	zebu 'day'	t'ut'i 'fly'	q'em 'head'
		azdah 'dragon'		

(Based on Testelec 2019)

(5) Archi (Lezgic)

	I	II	III	IV
SG	w-, <w>	d-, <r>	b-, 	∅
PL	b-, 		∅	

(6) Types of verbs in Archi:

	PERFECTIVE		IMPERFECTIVE		FINALIS		IMPERATIVE	
	IV.SG	III.SG	IV.SG	III.SG	IV.SG	IIISG	IV.SG	III.SG
prefixal, 'milk'	acu	b-acu	a<r>ca-r	b-a<r>ca-r	aca-s	b-aca-s	aca	b-aca
infixal, 'throw'	caχu	caχu	ca<r>χa-r	caχa-r	caχa-s	caχa-s	caχa	caχa
mixed, 'put through'	akɬu	akɬu	a<r>kɬa-r	b-a<r>kɬa-r	akɬa-s	akɬa-s	akɬa	b-akɬa

(7)Tsakhur (Lezgif)

	Strong set				Weak set			
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV
SG	⟨r⟩	⟨r⟩	⟨b⟩	⟨d⟩	∅	⟨j⟩	⟨w⟩	∅
PL	⟨b⟩		⟨d⟩		⟨w⟩		∅	

Weak verbs (50%) use the weak set throughout the paradigm; strong verbs (20%) use the strong set throughout the paradigm; mixed verbs (30%) use the strong set for the perfective stem and the weak set for the imperfective and potential. (Kalinina 2002).

Non-verbal systems

Same paradigm structure, different exponents

(8)Avar adjectives

	masculine	feminine	neuter
singular	-w	-j	-b
plural	-l		

(8a) χ wali-ca hiq'-ana χ era-w č̣i-jas-da
death.OBL-ERG ask-PST old-M.SG man(M)-OBL-LOC
'Death asked the old man.'

(Rudnev 2015: 22)

Different paradigm structure, different exponents

(9) Archi

(a) adverbs

	I	II	III	IV
SG	w-, <w>	d-, <r>	b-, 	<t'>
PL			<t'>	

(b) attributives, demonstratives

	I	II	III	IV
SG	-w	-r	-b	-t
PL	-ib			

(c) pronouns

	I	II	III	IV
SG	w-, <w>	d-, <r>	b-, 	∅
PL	b-, 		∅	

	I	II	III	IV
SG	w-, <w>	d-, <r>	b-, 	<t'>
PL			<t'>	

Partial paradigm of Archi pronouns

	SG		PL		
	1st person	2nd person	1st person		2nd person
			EXCL	INCL	
NOM	zon	un	nen	nent'u	ž ^w en
ERG	zari		nen	nena<w> nena<r>u nenau nen<t'>u	ž ^w en
GEN	w-is d-is b-is is	wit	ulu d-olo b-olo olo	la<w>u la<r>u lau la<t'>u	wiš
DAT	w-ez d-ez b-ez ez	was	w-el d-el b-el el	w-ela<w> d-ela<r>u b-elau el<t'>u	wež

Sometimes adnominal agreement can differ in features, too. Thus, in Dargwa adjectives can attach a plural suffix *-ti*. In Khonokh Khwarshi adjectives can also optionally agree for number:

(10) Khonokh Khwarshi (Tsezic)

- (a) akoʎa-t'a uža-ba b-at'iq'a iⁿdu-Ɂol
tired-PL boy(I)[ABS]-PL I.PL-come.AOR home-DIR
'The tired boys came home.'

- (b) akoʎa uža-ba b-at'iq'a iⁿdu-Ɂol
tired boy(I)[ABS]-PL I.PL-come.AOR home-DIR
'The tired boys came home.'

