Is Agreement Really Independent of Case in Choctaw?

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In many languages, there is a match between the agreement and Case systems. It is very common to find languages where all and only nominative arguments trigger agreement, and if arguments with other Cases are cross-referenced, it is with pronominal clitics that match those arguments in Case. There is good evidence from the typological literature that agreement cannot be entirely independent of Case. For example, no language with a nominative-accusative Case system has been reported to have ergative agreement (e.g. Anderson 1977, 1985, Comrie 1978, Moravcsik 1978, Wierzbicka 1981), and this typological gap suggests that ergative agreement is dependent on the presence of ergative Case. Although there are languages with the opposite mismatch (e.g. Warlpiri), where an ergative Case system is paired with nominative-accusative agreement, the degree of independence of agreement in such languages turns out to be quite limited. Even in those languages, pronominal clitics always match in Case with the arguments they double and true agreement always cross-references a nominative argument when one is present. The mismatch that occurs is limited to clauses with no nominative argument; some ergative languages allow true agreement with a non-nominative in clauses with no nominative (Woolford 2006b). This all suggests a rather close relationship between agreement and Case. Can we rule out the possibility of a language where agreement is truly independent of Case? Do any such languages exist?

One of the best candidates for a language where agreement is truly independent of Case is Choctaw. In Choctaw, “the agreement system and the case marking system function independently,” according to Davies 1986:8. The Case system of Choctaw is nominative-accusative (Broadwell 2006), but the agreement system is active-stative (Mithun 1991). That is, all subjects get nominative Case, but the more agentive subjects tend to be cross-referenced with Series I forms (using the neutral label from Munro and Gordon 1982), while other subjects tend to be cross-referenced with Series II/III forms, which also cross-reference objects and possessors (Nicklas 1974, Heath 1977, Davies 1986, Broadwell 2006).

The literature on Choctaw has taken one of two analytical options in response to this apparent mismatch between Case and agreement. One approach is to conclude that the cross-referencing system of Choctaw really is independent of its Case system, and that it is based on something else entirely, such as thematic roles, argument structure categories, or (initial) grammatical relations (e.g. Nicklas 1974, Heath 1977, Broadwell 1987, Davies 1986). The other option is to try to resolve the apparent mismatch between Case and agreement in Choctaw, by proposing that Choctaw has two different Case systems, one which governs the bound cross-referencing forms and another which governs free arguments (Jelinek 1989), or by concluding that the morphemes that mark free arguments are not Case morphemes at all (Jelinek 1989, Schütze 1995).
Both of these approaches actually share a common assumption, that the identity or definition of a cross-referencing form should fully determine its distribution. That is, both approaches take the task to be to fill in the blank in phrases such as ‘Series I is/marks ____’, ‘Series II is/marks ____’, with disagreement as to what goes in those blanks: thematic roles, grammatical relations, Cases, etc. I will argue for a rather different approach to the Choctaw system in which the identity of a cross-referencing form only partially determines its distribution, and there is no mismatch between Case and agreement.

The key to understanding the Choctaw system is the following crucial fact:

1. A language may have both true agreement and nominative pronominal clitics in its lexicon,

   \begin{align*}
   \text{and may select between these two ways of cross-referencing nominative arguments, based on various factors such as person, transitivity, or aspect.}
   \end{align*}

I will argue that Choctaw has both true agreement (which cross-references only nominatives) and nominative and accusative pronominal clitics (which are not morphologically distinguished for Case) in its lexicon. What makes Choctaw agreement qualify as active-stative is the basis upon which Choctaw selects between these two different options for cross-referencing nominatives. There is no choice in how to cross-reference accusative arguments: these can only be cross-referenced by accusative pronominal clitics.

