

## ‘EXTERNAL’ AGREEMENT WITH UNEXPECTED TARGETS

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**Workshop description:** Across the world’s languages, agreement is generally limited to relations between a verb and its arguments (clausal agreement) or a noun and its dependents (nominal agreement), and it usually occurs between elements belonging to particular parts of speech within the boundaries of established syntactic constituents.

We focus on a radically different type of agreement, where the relation between the controller and the target is typologically and theoretically unexpected. Examples have been registered in abundance in one linguistic family, Nakh-Daghestanian, and have been sporadically reported for other languages of the world (Antrim 1991, Fábregas and Pérez-Jiménez 2008, Ledgeway 2011 among others). Consider example (1), from the Nakh-Daghestanian language Avar, where the postposition *žaniw* ‘inside’ has the neuter noun *tusnaq* ‘prison’ as its complement. Together, these elements form a postpositional phrase, *tusnaqalda žaniw* ‘in the prison’. However, agreement on the postposition, realized by the masculine singular suffix *-w*, is controlled by one of the verb’s arguments, the object Rasul:

- (1) 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.’

The agreement represented in (1) is striking: first of all, it is an unusual part of speech that shows agreement, namely a postposition. Secondly, the agreement happens with an unexpected controller: not the complement of the postposition, but the object of the predicate. The target and controller in (1) ultimately belong to the same clause but do not form a local domain either in terms of strict locality (sisterhood) or high locality (such as verb-argument relations), as defined in Alexiadou et al. (2013: 3-4).

Languages of the Andic group present an even more striking example: agreement in the nominal paradigm. The noun in the affective case (‘mother’) coding the experiencer argument of the verb *hago* ‘see’ has a morphological slot for agreement and agrees in gender and number with the absolutive argument of the clause, as (2) and (3) from Andi illustrate:

- (2) ilu-b-o                    q’inkom        hago  
mother(II)-III.SG-AFF    bull(III)[SG.ABS]    see.AOR  
‘Mother saw a bull.’
- (3) ilu-r-o                    c’ul                hago  
mother(II)-V.SG-AFF    stick(V)[SG.ABS]    see.AOR  
‘Mother saw a stick.’

These examples demonstrate that, first, agreement affects a much wider range of grammatical elements than previously thought and, second, agreement does not always correlate with syntactic structure; it can ‘sidestep’ syntactic relations, contrary to what has been generally assumed. To capture the latter property of this phenomenon, we call it ‘external agreement’. This is, however, just a shorthand for a more accurate description: ‘agreement of non-verbal targets outside their minimal syntactic phrase, yet within the clause’.

The aim of this workshop is to expand our understanding of how agreement works by investigating phenomena such as arguments agreeing with other clause-level arguments, adpositions agreeing outside the adpositional phrase, and agreeing adverbs and discourse particles, as represented in the world's languages. Our overarching research question is: **What does external agreement tell us about the structure of human language?**

To shed light on this problem, we invite papers that consider any of the following questions:

- What types of controllers and targets are involved in external agreement?
- What are the structural constraints on non-local agreement?
- What are the morphosyntactic properties of external agreement?
- How does external agreement develop?

We invite general typological and theoretical contributions to these topics, as well as case studies from languages, families or linguistic areas that relate to the main questions of the workshop.

Provisional titles and abstracts (up to 300 words) should be sent by November 16<sup>th</sup> to the following address: [m.chumakina@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:m.chumakina@surrey.ac.uk)

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