(Grashchenkov 2019)

Special case of adnominal agreement

Andic genitive: depending on the gender of the target, the genitive can be realised by an agreement marker:

(11) Bagwalal (Andic)

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| (a) ehun-š:u-w | was: |
| blacksmith(M)-OBL.M-GEN.M | brother(M)[ABS.SG] |
| 'blacksmith's brother' | |
| (b) ehun-š:u-j | jas: |
| blacksmith(M)-OBL.M-GEN.F | sister(F)[ABS.SG] |
| 'blacksmith's sister' | |
| (c) ehun-š:u-b | misa |
| blacksmith(M)-OBL.M-GEN.N | house(N)[ABS.SG] |
| 'blacksmith's house' | |
| (d) ila-ł:i- ł: | misa |
| mother(F)-OBL-GEN | house(N)[ABS.SG] |
| 'mother's house' | |

Agreement domains

Clause: the absolutive controls the agreement (in GN) on everything:

(12) ERG-ABS: Dargwa (Dargwa)

il-q'a'jda,	b-išt'a-si	ʃaʃra-la	duxu-deš-li	
this-manner	N.SG-small-ATTR	hare-GEN	clever-NMLZ-ERG	
leilra	wac'a	b -erc-aq-ib	waj-si	žaniwar-li-zi- b -ad.
<N.SG>all	forest[ABS]	N.SG-escape.PFV-CAUS-AOR	bad-ATTR	animal-OBL-IN-N.SG-EL

'So, the resourcefulness of a little hare saved the whole forest from a wicked animal.'

(Lion and Hare)

(13) ABS Khwarshi (Tsezic)

heč'č'e	buq	č'ija-za-Ɂol	b -eq-na	a ⁿ q' ^w a.
very	sun	fall-CVB.LOC-DIR	III-get.out-EVD	mouse(III)[SG.ABS]

'The mouse went out into the sunniest part of the yard'

(Testelec 2020)

(14) DAT-ABS Archi (Lezxic)

b-is	χ: ^ɪ ele	b-ez	dit:au	eχni
I/II.PL-1SG.GEN	guest(I)[PL.ABS]	I/II.PL-1SG.DAT	soon<I/II.PL>	forget<I/II.PL>PFV

'I soon forgot my guests, who had left.'

Noun phrase: the head controls the agreement:

(15) Bagwalal (Andic)

in-š:u-j-da	hela-j	hak'uj-ɬa-s:
self-OBL.M-GEN.F	love-PART.F	woman.F-OBL.SUP-EL
inkar	že:-č'i	b-uk'a-la...
refuse	do-NEG	N-be.POT-CSL

Because he would not renounce his beloved... {he was poisoned}. (Kibrik, 2001:463)

Numeral phrase: the head must be in the singular but controls agreement in gender:

(16) Archi (Lezgif)

zari	ɬo	bo ^š :or	buɬ:ij<t>u	nokɬ'	aw
1SG.ERG	five hundred	fifty<IV.SG>	house(IV)[SG.ABS]	[IV.SG]make.PFV	

'I built five hundred and fifty houses.' Based on Kibrik 1977: 118-120

(17) Khwarshi (Tsezic)

(a) b-uq'u-t'a es-ne-ba
I.PL-old-PL brother(I)-OBL-PL[ABS]
'grown up brothers'

(b) q'uni uq'u-t'a es
two [I.SG]old-PL brother(I)[SG.ABS]
'two grown up brothers'

(Grashchenkov 2019)

But in the texts, there are instances of semantic agreement:

(18) Archi (Lezgic)

- (a) nen q'ʰwe<r>u e'ʰwwu-r-ši
we1PL.EXCL two<II.SG> cry-IPFV-CVB
q'ʰwe<r>u **q'oc'o-li** q'i'ʰjdi-li
two<II.SG> [1PL]reconcile.PFV-CVB [1PL]sit.PFV-EVID
'and we two (girls) were crying, we two (girls) had made up (by then) and were sitting there...

This example is from a spontaneous text. However, I discussed it with another speaker, and she allowed syntactic agreement here:

- (b) nen q'ʰwe<r>u e'ʰwwu-r-ši
we1PL.EXCL two<II.SG> cry-IPFV-CVB
q'ʰwe<r>u **do-q'c'o-li** q'i'ʰjdi-li...
two<II.SG> II.SG-reconcile.PFV-CVB [1PL]sit.PFV-EVID
'...we two (girls) were crying, we two had made up (by then) and were sitting there...'

