Diagnosing Object Agreement vs. Clitic Doubling: An Inuit Case Study

Michelle Yuan

Much recent literature has focused on whether the verbal agreement morphology cross-referencing objects is true φ-agreement or clitic doubling. I address this question on the basis of comparative data from related Inuit languages, Inuktitut and Kalaallisut (West Greenlandic), and argue that both possibilities are attested in Inuit. Evidence for this claim comes from diverging syntactic and semantic properties of the object DPs encoded by this cross-referencing morphology. I demonstrate that object DPs in Inuktitut display various properties mirroring the behavior of clitic-doubled objects crosslinguistically, while their counterparts in Kalaallisut display none of these properties, indicating genuine φ-agreement rather than clitic doubling. Crucially, this distinction cannot be detected morphologically, as the relevant cross-referencing morphemes are uniform across Inuit. Therefore, this article cautions against the reliability of canonical morphological diagnostics for (agreement) affixes vs. clitics.

Keywords: Inuit, agreement, affixes, clitic doubling, pronouns, objects

1 Introduction

Verbal agreement morphology is commonly analyzed as the morphological reflex of φ-feature valuation of a probing head H^0 by a φ-bearing goal, the result of Agree (e.g., Chomsky 2000, 2001). However, much recent literature has argued for a contrast between the agreement morphemes cross-referencing *subjects* and those cross-referencing *objects*: while subject agreement is often considered to be genuine φ-agreement, many cases of apparent object agreement have been reanalyzed as *pronominal clitic doubling* (e.g., Woolford 2008, Preminger 2009, Nevins 2011, Kramer 2014, Anagnostopoulou 2016). Unlike true agreement, clitic doubling involves a pronominal D^0 element cooccurring and coreferring with a DP associate. The clitic and its associate

are moreover often claimed to be related via a movement chain (Torrego 1988, Uriagereka 1995, Anagnostopoulou 2003, Arregi and Nevins 2012, Harizanov 2014, Baker and Kramer 2016, 2018). The structural difference between ɸ-agreement and clitic doubling is schematized in (1).

(1) a. *Agreement*

HP

H[*uval*]

DP$_ɸ$

b. *Clitic doubling*

HP

H

D$_ɸ$ H

DP$_ɸ$
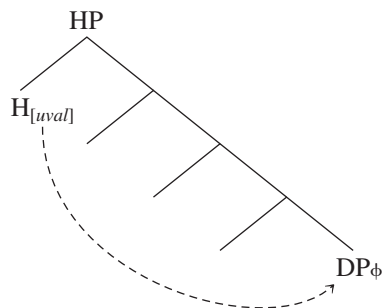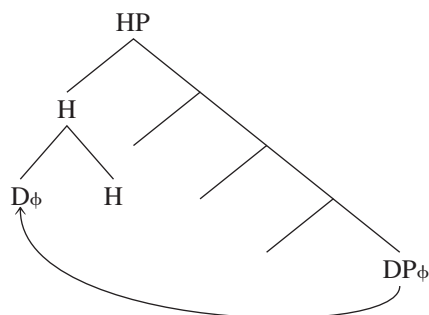
Concomitantly, there has been much discussion on how to identify whether a given ɸ-bearing morpheme results from true agreement or clitic doubling. Some of the authors cited above have suggested morphosyntactic diagnostics for distinguishing the structures in (1) (e.g., Kramer 2014, Baker and Kramer 2016, 2018). For example, if the morpheme in question is a doubled clitic, then it should behave like a pronoun or determiner, and behave as though it is linked to its associate by movement. In contrast, if the morpheme is genuine ɸ-agreement, then it is not expected to have such properties. At the same time, it has also long been assumed that true ɸ-agreement displays morphological properties typical of "affixes," while doubled clitics crucially do not (Zwicky and Pullum 1983, Nevins 2011, Compton 2016). However, as these latter criteria are often heuristic in nature, they are ultimately only contentful if the morphological properties in question correlate with other independent factors that differentiate ɸ-agreement and pronominal clitics.

This article presents a case study showing that the underlying status of this object-referencing morphology should be determined without appealing to its surface appearance. The argument comes from variation within the Inuit (Eskimo-Aleut) dialect continuum, in which object-referencing morphology targets ABS (absolutive) objects. I identify a constellation of grammatical differences between two Inuit varieties—Kalaallisut (West Greenlandic) and Inuktitut—and argue that

this follows from a dialectal split between object ϕ-agreement (in Kalaallisut) and pronominal clitic doubling (in Inuktitut). In Kalaallisut, ABS object DPs raise to a structurally high position (Spec,$\mathrm{Agr_O}$P, to be motivated later) and are cross-referenced by genuine ϕ-agreement, (2a) (Bittner 1994, Bittner and Hale 1996b, Woolford 2017). In contrast, on the basis of novel fieldwork, I propose that the raising element in Inuktitut is not a full DP, but a *ϕ-bearing D^0 doubling an ABS object DP*, (2b).

(2) a. *Kalaallisut*

$\mathrm{Agr_O}$P

DP$_\mathbf{ABS}$

$\mathrm{Agr_O^0}_{[val\phi]}$

VP

$\mathrm{V^0}$ ⟨**DP**$_\mathbf{ABS}$⟩

ϕ-Agree

b. *Inuktitut*

$\mathrm{Agr_O}$P

D$^\mathbf{0}_\mathbf{\phi}$

$\mathrm{Agr_O^0}$

M-Merger

VP

$\mathrm{V^0}$ **DP**$_\mathbf{ABS}$
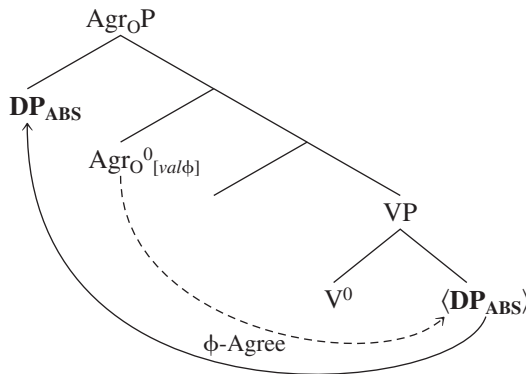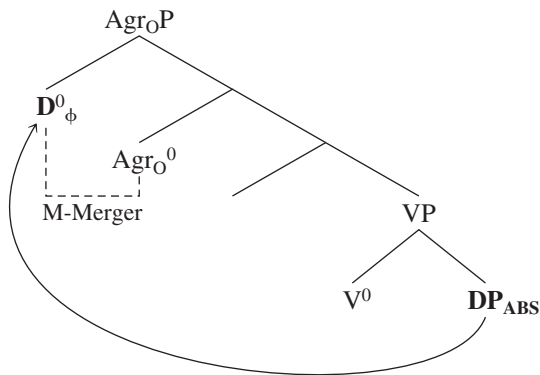
Crucially, the object-referencing forms in Kalaallisut and Inuktitut are morphologically uniform, and display properties typically associated with affixes and not morphophonological clitics. Appealing to morphological appearance alone would thus obscure the structural difference argued for here.

Evidence instead comes from an array of ABS *object asymmetries* in Inuktitut, in that ABS objects pattern distinctly from all other arguments, including ABS subjects. As I will show, the exact constellation of properties seen in Inuktitut is highly reminiscent of clitic-doubled objects crosslinguistically. Thus, whereas the verbal morphology encoding ERG (ergative) and ABS subjects in Inuktitut is true ϕ-agreement, its ABS object-referencing counterpart is best analyzed as a pronominal D^0. In contrast, these asymmetries are wholly absent in Kalaallisut, suggesting that

Kalaallisut lacks object clitic doubling—thus, its object-referencing morphemes are genuine ϕ-agreement, on par with its subject-referencing morphemes. Finally, as independent support for this proposal, I show that this split is not arbitrary, but may be subsumed within broader variation in the degree of *object shift* across the Eskimo-Aleut language family, building on an insight of Woolford's (2017).

The article is organized as follows. In section 2, I outline previous literature on the distinction between object ϕ-agreement and clitic doubling. In section 3, I provide an overview of Inuit morphosyntax, paying particular attention to the properties of the object-referencing morphemes under investigation. In sections 4–5, I argue that these morphemes in Inuktitut are the product of pronominal clitic doubling, and, concomitantly, that the analogous morphemes in Kalaallisut are genuine ϕ-agreement. I also develop an analysis of object clitic doubling that accounts for the morphological idiosyncrasies found in Inuktitut. Finally, in section 6 I show how this analysis sheds light on variation in object shift across Eskimo-Aleut.

2 Object Agreement vs. Clitic Doubling

Clitic doubling is the cooccurrence of a reduced pronominal element (a clitic) with a full DP. Unlike in clitic left- or right-dislocation, the full DP is in its base position, not dislocated, and the doubled clitic is generally optional. This article focuses on the clitic doubling of direct objects.[1] A canonical example of clitic doubling is given in (3), from Romanian.

(3) (**Il**)   văd pe Ion.
     him.CL see.I PE John
     'I saw John.'
     (Farkas 1978)

It has been claimed that many (or perhaps even all) cases of what has been taken to be object ϕ-agreement should actually be analyzed as clitic doubling (Woolford 2008, Nevins 2011). According to these proposals, these morphemes have the same underlying structure as the Romanian clitic in (3), despite surface appearances. This idea stems from the observation that, even in languages in which the object-referencing morphology does not *look* clitic in nature, it nonetheless displays the syntactic and semantic properties otherwise characteristic of clitic doubling (e.g., Riedel 2009, Kramer 2014, Anagnostopoulou 2016, Baker and Kramer 2016). On the other hand, it has been argued that there does exist object ϕ-agreement that is distinct from clitic doubling (e.g., Oxford 2014). The status of object-referencing morphology has also been debated in the context of the Inuit languages (Compton 2016, Johns 2017, Johns and Kučerová 2017).

