CHAPTER 6
EKEGUSII PREDICATE-ARGUMENT AGREEMENT

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Considering the term grammatical agreement as coterminous with grammatical concord, Ferguson and Barlow define it as a phenomenon in which, "a grammatical element X matches a grammatical element Y in property Z within a specified configuration" (Ferguson and Barlow 1988:3). In other words, agreement refers to the matching of features between elements in a definable syntactic domain (Corbett 1988). In this state of affairs, an element called the target, for example, an adjective or demonstrative, agrees in number and gender with another element termed the controller, for instance, the noun in a DP. The Kiswahili sentences in (1) exemplify this phenomenon:

1 (Kiswahili)

(a) **Ki-jiko** **ki-li-kuw-a** **ki-me-pote-a**.
   7-spoon 7-PST-be-FV 7-PFCT-be.lost-FV
   'The spoon had been lost.'

(b) **Vi-jiko** **vi-li-kuw-a** **vi-me-pote-a**.
   8-spoon 8-PST-be-FV 8-PFCT-be.lost-FV
   'The spoons had been lost'.

(c) **M-toto** **a-li-kuw-a** **a-me-pote-a**.
   1-child 1-PST-be-FV 1-PFCT-be.lost-FV
   'The child had been lost'.

(d) **Wa-toto** **wa-li-kuw-a** **wa-me-pote-a**
   2-child 2-PST-be-FV 2-PFCT-be.lost-FV.
   'The children had been lost'.
In (a), for example, the number and gender features of the lexical DP, *ki-jiko*, are marked on both verbs of the compound tense (CT), thereby establishing matching of features between the verbs and the external argument DP. It is the tallying of the features of the target with those of the controller which is termed agreement.

The focus of this chapter is on the syntax of such agreement patterns within two domains, namely the DP and TP. Following Henderson (2005), further evidence is provided from EkeGusii to show that agreement and concord are distinct grammatical phenomena.

**6.2 AGREEMENT FEATURES, DIRECTIONALITY AND CONFLICT**

This section explores the features in which constituents may agree, the putative source of the features and the resolution of agreement conflict which arises from coordination of arguments from divergent genders.

**6.2.1 AGREEMENT FEATURES**

Some of the agreement features in which the controller and the target match include number, gender, person, case and definiteness (Ferguson and Barlow 1988). To illustrate, in Hebrew, an attributive adjective agrees with its head noun in gender, number and definiteness as in (2):

2 (Hebrew, Ferguson & Barlow 1988:5)

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ha-ishaha-to-v-a
the-woman the-good.FEM.SG
‘the good woman’
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Such agreement occurs in EkeGusii in which the noun class prefix surfaces on all other constituents of the DP as in (3):

3 (EkeGusii)