Agreement in person

Person agreement

- is marked by suffixes or enclitics
- (some) person agreement markers bear an obvious resemblance to personal pronouns (e.g. in Tabasaran, Udi)
- in some languages, person markers are hosted by focused constituents and can be placed on non-verbal phrases as well (Lak)

(Maisak 2020)

Person agreement is an innovation. It has “at least three possible origins, one is certain (and in accordance with typological expectations), one can be proposed with reasonable certainty and the third remains a mystery (...в нахско-дагестанских языках личные показатели имеют по меньшей мере три источника, один из которых известен достоверно (и соответствует типологическим ожиданиям), другой может быть назван предположительно, а третий остается загадкой.” (Sumbatova 2001)

Person agreement types according to origins

origin	personal pronouns	participles	unclear
languages	Tabassaran, Udi, Batsbi	Zaqatal and Kusur dialect of Avar, Akhvakh,	Lak, Dargwa
paradigm structure	Udi: three persons, two numbers Tabassaran, Batbsi: three persons, two numbers, incl/excl	only first person gets marked, no number distinction	
controllers	A/S	A/S, A/S _A	

(based on Sumbatova, 2001).

Person agreement in Dargwa

Dargwa (Sumbatova 2001)

Chirag Dargwa: 1,2>3, if both are SAP, then the verb agrees with the Agent:

(19) dice ŋu r-iqqan-da
I.ERG you.ABS F.SG-drive-1
'I am driving you (fem)'.

Tanty Dargwa: 1,2>3, if both are SAP, then the verb agrees with the Patient:

(20) ŋu dali uc-ib-de
you.ABS I.ERG catch:PF-PRET-2SG
'I caught you'

Two positions for agreement in participles

different gender agreement slots in one verb form can be associated with different agreement controllers (!)

- *the stem slot agrees with the verb's absolutive argument*
- *the participial suffix agrees with the head noun*

(Maisak 2020)

Some examples from Archi (Lezgetic)

(21) Intransitive verb:

(a) same controller

duxij **d-aq^ʰa-t:u-r?**

upstream II.SG-come.PFV-ATTR-II.SG

‘{Was it} when you were coming back?’

(b) different controllers

jamu-t **o<r>q^ʰa-t:u-t** saʃat-li-t

this-IV.SG <II.SG>go.PFV-ATTR-IV.SG time(IV)-SG.OBL-SUPESS

‘At this time of my going {they left me alone with the sheep on the road}.’

Multiple exponence

Batsbi (Harris 2009 via Maisak 2020)

Archi (Lezgetic) has multiple exponence on some adverbs and pronouns:

(22) adverb

tu-w	tej-me-s	w-allej<w>u	w-irχ ^w ni
that.one-I.SG.ABS	that.one.OBL.PL-OBL.PL-DAT	I.SG-for.free<I.SG>	I.SG-work.PFV

He worked for them for free.

(23) pronoun

(a) **d-is:a<r>u** łonnol d-aq^ʕa nokł'-a-k
II.SG-1SG.PCL<II.SG> wife(II)[SG.ABS] II.SG-come.PFV house(IV)-IN-LAT

Only my wife (nobody else) entered the house.

(b) *possessive pronouns + a<GM>u + PCL<GM> + ATTR-GM*

d-as:a-a<r>u-ej<r>u-t:u-r

II.SG-of.myself-<II.SG>PCL-<II.SG>PCL-ATTR-II.SG

'my own [female]' (Kibrik 1977: 127-30 via Corbett 2006: 196).

Agreement in non-finite clauses

➤ converbs

(24) Khwarshi

qoḷa-ḷ'o-žu	zila	l-ače-he-č	χiḷ-na	idu	a ⁿ q' ^w a.
hide-SUP-ABL	boza(IV)[SG.ABS]	IV-lick-PRS-IPF.CVB	drink-EVD	this	mouse(III)[SG.ABS]

‘Thus, licking the boza from (her) hide, the mouse got drunk.’

(Testelec 2020)

➤ masdars

(25) Archi

jamu-r	hiba-t:u-r-u	mu-t:u-r-u	lo	d-i-kul-l-a
that-II.SG	be.good-ATTR-II.SG-and	be.beautiful-ATTR-II.SG-and	girl(II)[SG.ABS]	II.SG-be-MSD-OBL-IN

‘Because she was a good and beautiful girl....’