Traditionally, diagnostics to distinguish genuine ϕ-agreement from pronominal clitic doubling have focused on morphological tendencies that distinguish affixes and morphophonological

---

[1] In some languages, the clitic doubling of direct objects yields certain readings of the doubled DP that do not arise when other kinds of arguments (such as indirect objects) are clitic-doubled (e.g., Suñer 1988, Dobrovie-Sorin 1990, Bleam 2000). The clitic doubling of direct objects may also contrast with the clitic doubling of experiencers of psych predicates or raised possessors; whereas the former is usually optional, driven by information-structural considerations, the latter is obligatory in many languages (e.g., Kallulli 2000, Krapova and Cinque 2008, Harizanov 2014, Kramer 2014).

clitics, rather than sentence-level properties (Zwicky and Pullum 1983, Woolford 2008, Nevins 2011). For example, Zwicky and Pullum (1983) argue that agreement morphemes often display allomorphy and morphological irregularities, while clitics are expected to be invariant; moreover, while clitics are able to attach to stems that contain affixes, affixes cannot attach outside of clitics. However, as noted above, these distinctions are not universal and do not obviously follow from any theoretically grounded differences between the two. Thus, it is not clear that there is a reliable link between affixes and agreement, and between morphophonological clitics and pronominal clitics.[2]

For this reason, Nevins (2011) offers an alternative diagnostic based on contextual morphological variance, proposing that, since agreement expones φ-features on some functional head (e.g., T^0), it may interact with other features on that head. Conversely, he suggests that clitics—D^0s that adjoin to their host (again, T^0)—are expected to be invariant.[3] This contrast is borne out in Spanish, in which subject φ-agreement is tense-variant, but object pronominal clitics are not.

(4) a. $\boxed{\text{Lo}}$ compr**ó**.
   3SG.ACC bought.3SG
   'She bought it.'

   b. $\boxed{\text{Lo}}$ compr**ará**.
   3SG.ACC will.buy.3SG
   'She will buy it.'

However, this diagnostic faces the same issues that Nevins identifies for Zwicky and Pullum's (1983) proposal. It is not obvious how to rule out this type of variance between a pronominal clitic and its host within a postlexicalist framework such as Distributed Morphology,[4] as these elements are structurally immediately adjacent (see (1b)). Furthermore, allomorphy between a verbal head and an adjacent pronoun is in fact attested in natural language. For instance, as summarized in Bennett, Elfner, and McCloskey 2019, different varieties of Irish display alternations of this very sort. In the Donegal and Mayo dialects, the forms of various verbal morphemes are conditioned by the presence of a subject pronoun (analyzed by Bennett, Elfner, and McCloskey as a bare D^0). The reverse holds in the coastal Munster dialects, in which the form of the subject pronoun itself is conditioned by verbal inflection. These effects—especially the latter—contradict both Zwicky and Pullum's (1983) and Nevins's (2011) proposals.

---

[2] See also Zribi-Hertz and Diagne 2002 and Tyler to appear for further discussion of this point.

[3] More precisely, Nevins (2011) proposes that, if a given argument-referencing morpheme displays tense variance, it must be genuine φ-agreement and not clitic doubling; if it is tense-invariant, then the diagnostic is inconclusive, not suggestive of either analytic option. In addition to tense (in)variance, Nevins proposes person complementarity (i.e., the Person-Case Constraint) and omnivorous number effects as diagnostics for clitic doubling. Neither of these effects exist in Inuit; hence, they cannot be tested. Moreover, Preminger (2011, 2014) has shown that omnivorous number effects can also arise in languages with genuine φ-agreement. Thus, in what follows I concentrate on Nevins's morphological invariance diagnostic.

[4] In the same vein, another purportedly morphosyntactic diagnostic for the φ-agreement vs. clitic-doubling distinction comes from the idea that pronominal clitics might be expected to resemble the independent pronouns of the language, if both are D^0s (e.g., Preminger 2014). However, morphological similarity is still compatible with a φ-agreement account, as there is nothing to rule out exponing a φ-feature bundle with some form that resembles a pronoun with the same φ-features.

Thus, I contend that it is more fruitful to frame diagnostics for clitic doubling around the *structural and derivational* relationship between the clitic and its associate. For example, if clitic doubling involves a syntactic dependency between a D^0 and a coindexed DP, then the pronominal status of the clitic should have consequences for the distribution and interpretation of the DP associate (see Baker and Kramer 2016).[5] A novel empirical argument for this idea will come from variation within Inuit.

3 Properties of the Inuit Case and Agreement System

The Inuit languages are a continuum of dialects from the Eskimo-Aleut language family, spoken across the North American Arctic and Greenland. The data in this article represent Kalaallisut (Greenland), based on previous work by Fortescue (1984), Bittner (1994), Berge (2011), and others, and Inuktitut (Nunavut), based on work by Beach (2011) and on my own fieldwork.[6] The Inuit languages are polysynthetic, and the order of morphemes within a word generally adheres to the Mirror Principle. A word begins with a leftmost root, followed by a series of suffixes corresponding to successively higher heads along the functional spine. Because agreement morphemes occupy the right edge of the verb complex and are morphologically conditioned by mood/clause type, they are taken to be located in the extended CP-domain (Johns 2007, Compton 2016).[7]

(5) a. V-MOD-TNS-NEG-**AGR.S/O**
         Niri-juma-lau-nngit-**tait**.
         eat-want-PST-NEG-2SG.S/3SG.O
         'You did not want to eat it.'
     b. V-ADV-TNS-**MOOD.AGR.S-AGR.O**
         Matui-saali-qqau-**vi-uk**?
         open-early-REC.PST-INT.2SG.S-3SG.O
         'Did you open it early?'

The agreement forms in (5) target both the subject and the object, which display an ERG-ABS case patterning, shown in (6a). In intransitive contexts, only the ABS subject is cross-referenced, (6b). Finally, the transitive ergative construction alternates with an antipassive construction, in which the transitive subject is ABS and the object bears MOD ("modalis") case, (6c); here, the MOD object does not appear with agreement morphology, which can only encode ERG and ABS arguments (Murasugi 1994, Bobaljik 2008).[8]

---

[5] Similarly, if clitic doubling is derived by movement, then it should display effects of movement; for instance, it might be subject to intervention or be able to create new antecedents for anaphor binding (Preminger 2009, Anagnostopoulou 2003, 2016, Harizanov 2014). However, because these movement-based diagnostics are difficult to test in Inuit, due to the relative freedom of word order and some complicating factors concerning the distribution of anaphors (Bok-Bennema 1991, Beach 2011), I will set them aside in this article.

[6] The unattributed Inuktitut data in this article were elicited in the community of Iqaluit, Nunavut, Canada, during three fieldwork trips in August 2016, August 2017, and October 2017.

[7] In the data below, I do not gloss declarative mood/clause type, for simplicity.

[8] The term *modalis* (MOD) is often used in the literature on Inuit to refer to the *-mik/-mit*-marked object in antipassive constructions, though other labels include ACC, OBL, or simply MIK case. Outside of antipassive objects, this case morpheme has a variety of functions, as it is also used to mark certain instrumentals, secondary predicates, and stranded modifiers of incorporated objects.

(6) a. Qimmi-**up Jaani** kii-lauq-**tanga**.
    dog-ERG   Jaani.ABS bite-PST-3SG.S/3SG.O
    'The dog bit Jaani.'   (transitive; ERG-ABS)

    b. **Jaani**   ani-lauq-**tuq**.
    Jaani.ABS leave-PST-3SG.S
    'Jaani left.'   (intransitive; ABS)

    c. **Qimmiq** kii-si-lauq-**tuq**   Jaani-**mit**.
    dog.ABS   bite-AP-PST-3SG.S Jaani-MOD
    'The dog bit Jaani.'   (antipassive; ABS-MOD)

The agreement forms often (though not always) surface as portmanteaux; in such cases, they do not separately encode the ɸ-features of the subject and object, as indicated in (5a) and (6a). Comparing the declarative and interrogative forms in (5), we also see that mood/clause type may idiosyncratically trigger suppletive allomorphy on the adjacent agreement morpheme(s) (e.g., Fortescue 1984, Dorais 1986).[9] The nearly identical forms from Kalaallisut in (7) show that these properties hold across Inuit.[10]

(7) *Kalaallisut forms*
    a. -vait 'DECL.2SG.S/3SG.O'
    b. -vi-uk 'INT.2SG.S-3SG.O'

Compton (2016) argues that the nonpredictability of these forms is expected of agreement markers, not pronominal clitics. Moreover, he observes that the mood-sensitive allomorphy passes Nevins's (2011) tense variance diagnostic—instantiated in Inuit as *mood variance.* As this variance is able to affect the collective realization of subject and object features in the portmanteau forms, Compton concludes that the object-referencing portions of these agreement complexes cannot be clitic in nature.[11]

    However, a close comparison between Kalaallisut and Inuktitut reveals several previously unnoticed differences concerning the distribution and interpretation of ABS objects—the arguments cross-referenced by object-referencing morphology. I argue that the exact constellations of properties reveal the object ɸ-agreement vs. clitic-doubling distinction argued for here. Crucially, this cannot be determined by examining the morphemes themselves—which, as shown above, are uniform in both varieties.

---

[9] Thus, when they do encode the subject and object separately, as in (31b), only subject ɸ-agreement displays this allomorphy.

[10] The declarative forms provided for Inuktitut and Kalaallisut differ slightly, because in Inuktitut the declarative is expressed using what is called the *participial mood*, while in Kalaallisut the relevant declarative-encoding mood is the *indicative mood* (Dorais 1988).