The basis of the selection between true agreement and nominative pronominal clitics in Choctaw appears to be similar to or even identical to that which governs auxiliary selection in Italian. Auxiliary selection between ‘have’ and ‘be’ in Italian is based on the distinction between external and internal arguments (Burzio 1986). Choctaw provides strong motivation for the idea that the same factor that drives auxiliary selection can also drive an active-stative system, because Choctaw has both, and the choice between auxiliaries in Choctaw correlates with the choice between using true agreement or a nominative pronominal clitic (Series I or Series II) (Broadwell 2006). If Choctaw is like Italian, it means that external arguments (the more agentive arguments) are cross-referenced with true agreement (Series I), while nominative subjects that are not external arguments are cross-referenced with nominative clitics (one of the Series II forms). Under this view, work such as Nicklas 1974, Heath 1977 and Broadwell 1987 that something like thematic roles or initial grammatical relations is involved in the choice of cross-referencing form in Choctaw is on the right track. However, the distinction between internal and external arguments is not the only possible basis for this choice; the semantic factor(s) involved in auxiliary selection languages are known to differ cross-linguistically (e.g. Sorace 2000, Legendre 2007), as do the factors that underlie active-stative systems (e.g. Van Valin 1990, Mithun 1991). Thus I will leave the question of the exact basis of this selection open here.

The proposal in this paper for Choctaw can be thus summarized as follows. There is no mismatch between Case and agreement in Choctaw. The Series I forms are true agreement, of the ordinary sort found in English and Icelandic. The Series II forms are pronominal clitics. Pronominal clitics potentially come in all Cases and the Choctaw Series II forms include both nominative and accusative pronominal clitics, which look alike because their abstract Case is not
morphologically realized.\footnote{Dividing the Series II forms into two subclasses, one that cross-references subjects and one that cross-references objects has precedents in the Choctaw literature (Broadwell and Martin 1993, Schütze 1995, Broadwell 2006). These proposals are discussed in section 2.} In this respect, Choctaw is like Italian and other Romance languages in not morphologically distinguishing first and second person pronominal clitics by Case (Grimshaw 2001, Woolford 2006b, 2007a).\footnote{Choctaw does not cross-reference third person arguments.} As for Series III, I follow Broadwell 2006 and previous literature such as Ulrich 1986 in maintaining that Series III is not a distinct series, but rather only Series II forms attached to an applicative(-like) element. Under this view, Series III is not dative, and there is no dative Case in use in Choctaw (although this applicative does license the kind of goal/experiencer argument that is marked with dative Case in many languages).

Although there is no mismatch between Case and agreement in Choctaw, the agreement system of Choctaw is partially independent of the Case system, in that the choice between using true agreement or a nominative clitic to cross-reference a nominative argument is made on an active-stative basis, like that of auxiliary selection.

This paper is organized as follows. The nominative-accusative Case system of Choctaw is described in section 1. The proposed analysis of the cross-referencing system is presented in section 2. Section 3 focuses on the parallel between the basis for selecting between true agreement and a nominative pronominal clitic in Choctaw and auxiliary selection in Italian and in Choctaw.

1. Case in Choctaw

This section describes the nominative-accusative Case system of Choctaw, following Broadwell 2006. All subjects in Choctaw are marked with nominative Case and all objects are marked with accusative (Broadwell 2006). Accusative Case is not necessarily spelled out morphologically when the object is adjacent to V, in the normal SOV word order, but accusative Case must be morphologically overt if the object moves out of this position (Broadwell 2006).

(2) John-at tákkon(-a) chopa-h.  
John-NOM peach(-ACC) bought  
‘John bought a peach.’ \hfill (Broadwell 2006:39)

(3) Tákkon-a John-at chopa-h.  
peach-ACC John-NOM bought  
‘John bought a peach.’ \hfill (Broadwell 2006:39)

Like English, Choctaw allows two accusative objects in ditransitive constructions and has no dative Case. Speakers seldom spell out the accusative Case morpheme on the object adjacent to the verb in such constructions (Broadwell 2006):
(4) Hattak-at alla-yã towa(-yã) i-pila-tok.
   man-NOM child-ACC ball(-ACC) APPL-throw-past
   ‘The man threw the child the ball.’ (Davies 1986:7, reglossed3)

Free pronouns are also marked for nominative and accusative Case in Choctaw, however free pronouns are seldom overt unless focused, and when focused, they take a contrastive focus marker that can also express Case (Broadwell 2006:93).

