

On some issues surrounding the Hungarian nominal and pronominal plural

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1. Introduction

Empirical focus: nominal plural *-k*, associative plural *-ék*, pronominal plurality.

- (1) János-ok
John-PL
'more than one person named John'
- (2) János-ék
John-ASS.PL
'John and his associates/folks/company/cohort, John and them'

These topics have widely accepted analyses – why should we talk about them?

Nominal plural: spellout of Num⁰, doesn't co-occur with numerals because of a Doubly Filled Comp type of filter

But: it doesn't co-occur with spec, QP quantifiers either, and the associative plural doesn't co-occur with numerals/quantifiers either

Associative plural: in AssPl⁰ (dominating DP), has nothing to do with the *-k* plural

But: they show many similarities in their distribution, we should capture both the similarities and the differences

Pronominal plural: plurality comes from Num⁰; 1st and 2nd person pronouns are portmanteaus, 3rd person is morphologically transparent

But: we know that the meaning of 1st and 2nd person plural pronouns is more like the associative plural

Anti-agreement with 3PL pronouns ...

Roadmap:

Section 2: The nominal plural *-k*

Section 3: The associative plural *-ék*

Section 4: Deriving the similarities and differences bw. the 2 plurals

Section 5: Pronominal plurality

Section 6: Anti-agreement

2. The nominal plural *-k*

Complementarity with counters:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|--------------------------------|-----|---|-----|---|
| (3) | ház-ak
house-PL
'houses' | (4) | hét ház-(*ak)
seven house-PL
'seven houses' | (5) | sok ház-(*ak)
many house-PL
'many houses' |
|-----|--------------------------------|-----|---|-----|---|

Standard explanation: NumP is subject to an economy rule akin to the Doubly Filled Comp Filter (c.f. É. Kiss, 2002).

- | | | | | | |
|-----|--|-----|--|-----|--|
| (6) | $\begin{array}{c} \text{NumP} \\ \swarrow \quad \searrow \\ \text{Num} \quad \text{nP} \\ \text{-(a)k} \quad \text{ház} \end{array}$ | (7) | $\begin{array}{c} \text{NumP} \\ \swarrow \quad \searrow \\ \text{hét/sok} \quad \text{nP} \\ \quad \quad \swarrow \quad \searrow \\ \quad \quad \text{Num} \quad \text{nP} \\ \quad \quad \quad \quad \text{ház} \end{array}$ | (8) | $\begin{array}{c} \text{*NumP} \\ \swarrow \quad \searrow \\ \text{hét/sok} \quad \text{nP} \\ \quad \quad \swarrow \quad \searrow \\ \quad \quad \text{Num} \quad \text{nP} \\ \quad \quad \quad \quad \text{-(a)k} \quad \text{ház} \end{array}$ |
|-----|--|-----|--|-----|--|

But: *minden* 'every' and the so-called *-ik* quantifiers (*melyik* 'which', *bármelyik* 'any', *valamelyik* 'a certain', *semelyik* 'no, none', etc.) are in spec, QP, not in spec, NumP (Bartos, 1999; É. Kiss, 2002), and these don't co-occur with the plural either.

- (9) [_{QP} Minden [_{NumP} tíz falu]] épít-s-en egy templom-ot.
 every ten village build-IMP-3SG a church-ACC
 'Every ten villages must build a church.'
- (10) QP > NumP > nP
- (11) minden falu-(*k)
 every village-PL
 'every village'
- (12) mindegyik / semelyik gyerek-(*ek)
 each / no child-PL
 'each / no child'

A PF-deletion account wouldn't work: quantified nouns trigger singular agreement on the predicate.

- (13) minden / mindegyik / három gyerek táncol
 every / each / three child dance.3SG
 'every / each / three child(ren) dance(s)'

Proposal: *-k* is semantically incompatible with counters.

First pass: Hungarian counters require a semantically or syntactically singular input, for instance because their semantic job is iteration rather than simple modification/restriction. But: many quantifiers (e.g. *sok* 'many/much', *kevés* 'few', *minden* 'every' etc.) can happily co-occur with both count and mass nouns.

