

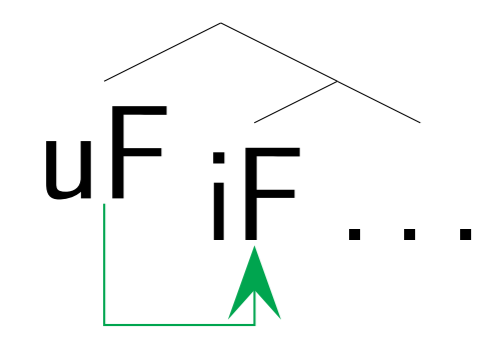
# Upward Agree is Superior

Bronwyn Bjorkman and Hedde Zeijlstra – University of Toronto and Göttingen University



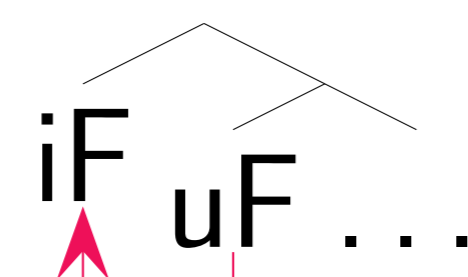
## 1. Upwards vs. Downwards Probing: the Debate

**Downwards Agree (DA)**  
(Chomsky, 1998)



uninterpretable features **probe downwards**  
(values passed upwards)

**Upwards Agree (UA)**  
(Zeijlstra, 2012; Wurmbrand, 2011)



uninterpretable features **probe upwards**  
(values passed downwards)

**Preminger (2014):** UA is **unable** to account for some cases of long-distance agreement (LDA), i.e. in Tsez and Basque.

**Our Proposal:** a slightly modified theory of Upwards Agree can **better** account for known asymmetries between LDA and local agreement.

## 2. Asymmetries in Long Distance Agreement

**Long-distance Agreement (LDA)** = Finite agreement with a lower DP

For DA, LDA is the **core case** of  $\varphi$ -agreement: Agree without Move.

**However** asymmetries in  $\varphi$ -agreement with higher vs. lower DPs:

I. Where both are available, LDA is often **defective**

- ▶ e.g. English (optional with expletive *there*); Icelandic (limited to number: Sigurdsson, 1996; Taraldsen, 1996); Arabic (limited to person and gender Fassi Fehri, 1993 et seq.).

II. LDA appears to always be **dependent** on features of the DP (e.g. Case, Topic).

By contrast,  $\varphi$ -agreement with higher DPs can be independent of Case / other Fs.

- ▶ Baker (2008): DA always Case-dependent → only possible with nominative or absolutive DPs.
- ▶ In other cases Topic- or Focus-dependent → e.g. Tsez, Algonquian.

Defectivity and dependency are **surprising** from a DA perspective.

DA also requires **EPP** features to account for all non-LDA  $\varphi$ -agreement.

