1. Valuation and Agree

Morphological Agreement: (very general statement) Properties (features) of one element determine the realization of another element.

Minimalist Perspective:
- Morphological agreement reflects existence of uninterpretable features.
- Syntax is driven by the need to associate these with valued and interpretable counterparts.
- All displacement results from a drive to eliminate uninterpretable features. Feature valuation optionally triggers movement.

Syntax is an engine of valuation.
Mechanism of valuation is Agree (Chomsky, 1998)

2. The Debate

- Agree is an operation that licenses unvalued/uninterpretable features (uF) by relating them to valued/interpretable features (iF). Recent disagreement about the configuration in which licensing/valuation occurs:

Original answer: “Standard” Agree (Chomsky, 1998)

\[ \text{uF} \rightarrow \text{iF} \text{val} \ldots \]

Feature values always passed upwards

Core motivation: finite agreement with post-verbal subjects.
- Icelandic agreement with in situ nominative objects:

(1) Henni leiddust stráknir.
3SG.F.DAT bored.3PL the.boys
“She found the boys boring.” (Sigurðsson, 1996, 3)

- Arabic (partial) agreement with post-verbal subjects:

(2) qadim-a / (*/qadim-uu) came-3SG.M the.boys-3PL.M
“The boys came.” (Harbert and Bahloul, 2002, 45)

- Long distance agreement in Tsez and Basque with absolutive DPs “trapped” in embedded clauses (Preminger, 2012): movement above agreement target uniformly ungrammatical.

(3) [ T0 [ cp \ldots DP \ldots ] ]

Recent alternative: “Reverse” Agree (Zeijlstra, 2010; Wurmbrand, 2011)

\[ \text{iF} \text{val} \rightarrow \text{uF} \ldots \]

Feature values always passed downwards

Core motivation: cases where a semantic operator licenses multiple lower morphological realizations.
- Negative concord (Zeijlstra, 2012)

(4) Dnes nikdo nevolná nikomu
Today n-body NEG.calls n-body?
“Today nobody is calling anybody?” (Czech: Zeijlstra, 2012, 14c)

- Inflectional “doubling” / “parasitic” inflection (Wilkund, 2007; Wurmbrand, 2012)

(5) Han hade kunnat skrivit.
he had can.PTCP write.PTCP
“He had been able to write.” (Swedish: Wilkund; 2007, 1)

(6) Hy se / i dien / (*/diwan) wolln ha
he would it do.PTCP / (*/do.INF) want.PTCP have.INF
“He would have liked to do it.” (Frisian: Den Dikken and Hoenk, 1997, 3)

[ T0/ Asp0 \ldots \text{verb} \ldots \text{verb} ]

Clear evidence on both sides: both upwards and downwards valuation are attested.

Preliminary conclusion: Agree must be bifurcated into two different operations of valuation.

3. Independent Operations?

- Is there a principled distinction in where Standard Agree and Reverse Agree apply?
  - Core cases promising, each required in to account for very different empirical domains.
  - Standard Agree: relationships between arguments and clause structure
  - Reverse Agree: relationships between functional elements in a sequence

- Unfortunately, neat division breaks down elsewhere.
  - Can’t be distinguished by position of features:
    - Standard Agree might apply between heads and phrases; Reverse Agree between heads themselves.
  - But as seen already, negative concord involves phrases and downwards valuation.

- Can’t be distinguished by type of features:
  - Standard Agree might apply to features interpretable on DPs (q, WH); Reverse Agree elsewhere.

- Direction of valuation could be parameterized, by language or by feature (Baker, 2008; Merchant, 2011) → but this would weaken the predictions of the theory.

4. Towards (partial) unification

- A stronger theory is available: upwards and downwards valuation are not equivalent:
  - Asymmetry: upwards v-valuation is often defective; downwards v-valuation is not.
    - English: optional agreement with expletive there
    - Icelandic: quirky agreement only for number (Sigurðsson, 1996; Taraldsen, 1996)
    - Arabic: post-verbal agreement only for person and gender (Fassi Fehri, 1993).
  - Zeijlstra (2013): upwards valuation (i.e. Standard Agree) is parasitic on pre-existing downwards valuation (i.e. Reverse Agree).

  \[ \chi^0 \overset{\text{Reverse Agree is basic.}}{\rightarrow} \chi^0 \]

  \[ \overset{\text{Standard Agree is dependent.}}{\chi^0} \]

- Remaining question: why would parasitic valuation be defective?
  - Possible answer: only features accessible to upwards valuation are those on the head that is receiving features – cross-linguistic variation in distribution of q-features within DP.

Conclusions:
- Separate operations in one sense: upwards and downwards valuation do not apply in the same structural configurations, and do not necessarily yield the same effects.
- A single operation in another: upwards valuation is simply a reflex of downwards valuation (reverse of Chomsky’s 1998’s approach to Case).
- Predictions to be pursued: link between upwards agreement and Case; direction of any asymmetries between upwards and downwards valuation.