UNACCUSATIVE STRUCTURES AND VERBAL SUPPLETION IN ME’PHAA

Philip T. Duncan, University of Kansas

WHITHER SUPPLETION?

1 | Suppletion is part of Me’phaa’s rich agreement paradigm

Me’phaa (ISO 639-3: tcf) verbal agreement: Three “ergativity properties” → Four-way split-S system

- Agreement sensitive to syntactic context
- Patterns derived directly from syntactic structures
- Verbs of inherently directed motion on a path suppletive

2 | Where is the trigger for suppletion in the syntax?

Bobaljik & Harley (2017): Strict locality conditions constrain what can trigger suppletion

- Only internal arguments
- Arguments must be sister to the verb root (e.g., DP₂ but not DP₁ in (3))
- No XP between trigger & target
- Suppletion isn’t agreement

3 | Me’phaa unaccusativities: Two unaccusative types, only one allows suppletion

- All unaccusatives: Person & number agreement, “object” clitic =ne can encode inanimate S ((4-a)-(5-a))
- Statives, CoS & inchoatives: Suffixal agreement incompatible w/ “iterative” (4-b)
- Inherently directed motion: Suppletive agreement compatible w/ “iterative” (5-b)

ANALYSIS

4 | Two unaccusative structures

Two unaccusative structures allow suppletion via agreement (Thornton 2018), contra B&H 2017

- Suppletion is not strictly local (Oseki, Tosasarvandani 2016, contra B&H 2017, Thornton 2018)

CONCLUSION

Me’phaa V suppletion is local agreement, but with Pred, not V₀.