Structural Parallelism in TP and DP:
Case and Agreement in Azeri Turkish

Mojtaba Mollavali[1], adgar Karimi[2],
Gholamhossein Karimi-Doostan[3], Vahid Gholami[4], Adel Dastgoshadeh[5]

1. INTRODUCTION
The purpose of this paper is to provide a minimalist account of case and agreement internal to Azeri Turkish DPs. The DP-internal case and agreement in Azeri Turkish has direct bearing on the structural parallelism across syntactic projections of different categories.

In comparison to TP-internal agreement, DP-internal agreement has been less studied due to the limited empirical domain in which the possessed-possessor agreement is attested cross-linguistically. However, in languages of the Finno-Ugric family, including Finnish and Hungarian, and the Turkic sub-family such as Turkish and Sakha, the agreement of the head noun with the possessor obtains in a robust fashion.

2. METHOD
Azeri Turkish, also called Azerbaijani, a language of the Oghuz branch of Turkic, spoken partly in Iran, displays possessed-possessor agreement inside DPs:
1) a. mæn-ım   kitaf-ım
       I-GEN   book-1.SG
         'my book'
   b. Mohsen-ın   kitaf-ie
       Mohsen-GEN book-3.SG
       'Mohsen's book'

The question arises as to whether DP-internal agreement, as opposed to morphological concord, invokes Agree in the same structural configuration as does

---

[1] PhD student of Linguistics, Islamic Azad University, Sanandaj;
m.mollavali@iausdj.ac.ir
[2] Associate Professor of Linguistics, Department of English & Linguistics, University of Kurdistan, (corresponding author); y.karimi@uok.ac.ir
[3] Professor of Linguistics, Department of Linguistics, University of Tehran; gh5karimi@ut.ac.ir
[4] Assistant Professor of English literature, Islamic Azad University, Sanandaj; vahidgholami@iausdj.ac.ir
[5] Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics, Islamic Azad University, Sanandaj; adastgoshadeh@iausdj.ac.ir

TP-internal agreement.

The robust correlation of agreement and case is cross-linguistically restricted to subject-verb agreement, which is theoretically conceptualized as resulting from Agree in the TP configuration. Under this view, the uninterpretable phi-features on the T probe into the c-command domain of T and locate the agent or patient (in unergative/transitive and unaccusative structures respectively) as the closest active goal. The matching interpretable phi-features on the goal value and delete the corresponding uninterpretable features on T, and, in turn, T gets the uninterpretable case feature on the goal valued as nominative, yielding the traditional subject-verb agreement. The analysis of the data in Azeri Turkish provides evidence that the same structural configuration underlying subject-verb agreement obtains in DP-internal agreement.

Specifically, the possessed-possessor agreement is shown to be the morphological instantiation of Agree between a D(determiner) head bearing uninterpretable phi-features and a possessor NP, in the Spec, NP, with a matching set of interpretable phi-features. Having its uninterpretable phi features valued by the corresponding features on the possessor, D, in turn, gets the case feature on the possessor, valued as genitive:
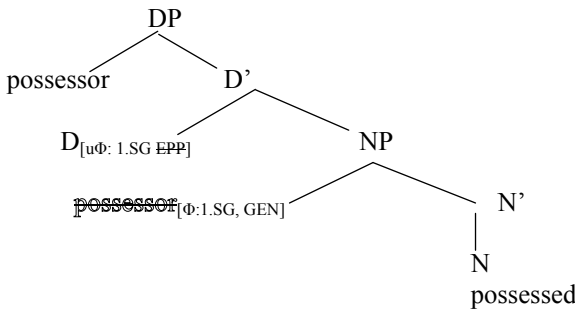

Figure 1. The syntactic configuration of DP-internal Agree

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The structural parallelism drawn between TP-internal agreement and DP-internal agreements is motivated on three grounds.

First, if D is the locus of phi-features agreement, it follows that possessor *pro*'s can be licensed in the same way that a richly inflected T licenses subject *pro*'s (on structural licensing and identification conditions on *pro*, see Rizzi 1986). This prediction is borne out in Azeri Turkish as a *pro*-drop language:

2) a. sæn-ı(n) kitav-yı(n)
        you-GEN book-2.SG
        'your book'
    b. (*pro*) kitav-yı(n)
            book-2.SG
        'your book'
3) a. ʔular-(ın) kitaf-ları
        they-GEN book-3.PL
        'their book'
    b. (*pro*) kitaf-ları

book-3.PL
'their book'

Second, the morphological instantiation of D-possessor Agree as the possessed-possessor agreement is argued to be derived from the lowering of the inflectional morphemes from D to N, in the sense of Embick and Noyer (2001). In the same vein, subject-verb agreement of Azeri Turkish is shown to be following from the lowering of the inflectional morphemes from T to the v-V complex. Of particular interest in the morphological realization of DP-internal agreement is the striking parallelism between the morphological exponence of the inflection morphemes realizing DP-internal agreement and the corresponding inflectional morphemes instantiating TP-internal agreement (subject-verb agreement). The following data show the parallelism in the morphological makeup of the relevant inflectional morphemes.

4) gedd-ım   'I went.'
       gedd-ey   'You went.'
       gedd-e   'He went.'
       gedd-ex/k   'We went.'
       gedd-(ey)ız 'You[pl] went.'
       gedde-lær   'They went.'

5) kitav-ım   'my book'
       kitav-ey   'your book'
       kitav-e   'his book'
       kitav-ım-ız   'our book'
       kitav-ey-ız   'your[pl] book'
       kitaf-lare   'our book'

Third, the lowering of T (inflection morphemes) into N, at PF, is not blocked by the intervention of in-between material such as adjuncts. This is in line with the standard assumption that lowering at PF is a downward head to head movement, which is unaffected by the intervention of adjunct materials. The following data show that the possessed-possessor agreement is not hindered by the presence of adjectives:

6) Muhsen-ı(n)   bowok kitav-ı
       Mohesen-GEN big   book-3.SG
       'Mohsen's big book;
7) biz-ım   čox yaxče kitav-ımız
       we-GEN very good   book-1.PL
       'our very good book'

4. CONCLUSION

The instances of parallelism observed in the structural configurations underlying Agree within TP and DP domains provide compelling evidence substantiating the theoretical stance that syntactic projections of diverse categories are structurally parallel to one another. In particular, if, following Chomsky (2000), Merge and Agree are posited to be the basic operations underlying the derivation of syntactic structures in Narrow Syntax, it follows that syntactic projections are derived in a parallel fashion, regardless of their categories.