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a) e-sani e-nene b) chi-sani chi-nene
10-plate 10-big 9-plate 9-big
‘big plate’ ‘big plates’
```
c) **ekte-rogo**  **ekte-nene**  
7-chair 7-big  
‘big chair’

d) **ebi-rogo**  **ebi-nene**  
8-chair 8-big  
‘big chairs’

e) **omw-ana**  **omo-nene**  
1-child 1-big  
‘big child’

f) **aba-ana**  **aba-nene**  
2-child 2-big  
‘big children’

Concord thus obtains in the entire DP.

Number and person in EkeGusii occur as a portmanteau morph since both features are packaged as a bundle as in (4):

4  *(EkeGusii)*

a) (Kerubo)  **o-ba-nyor-ir-e** 
(Kerubo)  3SGSM-3PLOM-find-PFCT-FV  
‘Kerubo has found them.’

b) (Kerubo)  **o-ba-gos-ir-e** 
(Kerubo)  3SGSM-3PLOM-frighten-PFCT-FV  
‘Kerubo has frightened them’.

c) (Kerubo)  **o-mo-gos-ir-e** 
(Kerubo)  3SGSM-3SGOM-frighten-PFCT-FV  
‘Kerubo has frightened him/her.’

In 4(a) and (b), for example, the subject marker /o-/ is singular third person while the object marker, /ba-/ is plural third person. To sum up, the external and internal argument markers amalgamate number and person in EkeGusii.

The data in (3) and (4) exemplify two agreement domains. (3) shows agreement in the DP domain and (4) within a TP. In conformity with Bantu morphosyntax, all constituents in the DP such as adjectives, demonstrative pronouns, independent pronouns, possessive pronouns, relative pronouns and quantifiers agree
with the governing head in number and gender (cf Demuth 1988; Hyman 1979; Givón 1983; Marchese 1988).

6.2.2 DIRECTIONALITY OF AGREEMENT

Since the agreement features in the modifiers within the DP originate in the nominal, it is possible to state the directionality of agreement in EkeGusii. While the possibility of verbs and other categories to control agreement has been noted in some languages, data from EkeGusii indicate that directionality of agreement is a function of a nominal or pronominal. The noun class prefix which is inherently specified for number and gender features is copied onto the target constituent as (5) and (6) show:

5 (EkeGusii)

a) eke-busi
   7-cat
   'cat'

b) ebi-busi
   8-cat
   'cats'

c) ri-tunda
   5-fruit
   'fruit'

d) ama-tunda
   6-fruit
   'fruits'

e) e-sese
   9-dogs
   'dog'

f) chi-sese
   10-dogs
   'dogs'

6 (EkeGusii)

a) eke-busi eke-mwamu
   7-cat  7-black
   'black cat'

b) ebi-busi ebi-mwamu
   8-cat  8-black
   'black cats'

c) ri-tunda ri-mwamu
   5-fruit  5-black
   'black fruit'

d) ama-tunda ama-mwamu
   6-fruit  6-black
   'black fruits'
The number and gender features inherent in the nouns in (5) are transferred to
the adjectives to effect uniformity of features within the DP, which indicates that the
direction of control is from the nominal to other constituents in EkeGusii. Accordingly, the nominal is termed the controller and the adjective the target or
controllee because of the directionality of agreement features.

Predicate-argument agreement as in (7) corroborates the view that agreement
features originate in the nominal:

7  (EkeGusii)
a)  Chi-sese  chi- á-raage-ir-e
   10-dog 10-PST-eat- PFCT-FV
   ‘The dogs have eaten.’

b)  Ri-to  ri- á-g-ur-e
   5-leaf  5-PST-fall- PFCT-FV
   ‘A fruit has fallen.’

c)  Omo-geni  o-ø-ch-ir-e
   1-visitor 1-PST-come- PFCT-FV
   ‘A visitor has come.’

The origin of the number and gender features, namely, /chi/, /ri-/ and /ø-/ on
the TP is the subject lexical DPs ‘chi-sese’, ‘ri-to’ and ‘omo-geni’, respectively. What emerges from (6) and (7) is that the agreement features occurring in the DP and TP
domains are inherited from the nominal in which they are inherent.

6.2.3 AGREEMENT CONFLICT

Ferguson and Barlow (1988) discuss conditions under which patterns of
agreement may conflict. These include co-ordination, comitative phrases, marking
respect, semantic vs syntactic agreement, quantifier phrases, lexical idiosyncrasies, word order, syntactic distance, case of controller and attraction. In this respect, coordination of DPs from different noun classes and honorific use of number in EkeGusii are cases in point. The evidence from the conjoined DPs in (8) supports this view:

8  (EkeGusii)

a) Ama-rabwani  ne-chi-ngende  bi-á-yi-ir-e