(5) An-akoosh nípi’ chopa-li-tok.
   I-CONTR:NOM meat buy-1SG-PAST
   ‘I (not someone else) bought the meat.’ (Broadwell 2006:93)

The accusative Case on free pronoun objects is not necessarily morphologically spelled out, just as with non-pronominal objects:

(6) An-o is- sa- hottopali-tok
   I/Me-CONTR 2SG-1SG-hurt -PAST
   ‘You hurt me.’ (Davies 1986:2)

Now that we have seen that Choctaw has a nominative-accusative Case system, let us turn now to the cross-referencing system of Choctaw, where we will see that it is not necessary to posit a mismatch between Case and agreement in Choctaw.

2. Cross-referencing in Choctaw

Choctaw is often described as having three series of cross-referencing morphemes, labeled neutrally as Series I, II, and III by Munro and Gordon 1982. Series I cross-references only nominatives (which are always subjects in Choctaw) and I argue that these forms are true agreement. Series II/III forms are used to cross-reference nominatives and accusatives (and possessives), and I argue that these are pronominal clitics. What is labeled Series III actually consists of a Series II form attached to the goal/experiencer applicative morpheme, which is just one of a series of applicative morphemes in Choctaw, all of which can have an attached cross-referencing form (Broadwell 2006). Thus, the third person forms shown in the Series III column in standard charts of Choctaw cross-referencing forms are just this goal/experiencer applicative morpheme occurring alone, since there are no third person cross-referencing forms in Choctaw.

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3 Davies 1986 glosses the object Case as oblique. I follow Broadwell 2006 in concluding that objects take accusative Case in Choctaw. I also drop the ‘dative’ gloss for Series III forms from examples from Davies 1986, following Broadwell 2006 in identifying Series III forms as an applicative morpheme that licenses goal/experiencer arguments, which may be combined with a Series II form.
## Cross-referencing Forms in Choctaw

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Series I [true agreement]</th>
<th>Series II [pronominal clitics]</th>
<th>Series III [Series II+applicative]</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; sg</td>
<td>li</td>
<td>sa/si</td>
<td>(s)am</td>
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<td>pl</td>
<td>il</td>
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<tr>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; sg</td>
<td>is(h)</td>
<td>chi</td>
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A rough description of the relative order of these forms in the verbal complex is given in (8). The pronominal clitics (Series II), which I argue are head clitics (pronominal clitics that attach to heads) are prefixed to the verb or to an applicative, while the true agreement (Series I) forms occur at the extreme left edge of the verbal complex, except for the first singular affirmative -li which suffixes to the verb.

(8) Agreement+NEG+CL+CL+applicative+CL+V+Agreement(1<sup>st</sup>sg only)+Tense

There is some similarity between this morpheme order in Choctaw and the morpheme order in the verbal complex of Bantu languages such as Kinyarwanda (Kimenyi 1980). Bantu languages have true agreement at the left edge of the verbal complex and a series of pronominal head clitics that attach to the left edge of the verb.

(9) Bantu morpheme order in the verbal complex

Agreement+Tense+CL+CL+CL+V+applicative

Because languages may have head clitics, phrasal clitics or both, there is no invariant rule as to whether clitics or agreement will be placed closer to the verb.

We start this section with a brief discussion of other languages that make use of both true agreement and nominative pronominal clitics to cross-reference nominatives.

### 2.1 Choctaw Series I: True Agreement

Series I forms in Choctaw behave like true agreement in many other languages in that they cross-reference only nominative arguments. In the following example, we see a nominative pronoun cross-referenced by a Series I form:
(10) An-akoosh  nip’ chop-a-li  -tok.
I-CONTR:NOM  meat  buy  -1sg.Agr  -PAST
‘I (not someone else) bought the meat.’ (Broadwell 2006:93, reglossed⁴)

Because Choctaw normally drops pronouns that are not focused, first and second person subjects are typically indicated by agreement.