[11] In contrast to Compton (2016), Johns (2017) and Johns and Kučerová (2017) argue for a clitic-doubling analysis of Inuit object-referencing morphology. Their evidence is mainly drawn from Eastern Canadian Inuktitut dialects (including the varieties presented here), though they generalize their proposal to all of Inuit. As I will show throughout the rest of this article, however, this generalization is incomplete given the contrast between Inuktitut and Kalaallisut.

4 The Interpretation of ABS Objects across Inuit

It is often noted that ergative and antipassive constructions across Inuit display distinct semantic properties. While the exact effect is somewhat difficult to pinpoint, I will follow Bittner (1994) and Bittner and Hale (1996a,b) in characterizing it in terms of scope, that is, correlating it with syntactic height.[12] Regardless, it is almost universally assumed that the locus of the distinction differentiates ABS arguments (both subjects and objects) from MOD objects. However, I demonstrate below that these properties are true for Kalaallisut—but do not extend to Inuit as a whole.

4.1 ABS Arguments in Kalaallisut

In Kalaallisut, the contrast described above can be illustrated by comparing the interpretation of ABS arguments with that of other elements in the sentence. In (8), we see that ABS subjects and objects obligatorily scope above negation, while MOD objects obligatorily scope below negation. According to Bittner (1994:138), this also holds for other sentential operators (e.g., *-tariaqar* 'must', *-juannar* 'always').

(8) a. **Atuagaq ataasiq** tikis-sima-*nngi*-laq.
    book.ABS one.ABS come-PERF-NEG-3SG.S
    'There is one (particular) book that hasn't arrived.'　　　(ABS subj.)
    Available reading: ∃ > NEG; *NEG > ∃

 b. Suli Juuna-p   **atuagaq ataasiq** tigu-sima-*nngi*-laa.
    still Juuna-ERG book.ABS one.ABS get-PERF-NEG-3SG.S/3SG.O
    'There is one (particular) book that Juuna hasn't received yet.'　　(ABS obj.)
    Available reading: ∃ > NEG; *NEG > ∃

 c. Suli Juuna   **atuakka-mik ataatsi-mik** tigu-si-sima-*nngi*-laq.
    still Juuna.ABS book-MOD   one-MOD   get-AP-PERF-NEG-3SG.S
    'Juuna hasn't received (even) one book yet.'　　　(MOD obj.)
   Available reading: NEG > ∃; *∃ > NEG
    (Bittner 1994:2, 35)

Various authors explain this difference as a consequence of movement of the ABS argument to a structurally high position (see (9a–b)), taking scope above sentential negation (e.g., Bittner 1994, Bittner and Hale 1996a,b, Manga 1996, Woolford 2017; cf. Diesing 1992).[13] In contrast, antipassive (MOD) objects remain in situ within the VP domain (see (9c)). Under this view, the

---

[12] Other authors have described this distinction in terms of definiteness (Fortescue 1984, Hallman 2008), topicality (Berge 1997, 2011, Johns and Kučerová 2017), and specificity (Manga 1996, Wharram 2003, Beach 2011).

[13] In contrast, Wharram (2003) presents data indicating that these arguments take widest matrix scope, for example, scope out of embedded clauses and even islands. As movement cannot occur out of islands, Wharram argues that an account based on syntactic scope is insufficient, opting instead for a choice function analysis, building on work by Reinhart (1997), Kratzer (1998), Matthewson (1999), and others, though he also assumes movement of the object to Spec,TP, for reasons of case. Wharram's data are problematic for the received view of the Inuit syntax-semantics interface as being movement-driven. As his findings have not been replicated elsewhere in the literature, I leave for future research the question of whether these approaches can be reconciled.

interpretive contrast between ABS and MOD objects is fed by the syntax, as the scope of a given argument is determined by its structural height. As observed by Woolford (2017), this is reminiscent of object shift in Icelandic, which is optional for DPs and has similar semantic consequences; we will return to this parallel in section 6. Finally, the idea that ABS subjects and objects raise to a uniformly high position, above the locus of non-ABS arguments, fits with the syntactically ergative profile of the Inuit languages.

(9) a. *High ABS subject*
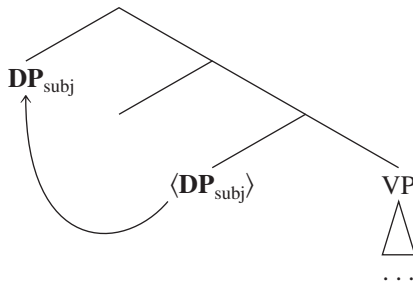
b. *High ABS object*
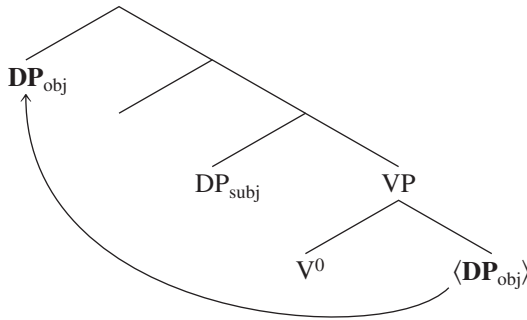
c. *In-situ MOD object*
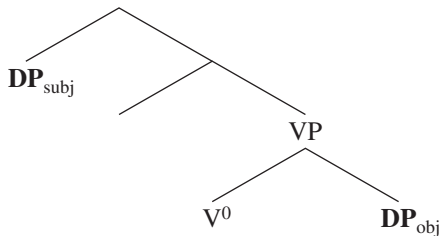
Another relevant property concerns the distribution of negative polarity items (NPIs). Under negation, a negative indefinite can be created by attaching the disjunctive clitic *=luunniit* 'or' to a quantifier or *wh*-indeterminate (Bittner 1994, Hallman 2008). Bittner (1994) additionally shows that the licensing of this NPI is sensitive to c-command. The examples in (10) show that, as long as the c-command requirement is met, the NPI may surface in any argument position, including ABS object position (10b). Since ABS arguments in Kalaallisut otherwise exhibit wide scope, Bittner

(1994) proposes that, while ABS NPIs undergo Ā-movement to the clausal left periphery, they reconstruct at LF in order to be licensed by negation.

(10) a. Atuagaq **ataasir=luunniit** tiki-sima-*nngi*-laq.
book.ABS one.ABS=or   come-PERF-NEG-3SG.S
'No book has come (yet).'   (ABS subj.)
(Bittner 1994:142)

b. **Kina=luunniit** taku-*nngi*-laa.
who.ABS=or   see-NEG-3SG.S/3SG.O
'He didn't see anyone.'   (ABS obj.)
(Fortescue 1984:138)

c. Kuruuni-nik   **marlu-innar-nil=luunniit** piqa-*nngi*-langa.
kroner-MOD.PL two-just-MOD.PL=or   have-NEG-1SG.S
'I don't have even two kroner.'   (MOD obj.)
(Fortescue 1984:221)

I now show that these properties of Kalaallisut cannot be replicated in Inuktitut.

4.2 ABS Object Asymmetries in Inuktitut

On the surface, the Inuktitut examples in (11) are morphosyntactically analogous to the Kalaallisut examples in (8). However, consider the available interpretations relative to the quantificational adverb *qautamaat* 'every day'. The ABS subject and MOD object may both be interpreted as taking apparent wide scope or narrow scope relative to each other, (11a–b). In contrast, the ABS object in (11c) appears to permit only the wide scope interpretation. Moreover, though he does not provide the relevant data, Beach (2011:62–63) states that the same pattern can be seen with sentential negation. The fact that ABS subjects and ABS objects pattern differently provides a first clue that the analysis of Kalaallisut described in section 4.1 cannot be extended to Inuktitut.[14]

(11) a. *Qautamaat* **ujaraq**   kata-qatta-tuq.
every.day   rock.ABS fall-HAB-3SG.S
'Every day, a rock falls (i.e., not necessarily the same rock).'   (ABS subj.)
Available readings: every day $>$ ∃; ∃ $>$ every day

b. *Qautamaat* **qimmi-mik** taku-qatta-tunga.
every.day   dog-MOD   see-HAB-1SG.S
'Every day, I see a dog (i.e., not necessarily the same dog).'
Available readings: every day $>$ ∃; ∃ $>$ every day   (MOD obj.)

c. *Qautamaat* **qimmiq** taku-qatta-tara.
every.day   dog.ABS see-HAB-1SG.S/3SG.O
'Every day, I see a dog (i.e., the same dog).'   (ABS obj.)
Available reading: ∃ $>$ every day; *every day $>$ ∃
(Beach 2011:53, 54, 55)

---

[14] See Carrier 2016 for similar discussion along these lines, based on sociolinguistic evidence.

Evidence from NPI licensing in Inuktitut corroborates this point, and moreover reveals that the wide-scope-like effect seen in (11c) does not arise from structural height—again, in contrast to Kalaallisut. In Kalaallisut, we saw that NPIs may surface in all argument positions, including ABS object position; recall, moreover, Bittner's (1994) analysis based on syntactic movement and LF reconstruction. In contrast, (12) shows that, in Inuktitut, the same NPI may appear in any position *except* ABS object position.[15]

(12) a. **Kina=luunniit** saqi-lau-nngit-tuq.
who.ABS=or   show.up-PST-NEG-3SG.S
'Not a single person showed up.' (ABS subj.)

b. Taku-lau-nngit-tuq **kisu-mi=luunniit**.
see-PST-NEG-3SG.S what-MOD=or
'She/He didn't see a single thing.' (MOD obj.)

c. *Taku-lau-nngit-tara   **kina=luunniit**.
see-PST-NEG-1SG.S/3SG.O who.ABS=or
Intended: 'I didn't see a single person.' (ABS obj.)