- (14) sok alma
 many apple
 'many apples' count reading
 OR: 'much apple' (e.g. grated or meshed apple 'stuff') mass reading

- (15) sok hó
 much snow
 ‘much snow’

Second pass: *-k* is hardwired as an undefined plural quantity (means something like ‘some’), i.e. a noun with a plural marker is already counted. The undefined characterization of the plural makes it incompatible with modification by a more specific quantity such as numerals and quantifiers.

3. The associative plural *-ék*

The associative plural means that the noun belongs to a non-homogenous group, and has human associates who have a near-equal status to that of the noun’s referent (Corbett, 2000; Moravcsik, 2003).

- (16) János-ok
 John-PL
 ‘more than one person named John’

- (17) János-ék
 John-ASS.PL
 ‘John and his associates/folks/company/cohort, John and them’

It’s is restricted to proper names, kin terms, friends, occupations, titles and the noun *neighbour* (in Hungarian). Ordinary nouns are infelicitous with it.

- | | | | | | | | |
|------|----|---|---------------------------------|--|----|----|--------------------------------|
| (18) | a. | a | testvér-em-ék | | c. | az | igazgató-ék |
| | | | the sibling-POSS.1SG-ASS.PL | | | | the director-ASS.PL |
| | | | ‘my sibling and her associates’ | | | | ‘the director and her associa- |
| | b. | a | tanár-om-ék | | | | tes’ |
| | | | the teacher-POSS.1SG-ASS.PL | | d. | *a | nő-ék |
| | | | ‘my teacher and her associates’ | | | | the woman-ASS.PL |
| | | | | | | | ‘the woman and her associates’ |

3.1. *-ék* ≠ *-é* + *-k*

Lotz (1968, 1988); Abondolo (1988); Balogh (2000): *-é* + *-k*

possessive anaphor *-é*

nominal plural *-k*

- (19) János-é
 John-é
 ‘John’s one’

- (20) ház-ak
 house-PL
 ‘houses’

M. Korchmáros (1995); Bartos (1999) and Moravcsik (2003) discuss the advantages and disadvantages of this proposal.

Advantages of *-ék* containing the possessive anaphor:

- both contain an invariant *-é* (but: Finalis case marker *-ért*)

- trigger plural agreement on the predicate

- (31) az igazgató-k jön-nek (32) az igazgató-ék jön-nek
the director-PL come-3PL the director-ASS.PL come-3PL
‘the directors are coming’ ‘the director and his company
are coming’

Differences:

- demonstrative agreement only for *-k*

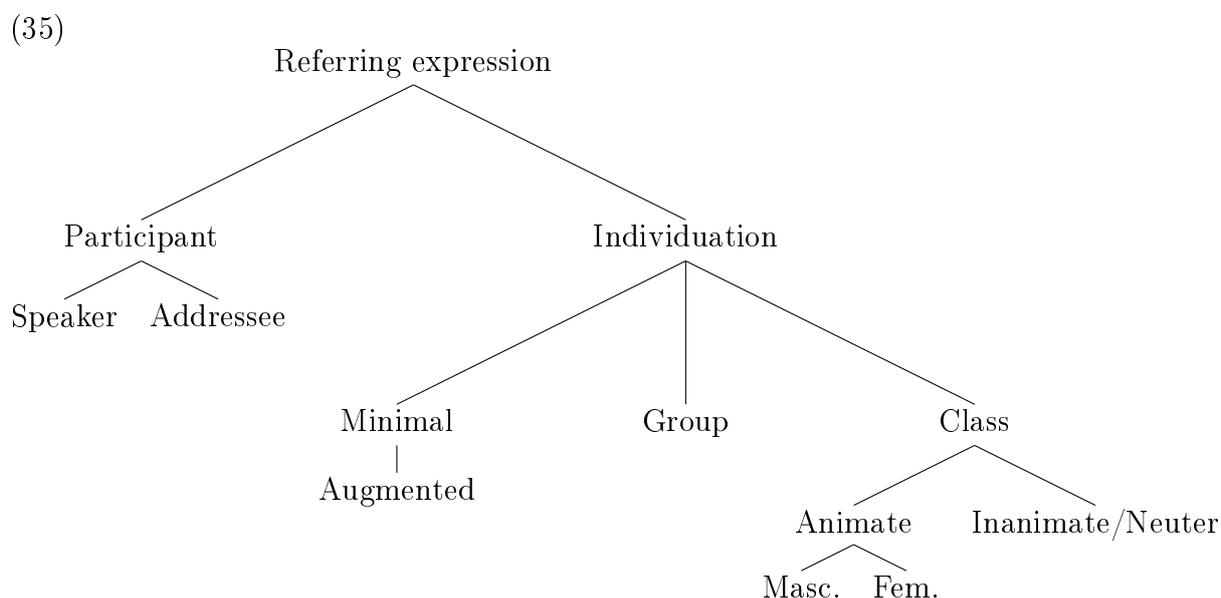
- (33) ez-ek a lány-ok
this-PL the girl-PL
‘these girls’
- (34) a. *ez-ék-nél a lány-om-ék-nál
this-ASS.PL-ADESS the daughter-POSS.1SG-ASS.PL-ADESS
‘at this daughter of mine and her company’
b. ennél a lány-om-ék-nál
this.ADESS the daughter-POSS.1SG-ASS.PL-ADESS
‘at this daughter of mine and her associates’
(Bartos, 2001a, ex. 4. h.)