   6-potato and -10- beans  8-PST-cook- PFCT-FV
   ‘Potatoes and beans have cooked.’

   a) Ri-ruma  ne-eke-baki  bi-á-ch-a
   5-dove and -7- eagle  8-PST-come-FV
   ‘A dove and an eagle come.’

   c) Omo-nto  ne-e-sese  o-ø-took-a- nyomba
   1-person and -9-dog  1-PST-be.found-FV  house.
   ‘A person and a dog were found in the house.’

Apparently, the agreement conflict in 8 (a) to (c) is resolved by resorting to different resolution rules. In 8 (a) and (b), both conjuncts are viewed as constituting a composite plural DP whose class prefix is from neither conjunct. Specifically, the agreement morphology on the verbal complex is that of class 8 which refers to inanimate ‘things’ because potatoes and beans are characteristically inanimate. On the other hand, the verb agreement in 8 (c) is controlled by the first conjunct, omonto, because the composite DP has a reading in which omonto ‘person’ is interpretable as a possessor DP and esese ‘dog’ a possessee. This scenario arises from the meaning of na which is ambiguous between a conjunction and a preposition meaning ‘with’ and, therefore, the ‘possessor’ conjunct controls agreement irrespective of its distance from T.

Similar resolution rules obtain in Kiswahili. Smallwood (1998) reports that the Kiswahili verb agrees with either conjunct in conjoined subject DPs of different classes as in (9):
The resolution rule applicable in (9) means that the features on T can be checked unconditionally by either of both DPs and that T is not sensitive to class variety in the conjoined subject DP.

Further, plural verbal complex agreement sometimes occurs unexpectedly even when the subject DP is singular. The best exemplar of this phenomenon is the honorific use of plural as in (10):

10 (EkeGusii)

a) ø-nyomba mw-ane ba-ø-ch-ir-e
   NPX-house 1-1SG POSS 3PL-PST-come- PFCT-FV
   ‘My wife has come.’

b) ø-nyomba mw-aø ba-ø-ch-ir-e
   NPX-house 1-2SG POSS 3PL-PST-come- PFCT-FV
   ‘Your wife has come.’

c) ø-nyomba mw-aye ba-ø-ch-ir-e
   NPX-house 1-3SG POSS 3PL-PST-come- PFCT-FV
   ‘His wife has come.’

In (10), the subject DPs are singular but the verb complex bears the plural agreement morpheme /ba/. These anomalous but acceptable agreement phenomena result from the rule governing honorificity in which politeness licenses plural marking on the verbal complex irrespective of number in the lexical DP.
6.3.0 PREDICATE-ARGUMENT AGREEMENT

Predicate-argument agreement, also termed subject-verb concord, is conspicuous in EkeGusii morpho-syntax. Simply put, "morpho-syntactic agreement in the verb is expressed through a prefix that marks the subject." (Cammenga 2002: 243). In Bantu linguistics, the predicate-argument marker of agreement is often termed subject marker (SM), a neutral term, because of the controversy as to whether the marker is an incorporated pronominal or an agreement morpheme. While agreement in English is evidenced by verb conjugation to reflect spec-head number agreement, the number and person morpheme is prefixed to the verb complex to encode agreement in EkeGusii as in (11):

11 (EkeGusii)

a) **Omo-nto** o-ø-tony-ir-e
   1-person AGR-PST-drop- PFCT-FV
   'A person has dropped.'

b) **Aba-nto** ba-ø-tony-ir-e
   2-person AGR-PST-drop- PFCT-FV
   'People have dropped.'

c) **Omo-te** o-ø-tony-ir-e
   3-tree AGR-PST-drop- PFCT-FV
   'A tree has dropped.'

d) **Eme-te** y- á-tony-ir-e
   4-tree AGR-PST-drop- PFCT-FV
   'Trees have dropped.'

e) **Ri-toke** ri-á-tony-ir-e
   5-banana AGR-PST-drop- PFCT-FV
   'A banana has dropped.'
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<td>Ama-toke</td>
<td>a-ŋ-tony-ir-e</td>
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<td>6-banana</td>
<td>AGR-PST-drop- PFCT-FV</td>
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<td>‘Bananas have dropped.’</td>
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<td>Eke-rogo</td>
<td>gi-ŋ-tony-ir-e</td>
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<td>7-chair</td>
<td>AGR-PST-drop- PFCT-FV</td>
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<td>‘A chair has dropped.’</td>
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<td>Ebi-rogo</td>