(11) Hilha -li  -tok.
   dance -1sg.Agr  -PAST
   ‘I danced.’ (Davies 1986:14, reglossed)

Most Series I forms occur at the left edge of the verbal complex, but one form is suffixed to the verb, the first singular affirmative form -li.

(12) Series I+Series II+Series III+Series II+V+Series I(1st sg)+Tense

(13) I:- bal:i:li -tok.
   1pl.Agr  run  PAST
   ‘We ran.’ (Davies 1986:14, reglossed)

(14) Ish- īpa -h  ō.
   2nd sg.Agr  eat  -PRED Q
   ‘Have you eaten?’ (Davies 1986:14, reglossed)

(15) Hilha -li  -tok.
   dance -1sg.Agr  -past
   ‘I danced.’ (Davies 1986:14, reglossed)

Despite this positional difference, all the cross-referencing morphemes in Series I are analyzed as members of the same series in the Choctaw literature (Nicklas 1974, Heath 1977, Munro and Gordon 1982, Davies 1986 and Schütze 1995) because they behave exactly alike in terms of what they cross-reference. Davies 1986 and Schütze 1995 label Series I nominative. In the negative, all Series I forms occur in the prefixed position where they fuse with a negative form. We see this contrast between the positive and negative forms of the 1st sg Series I form in the examples below from Broadwell (2006:149). In the affirmative version of the sentence in (16), the 1st sg form -li is suffixed to the verb, but in the negative version in (17), the 1st sg form is fused with a negative form and prefixed to the verbal complex:

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⁴ Broadwell 2006 uses the neutral label ‘Series I’ from Munro and Gordon 1982 for what I analyze here as true agreement.
There is a (superficial) parallel Choctaw and English with respect to the effect of the negative on the position in which true agreement forms can occur. In English, agreement is suffixed to the verb in the absence of an auxiliary, but in the negative, agreement must precede the negative, even if this means inserting a dummy ‘do’ auxiliary to host it.

Although it is not clear if this apparent parallel is real, or what it means in terms of the details of the syntactic and morphological structure of Choctaw, we can at least see that it is possible for a language to have two different positions in which true agreement morphemes can occur.\(^5\)

True agreement (Series I) cross-references only nominative arguments in Choctaw, but true agreement is not used to cross-reference all nominatives arguments in Choctaw. This is because Choctaw has another option for cross-referencing nominative arguments: nominative pronominal clitics. These are among the Series II forms to which we now turn.

### 2.2 Series II: Pronominal Clitics

Series II forms cross-reference both nominative and accusative arguments (and possessors inside DPs). I argue that Series II forms are pronominal clitics. Pronominal clitics

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5 Broadwell and Martin 1993 is the only published attempt (of which I am aware) to account for the positional difference between the prefix and suffix forms of Series I in Choctaw. They investigate several interesting behavioral differences between these forms. These include a contrast in the optionality of the forms in the presence of an overt argument in the clause: the suffix form is never optional, while the prefix form is optional when doubled by an overt pronoun. They also discuss a difference in whether these forms are included in the domain with the verb with respect to the phonological processes of rhythmic lengthening. They offer two possible hypotheses for the differences they find. One is that the suffix form is agreement, while the prefix form is a clitic. The other is that these differences stem from whether the form is closer to or further from the verb stem, that is, from the morphological layering in the verb complex.

I agree that the idea of attributing the positional split in Series I to an agreement/clitic split is attractive, but it would need to be embedded in an account that predicts the distribution of these cross-referencing forms. It could be that the prefix forms of Series I are phrasal clitics (which lie outside the Series II head clitics that we discuss below). The account would need to explain why only nominative phrasal clitics are used in Choctaw, when head clitics come in all abstract Cases, and one would need to explain why phrasal clitics are confined to ‘active’ verbs when head clitics are not.