Given Bittner's (1994) analysis of Kalaallisut, we might initially want to analyze the ill-formedness of (12c) as an exceptional inability for structurally high ABS objects to reconstruct. However, this cannot be the case: NPIs trapped in syntactic islands (ruling out covert movement past matrix negation) still may not surface in ABS object position.[16]

(13) a. Jaani   iqauma-nngit-tuq   [**kina=luunniit** qai-lau-mmangaa].
Jaani.ABS remember-NEG-3SG.S who.ABS=or   come-PST-DUB.3SG.S
'Jaani doesn't remember if a single person came.' (ABS subj.)

b. Jaani   iqauma-nngit-tuq   [niri-lau-mmangaa **kisu-mi=luunniit**].
Jaani.ABS remember-NEG-3SG.S eat-PST-DUB.3SG.S what-MOD=or
'Jaani doesn't remember if he ate a single thing.' (MOD obj.)

c. *Jaani   iqauma-nngit-tuq   [niri-lau-mmangaagu   **kisu=luunniit**].
Jaani.ABS remember-NEG-3SG.S eat-PST-DUB.3SG.S/3SG.O what.ABS=or
Intended: 'Jaani doesn't remember if he ate a single thing.' (ABS obj.)

In summary, we have seen that, whereas ABS subjects and objects pattern together in Kalaallisut, Inuktitut displays ABS object asymmetries. Moreover, whereas ABS arguments in Kalaallisut can be uniformly analyzed as raising to a structurally high position, the exact nature of the asymmetries in Inuktitut indicates that the exceptional semantic behavior of ABS objects requires an alternative explanation. I will argue below that the key difference lies in the object ϕ-agreement vs. clitic-doubling distinction, which shapes the degree of ABS object movement across Inuit.

---

[15] See Hallman 2008 for a similar observation.

[16] Given an observation made by Wharram (2003) that ABS arguments in Inuit take widest scope even in islands, discussed in footnote 13, a reviewer asks how that bears on the present diagnostic, which relies on the opacity of islands. The crucial point about (13) is the contrast between ABS subjects and ABS objects.

4.3 Object Clitic Doubling in Inuktitut

The fact that ABS objects seem to be exceptional in Inuktitut requires an analysis that isolates this particular combination of case and argument position from the others in the language (e.g., ABS subject, MOD object). Now observe that ABS objects happen to be the only nominals cross-referenced by object agreement morphology. I propose that this is the relevant factor, and the semantic asymmetry arises because object-referencing morphology in Inuktitut is underlyingly *pronominal clitic doubling*. In contrast, because Kalaallisut lacks these semantic asymmetries, I conclude that the surface-equivalent morphemes in Kalaallisut expone genuine object ϕ-agreement.

The kinds of effects observed in Inuktitut are robustly attested crosslinguistically: clitic-doubling languages generally forbid clitic doubling of nonreferential, nonspecific objects, including negative indefinites, but require clitic doubling of referential (i.e., D-linked) or specific objects (e.g., Suñer 1988, Dobrovie-Sorin 1990, Franks and Rudin 2005, Kramer 2014, Baker and Kramer 2016, 2018). Examples from Romanian are provided in (14).[17]

(14) a. **Pe cine (*l-)**ai   văzut?
        PE   who him-have (you) seen
        'Who did you see?'   (Non-D-linked *wh*-phrase; no doubling)

   b. Nu **(*l-)**am   văzut **pe nimeni**.
      not him-I.have seen   PE nobody
      'I didn't see anyone.'   (Negative indefinite; no doubling)

   c. **Pe care   *(l-)**ai   văzut?
      PE   which him-have (you) seen
      'Which one did you see?'   (D-linked *wh*-phrase; doubling obligatory)
      (Dobrovie-Sorin 1990:352, 360, 364)

Although there is much debate over how to characterize and derive the semantic contribution of clitic doubling, this may be due to crosslinguistic variation in the exact effect that arises (see section 5.1). Regardless, the *directionality* of the effect appears to be universal: clitic-doubled nominals tend to have special interpretations reminiscent of those associated with pronouns or definite determiners, while nominals that are not doubled do not.

Indeed, this pattern is also observable in Inuktitut. We saw in section 4.2 that Inuktitut ABS objects appear to take wide scope and are incompatible with NPI licensing. Below, I additionally show that *wh*-phrases in ABS object position in Inuktitut are obligatorily D-linked, thus following the same general pattern.[18] Whereas simplex *wh*-phrases (e.g., *kisu* 'what') need not be interpreted

---

[17] A reviewer points out that an effect similar to D-linking is also seen in other Romance languages like French when *wh*-objects cooccur with participle agreement (e.g., Obenauer 1994, Déprez 1998). As Tsakali and Anagnostopoulou (2008) observe, in languages that display both pronominal object clitics and participle agreement with objects (and object clitics), the two phenomena are in complementary distribution, meaning that object clitic doubling is impossible if participle agreement is present, and vice versa. This generalization strongly suggests a unifying factor behind these two sources of D-linking, though a more thorough investigation is beyond the scope of this article.

[18] Note also that the appearance of wide scope is notoriously difficult to discern from surface-similar notions such as referentiality and topicality (e.g., Fodor and Sag 1982, Kratzer 1998, Endriss 2011)—which, in turn, are often taken to be properties of D-linking.

as D-linked in ABS subject and MOD object position, (15a–b), the same phrases *are* interpreted as D-linked in ABS object position, (15c).

(15) a. Context: You're trying to identify something that's partly obstructed.
   Kisu inna?
   what.ABS DEM.PRON
   'What's that?' (#'Which one is that?') (ABS subj.)

   b. Context: You and a friend are discussing what to eat for dinner.
   Kisu-mit niri-guma-vit?
   what-MOD eat-want-INT.2SG.S
   'What do you want to eat?' (#'Which one do you want to eat?') (MOD obj.)

   c. Context: You and a friend are now at the grocery store, looking at the options.
   Kisu niri-guma-viuk?
   what.ABS eat-want-INT.2SG.S/3SG.O
   'Which one do you want to eat?' (ABS obj.)

Crucially, this effect is *obligatory*, as illustrated with aggressively non-D-linked arguments[19] in Inuktitut (e.g., '*wh*-the-hell' or '*wh*-on earth'), expressed with the vagueness enclitic *=kiaq.* As predicted, they are ruled out in ABS object position.

(16) a. Context: You've been getting calls from an unfamiliar number.
   Kina=kiar=imna uqaluq-tap-paa uvam-nut?
   who.ABS=vague=DEM.PRON call-ITER-INT.3SG.S 1SG-ALLAT
   'Who on earth keeps calling me?' (ABS subj.)

   b. Context: You see that I'm experiencing symptoms of a food allergy.
   i. **Kisu-mi=kiaq** niri-qqau-vit?
      what-MOD=vague eat-REC.PST-INT.2SG.S
      'What on earth did you eat?' (MOD obj.)
   ii. ***Kisu=kiaq** niri-qqau-viuk?
      what.ABS=vague eat-REC.PST-INT.2SG.S/3SG.O
      Intended: 'What on earth did you eat?' (ABS obj.)

In summary, I have shown that Inuktitut displays a semantic asymmetry that diverges from Kalaallisut. Whereas ABS subjects and objects pattern together in Kalaallisut, in Inuktitut ABS objects contrast with all other arguments, including ABS subjects. On the basis of crosslinguistic parallels with better-studied languages, I proposed that Inuktitut ABS objects are clitic-doubled. Below, I develop an explicit derivation of clitic doubling that accounts for both the Inuktitut facts shown above and their morphological similarities with Kalaallisut.

---

[19] See Pesetsky 1987 and Den Dikken and Giannakidou 2002 for discussion.

5 The Morphosyntax of Object Clitic Doubling

5.1 Derivation of Clitic Doubling

Building on work by Baker and Kramer (2016, 2018), I propose that object clitic doubling in Inuktitut involves three steps. First, Agr_O^0 enters into an Agree relation with the ABS object DP, triggering phrasal movement to Spec,Agr_OP in the clausal left periphery, (17a).[20] This first step takes place in both Inuktitut and Kalaallisut. However, in Inuktitut the DP undergoes an additional syntactic operation—termed *Reduce* by Baker and Kramer—which converts the DP into a pronominal D^0, (17b). M-Merger then applies postsyntactically, rebracketing the specifier-head configuration in (17b) into a complex head, (17c) (Matushansky 2006).[21]

(17) a.

Agr_OP

DP

Agr_O^0

DP

①

b.

Agr_OP

DP$\Rightarrow$**D^0**
②

Agr_O^0

DP

c.

Agr_OP

Agr_O^0

D^0   **Agr_O^0**

③

DP

---
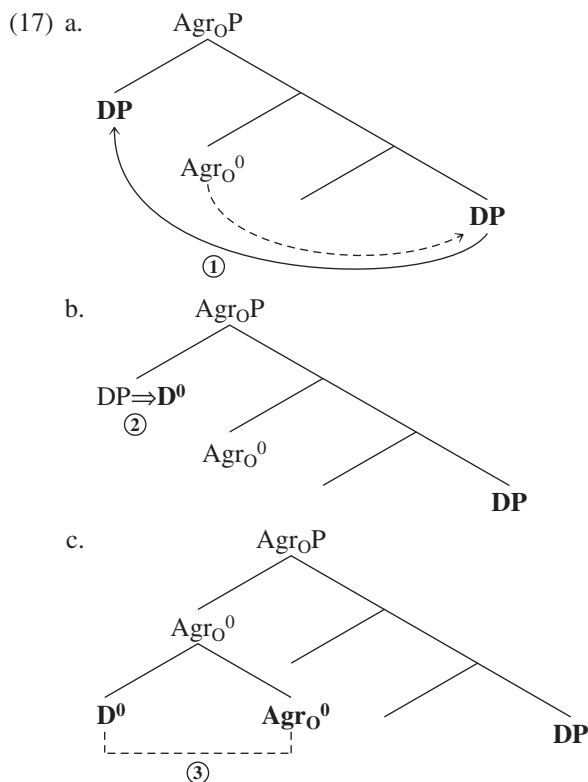
[20] The idea that clitic doubling is triggered by Agree is also assumed by Kramer (2014) and Preminger (2019), among others.