**Can UA do better?**

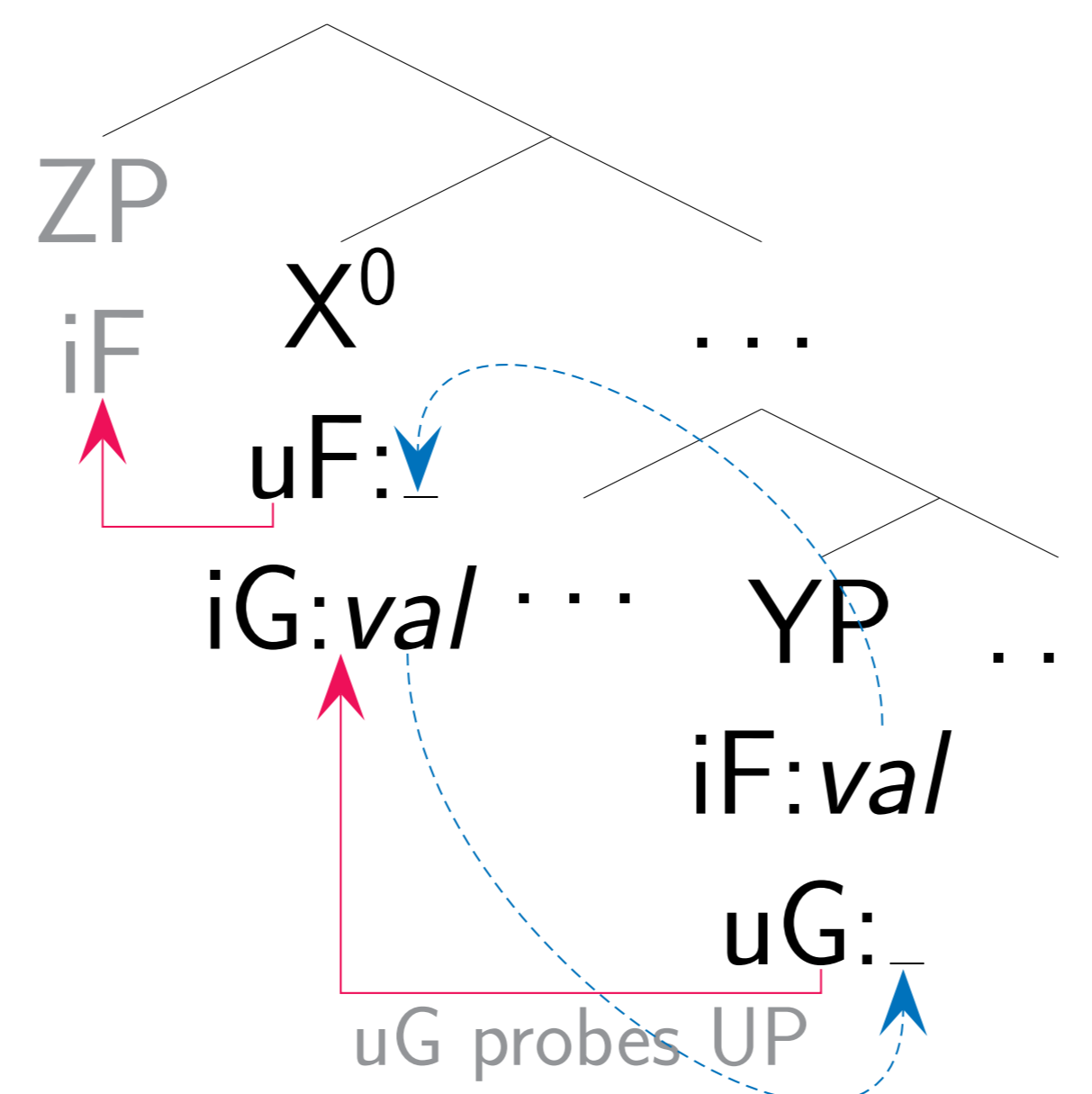
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For further detail, an earlier draft paper can be found at [ling.auf.net/lingbuzz/002350](http://ling.auf.net/lingbuzz/002350).

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## 3. Modifying Upwards Agree