	ordinary plural	associative plural
rejects counters	yes	yes
requires plural agreement on the predicate	yes	yes
concord on inflecting demonstratives	yes	no

Table 1: The ordinary vs. the associative plural

4.2. The two plurals have a common core

Feature geometry of Harley and Ritter (2002):



Singular: bare Individuation node / Individuation with a Minimal dependent

Plural: Individuation with a Group dependent

Dual: Individuation with both Minimal and Group dependent

Paucal: Individuation with all of Minimal, Group and Augmented

The idea that I take over from Harley and Ritter (2002) is that Number can have a specification that yields singular meaning or a specification that yields plural meaning, and that the latter involves a group feature. I will call their Minimal feature ‘singular’.¹

Proposal: the common trait of the two plurals is the [group] feature, all shared properties of the 2 plurals stem from this feature.

Num⁰: [singular] or [group] (pluralization in Hungarian is actually group formation). No feature in Num⁰ that would contribute inhomogeneity, → in absence of such a specification the group is interpreted as homogenous.

AssPl⁰: [group] bundled together with other features.

These are responsible for the +human interpretation and the inhomogeneity of the group, and these are responsible for the semantic difference.

Singular

Ordinary plural

Associative plural

{Num: singular} ⇒ ∅

{Num: group} ⇒ -k

$\left\{ \begin{array}{c} \text{group} \\ \text{human} \\ \dots \end{array} \right\} \Rightarrow -\acute{e}k$

4.3. The plurals and counters

[group]: semantically incompatible with (further) counting.

The idea intuitively and informally: we can arrive at a noun phrase with multiple referents in two distinct ways:

1. create multiple individuals one by one; this is what counters do
2. create a group of individuals in one fell swoop; this is what the [group] feature does

[group] plus counters form an inadmissible configuration for the same reason why one event cannot be doubly delimited.^{2,3} This correctly derives that

- neither plural is compatible with counters
- the position of counters and their distance from the [group] feature in the structure is irrelevant for grammaticality

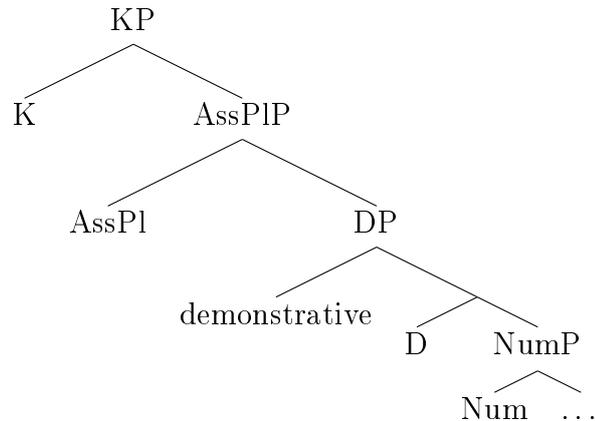
¹This is purely for purposes of convenience and does not reflect a theoretical difference. Hungarian doesn't have a dual or a paucal, so in the Harley–Ritter system this means that Minimal and Group don't co-occur in Hungarian, and the Augmented feature doesn't come into play at all. Thus the presence of Minimal always leads to a singular interpretation in Hungarian.

²E.g. **run a mile for ten minutes* or **wash the clothes clean white*, from Filip, 2003.

³Counters co-occur with the plural in many languages, see (Dékány, 2011, ch.9.) how to derive this.