(Kibrik et al. 2007)

➤ infinitives

(26) Avar

untaras-e	χirurg	w-ix-ize	b-oḷ'-ana
sick.man-DAT	surgeon(M)[ABS]	M.SG-see-INF	N.SG-want-PST

‘The patient wanted to see the surgeon.’

(Rudnev 2015:18)

Long-distance agreement

(27) Tsez: LDA is triggered by a constituent which must be a topic

(a) eni-r uža: magalu ba:c'ruħi **r**-iyxo
mother-DAT boy bread.III.ABS ate.IV IV-know
'The mother knows [the boy ate the bread]'

(b) eni-r uža: magalu ba:c'ruħi **b**-iyxo
mother-DAT boy bread.III.ABS ate.IV III-know
'The mother knows [the boy ate the bread]'

(Polinsky & Potsdam 2001: 584)

(28) Archi

(a) laha-s me^ʃ c'abu-s kɬ'an **b**-eker
girl(II).OBL.SG-DAT whey(III)[SG.ABS] drink-INF like III.SG-AUX.IPFV
'The girl likes drinking whey.'

(b) laha-s sin-ši edi k^war akɬa-s
girl(II).OBL.SG-DAT know-CVB2 IV.SG.be.PST thread(III)[SG.ABS] <III.SG>put-INF

(c) laha-s k^war akɬa-s sin-ši edi
girl(II).OBL.SG-DAT thread(III)[SG.ABS] <III.SG>put-INF know-CVB <III.SG>be.PST
'The girl knew how to sew (lit.: put thread through).'

Clausal agreement of non-verbal targets

The following parts of speech in various EC languages can have a morphological slot for agreement and agree with the absolutive of the clause:

➤ adpositions

➤ adverbs

➤ nouns

➤ pronouns

➤ particles

Adpositions

(29) Avar (Boris Ataev, p.c.)

tusnaq-al-da **žani-w** t'amuna niže-c:a Rasul
prison(N)-SG.OBL-SUP in-M.SG put.PST 1PLEXCL-ERG Rasul(M)SG.ABS
'We put Rasul in prison.'

(30) Archi (Lezgic)

zari gəzet okłni arχul-ma-k **eq'en**
1SG.ERG newspaper(III)[SG.ABS] <III.SG>read.PFV the.middle-IN-LAT <III.SG>up.to
'I read the newspaper up to the middle.'

Adverbs

(31) Lak

s:ut:ixun<m>aj	Barzulaw-qul	č:ar	d-urnu	b-ija
by autumn<I.PL>	barzulaw(I)-PL.ABS	threshing(IV)[SG.ABS]	IV.SG-finish.PFV	I.PL-be.PST

‘By autumn the Barzulaw family finished threshing’ (lit: ‘By autumn Barzulaws having finished threshing were’)

(Kazenin 2013: 98)

(32) Khwarshi (Tsezic)

a. kaⁿd a<j>di goł:e
girl(II)[SG.ABS] <II.SG>here COP.PRS
‘The girl is here.’

b. ziⁿhi adi goł:e
cow(III)[SG.ABS] <III.SG>here COP.PRS
‘The cow is here.’

Nouns

Agreement in nouns represents a special case

- not restricted lexically
- is found in the locative paradigm in 4 language groups (Andic, Dargwa, Lak, Avar)
- is found in the main case paradigm in two Andic varieties: Andi and Tokita Karata

Agreement in locative paradigms

(33)Avar (Creissels 2009: 617)

	ON	BY, NEAR	INTER	UNDER	IN
LOCATION	-da	-q	-ɬ	-L'	-GN
DESTINATION	-de	-qe	-ɬe	-L'e	-u-GN-e
SOURCE	-dasa	-qa	-ɬa	-L'a	-sa
PATH	-dasan	-qan	-ɬan	-L'an	-san

(34)Tokita Karata (Andic) (Magomedbekova 1971: 79-85)

	ON	SUPER	BY, NEAR	AT	INTER	UNDER	IN
LOCATION	-č'	-L'a	-ha	-q	-ɬi	-ɬ'i	-i
DESTINATION	-č'i	-L'a-r	-ha-r	-qi	-ɬi-r	-ɬ'i-r	-i-ni
SOURCE	-č'i-GN-a	-L'a-GN-a	-ha-GN-a	-qi-GN-a	-ɬi-GN-a	-ɬ'i-GN-a	-i-GN-a
PATH	-č'i-gi-GN-a	-L'a-gi-GN-a	-ha-gi-GN-a	-qi-gi-GN-a	-ɬi-gi-GN-a	-ɬ'i-gi-GN-a	-i-gi-GN-a