<td>bi-ŋ-tony-ir-e</td>
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<td>8-chair</td>
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<td>i)</td>
<td>E-Sani</td>
<td>y-ŋ-tony-ir-e</td>
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<td>9-plate</td>
<td>AGR-PST-drop- PFCT-FV</td>
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<td>10-plate</td>
<td>AGR-PST-drop- PFCT-FV</td>
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<td>‘Plates have dropped.’</td>
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<td>k)</td>
<td>Oro-ko</td>
<td>ru-ŋ-tony-ir-e</td>
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<td>11-firewood</td>
<td>AGR-PST-drop- PFCT-FV</td>
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<td>‘A piece of wood has dropped.’</td>
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<td>Aka-mwana</td>
<td>ga-ŋ-tony-ir-e</td>
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<td>12-child</td>
<td>AGR-PST-drop- PFCT-FV</td>
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<td>‘A small child has dropped.’</td>
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<td>m)</td>
<td>Obo-mwana</td>
<td>bu-ŋ-tony-ir-e</td>
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<td>14-child</td>
<td>AGR-PST-drop- PFCT-FV</td>
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<td>‘Small children have dropped.’</td>
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n) Oko-igwana gu-á-siny-ir-e
   15-agree AGR-PST-be.difficult-PFCT-FV
   ‘It has become difficult to agree.’

o) Gesusu a-be-ir-e a - be
   Gesusu AGR-become-PFCT-FV AGR-bad
   ‘Gesusu has become bad/a bad place.’

Two contending theories have been propounded to explain the occurrence of
the noun class prefixes on the verbal complex as in (11). As is shown in section 6.5,
one school of thought views the morphemes as pronominal clitics which raise to T
while the other considers the same as agreement morphology arising from the
operations of Agree relations (cf Mchombo 2004; Henderson 2005).

As the data in (12) show, the agreement morphology of the nouns denoting
human referents differs from that of the rest of the nouns. To illustrate, in (12), the
singular SMs are /o-/ and /a-/ and the plural counterpart of both is /ba-/

12 (EkeGusii)

a) Bosibori o-ø-n-dam-a
   Bosibori AGR-PST-1SG- insult-FV
   ‘Bosibori insulted me.’

b) Bosibori a-ka-n-dam-a
   Bosibori AGR-NARR-1SG- insult-FV
   ‘Bosibori insulted me.’

c) Bosibori na Kerubo ba-ø-n-dam-a
   Bosibori and Kerubo AGR-PST-1SG- insult-FV
   ‘Bosibori and Kerubo insulted me.’

d) Bosibori o-ø-to-ram-a
   Bosibori AGR-PST-1PL- insult-FV
   ‘Bosibori insulted us.’
In 12 (a) to (f), the lexical DPs are optional but their agreement markers /o- /a-/ and /ba-/, which have pronominal function, are obligatory. However, since they cannot occur independent of the verbal complex to which they attach, these agreement morphemes are characterized as pronominal clitics.

The temptation to analyze the clitics as pronouns in the literature arises from the fact that these morphemes are co-referential to the lexical DPs which they relegate to optional topic status in the sentence, making EkeGusii a pro drop language. The syntax of this phenomenon is the focus of section 6.5.

6.4 OBJECT AGREEMENT

Incidentally, the prefixes identified for the various noun classes in (11) can also be used co-referentially with object DPs as well but their co-occurrence with the lexical DPs is not tolerable as shown in (13):

13. (EkeGusii)

a) Tata o-Ø-riik-a ri-rube
   Father AGR-PST-write-FV 5-letter
   ‘My father wrote a letter.’

b) *Tata o-Ø-ri-riik-a ri-rube
   Father AGR-PST-5-write-FV5-letter
   ‘My father wrote a letter.’
c) Baba o-ø-simek-a chi-ngende  
   Mother AGR-PST-plant-FV 10-bean  
   ‘My mother planted beans.’

d) *Baba o-ø-chi-simek-a chi-ngende  
   Mother AGR-PST-10-plant-FV 10-beans  
   ‘My mother planted beans.’

e) Omw-ana o-ø-nyw-a e-sumu  
   1-child AGR-PST-drink-FV 9-poison  
   ‘The child drank poison.’

f) * Omw-ana o-ø-ye-nyw-a e-sumu  
   1-child AGR-PST-9-drink-FV 9-poison  
   ‘The child drank poison.’