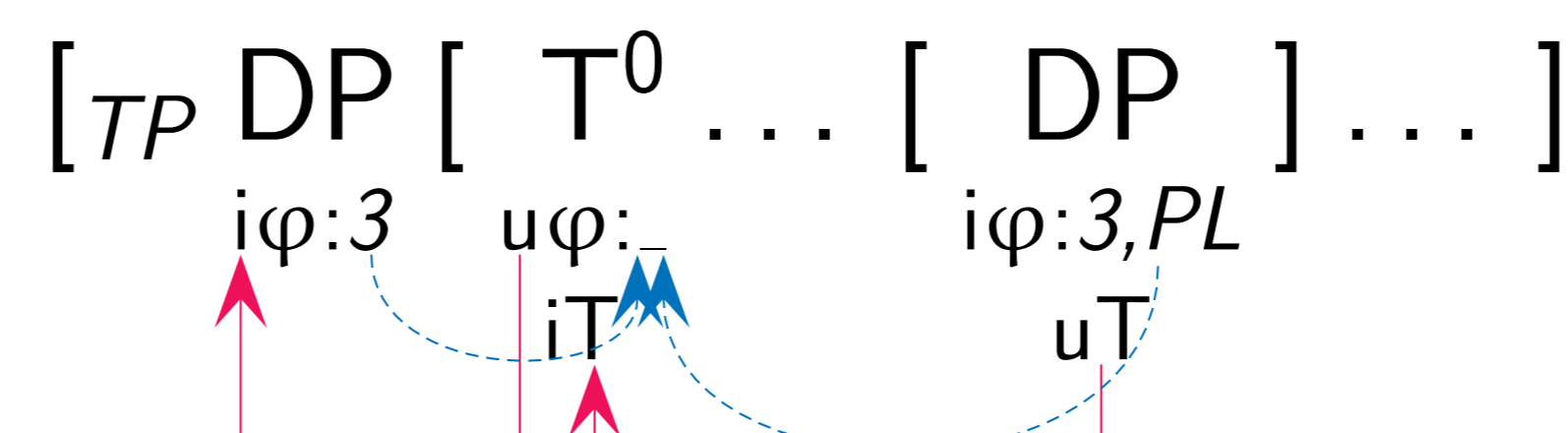


- ▶ Chomsky's **Activity Condition**: DA possible only if lower goal bears [uG] → all Agree relations are **bidirectional**
- ▶ (Upwards) Agree as a mechanism of **checking** → **valuation** occurs separately (and after) (cf. Pesetsky & Torrego, 2006; Arregi & Nevins, 2012).
- ▶ Valuation restricted to features on elements that are accessible:
  - Accessibility**:  $\alpha$  is accessible to  $\beta$  iff  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  are members of an (Upwards) Agree-chain, where  $\langle x_n, \dots, x_1 \rangle$  is an Agree chain iff every chain member  $x_{i+1}$  stands in an Agree relation with  $x_i$ .
- ▶ Accessibility drives not only valuation but also **movement** (i.e. EPP effects):
  - ▶ e.g. [u $\varphi$ ] on  $T^0$  must be checked by [i $\varphi$ ] that either Merges or Moves to a higher position.
  - ▶ if possible, Merge [i $\varphi$ ]; if not, Move accessible [i $\varphi$ ]; if none accessible, wait for later Merge.

## 4. Three Subtypes of LDA

**Case-linked LDA:** e.g. Icelandic

- (1) Henni leiddust strákarinn.  
3SG.FEM.DAT bored.3PL the.boys  
"She found the boys boring."

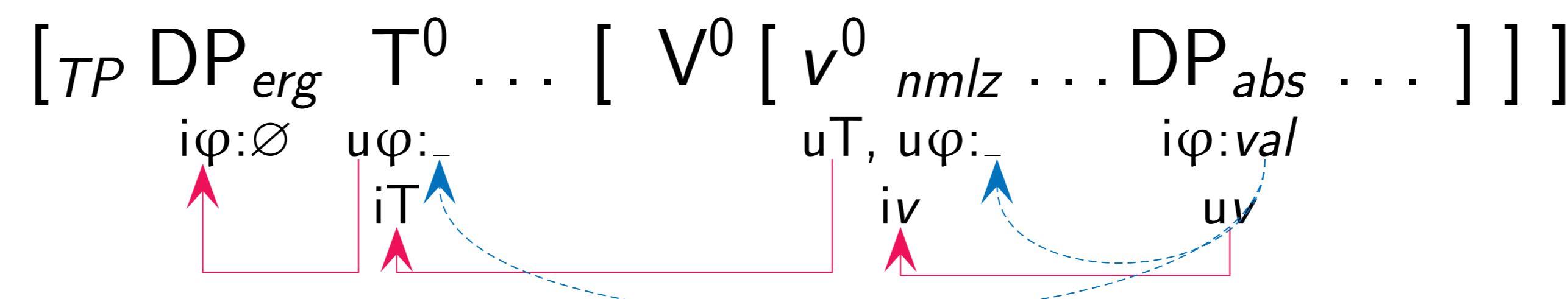


- ▶ [u $\varphi$ ] is **checked** by [i $\varphi$ ] on dative DP in Spec-TP.
  - ▶ ideally this would allow full valuation (i.e. Earliness) → but following Rezac (2008, a.o.), assume dative DP is **defectively**  $\varphi$ -valued only for person.
- ▶ [u $\varphi$ ] is **valued for number** by  $DP_{obj}$ , accessible due to UA for [uT] (= [uNOM], Pesetsky & Torrego 2002).