Agreement in locative paradigms

(35) Aqusha Dargwa (Lion and Hare)

ža^ʰw zamunt-a-zi-**b**-ad nuša-la wac'-urb-a-z-**ib**
very time.pl-obl-in-n.sg-el 1pl-gen forest-pl-obl-in.n.sg
ħerir-ul=ri arslan
<N.SG>live.IPFV-CVB=PRET lion(N)[ABS]

'A very long time ago, a lion used to live in our forests.'

(36) Avar (Alekseev & Ataev 1998: 48)

a. hel-gi tusnaq-al-u<r>e r-it'e
DEM.ABS.PL-ADD prison(N)-SG.OBL-<PL>INLAT PL-send.IMP

'And send them to prison.'

b. hew-gi tusnaq-al-u<w>e w-it'e
DEM.ABS.M.SG-ADD prison(N)-SG.OBL-<M.SG>INLAT M.SG-send.IMP

'And send him to prison.' (Boris Ataev, p.c.)

Agreement in main paradigm

Affective – a special case employed to code the experiencer argument of the verbs of cognition, perception and emotion

(37) Gagatli Andi (based on Salimov 2010: 105)

a. ilu-b-o q'inkom hago
mother(II)-III.SG-AFF bull(III)[SG.ABS] see.AOR
'Mother saw a bull.'

b. ilu-r-o c'ul hago
mother(II)-V-AFF stick(V)[SG.ABS] see.AOR
'Mother saw a stick.'

(38) Tokita Karata (Magomedova & Khalidova 2001: 449)

waxja-š:u-ba b-iʃi-dak'a
son(I)-SG.OBL-III.SG.AFF III.SG-know-PRS
'The son knows.'

Diachrony of noun agreement

An agreeing case in the core of the case paradigm is a rare phenomenon. In the Nakh-Daghestanian family it is found only in one branch (Andic), and not in all varieties of this branch. Other Andic languages have a frozen agreement marker for affective case: Bagwalal -ba (N), Tindi -ba (N), Gigatli Chamalal -ba (N), Godoberi -ra (IV), etc.

In Andi, the agreeing affective also can be used in locative function; this is probably the common grammaticalization path for quirky subjects in Nakh-Daghestanian; they generally start as locatives:

- (39) Andi (Alisultanova 2010 via Steven Kaye)
qala-l̥i-w-o Lerdi w-ug^wo-d̥u se-w oloqan wošo
castle(IV)-SG.OBL-I-AFF before I-come-PRF one-I young boy(I)[SG.ABS]
'A young boy appeared before the castle.'

Agreement spreading?

Keenan for Avar (2014: 396), Testelec for Nakh-Daghestanian languages in general (2001).
However...

(40) Archi, biabsolute construction:

(a) zon abbadij<t'>u allij<t'>u gudum-mi-n nokɬ'
 1SG.ABS always<IV.SG> for.free<IV.SG> that.I.SG-OBL.SG-GEN house(IV)[SG.ABS]
 mu a-r-mat w-i
 be.good [IV.SG]do-IPFV-CVB I.SG-be.PRS
 'I always fix his house for free.'

(b) zon abbadij<w>u allij<t'>u gudum-mi-n nokɬ'
 1SG.ABS always<I.SG> for.free<IV.SG> that.I.SG-OBL.SG-GEN house(IV)[SG.ABS]
 mu a-r-mat w-i
 be.good [IV.SG]do-IPFV-CVB I.SG-be.PRS
 'I always fix his house for free.'

Finally...

Ganenkov & Bogomolova (2013), a talk at workshop 'Agreement in Discourse' (Bamberg) where they compared referential density of texts in Tabassaran and Dargwa to that of texts in Agul. The results came out the same, that is, texts in a language with agreement have the same referential density as texts in a language without agreement.



oj aču-t:-ib c'ullij b-aka!
ear(IV)[SG.ABS] put[IV.SG]-ATTR-PL healthy HPL-become.IMP!

Archi settlements

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