

Word-external allomorphy is not concord: evidence from Ingush

Preface It has since long been observed that allomorphy can not only be conditioned by internal inflectional features of a phrase, (such as number-conditioned allomorphy in English *person-people*) but also by active morphosyntactic features of other phrases in its domain (Bobaljik&Harley 2017). An example of such position, often referred to as Word-External Allomorphy (WEA), is provided below, where in each case two distinct allomorphs of a verb are chosen depending on the number of the verb's argument.

(1) Yaqui (Hiaki) (Bobaljik&Harley 2017)

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|----|---------------------|----|--------------------|
| a. | Aapo weye | b. | Vempo kate |
| | 3PL walk.PL | | 3SG walk.SG |
| | 'They are walking.' | | 'S/he is walking.' |

Recent research has suggested that WEA cannot be reduced to Predicative Agreement (Toosarvandani (2016); Bobaljik&Harley (2017); Weisser (2019)). However, examples of WEA are not limited to verbal/clausal domain and are found in the nominal domain as well. One well known example of adnominal word-external allomorphy are cases of number-condition suppletive adjectives in Swedish:

(2) Number-conditioned NP-internal WEA

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|----|------------------|----|----------------------------------|
| a. | en liten snigel | b. | små sniglar |
| | a little snail | | little snails |
| | 'a little snail' | | 'little snails' (Adamson 2024:4) |

To our knowledge, the question of whether WEA is a distinct operation from concord (i.e. NP-internal Agreement) has never been explicitly raised in the literature (see Adamson (2024) who assumes that adjectival suppletion involves AGREE without providing evidence to that effect). The paper argues that it is not the case and that suppletion and agreement/concord are distinguishable at least in some languages. **Data.** The data presented here was collected with three speakers in Ingushetia. In Ingush (Nakh-Dagestanian), number (SG vs. PL) in adjectives is encoded either on the class prefix (5), or (3) in a suppletive way. One (perhaps the sole) example of full number-conditioned suppletion in Ingush adjectives is the pair *zwamiga-kegii* 'small'. The pair is usually taken to represent a strict number opposition: *zwamiga SG-kegii PL*. (Nichols 2011, Norris 2022). However, speakers report that in most plural cases, both forms can be used with no tangible difference in meaning. In contrast, in strict singular contexts only the singular form can be used.

- (3) a. *zwamiga/kegii cisk-až* 'small cats'
b. *zwamiga/*kegii cisk* 'small cat'

Furthermore, the distribution of the two suppletive forms is different in idiomatic expressions, most prominently with the noun *sag/nax* 'person/people'. The adjective *zwamiga-kegii* can form idiomatic relation with this noun yielding the meaning 'young person'/'young people'. However, in plural contexts, only the *kegii* form can be used (3). In the singular, only the *zwamiga* form can be used for both idiomatic and non-idiomatic readings.

- (4) a. *kegii nax* 'young people', 'small people'
b. *zwamiga nax ** 'young people', 'small people'
c. *zwamiga/*kegii sag* 'small person', 'young person',

Next, a similar pattern is observed with the adjective *CL-oaqqa/CL-oaqqii* 'big' which involves partial suppletion. Similarly to the adjective *zwamiga-kegii* 'small', the second form *CL-oaqqii* is reserved for strictly plural contexts, while the form *CL-oaqqa* can be used both in plural and singular contexts. Furthermore, similarly to *zwamiga-kegii* 'small', the *CL-oaqqii* form should be used in plural contexts on idiomatic readings, while both forms can be used in plural contexts on non-idiomatic readings. The class prefix tracks the number of the noun regardless of the idiomatic/non-idiomatic distinction (The plural prefix for *ust* is *d-*, the plural prefix for *sag/nax* is *b-*; the singular prefix for *sag/nax* is *v-*).

(12) **Mismatch in ellipsis with $\sqrt{\text{SMALL}}$**

a. C'ahw ca zwamiga cisk d-oal-i je dukkxa ~~kegii~~ eisk-az ?
home one small cat SG-be-Q CONJ many small.PL cat-PL
'Is there one small cat in the house or many small cats?'

b. C'ahw dukxa kegii cisk-az d-oakx-i je ca zwamiga eisk ?
home one small cat-PL SG-be.PL-Q CONJ one small.SG cat
'Is there many small cats in the house or one?'

Implications for the theory of allomorphy and agreement. The main takeaway from the Ingush data presented above is that WEA and concord can co-occur in the same language and are in principle distinguishable from each other. **Selected bibliography** Adamson, L. J. (2024). Root suppletion in Swedish as contextual allomorphy. *The Journal of Comparative Germanic Linguistics*, 27(1), 1-42. Bobaljik, J. D. Harley. H. (2017) Suppletion is Local: Evidence from Hiaki Nichols, J. (2011). *Ingush grammar* (Vol. 143). Univ of California Press. Norris, M. (2022). Nominal inflection in Distributed Morphology. *Ms., lingbuzz/006516*. Weisser, P., (2019) "Telling allomorphy from agreement", *Glossa: a journal of general linguistics* 4(1):86.