4.4. Demonstrative concord and predicate agreement with the two kinds of plurals

(36)



Demonstratives share the number and case marking of the noun:

(37) ez-ek-et a könyv-ek-et
 this-PL-ACC the book-PL-ACC
 ‘these books’

I suggest that demonstrative concord involves Agree (it cannot be semantic agreement).

(38) ez-t a három könyv-et
 this-ACC the three book-ACC
 ‘these three books’

Demonstratives are bw. Num and AssPl. Suppose that probing is only downwards, or upward probing is allowed only when downward probing doesn’t yield a match, then:

- the demonstrative’s Number feature is always valued by the Num head, regardless of the presence or absence of AssPl

(39) ennél a lány-om-ék-nál
 this.ADESS the daughter-POSS.1SG-ASS.PL-ADESS
 ‘at this daughter of mine and her associates’
 (Bartos, 2001a, ex. 4. h.)

(40) a. *ez-ék-nél a lány-om-ék-nál
 this-ASS.PL-ADESS the daughter-POSS.1SG-ASS.PL-ADESS
 ‘at this daughter of mine and her company’
 b. *ez-ek-nél a lány-om-ék-nál
 this-PL-ADESS the daughter-POSS.1SG-ASS.PL-ADESS
 ‘at this daughter of mine and her company’
 (Bartos, 2001a, ex. 4. h.)

(41) ez-ek-nél a lány-a-i-m-ék-nál
 this-PL-ADESS the daughter-POSS-PL-POSS.1SG-ASS.PL-ADESS
 ‘at these daughters of mine and their company’

- DP-external probes agree for AssPl regardless of the value of the Num head

- (42) A lány-om-ék olvas-nak.
 the daughter-POSS.1SG-ASS.PL read-3PL
 ‘My daughter and her company are reading.’
- (43) A lány-a-i-m-ék olvas-nak.
 the daughter-POSS-PL-POSS.1SG-ASS.PL read-3PL
 ‘My daughters and their company are reading.’

- in the absence of AssPl, DP-external probes agree for the Num head’s feature specification

- (44) A diák olvas.
 the student read.3SG
 ‘The student is reading.’
- (45) A diák-ok olvas-nak.
 the student-PL read.3PL
 ‘The student is reading.’

To summarize: DP-external probes are sensitive to the value of Num only as long as there is no AssPl. This is because once AssPl is projected, it is closer to these probes than Num.

It is important that there is no double plural agreement on the predicate.

- (46) a. az igazgató-k jön-nek
 the director-PL come-3PL
 ‘the directors are coming’
 b. az igazgató-ék jön-nek
 the director-ASS.PL come-3PL
 ‘the director and his company are coming’
- (47) A lány-a-i-m-ék olvas-nak-(*nak).
 the daughter-POSS-PL-POSS.1SG-ASS.PL read-3PL-3PL
 ‘My daughters and their company are reading.’

The plural specification of both AssPl and Num is the same type of feature and serve as goals for the same probe.

5. Pronominal plurality

5.1. Personal pronouns: 1st and 2nd person vs. 3rd

Pronouns fall into two natural classes: 1st and 2nd person pronouns vs. 3rd (c.f. Bartos, 1999).

Morphology: 1st and 2nd have suppletive plurals, 3rd has the nominal plural (48).

- | | | | | | | | | |
|------|----|----|--|----|-----|--|----|---------|
| (48) | a. | én | | c. | te | | e. | ő |
| | | I | | | you | | | s/he |
| | b. | mi | | d. | ti | | f. | ők |
| | | we | | | you | | | s/he-PL |
| | | | | | | | | ‘they’ |

Morphology: 1st and 2nd has to take an extra suffix in front of ACC (segmentally identical to possessive agreement)

- | | | | |
|------|---------------------------|------|---------------------------|
| (49) | én, eng- em -(%et) | (51) | mi, mi- nk -et |
| | I I-POSS.1SG-ACC | | we we-POSS.1PL-ACC |
| | ‘I, me’ | | ‘we, us’ |
| (50) | te, tég- ed -(%et) | (52) | ti, ti- tek -et |
| | you you-POSS.2SG-ACC | | you you-POSS.2PL-ACC |
| | ‘you, you (acc)’ | | ‘you, you (acc)’ |
| (53) | ő, ő-t | (54) | ők, ő-k-et |
| | s/he/it him/her/it | | s/he/it-PL s/he/it-PL-ACC |
| | ‘she/he/it him/her/it’ | | ‘they them’ |

Distribution: 1st and 2nd induce indefinite agreement on the verb (56), 3rd goes with definite agreement.