Unlike the subject agreement marker /o-/ which is morphologically dissimilar to its antecedent DPs in 13 (a) to (f), the object markers in 13 (b), (d) and (f) are copies of the noun class prefixes of the complement DPs.

Besides DPs, locative PPs trigger agreement in Bantu. As Bresnan & Kanerva (1989) report, the Chichewa locative inversion construction is a case in point. (14) contains examples of this phenomenon:

14 Chichewa (Bresnan & Kanerva (1989); Smallwood (1998:23))  
a. m-nkhalango m-okhala mi-kango  
   18-9 forest 18-live 4-lion  
   ‘In the forest lives a lion.’

b. m-khalango m-akhala mi-kango  
   18-9 forest 18-PERF-remain 4-lion  
   ‘In the forest have lived lions.’
In these sentences, the locative prefix /m-/ in the preverbal nominal nkhalango, 'forest', is copied on the verb khala, 'live', to effect agreement between the verb and the preposed locative PP. In contradistinction to Bantu is English, for example, in which preposed locative PPs do not trigger agreement as (15) shows:

15 (English, Smallwood 1998:21)
Behind the stones is/*are a pretty garden.

Smallwood argues that the English locative PP lacks the phi features requisite for verbal agreement and that only the post-verbal subject contains them and, therefore, triggers agreement. The fact that subjects in English trigger agreement in preposed as well as post-verbal position prompts Smallwood to postulate the split Extended Projection Principle (EPP) hypothesis. The gist of the hypothesis is that a post-verbal subject satisfies the Nominal Condition of Infl while the fronted locative PP meets the merge EPP Condition. Smallwood states the merge EPP Condition as in (16):

(16) Merge EPP
The specifier of Infl must be projected (i.e. filled by an element containing a maximal set of features).

The separability of the Nominal Condition of Infl and Merge EPP explains why the verb in English may agree with the subjects which are in post-verbal position rather than in the expected [Spec IP]. As Smallwood reasons, the “locative moves through [SPEC IP] and satisfies the merge EPP requirement of Infl” but “does not trigger subject-verb agreement” (Smallwood 1998:20). In other words, locative inversion expressions do not occupy [SPEC IP] as they satisfy Merge EPP without pied piping the subject to [SPEC IP] as shown in (17):

17 (English, Smallwood 1998:4)
In the garden are four cats.

Evidence from constructions of the type in (17) prompts Smallwood to consider, contrary to Ura (1996) and Collins (1997), that the locative PP is not in free variation with the fronted subject DP in (18):
Four cats are in the garden.

One basic assumption of the free-variation account is that the locative PP and the subject DP are capable of checking the D feature on Infl, which is not the case and so both nominals are far from being variants of the agreement operation in (18).

Locative phenomena of this type provide evidence that agreement does not always occur in a Spec-head configuration. While the facts relating to English locative inversion can be accounted for in the split EPP hypothesis, the Bantu phenomenon in which locative agreement obtains calls for an alternative account. In these parametric circumstances, appeal may be made to Smallwood’s proposal that Bantu lacks the merge EPP condition but has a strong nominal condition on Infl which is satisfied by the D feature of the locative, thereby yielding agreement between the Infl and the locative nominal. Recourse to this suggestion aids in laying to rest the ghost of discordant agreement phenomena in Romance and Bantu.

6.5 CONCORD IS NOT AGREE

The pervasive agreement system of Bantu raises fundamental questions for the theory of agreement. One matter at issue is the marking of identical agreement on each verb in a CT or serial verb construction. 18 (a) and to (b) exemplify Kiswahili CT constructions:

18 (Kiswahili, Henderson 2005:4)

a) Juma a-li-kuwa a-me-pika cha-kula
   Juma 3SG-PST-be 3SG-PERF-cook food
   ‘Juma had cooked food.’

b) (Mimi) ni-li-kuwa ni-ngali ni-ki-fanya kazi
   (I) 1SG-PST-be 1SG-still 1SG-PERF-do work
   ‘I [was] still working.’

Contrary to Carstens’ (2001) analysis of such Bantu CT constructions as multiple agreement, Henderson (2005) posits that such phenomena involve an Agree