**Mediated Case-linked LDA:** e.g. Hindi-Urdu

- (2) Vivek-ne [ kitaab paṛh-nii ] chaah-ii  
Vivek-ERG book.FEM read-INF.FEM want-PFV.FEM.SG  
"Vivek wanted to read the book."

- ▶ Bhatt (2005): LDA with embedded  $DP_{abs}$  reflects Agree between matrix and embedded  $T^0$  (which converts embedded  $T^0$  to a probe).
- ▶ Alternative: restructuring complement =  $vP$  (Wurmbrand, 2003, a.o.)
  - ▶ embedded  $v^0$  marked as dependent via [uT]
  - ▶ embedded  $v^0$  checks [uv] on  $DP_{abs}$
  - ▶ matrix  $T^0$  checks [uT] of embedded  $v^0$
  - ▶ indirect relationship makes ABS accessible to  $T^0$
- ▶ Any additional embedded head would disrupt LDA (e.g. Appl<sup>0</sup>, cf. dative intervention in Basque LDA: Etxepare, 2006; Preminger, 2009).

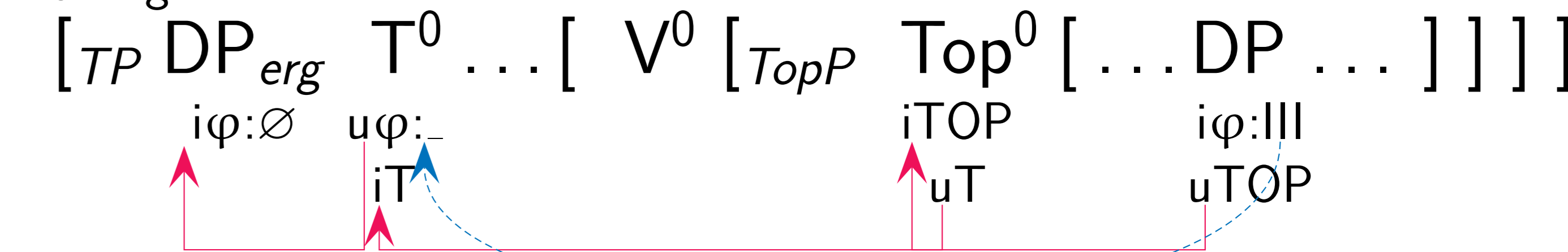


**Topic-linked LDA:** e.g. Tsez

- (3) eni-r [už-ā magalu b-āc'-ru-ii] b-iy-xo  
mother-DAT boy-ERG bread.III.ABS III-eat-PST.PTC-NMZ III-know-PRS  
"The mother knows that (as for the bread), the boy ate it."

- ▶ Polinsky & Potsdam (2001) demonstrate that LDA in Tsez targets only absolutive **topics** (similarly Algonquian: Branigan & MacKenzie (2002); Hamilton & Fry (2014))
- ▶ If an **embedded topic**: (alternative account possible if matrix topic)
  - ▶ [uTOP] checked by head in embedded left-periphery:  $Top^0$ .
  - ▶ embedded clause marked as dependent via [uT]
  - ▶ [uT] on highest embedded head checked by matrix  $T^0$
  - ▶ indirect accessibility arises iff  $Top^0$  = highest embedded head

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## 5. Conclusions

- ▶ UA **can** account for LDA phenomena.
- ▶ Also has further advantages:
  1. Accounts for **dependency** and **defectivity** of LDA.
  2. Dispenses with need for EPP features.
  3. Unification with other cases of feature licensing. (e.g. negative concord, inflection doubling, etc.)
- ▶ UA thus has **broader coverage** than alternative DA accounts.

**Challenge for DA:**

Show that DA can account equally well for the same **range** of data, without additional theoretical machinery.