- | | | | | | | |
|------|----|---------------------------|-------------|----|-----------------------|----------------|
| (55) | a. | Lát-sz | minket. | b. | Lát-unk | titeket. |
| | | see-2SG.INDEF | us | | see-1PL.INDEF | you.PL.ACC |
| | | ‘You can see us.’ | | | ‘We can see you(pl).’ | |
| (56) | a. | Lát-od | ő-t. | b. | Lát-juk | ők-et. |
| | | see-2SG.DEF | s/he/it-ACC | | see-1PL.DEF | s/he/it-PL-ACC |
| | | ‘You can see him/her/it.’ | | | ‘We can see them.’ | |

5.2. The plurality of first and second person pronouns

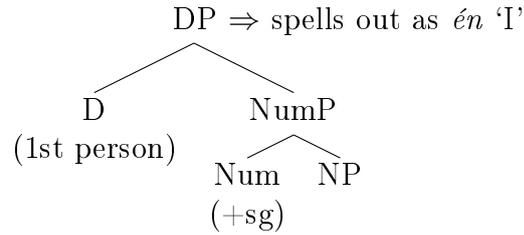
1st and 2nd: portmanteaus, with a built-in number and person feature

I adopt the idea in the literature that pronouns may correspond to (spell out) a whole syntactic phrase.⁴

Proposal: 1st and 2nd singular pronouns are pro-DPs

⁴C.f. most relevantly Weerman and Evers-Vermeul, 2002; Neeleman and Szendrői, 2007, and Jackendoff, 1977 for *one* and *do-so*, also Corver and Delfitto, 1999; Uriagereka, 1995 who propose that D-clitics have a pro-NP complement, and more generally Phrasal Spellout by Fábregas, 2007; Caha, 2009; Starke, 2011.

(57) feature specifications of a first person singular pronoun⁵

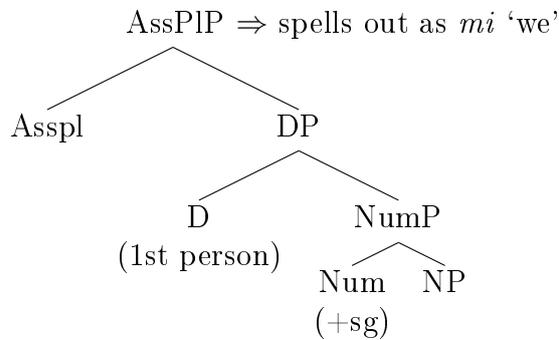


Proposal: 1st and 2nd plural pronouns are pro-AssplPs

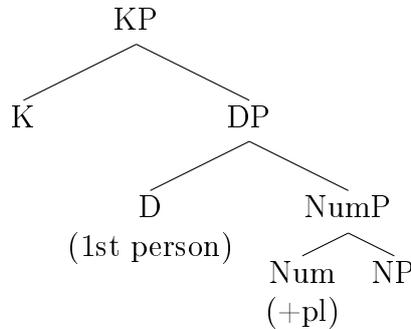
Semantically associative plurals of the corresponding singular pronouns (Lyons, 1968, ch. 7.2.2, Bartos, 1999, ch. 2.3., Moravcsik, 2003, Siewierska, 2004, ch. 3.2.1, Bhat, 2004; Vassilieva, 2005; Wiltschko, 2008; Kratzer, 2009; Wechsler, 2010).

we = ‘I and my associates’; *we* ≠ I₁+I₂+I₃...

(58) feature specifications of a first person plural pronoun



(59) the more traditional approach that I reject:



If 1st and 2nd pronouns contain a D (c.f. also den Dikken, 2004; É. Kiss, 2005) and they are pluralized by AssPl → further evidence for the hierarchy AssPl > D.

5.3. The plurality of the third person pronoun

Let us now turn to third person pronouns. These pronouns have an agglutinative plural and accusative marking like ordinary nouns do (c.f. (61)).