relation with the subject. For Henderson, the appearance of agreement marking on the lower auxiliary as in (18) is a consequence of agreement on the higher auxiliary rather than an independent Agree.

Therefore, instead of treating both morphemes on the two verbs as evidence of multiple agreement, Henderson suggests that the higher verb is in an Agree relation with the subject while the agreement on the lower verb is an instance of concord. In this regard, Henderson’s analysis differs significantly from Carstens and Kinyalolo (1989) where the subject establishes an Agree relation with each verb as it raises successively from its base-generated position inside vP to the Spec, TP position as shown in (19):

\[(19)\]

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(i) Agree
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\[
\text{Juma} \quad \text{a-li-kuwa <Juma>} \quad \text{a mepika <Juma>} \quad \text{chakula}
\]

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(iv) Move
(ii) Move
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For Carstens and Kinyalolo (1989) and Carstens (2001), the occurrence of agreement on both verbs of the CT as in (19) can be accounted for as raising constructions involving two Agree relations and two Move operations, hence multiple agreement. This analysis goes against the grain of the Minimalist thesis of Agree.

To make the phenomenon of agreement in such Bantu CT constructions minimalist-compliant, Henderson suggests that agreement be distinguished from concord. Arguing that agreement on the lower verb does not result from Agree, Henderson proposes that agreement in CT be analyzed as (20):

\[(20)\]

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(Kiswahili, Henderson 2005:7)
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(i) Agree
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\[
\text{Juma} \quad \text{a-li-kuwa a-me-pika <Juma>} \quad \text{chakula}
\]

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(iii) Concord
(ii) Move
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To the extent that the analysis in (20) is theoretically tenable, it aids in sifting Agree from the process of concord. Henderson defines both terms in (21):

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a) **AGREE**: a probe $\alpha$ and a goal $\beta$ are in an **AGREE** relation when $\alpha$ c-commands $\beta$ and some uninterpretable features of $\alpha$ and $\beta$ are checked/deleted/valued.

b) **CONCORD**: two elements $\alpha$ and $\beta$ are in a **CONCORD** relation when $\alpha$ and $\beta$ are adjacent and some features realized on $\alpha$ are also realized on $\beta$.

The basic assumption in (21) is that Agree proceeds from computation at the level of syntax while concord is a post-syntactic adjacency procedure in which features which have undergone valuation are copied. Accordingly, Henderson's account of Bantu CT structure is a refutation of Carstens' (2001) proposal in which each verb in a CT construction contracts on independent Agree relation with the subject in order to have its features deleted.

However, Carstens' proposal is informed by the Spec-Head Agreement Hypothesis (SHAH) as postulated in Chomsky (1986), Koopman (1992) and Kinyalolo (1991), among others, in which the head inherits features from the XP residing in Spec, TP. In other words, in the SHAH, Agree in Bantu occurs in a Spec-Head relation under government in which the verb enters a checking relation with XP in Spec, TP. Implicit in this hypothesis is the assumption that the subject DP in Bantu CT constructions inevitably contracts a checking relation with each verb, beginning with the right-most one before raising successively via Spec-to-Spec movement in search of case. Since checking operations of this sort are unexpected within the Minimalist framework, Henderson’s suggestion seems tenable since his contention is that multiple Agree as in (19) surprisingly permits the visibility of the features of XP for checking relations more than once, that is, the system allows the occurrence of a many-to-one probe-goal feature checking relation.