[21] The Inuktitut data are in principle also compatible with a "big DP" treatment of object clitic doubling, whereby the pronominal D^0 and its associated DP are generated as a constituent before the clitic undergoes long head movement to its final landing site (Torrego 1988, Uriagereka 1995, Arregi and Nevins 2012). However, as I discuss in section 6, it becomes difficult to reconcile this treatment with other Inuit varieties, such as Kalaallisut, that do not have object clitic doubling.

It is crucial that the operation that converts the raised DP to a bare D^0 takes place in the *syntactic component.* This contrasts with Harizanov's (2014) proposed DP→D^0 process of clitic doubling, which is postsyntactic. These approaches can be differentiated in their predictions for the interpretation of object clitic doubling at LF. Under the present analysis, because the clitic is created syntactically, this element is also interpreted as a D^0 at LF. In contrast, if the clitic is generated postsyntactically, then the raised element should be interpreted as a full DP at LF. Indeed, one motivation for Harizanov's (2014) account is to draw syntactic and semantic parallels between object clitic doubling and object shift—both understood as DP-movement under his analysis.

However, this approach is not viable for Inuktitut, given the contrast with Kalaallisut identified above. If the uniform interpretation of ABS subjects and objects in Kalaallisut is derived from syntactic movement of a DP (i.e., object shift), then the behavior of ABS objects in Inuktitut cannot also be derived by this process.

A syntactic operation like Reduce instead ensures that the interpretation of clitic-doubled ABS objects is distinct from that of genuinely structurally high elements, like ABS subjects. Building on work by Suñer (1988), I propose that the special interpretation of clitic-doubled objects arises from a Matching Principle imposed between the D^0 and its DP associate; the two must match in both ϕ-features and semantic features because they are coindexed members of a chain. In Inuktitut, pronominal D^0s are standardly interpreted as referential, (18). Therefore, quantificational DPs must be interpreted as D-linked when doubled by a pronominal D^0.
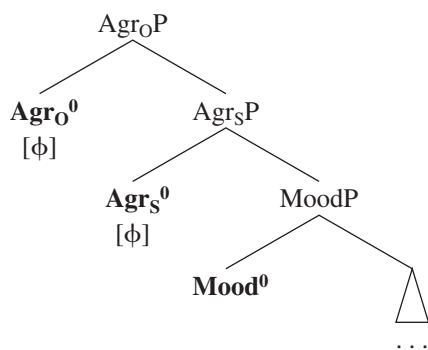
(18) a. Context: Jaani took a pencil from the pencil case . . .
   amma tuni-**janga**   Miali-mut.
   and   give-3SG.S/3SG.O Miali-ALLAT
   ' . . . and gave it to Miali.'
 b. Context: David bought a new shirt . . .
   #amma=lu Kiuru-p   niuvi-lau-mmi-**janga**.
    and=CONJ Kiuru-ERG buy-PST-also-3SG.S/3SG.O
   ' . . . and Kiuru bought it too.' (Unavailable: ' . . . and Kiuru bought one too.')

As independent evidence, Runić (2014) has observed that languages whose pronominal clitics are semantically flexible, such as Serbian (see (19a)), do not impose special interpretive effects on their doubled associates. Under the present analysis, this is because the Matching Principle can be more easily satisfied. In nonstandard Serbian varieties that permit clitic doubling, clitic-doubled objects can be understood as nonspecific, (19b).

(19) a. Nikola je   vidio **film**, a   vidio **ga**   je   i   Danilo.
   Nikola AUX.3SG saw   film   and saw   it.CL.ACC AUX.3SG and Danilo
   'Nikola saw a movie and Danilo saw it/one too.'
 b. Context: There is a considerable number of old and sick people in the village. However, there is no doctor in the village.
   Opština   **(ga)**   **novog lekara** traži.
   municipality him.CL.ACC new   doctor   look.for.3SG
   'The municipality is looking for a new doctor.'
   (Runić 2014:7, 78)

We are now in a position to derive the morphologically idiosyncratic properties of Inuktitut clitic doubling, as well as their morphological similarities with Kalaallisut. As illustrated below, the mood-agreement complex in Inuit can be schematized as comprising a series of contiguous heads, $Mood^0$, Agr_S^0, and Agr_O^0. In Kalaallisut, (20a), both Agr_S^0 and Agr_O^0 bear ϕ-probes, which are valued by the ERG subject and ABS object, respectively. In Inuktitut, (20b), the crucial difference is that the ABS object's ϕ-features are exponed by D^0, rather than by Agr_O^0.[22]

(20) a. *Kalaallisut*

```
                AgrOP
               /     \
          AgrO⁰      AgrSP
           [φ]       /    \
                AgrS⁰     MoodP
                 [φ]      /    \
                    Mood⁰      △
                              . . .
```

b. *Inuktitut*

```
                    AgrOP
                   /      \
              AgrO⁰        AgrSP
             /     \       /    \
          D⁰φ     AgrO⁰  AgrS⁰   MoodP
                          [φ]    /    \
                            Mood⁰     △
                                     . . .
```
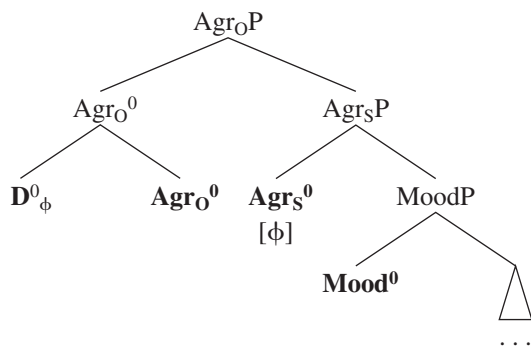
Because D^0 forms a complex head with Agr_O^0 in (20b), standard locality conditions on subsequent morphological operations—such as those responsible for portmanteaux—are met. As one illustration, consider the spanning approach to portmanteaux proposed by Svenonius (2012) and Merchant (2015). Because the relevant heads are contiguous and occur within a single extended projection (here, the extended CP), they may be exponed by a single morph. In Kalaallisut, the relevant span contains the boldfaced heads in (20a); in Inuktitut, the span also includes the pronominal D^0.

----

[22] As Kramer (2014:618) discusses, it is perhaps puzzling that the object's ϕ-features are not exponed on both Agr_O^0 and D^0 if clitic doubling is Agree-driven. Kramer suggests that this could be due to a principle of morphological economy, coupled with a preference to expone the pronominal element over the agreement head (Rezac 2008, Preminger 2011). Another possibility I offer here concerns differences in the featural specification of the probe in Agr_O^0, such that it bears both ϕ- and movement-triggering features in Kalaallisut but only the latter in Inuktitut.

In sum, I have shown that pronominal clitic-doubling structures are compatible with portmanteaux and other morphological effects, contrary to proposals by both Zwicky and Pullum (1983) and Nevins (2011). Because the pronominal D^0 is structurally adjacent to its host (which, in turn, may be adjacent to a subsequent head, and so on), there is no theoretical reason why these heads cannot interact morphologically.

5.2 Pronominal Clitics without Doubling

Whereas the discussion in section 4 uncovered an asymmetry in Inuktitut concerning the interpretation of ABS objects, I now provide additional evidence for Inuktitut clitic doubling based on distributional restrictions on *independent pronouns* in ABS object position. This, in turn, will help support the idea that clitic doubling is derived by *syntactic movement*, by delineating the conditions governing copy spell-out in clitic-doubling constructions.

I start by establishing that independent pronouns in Inuit are bare D^0s, not phrasal DPs (e.g., Postal 1966, Abney 1987, Elbourne 2005). This treatment is evidenced by the observation that they may function as determiners in so-called adnominal pronoun constructions (APCs)[23] such as *we linguists*. Although APCs have not been studied in detail in Inuit, Fortescue's (1984) grammar offers (21a), from Kalaallisut.[24] In contrast, pronouns in APCs in Inuktitut surface as ɸ-bearing bound morphemes on the NPs that they modify, (21b); this option seems to be unattested in Kalaallisut.

(21) a. *Kalaallisut*
kalaalliit   **uagut**
Greenlanders 1PL
'we Greenlanders'
(Fortescue 1984:110)
b. *Inuktitut*
ilisaiji-**tigut**
teacher-1PL
'we teachers'

I take this contrast to indicate that M-Merger of D^0 with a structurally adjacent head is a generalized rule in Inuktitut (though not in Kalaallisut), regardless of the exact syntactic environment. In the clausal left periphery, D^0 undergoes M-Merger with $Agr_O{}^0$, as shown in section 5.1; in the nominal domain, we see this operation apply in APCs, (21b).

Having established the structure of independent pronouns in Inuktitut, let us now turn to how they interact with clitic doubling. The Inuit languages are generally *pro*-drop, with the features of the unpronounced pronoun being recoverable from the verbal agreement morphology. However, although Inuktitut allows ERG and ABS subject pronouns to cooccur with subject ɸ-agreement,

---

[23] Terminology from Höhn 2016, 2017.
[24] The NP-D^0 word order presumably follows from Inuit's head-final nature.

(22a–b), ABS object pronouns are forbidden from cooccurring with object clitics. The examples in (22c) are therefore grammatical only if the overt pronoun is suppressed. Though there was some interspeaker variation in the acceptability of (22a–b) (with many speakers finding these examples slightly redundant, though otherwise fine), all speakers consulted judged examples like (22c) as completely ungrammatical. Furthermore, the consultant's comment in (22c) clearly suggests that the ungrammaticality is due to the cooccurrence of the ABS object pronoun and the object-referencing morpheme.[25]

(22) a. **(Uvanga)** Jaani   ilisaiji-gi-**jara**.
       1SG.ERG Jaani.ABS teacher-have.as-1SG.S/3SG.O
       'I have Jaani as a teacher.'   (ERG subj.)

   b. **(Uvanga)** taku-**junga** surusim-mit.
       1SG.ABS see-1SG.S   child-MOD
       'I saw the child.'   (ABS subj.)

   c. Jamesi-up   **(*uvanga)** taku-qqau-**jaanga**.
       Jamesie-ERG *1SG.ABS see-REC.PST-3SG.S/1SG.O
       'Jamesie saw me.'   (ABS obj.)
       Comment: "No, because you're saying, 'me,' and then, 'he saw me.'"