Thus, for now, I assume that all Series I forms are true agreement from the point of view of syntax, but these forms are placed in two different positions.
always have abstract Case, and they must always match in abstract Case with the elements they cross-reference, but this abstract Case is not always morphologically realized. I argue that the Choctaw Series II includes both nominative and accusative pronominal clitics but that these look alike because they are not morphologically distinguished for Case. In this respect, Choctaw is like French and other Romance languages where first and second person pronominal clitics are not morphologically distinguished for Case (See Grimshaw 2001). (We do not know if Choctaw would distinguish third person pronominal clitics for Case like Romance languages do because Choctaw has no third person clitics.) The following examples have both a nominative and an accusative pronominal clitic in the same clause. Although these pronominal clitics look alike, they can be distinguished in that the nominative clitic (subject clitic) is always closer to the verb than the accusative clitic (object clitic) (Broadwell 2006).

(19) Chi-sa-yimmi -h
   2ndSGCL.ACC 1stsgCL.NOM believe -PRED
   ‘I believe you.’

(20) Sa-chi-anokfohka -h -ð
   1stSGCL.ACC 2ndsgCL.NOM understand -PRED -Q
   ‘Do you understand me?’

(21) Chi-sa-banna -h
   2ndsgCL.ACC 1stsgCL.NOM believe -TNS
   ‘I want you.’

Pronominal clitics in Choctaw can attach to verbs and applicative heads (Broadwell 2006). Because these pronominal clitics attach to heads, rather than to phrases, they are appropriately called head clitics in the terminology of Marantz (1988:263). In the example below, we see a pronominal clitic attached to a noun argument (‘father’); the clitic cross-references the null possessor of that noun. We also see a pronominal clitic attached to the applicative morpheme, and one attached to the verb. (The verb believe is on that does not select true agreement for its subject.)

(22) Chĩ-ki-chi-i-sa-yimmi -tok
   2ndSG.CL-father 2ndSG.CL.ACC APPL 1stSG.CL.NOM believe -PAST
   ‘I believed you for your father.’

A pronominal clitic that cross-references the subject must be located closer to the verb than any other clitic (Broadwell 2006). In this situation, an object clitic will attach to the left of that (and to the left of an applicative morpheme, if present). However, if the verb is one whose subject is

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6 According to Broadwell 2006:145, there is considerable speaker variation in which verbs allow the pattern with two Series II cross-referencing forms. Davies 1986 lists four verbs that can, ‘to doubt’, ‘to understand’, ‘to want’, and ‘to believe’, but not all of the speakers that Broadwell consulted allow this pattern with all of these verbs.

7 Pronominal clitics that attach to heads have often been called incorporated pronouns in the linguistics literature, but that terminology carries the implication that these are pronominal arguments (rather than cross-referencing forms) and that they incorporate like nouns. Noun incorporation is quite different in many ways and Choctaw does not even have productive noun incorporation (Broadwell 2006:136).
cross-referenced with agreement, the position adjacent to the verb stem is where the object clitic is placed (Broadwell 2006). The following example shows the relative order of the applicative morpheme and the accusative clitic, which is reversed in comparison to the above example:

(23) í- chi- tokcholi -tok.
     APPL 2nd.SG.CL.ACC tickle PAST
‘He tickled you for her.’ (Broadwell 2006:152, reglossed)

The claim here that Series II is subdivided into two subsets which have different Cases that look alike on the surface, one of which cross-references subjects and the other objects, is not new. Although Schütze 1995 follows Davies 1986 in labeling all Series II forms as accusative, he subdivides these into lexical accusatives for subjects and structural accusatives for objects. Schütze’s proposal has the advantage of avoiding the rather radical claim that Choctaw assigns structural accusative Case to subjects. However, given what we know about the distribution of lexical accusative Case in languages such as Icelandic, lexical accusative Case tends to be much more idiosyncratic than the pattern we see here in Choctaw. That is, there is no precedent for a language that marks all theme subjects with lexical accusative Case (see the discussion in Woolford 2006a). A more restrictive proposal that does not posit unmotivated mismatch in Choctaw between the Case on free arguments and the Case on cross-referencing forms is the one I argue for here, that the Series II forms that cross-reference nominative arguments are simply nominative pronominal clitics.