Although CT constructions do not obtain in EkeGusii, Carstens’ and Henderson’s analyses are relevant to the explication of the phenomenon of serial verb constructions obtaining in the language as in (22):
(EkeGusii)

a) Sinclair o-0-to-ror-a o-0-tam-a
   Sinclair AGR-PST-1PL-see-FV AGR-PST-ran.away-FV
   ‘Sinclair saw us and ran away.’

b) Prudence a-ga-to-ror-a a-ga-tam-a
   Prudence AGR-NARR-1PL-see-FV AGR-NARR-ran.away-FV
   ‘Prudence saw us and then ran away.’

d) Bosibori o-0-rug-a o-0-raager-a
   Bosibori AGR-PST-cook-FV AGR-PST-eat-FV
   ‘Bosibori cooked and ate.’

Following Henderson (2005), the assumption in 22 (a), for instance, is that the agreement marker, /o-/, results from the checking relation the verbal complex contracts with the lexical DP, Sinclair, inside the vP prior to movement to topic position. In other words, once the features of the lower T are checked and copied onto the higher T, the lexical DP moves out of the vP to the topic position in the left periphery. That the lexical DP is optional provides evidence for the vP internal subject hypothesis and explains why EkeGusii is amenable to classification as a null subject language (NSL). As Smallwood (1998) shows, pro drop phenomena of this kind are also found in Kiswahili in which subject agreement is obligatory but the lexical DP optional:

(Kiswahili, Smallwood 1998:28)

(a) pro vi-li-tosha
    8-PST-be-enough
    ‘They (inanimate objects) were enough.’

b) (uzi) u-li-tosha
    (11-string) 11-PST-be.enough
    ‘It was enough.’
Phenomena such as those in (23) and (24) have led to divergent accounts as to the status of the SM in Bantu. For Givón (1976), since the lexical subject and the SM are co-referential, both can be treated as a topic-comment construction as in (24).

(24) **TOPIC COMMENT**

The man he came

**SUBJ** **VERB**

The man he -came

**SUBJ** **VERB**

The proposal in (24) seems to co-relate well with information structure and presentational focus in EkeGusii as in 25 (b) where the focus marker can be said to introduce the VP as the comment about the topic lexical DP:

25 **(EkeGusii)**

a) Omo-ント o-∅-ch-a

I-person AGR-PST-come-FV

‘A person came.’

b) Omo-ント n-a-∅-ch-a

I-person FOC-AGR-PST-come-FV

‘A person came.’

However, considering the agreement facts in Bantu, the treatment of the SM and Object marker (OM) as incorporated pronouns as has already been argued for in Setawana (Demuth and Mmusi 1989) and Chichewa (Mchombo 2004) deserves comment. The precise status of these clitics is blurred by their properties and function. As Mchombo maintains, incorporated pronouns have anaphoric reference since they are “linked to a discourse-licensed extra-sentential NP” (Mchombo 2004:82). This reasoning seems consistent with Henderson’s view that movement of the lexical DP to the left periphery proceeds from an Agree relation in vP prior to Move.

While the SM is amenable to an incorporation analysis, the OM poses a
problem to the approach. It should be noted at the outset that Bantu complement clitics do not behave uniformly. For example, in Emukhuwa and Kiswahili, the OM obligatorily co-occurs with the object argument (Mchombo 2004). Conversely, as in the case of EkeGusii, Gikuyu (Bergvall 1985; Mugane 1997; Mchombo 2004) complement clitics are in complementary distribution with the lexical DPs with which they are co-referential.

Considering that the presence of OMs in Emukhuwa and Kiswahili has no dislocation effects on the lexical DPs as would be expected, the possibility that the OMs could be agreement markers rather than by-products of incorporation appears appealing, yet the fact that the OMs have agreement-like properties by virtue of encoding the number and gender features of lexical DPs cannot be gainsaid.

In conclusion, it has been shown in this chapter that the agreement domains in EkeGusii are the DP and TP. Further, the problem of the pervasive agreement morphology of EkeGusii and Bantu in general which has been analyzed as multiple Agree in some of the literature can be resolved by delineating agreement and concord in accord with the principal tenets of the Minimalist Programme (Chomsky 1995).