Since Kalaallisut is hypothesized to lack pronominal clitics altogether, we predict that independent pronouns may cooccur with verbal agreement in all positions, including ABS object position. Naturally occurring data from Berge 1997 show that this is borne out.

(23) a. **Uanga** eqqaama-**vara**   umiaasa-qa-raluar-poq.
       1SG.ERG remember-IND.1SG.S/3SG.O little.flat.bottomed.rowboat-have-CONS-3SG.S
       'I remember it had little flat-bottomed rowboats.'   (ERG subj.)

   b. **Uanga** Nuum-mi inunngor-**vunga**.
       1SG.ABS Nuuk-LOC be.born-1SG.S
       'I was born in Nuuk.'   (ABS subj.)

   c. . . . **uanga** cigaritsi-p   aju-le-**raminga**.
       . . . 1SG.ABS cigarette-ERG be.bad-begin-3SG.S/1SG.O
       '(I stopped smoking,) Cigarettes didn't like me anymore.'   (ABS obj.)
       (Berge 1997:296, 371, 415)

I propose that the asymmetry instantiated in (22) follows from the idea that the pronominal clitic (a D^0) and its associate (also a D^0 in this context) are identical members of a movement chain, established in section 5.1. Following Landau (2006), the pronunciation of movement chains is

---

[25] This inability to cooccur with independent pronouns is not specific to Inuktitut; it has also been observed as a property of clitics in dialects of Zapotec (Sichel and Toosarvandani 2018).

constrained by an economy condition that normally triggers deletion of all but one copy. Moreover, the choice of which copy to pronounce is subject to various considerations applying at PF. Together, these derive the cooccurrence restriction in Inuktitut: the higher copy is obligatorily pronounced because it undergoes M-Merger with Agr_O^0; deleting it would violate the Stray Affix Filter (Lasnik 1995). The lower copy is instead deleted to satisfy the aforementioned economy condition. In contrast, clitic doubling permits the D^0 and DP to cooccur because they are syntactically distinct.

Of course, object clitics often do cooccur with pronouns crosslinguistically. However, the pronouns in these cases are often emphasized or are otherwise understood as information-structurally salient. This is also true for Inuktitut, in which contrastively focusing an ABS object pronoun (boxed) obviates the cooccurrence restriction.

(24) $\boxed{\text{Uvanga}}$ Taiviti-up taku-qqau-**jaanga**, Carol taku-nngi-&uni-uk.
1SG.ABS Taiviti-ERG see-REC.PST-3SG.S/1SG.O Carol.ABS see-NEG-CTMP.3SG.S-3SG.O
'It's ME that Taiviti saw, not Carol.'

According to Landau (2006), this is because the economy condition mentioned above may be overridden by other conditions. In (24), this may be attributed to intonational requirements imposed on focus-marked elements. In (25), we further see that pronouncing an ABS object pronoun in its base position is also possible, if it itself undergoes M-Merger with the head of an adjacent element—for example, an adjective, (25a), or a nominal complement in an APC as previously discussed, (25b).

(25) a. Taiviti-up $\boxed{\text{igvi}}$-**kuluk** taku-qqau-**jaatit**.
Taiviti-ERG 2SG.ABS-dear see-REC.PST-3SG.S/2SG.O
'Taiviti saw dear you.'

b. Jaani-up piu-gi-nngit-**taatigut**   **ilisaiji-**$\boxed{\text{tigut}}$.
Jaani-ERG like-have.as-NEG-3SG.S/1PL.O teacher-1PL.ASSOC.ABS
'Jaani doesn't like us teachers.'

For concreteness, these patterns are schematized in (26).

(26) a. *No cooccurrence*

b. *Cooccurrence*

AgrₒP

Agrₒ⁰

D⁰   **Agrₒ⁰**   DP

D⁰   **NP**

. . .
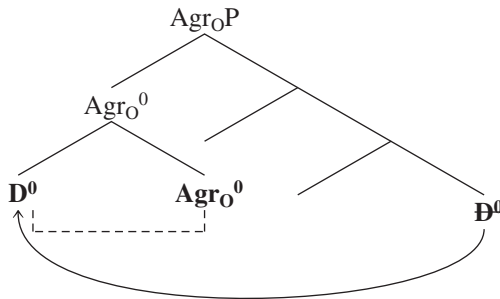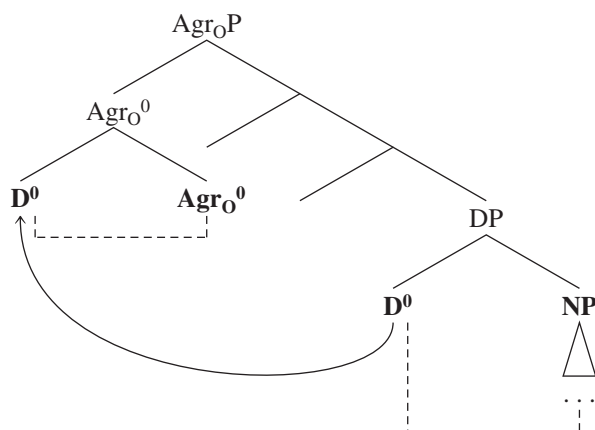
Again, none of the above discussion is relevant to Kalaallisut, in which bare pronouns may surface in all environments and in pragmatically neutral contexts, including ABS object position. As I suggested, this contrast is located in the different underlying structures of the object-referencing morphemes in Inuktitut and Kalaallisut. Because Kalaallisut only has genuine ϕ-agreement, the approach adopted here predicts an absence of cooccurrence restrictions between pronouns and argument-referencing morphology.

6 Broader Discussion: Object Shift across Inuit

In the remainder of the article, I provide further theoretical context for the object ϕ-agreement vs. clitic-doubling distinction across Inuit. Why is it that Kalaallisut has object ϕ-agreement while Inuktitut has object clitic doubling, rather than the other way around? Moreover, why do the morphological properties seen in Inuktitut appear so idiosyncratic from the perspective of clitic doubling crosslinguistically?[26]

I propose that this contrast can be tied to a broader point of variation in *object shift* across the Eskimo-Aleut language family, akin to the pattern in Scandinavian (e.g., Holmberg 1986, Vikner 2006, Thráinsson 2008). In Icelandic, (27), object shift of DPs is optional and correlates with a semantic distinction similar to specificity (Diesing 1992, 1996); object shift of pronouns is obligatory, though omitted here for reasons of space. In contrast, Mainland Scandinavian languages such as Danish only permit pronominal object shift, (28).

---

[26] This question was raised by an anonymous reviewer. Although this section suggests that the answer lies in the broader variation in object shift across Eskimo-Aleut, note that a prediction made by this article is that these properties are *not* as rare as previously assumed. Rather, if most previous literature has relied on morphological diagnostics for ϕ-agreement vs. clitic doubling, then we would of course only find ϕ-agreement as affixes and pronominal clitics as morphophonological clitics. If the contributions of this article are on the right track, however, then we expect the reanalysis of previous data to yield different results.

(27) *Icelandic*
 a. Hann les *sjaldan* **lengstu bókina**.
   he   reads seldom longest the.book
   'He seldom reads the longest book.'
   Reading: 'Given any group of books, he seldom reads the longest one.'
 b. Hann les **lengstu bókina** *sjaldan.*
   he   reads longest the.book seldom
   'He seldom reads the longest book.'
   Reading: 'There is a book longer than all the others that he seldom reads.'
   (Diesing 1996:79)

(28) *Danish*
 a. Studenten læste **den** *ikke* (*ikke **den**).
   student.the read it   not
   'The student didn't read it.'
 b. Studenten læste *ikke* **bogen** (***bogen** *ikke*).
   student.the read not book.the
   'The student didn't read the book.'
   (Thráinsson 2008:150)

As mentioned in section 4.1, the behavior of objects in Icelandic is parallel to that in Kalaallisut, though object movement in Kalaallisut is reflected by a difference in case morphology (ABS vs. MOD) rather than word order. Strikingly, Woolford (2017) draws an additional parallel between Mainland Scandinavian and Aleut, which is distantly related to the Inuit languages. In Aleut transitive sentences, the subject is always cross-referenced by φ-morphology, while the object normally is not, (29a). However, when the object is a pronoun, it appears on the verb *within a portmanteau with subject φ-agreement*, (29b).[27]

(29) a. **Hla-x̂** asxinu-x̂ kidu-ku-**x̂**.
    boy-ABS girl-ABS help-PRES-3SG.S
    'The boy is helping the girl.'
  b. **Piitra-m** kidu-ku-**u**.
    Peter-REL help-PRES-3SG.S/3SG.O
    'Peter is helping him/her.'
    (Bergsland 1997:126, 138)

---

[27] This is accompanied by a change in case morphology on the transitive subject, termed the *Aleut effect* (e.g., Bergsland 1997, Sadock 2000). See Merchant 2011 and Yuan 2018 for recent analyses of this alternation. Interestingly, certain Inuit varieties spoken in Labrador, Canada, have been observed to display a pattern similar to that of Aleut (Johns 1999, 2001, 2017). Why two very distantly related Eskimo-Aleut grammars have converged in this way is outside of the scope of this article, but presents an intriguing puzzle for future research.