2.3 Other Languages With Both True Agreement and Pronominal Clitics

Other languages provide independent motivation for the idea that a single language can have both true agreement and nominative pronominal clitics in its lexicon. Kashmiri does, using both true agreement and a pronominal clitic simultaneously to cross-reference a nominative (Wali and Koul 1997).

(24) BI ch -u -s gatsha:n.
     L.NOM.MASC.SG be -AGR.MASC.SG CL.NOM.1SG go, present participle
‘I am going.’ (Wali and Koul 1997:152)

Selayarese, Yimas, and Yucatec Maya also make use of both true agreement and pronominal clitics, but select between these forms when cross-referencing a nominative based on various factors including person, transitivity, and aspect (Woolford 2003, 2007b). In Yucatec Maya, for example, the nominative subject of an intransitive clause is cross-referenced by true agreement in the imperfective aspect, but by a nominative pronominal clitic in the perfective aspect (Woolford 2007b). The true agreement forms occur to the left of the verb, attached to a

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8 Broadwell and Martin 1993 also divide Series II forms into two subsets, one of which cross-references subjects and one of which cross-references objects, although they do not discuss the Case of these forms. Although they suggest that the subject forms of Series II are agreement while the object forms are clitics, the differences upon which their division is based appear to have to do with the differential syntactic position of the arguments that these forms cross-reference (inside and outside the VP), rather than with the cross-referencing forms themselves. In the Romance languages that Broadwell and Martin use as a model, these differences appear to correlate with the cross-referencing forms because subjects agree while objects are cross-referenced with pronominal clitics.
functional head or prefixed to the verb, while the pronominal clitic forms suffix to the verb.

(25) K-in meyah. | [imperfective aspect]
    incompl-1\textsuperscript{A}AGR work
    ‘I am working.’ (Krämer and Wunderluch 1999 (1c), reglossed)

(26) H meyah-n-ah-en | [perfective aspect]
    compl work-N-PERF-1\textsuperscript{C}CL
    ‘I have worked.’ (Krämer and Wunderluch 1999 (1d), reglossed)

As in Choctaw, the pronominal clitics in Yucatec Maya are not morphologically distinguished for Case, and nominative and accusative pronominal clitics look alike. Thus we see the same morphological form of the pronominal clitic used for first person accusative objects in all transitive constructions.

(27) Táan uy-il-ik-en | [imperfective aspect]
    DUR 3\textsuperscript{rd}AGR-see-imperf-1\textsuperscript{C}CL
    ‘He is seeing me.’ (Bricker 1981 (1), reglossed\textsuperscript{9})

Although Yucatec Maya and the other languages noted above provide independent motivation for the idea that a language can have both true agreement and nominative clitics, and can select between these on various bases, the particular basis for this selection is quite different in Choctaw. Let us now turn to a discussion of the ‘active-stative’ basis of this selection in Choctaw.

3. Active-Stative Systems and Auxiliary Selection

Choctaw falls under the typological label of an ‘active-stative’ language in that this is the basis for selecting between using true agreement or a nominative pronominal clitics to cross-reference a nominative argument; however, it is not yet clear what ‘active-stative’ means in formal terms. The kinds of semantic features that underlie active-stative systems are similar to the semantic features that underlie auxiliary selection, although there are cross-linguistic differences in exactly which features are relevant in each domain (Mithun 1991, Legendre 2007).

The idea that these two selection processes have a common basis is supported by the fact that Choctaw also has auxiliary selection, which parallels the choice between true agreement and pronominal clitics (Series I and Series II forms) (Broadwell 2006).

\textsuperscript{9} Yucatec Maya is assumed to be an ergative language by Bricker 1981, but there is a nice discussion in Krämer and Wunderluch 1999 concerning the general lack of evidence that Yucatec Maya is ergative. With respect to the split agreement pattern in Yucatec Maya, analyzing the prefixing forms as having ergative Case leads to the unexpected result that ergative Case is confined to the imperfective aspect in intransitives, rather than to the perfective aspect as in all known aspect splits involving the ergative Case (Krämer and Wunderluch 1999).