(60) *ő*, *ő-k*, *ő-k-et*
 s/he s/he-PL s/he-PL-ACC

(66) Ez le-es-ett.
 this down-fall-PAST.3SG
 ‘This fell (down).’

(67) Ez a levél le-es-ett.
 this the leaf down-fall-PAST.3SG
 ‘This leaf fell (down).’

But they cannot modify unmarked possessors (68-a) or serve as such themselves (69-a).

(68) a. *(az) [ez a tanár] ház-a
 the this the teacher house-POSS
 ‘this teacher’s house’
 b. [ennek a tanár-nak] a ház-a
 this.DAT the teacher-DAT the house-POSS
 ‘this teacher’s house’

(69) a. *(az) ez ház-a
 the this house-POSS
 ‘the house of this’
 b. ennek a ház-a
 this.DAT the house-POSS
 ‘the house of this’

This because demonstratives need (an antecedent with) case, but this is a caseless position.

6.3. Proposal

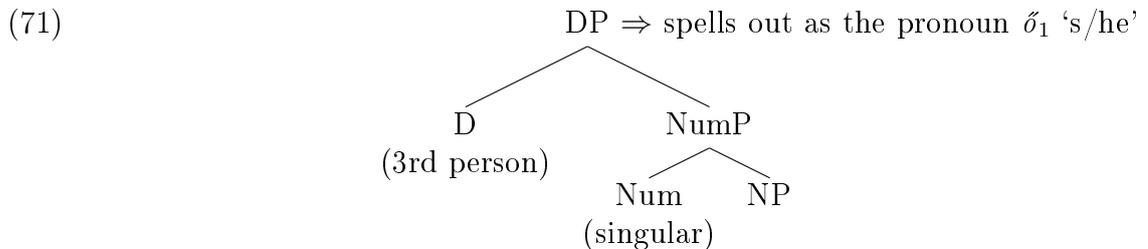
The received view:



The idea in this talk: caselessness and loss of *-k* are connected

3SG pronoun:

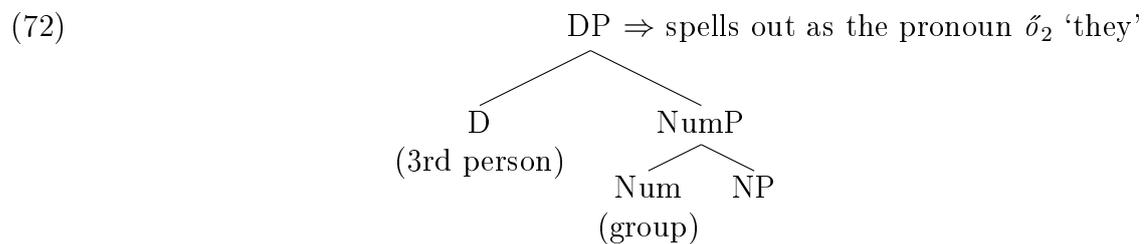
- the 3SG pronoun is a pro-DP
- the Num inside the DP is valued as [singular]



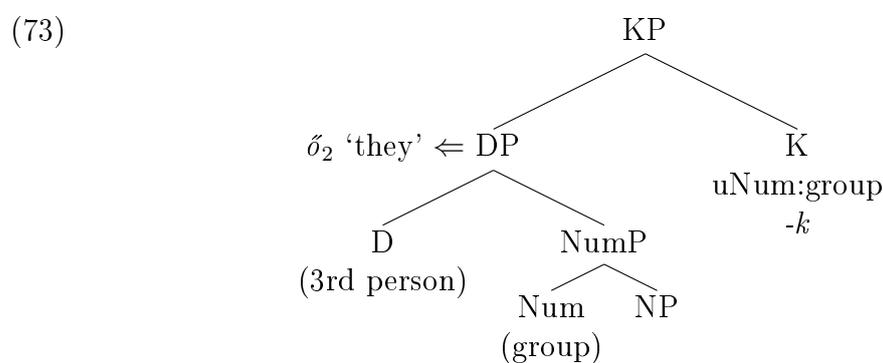
3PL pronoun

- the 3PL pronoun is is a pro-DP

- its spellout is actually \check{o} , not \check{o} - k (i.e. 3SG and 3PL are homophonous)
- the Num inside the DP is valued as [group]



- the $-k$ of 3PL is tied to the K layer because it *is* on K: it's an uNum agreement feature on K → lost in caseless contexts