As Woolford points out, this is highly reminiscent of the agreement patterns in antipassive (ABS-MOD) and ergative (ERG-ABS) transitive sentences in Inuit. Thus, the Aleut examples can be analyzed as featuring an in-situ object DP in (29a), but a structurally high pronominal object in (29b)—just as in Mainland Scandinavian.

Here, I point out an additional crosslinguistic similarity. In certain Romance languages (e.g., Standard French), pronominal objects that obligatorily move are realized as verb-adjacent clitics, (30). I suggest that the Aleut example in (29b) displays an analogous effect.

(30) a. Marie voit **Jean**.
      'Marie sees Jean.'
   b. Marie **le**   voit.
      Marie him sees
      'Marie sees him.'

This triangulation between Mainland Scandinavian, Aleut, and French is reminiscent of proposals that have recast Mainland Scandinavian object shift as pronominal cliticization (e.g., Josefsson 1993, Bobaljik and Jonas 1996). As Holmberg and Platzack (1995) point out, however, there are several morphological reasons against adopting such an analysis wholesale. To resolve this (though I leave a fuller development for future work), I suggest that all three of these language groups display object shift of a pronominal D^0—however, M-Merger applies only in Aleut and French, yielding a clitic.[28]

(31) a. *Pronominal object shift*
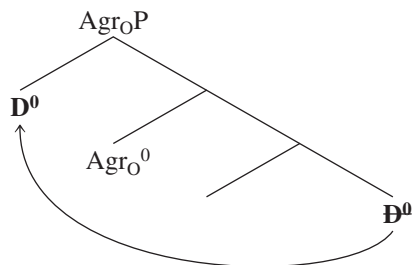
   b. *M-Merger in Aleut/French*

----
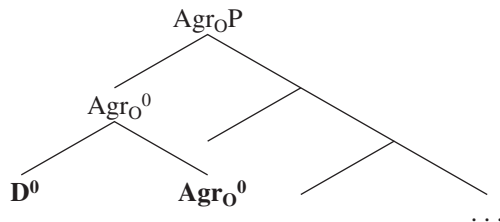
[28] In (31), I follow Johnson (1991) and Collins and Thráinsson (1996), among others, in taking the locus of pronominal object shift and cliticization to be Spec,Agr_OP.

The preceding discussion provides crucial new insights into the question of why Kalaallisut and Inuktitut display a ϕ-agreement vs. clitic-doubling split. As demonstrated in (32), there is an inverse correlation between the relative "pronominality" of object agreement and the degree of object shift permitted. Moreover, Inuktitut occupies an intermediate position between Kalaallisut and Aleut along both dimensions. As in Kalaallisut, object-referencing morphology in Inuktitut may cross-reference a full ABS DP; however, as in Aleut, this morphology is a pronominal clitic. Furthermore, although D^0s and DPs in Inuktitut may both undergo object shift, on par with Kalaallisut, the application of the operation Reduce (section 5.1) means that Inuktitut also patterns with Aleut in that the nominal element in $Agr_O P$ is structurally a D^0.

(32)

	Kalaallisut	Inuktitut	Aleut
Object morphology	ϕ-agreement	Clitic doubling	Pronominal clitic only (no doubling)
Object shift	D^0s and full DPs	D^0s and full DPs (which undergo Reduce)	D^0s only

Therefore, in addition to the independent evidence for object clitic doubling in Inuktitut, this section has provided broader context to the core empirical proposal of this article: that the object-referencing forms in Kalaallisut and Inuktitut are underlyingly distinct at a structural level, despite their morphological similarities.

7 Conclusion

In this article, I showed that genuine object ϕ-agreement and pronominal clitic doubling coexist within the Inuit languages. I demonstrated that Inuktitut displays a number of ABS object asymmetries and argued that this follows from an analysis in which subject-referencing morphology is genuine ϕ-agreement, while object-referencing morphology is actually clitic in nature: a pronominal D^0. Furthermore, the Inuktitut data presented in this article are at odds with many previous characterizations of the Inuit languages—particularly Kalaallisut (e.g., Bittner 1994). Unlike Inuktitut, Kalaallisut exhibits no ABS object asymmetries, which suggests that it lacks clitic doubling; thus, in Kalaallisut, both subject- and object-referencing morphemes are realizations of genuine ϕ-agreement. Finally, I demonstrated that identifying these two divergent patterns in Inuit permits a more nuanced understanding of variation within Eskimo-Aleut morphosyntax.

Crucially, I arrived at this conclusion without referencing *any* morphological diagnostics for ϕ-agreement vs. clitic doubling. Recall that Inuktitut and Kalaallisut have nearly identical agreement forms, shown in (5) and (7), and that they uniformly fail standard morphological tests for clitichood (both showing mood variance). Examining their morphological appearance alone would have obscured the main empirical finding of this article: that Inuktitut and Kalaallisut object-referencing morphemes are underlyingly structurally different. This distinction instead emerged

from examining interpretive and distributional interactions between these morphemes and the ABS objects they cross-reference.

More broadly, although there has been some work suggesting that all apparent instances of object-referencing morphology are doubled clitics (Woolford 2008, Nevins 2011), the analysis presented here suggests that such a treatment is too strong. Both are attested in natural language and may even coexist within a single language family.

References

Abney, Steven. 1987. The English noun phrase in its sentential aspect. Doctoral dissertation, MIT, Cambridge, MA.

Anagnostopoulou, Elena. 2003. *The syntax of ditransitives: Evidence from clitics.* Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Anagnostopoulou, Elena. 2016. Clitic doubling and object agreement. In *Proceedings of the VII Nereus International Workshop*, ed. by Susann Fischer and Mario Navarro, 11–42. Konstanz: Fachbereich Sprachwissenschaft Universität Konstanz.

Arregi, Karlos, and Andrew Nevins. 2012. *Morphotactics: Basque auxiliaries and the structure of Spellout.* Dordrecht: Springer.

Baker, Mark, and Ruth Kramer. 2016. Clitics are pronouns: Reduce and interpret. Ms., Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ, and Georgetown University, Washington, DC.

Baker, Mark, and Ruth Kramer. 2018. Doubled clitics are pronouns: Amharic objects and beyond. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 36:1035–1088.

Beach, Matthew. 2011. Studies in Inuktitut grammar. Doctoral dissertation, State University of New York, Buffalo.

Bennett, Ryan, Emily Elfner, and Jim McCloskey. 2019. Prosody, focus, and ellipsis in Irish. *Language* 95:66–106.

Berge, Anna. 1997. Topic and discourse structure in West Greenlandic agreement constructions. Doctoral dissertation, University of California, Berkeley.

Berge, Anna. 2011. *Topic and discourse structure in West Greenlandic agreement constructions.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Bergsland, Knut. 1997. *Aleut grammar: Unangam Tunuganaan Achixaasi.* Fairbanks, AK: Alaska Native Language Center.

Bittner, Maria. 1994. *Case, scope, and binding.* Dordrecht: Kluwer.

Bittner, Maria, and Ken Hale. 1996a. Ergativity: Toward a theory of a heterogeneous class. *Linguistic Inquiry* 27:531–604.

Bittner, Maria, and Ken Hale. 1996b. The structural determination of case and agreement. *Linguistic Inquiry* 27:1–68.

Bleam, Tonia. 2000. Leista Spanish and the syntax of clitic doubling. Doctoral dissertation, University of Delaware, Newark.

Bobaljik, Jonathan David. 2008. Where's phi? Agreement as a post-syntactic operation. In *Phi-theory: Phi features across interfaces and modules*, ed. by Daniel Harbour, David Adger, and Susana Béjar, 295–328. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bobaljik, Jonathan David, and Dianne Jonas. 1996. Subject positions and the role of TP. *Linguistic Inquiry* 37:195–236.

Bok-Bennema, Reineke. 1991. *Case and agreement in Inuit.* Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Carrier, Julien. 2016. The double object construction in Inuktitut. Paper presented at the Montreal-Ottawa-Toronto-Hamilton (MOTH) Syntax Workshop, 15–16 April.

Chomsky, Noam. 2000. Minimalist inquiries: The framework. In *Step by step: Essays on Minimalist syntax in honor of Howard Lasnik*, ed. by Roger Martin, David Michaels, and Juan Uriagereka, 89–155. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Chomsky, Noam. 2001. Derivation by phase. In *Ken Hale: A life in language*, ed. by Michael Kenstowicz, 1–52. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Collins, Chris, and Höskuldur Thráinsson. 1996. VP-internal structure and object shift in Icelandic. *Linguistic Inquiry* 27:391–444.

Compton, Richard. 2016. Mutually conditioned mood and object agreement in Inuit. In *NELS 46*, ed. by Christopher Hammerly and Brandon Prickett, 1:241–250. Amherst: University of Massachusetts, Graduate Linguistic Student Association.

Déprez, Viviane. 1998. Semantic effects of agreement: The case of French participle agreement. *Probus* 10:1–67.

Diesing, Molly. 1992. *Indefinites.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Diesing, Molly. 1996. Semantic variables and object shift. In *Studies in comparative Germanic syntax II*, ed. by Höskuldur Thráinsson, Samuel David Epstein, and Steve Peter, 66–84. Dordrecht: Kluwer.

Dikken, Marcel den, and Anastasia Giannakidou. 2002. From *hell* to polarity: "Aggressively non-D-linked" *wh*-phrases as polarity items. *Linguistic Inquiry* 33:31–61.

Dobrovie-Sorin, Carmen. 1990. Clitic doubling, *wh*-movement, and quantification in Romanian. *Linguistic Inquiry* 21:351–397.

Dorais, Louis-Jacques. 1986. Inuktitut surface phonology: A trans-dialectal survey. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 52:20–53.

Dorais, Louis-Jacques. 1988. *Tukilik: An Inuktitut grammar for all.* Quebec: Université Laval, Association Inuksiutiit Katimajiit Inc., Groupes d'études inuit et circumpolaires.