Cross-referencing in related Mayan languages manifests an ergative pattern, which leads to the natural assumption that ergative Case must be present. However, there superficial or pseudo-ergative agreement pattern that can occur in languages with a neutral Case pattern (an abstract nominative-accusative Case pattern that is not morphologically marked). This pseudo-ergative cross-referencing pattern results from a preference for using pronominal clitics, combined with a limit of one per clause. This analysis is motivated for cross-referencing in Selayarese in Woolford 2000, 2003, and suggested for Mayan languages in Woolford 2000.
In Italian, the *have* auxiliary is selected when the verb takes an external argument, and otherwise the *be* form is used (Burzio 1986). Davies 1986 suggests that the choice of cross-referencing forms in Choctaw involves the distinction between unaccusative and unergative predicates, but he notes (p. 37) that there are counterexamples: verbs meaning ‘die’ and ‘be here’ behave like verbs with agentive subjects. He gives a sample list of verbs in each class:

(28) ‘unergative’ = dance, eat, jump, run, play, cut, cook, work, see, walk, go, bathe, swim, arrive, stop, believe, know, die, be here, sit, stand, lie

(29) ‘unaccusative’ = (be) hungry, tall, ashamed, sick, cold, cut, old, happy, lost, hurt, break, sweat, suffer

Davies 1986 also talks about volitionality as a diagnostic in Choctaw, and volitionality is associated with external arguments. Some intransitive verbs go in either class, depending on whether the action is voluntary. However, the speaker’s that Broadwell consulted did not report a volitionality contrast of this sort (Broadwell 2006: 146)

Even Davis 1986:5 reports verbs that allow a choice of using either Series I or Series II (true agreement or a nominative clitic in my terms) without any discernable semantic difference.

(30) a. Sa- ttola tok.  
\textbf{1sgCL.nom} fall PAST  
'I fell.'

b. Ittola -li tok.  
fall \textbf{1stSG.Agr} PAST  
'I fell (on purpose).  
(Davies 1986:35, reglossed)

The question must remain open for now of whether the distinction between external and internal arguments is the correct basis for the ‘active-stative’ split between auxiliary forms and the parallel choice between whether to use true agreement or a nominative pronominal clitic to cross-reference subjects in Choctaw.

What we can conclude, from the fact that auxiliary selection is not driven by the Case of the subject in other languages, and by the fact that auxiliary selection and the choice of cross-referencing form for subjects are made on the same basis in Choctaw, is that the choice of cross-referencing form for subjects is not determined by the Case of the subject, contra what has been
assumed in some previous work on Choctaw (Jelinek 1989, Schütze 1995). All subjects in Choctaw have nominative Case (Broadwell 2006) and there is no independent Case system for agreement.

4. Conclusion

This paper has shown that, although Choctaw agreement has been analyzed in the past as having a serious mismatch between its Case and agreement systems, there is a simpler, independently motivated analysis under which there is no mismatch. Under this analysis, Series I forms are true agreement while Series II forms are pronominal clitics which come in both nominative and accusative Case, but look alike on the surface because they are not morphologically distinguished for Case. However, the Case of an argument determines its cross-referencing form only for non-nominative arguments. For nominative arguments, there is a choice of cross-referencing forms (true agreement and nominative clitics) and this choice is made on an active-stative basis.

The answer to the question asked in the title of this paper, ‘Is agreement really independent of Case in Choctaw?’, is thus a very clear ‘no’ and ‘yes’. The answer is ‘no’ in the sense that both agreement and Case are nominative-accusative in Choctaw and there is no mismatch between these systems. Nominative arguments are only cross-referenced with the kinds of elements used for this purpose cross-linguistically: true agreement and nominative clitics. Accusative arguments are only cross-referenced with accusative clitics. Yet the answer to this question is ‘yes’ in the sense that there is a dimension of agreement in Choctaw that is completely independent of Case: the choice between whether to use true agreement or a nominative clitic to cross-reference a nominative argument is made on an ‘active-stative’ basis, which also governs auxiliary selection in Choctaw, that may correspond with whether the nominative is an external or an internal argument, but Case plays no role in this choice.
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