Elbourne, Paul. 2005. *Situations and individuals.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Endriss, Cornelia. 2011. *Quantificational topics.* Dordrecht: Springer.

Farkas, Donka. 1978. Direct and indirect object reduplication in Romanian. In *Papers from the Fourteenth Regional Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society*, ed. by Donka Farkas, Wesley Jacobsen, and Karol Todrys, 88–97. Chicago: University of Chicago, Chicago Linguistic Society.

Fodor, Janet, and Ivan A. Sag. 1982. Referential and quantificational indefinites. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 5:355–398.

Fortescue, Michael. 1984. *West Greenlandic.* London: Croom Helm.

Franks, Steven, and Catherine Rudin. 2005. Bulgarian clitics as K^0 heads. In *Formal approaches to Slavic linguistics: The South Carolina meeting*, ed. by Steven Franks, Frank Y. Gladney, and Mila Tasseva-Kurktchieva, 104–116. Ann Arbor: Michigan Slavic Publications.

Hallman, Peter. 2008. Definiteness in Inuktitut. Ms., University of Toronto.

Harizanov, Boris. 2014. Clitic doubling at the syntax-morphophonology interface: A-movement and morphological merger in Bulgarian. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 32:1033–1088.

Höhn, Georg F. K. 2016. Unagreement is an illusion: Apparent person mismatches and nominal structure. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 34:543–592.

Höhn, Georg F. K. 2017. Non-possessive person in the nominal domain. Doctoral dissertation, University of Cambridge.

Holmberg, Anders. 1986. Word order and syntactic features in the Scandinavian languages and English. Doctoral dissertation, University of Stockholm.

Holmberg, Anders, and Christer Platzack. 1995. *On the role of inflection in Scandinavian syntax.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Johns, Alana. 1999. The decline of ergativity in Labrador Inuttut. In *Papers from the Workshop on Structure and Constituency in Native American Languages*, ed. by Leora Bar-El, Rose-Marie Déchaine, and Charlotte Reinholtz, 73–90. MIT Occasional Papers in Linguistics 17. Cambridge, MA: MIT, MIT Working Papers in Linguistics.

Johns, Alana. 2001. An inclination towards accusative. *Linguistica Atlantica* 23:127–144.

Johns, Alana. 2007. Restricting noun incorporation: Root movement. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 25:535–576.

Johns, Alana. 2017. Anaphoric arguments in Unangax and Eastern Canadian Inuktitut. In *Studies in Inuit linguistics: In honor of Michael Fortescue*, ed. by Lawrence D. Kaplan and Anna Berge, 91–103. Fairbanks, AK: Alaska Native Language Center.

Johns, Alana, and Ivona Kučerová. 2017. Towards an information structure analysis of ergative patterning in the Inuit language. In *The Oxford handbook of ergativity*, ed. by Jessica Coon, Diane Massam, and Lisa Travis, 397–418. New York: Oxford University Press.

Johnson, Kyle. 1991. Object positions. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 9:577–636.

Josefsson, Gunlög. 1993. Scandinavian pronouns and object shift. *Working Papers in Scandinavian Syntax* 52:1–28.

Kallulli, Dalina. 2000. Direct object clitic doubling in Albanian and Greek. In *Clitic phenomena in European languages*, ed. by Frits Beukema and Marcel den Dikken, 209–248. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Kramer, Ruth. 2014. Clitic doubling or object agreement: The view from Amharic. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 32:593–634.

Krapova, Iliyana, and Guglielmo Cinque. 2008. Clitic reduplication constructions in Bulgarian. In *Clitic doubling in the Balkan languages*, ed. by Dalina Kallulli and Liliane Tasmowski, 257–286. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Kratzer, Angelika. 1998. Scope or pseudo-scope? Are there wide-scope indefinites? In *Events in grammar*, ed. by Susan Rothstein, 163–196. Dordrecht: Kluwer.

Landau, Idan. 2006. Chain resolution in Hebrew V(P)-fronting. *Syntax* 9:32–66.

Lasnik, Howard. 1995. Verbal morphology: *Syntactic Structures* meets the Minimalist Program. In *Evolution and revolution in linguistic theory: Essays in honor of Carlos Otero*, ed. by Héctor Campos and Paula Kempchinsky, 251–275. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.

Manga, Louise. 1996. An explanation for ergative versus accusative languages. Doctoral dissertation, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, ON.

Matthewson, Lisa. 1999. On the interpretation of wide scope indefinites. *Natural Language Semantics* 7:79–134.

Matushansky, Ora. 2006. Head movement in linguistic theory. *Linguistic Inquiry* 37:69–109.

Merchant, Jason. 2011. Aleut case matters. In *Pragmatics and autolexical grammar: In honor of Jerry Sadock*, ed. by Etsuyo Yuasa, Tista Bagchi, and Katharine Beals, 193–210. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Merchant, Jason. 2015. How much context is enough? Two cases of span-conditioned stem allomorphy. *Linguistic Inquiry* 46:273–303.

Murasugi, Kumiko. 1994. A constraint on the feature specification of Agr. In *The morphology-syntax connection*, ed. by Heidi Harley and Colin Phillips, 131–152. MIT Working Papers in Linguistics 22. Cambridge, MA: MIT, MIT Working Papers in Linguistics.

Nevins, Andrew. 2011. Multiple Agree with clitics: Person complementarity vs. omnivorous number. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 29:939–971.

Obenauer, Hans-Georg. 1994. Aspectes de la syntaxe Ā. Doctoral dissertation, University of Paris 8.

Oxford, Will. 2014. Multiple instances of agreement in the clausal spine: Evidence from Algonquian. In *WCCFL 31*, ed. by Robert Santana-LaBarge, 335–343. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Press.

Pesetsky, David. 1987. *Wh*-in situ: Movement and unselective binding. In *The representation of (in)definiteness*, ed. by Eric Reuland and Alice G. B. ter Meulen, 98–130. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Postal, Paul M. 1966. On so-called 'pronouns' in English. In *Report of the 17th Annual Round Table Meeting on Linguistics and Language Studies*, ed. by Francis P. Dineen, 177–206. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.

Preminger, Omer. 2009. Breaking agreements: Distinguishing agreement and clitic doubling by their failures. *Linguistic Inquiry* 40:619–666.

Preminger, Omer. 2011. Agreement as a fallible operation. Doctoral dissertation, MIT, Cambridge, MA.

Preminger, Omer. 2014. *Agreement and its failures*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Preminger, Omer. 2019. What the PCC tells us about "abstract" agreement, head movement, and locality. *Glossa* 4(1), 13.

Reinhart, Tanya. 1997. Quantifier scope: How labor is divided between QR and choice functions. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 20:335–397.

Rezac, Milan. 2008. Phi-agree and theta-related case. In *Phi theory: Phi-features across interfaces and modules*, ed. by Daniel Harbour, David Adger, and Susana Béjar, 83–129. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Riedel, Kristina. 2009. The syntax of object marking in Sambaa: A comparative Bantu perspective. Doctoral dissertation, Leiden University.

Runić, Jelena. 2014. A new look at clitics, clitic doubling, and argument ellipsis: Evidence from Slavic. Doctoral dissertation, University of Connecticut, Storrs.

Sadock, Jerrold. 2000. Aleut number agreement. In *Proceedings of the 26th annual meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society*, ed. by Andrew Simpson, 121–138. Berkeley: University of California, Berkeley Linguistics Society.

Sichel, Ivy, and Maziar Toosarvandani. 2018. Pronouns and attraction in Sierra Zapotec. Paper presented at Symposium on Oaxacan Linguistics, UCLA, 2–3 June.

Suñer, Margarita. 1988. The role of agreement in clitic-doubled constructions. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 6:391–434.

Svenonius, Peter. 2012. Spanning. Ms., University of Tromsø.

Thráinsson, Höskuldur. 2008. Object shift and scrambling. In *The handbook of contemporary syntactic theory*, ed. by Mark Baltin and Chris Collins, 148–202. Oxford: Blackwell.

Torrego, Esther. 1988. Pronouns and determiners: A DP analysis of Spanish nominals. Ms., University of Massachusetts, Boston.

Tsakali, Vina, and Elena Anagnostopoulou. 2008. Rethinking the clitic doubling parameter: The inverse correlation between clitic doubling and participle agreement. In *Clitic doubling in the Balkan languages*, ed. by Dalina Kallulli and Liliane Tasmowski, 321–360. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Tyler, Matt. To appear. Absolutive promotion and the condition on clitic hosts in Basque and Choctaw. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory*.

Uriagereka, Juan. 1995. Aspects of the syntax of clitic placement in Western Romance. *Linguistic Inquiry* 26:79–124.

Vikner, Sten. 2006. Object shift. In *The Blackwell companion to syntax*, ed. by Martin Everaert and Henk van Riemsdijk, 392–436. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Wharram, Douglas. 2003. On the interpretation of (un)certain indefinites in Inuktitut and related languages. Doctoral dissertation, University of Connecticut, Storrs.

Woolford, Ellen. 2008. Active-stative agreement in Lakota: Person and number alignment and portmanteau formation. Ms., University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

Woolford, Ellen. 2017. Mainland Scandinavian object shift and the puzzling ergative pattern in Aleut. In *Order and structure in syntax*, ed. by Laura Bailey and Michelle Sheehan, 117–134. Berlin: Language Science Press.

Yuan, Michelle. 2018. Dimensions of ergativity in Inuit: Theory and microvariation. Doctoral dissertation, MIT, Cambridge, MA.

Zribi-Hertz, Anne, and Lamine Diagne. 2002. Clitic placement after syntax: Evidence from Wolof person and locative markers. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 20:823–884.

Zwicky, Arnold, and Geoffrey K. Pullum. 1983. Cliticization vs. inflection: English *n't*. *Language* 59: 501–513.

Department of Linguistics
University of California, San Diego

myuan@ucsd.edu