- $-k$ is lost when K is lost, in bare DPs \check{o}_1 's/he' and \check{o}_2 'they' are indistinguishable by their form
- singular/group interpretation comes from Num⁰ inside the DP, external probes see it and agree for the correct value

No anti-agreement for subject pronouns: subjects are case-marked

- (74)
- | | | | |
|----|---|----|--|
| a. | \check{o} - k ír-nak
s/he-PL write-3PL
'they write' | b. | $^*\check{o}$ ír-nak
s/he write-3PL
'they write' |
|----|---|----|--|

No anti-agreement for R-expressions: their $-k$ is the spellout of Num⁰

- (75)
- | | |
|----|---|
| a. | *a $v\acute{o}$ csont-j-uk
the son.in.law bone-POSS-POSS.3PL
'the sons-in-law's bone' |
| b. | a $v\acute{o}$ - k csont-ja
the son.in.law-PL bone-POSS(3SG)
'the sons-in-law's bone' |
| c. | *a $v\acute{o}$ - k csont-j-uk
the son.in.law-PL bone-POSS-POSS.3PL
'the sons-in-law's bone' |

uNum of K: always there, always valued by Num⁰

If valued as [singular]: spells out as \emptyset

If valued as [group]: default spellout as \emptyset , in the context it spells out as *-k*; this is allomorphic variation (c.f. *-k* and *-i* in Num⁰)

6.4. Independent support for uNum on K

6.4.1. Conceptual argument

Observation in Danon (2011):

- general, often implicit assumption: the highest head in nominal phrases is ϕ -complete
- different ϕ -features are introduced on different functional heads ("distributed noun phrases)
- these Minimalist assumptions are incompatible

Solution in Danon (2011):

- ϕ -features are 'collected' at the top of the noun phrase (this is KP for me)
- highest head is endowed with uNum, uPerson, uGender
- a feature-sharing view of Agree guarantees that these features are not deleted upon the completion of a phase and remain visible for external probes

In light of this, the following features collect on the Hungarian KP:

- Number, Person

(76) mi ír-unk
we write-1PL
'we are writing'

(77) mi magas-ak vagy-unk
we tall-PL be-1PL
'we are tall'

- feature contributing the plurality of AssPl

(78) János-ék ír-nak
John-ASS.PL write-3PL
'John and his associates are writing'

(79) János-ék magas-ak
John-ASS.PL tall-PL
'John and his associates are tall'

- feature responsible for definiteness agreement

(80) lát-ok egy ház-at
see-1SG.INDEF one house-ACC
'I can see a house'

(81) lát-om a ház-at
see-1SG.DEF the house-ACC
'I can see the house'

Visibility of Number for external probes requires uNum on K.

6.4.2. Empirical support

Dialectal 2PL *tik* also has a *-k* that disappears in the same context, out intuition here is that this *-k* is not the contributor of plural interpretation.

(82) %Ti-k gyütt-ök.
you-pl come-2pl
'You guys are coming.'

(83) *A ti-k csont-ja-i-tok.
the you-pl bone-poss-pl-2pl
'your(pl) bones'

(84) a ti csont-ja-i-tok
the you bone-poss-pl-2pl
'your(pl) bones'

Some dialects have double plurals (in possessives, at least), I suggest that the second *-k* is the uNum of K.

Órség (either *-k* or both)

Ormányság and Slavonia

(85) a. diszó-**j-i-m-ak**
pig-POSS-POSS.1SG-PL
'my pigs'
b. ujj-**a-ji-m-ak**
pig-POSS-PL-POSS.1SG-PL
'my fingers' (Antal, 1961)

(86) a. lov-**a-ji-nk-ak**
horse-POSS-PL-POSS.1PL-PL
'our horses'
b. öreg-**e-i-nk-ek**
elderly-POSS-PL-POSS.1PL-PL
'our elderly people' (Kálmán,
1966, p. 76.)

Órség and Hetés

(87) a. ökr-**e-ji-nk-ek**
ox-POSS-PL-POSS.1PL-PL
'our oxen'
b. tehen-**e-ji-m-ek**
cow-POSS-PL-POSS.1SG-PL
'my cows'
c. tik-**a-ji-m-ak**
chicken-POSS-PL-POSS.1SG-PL
'my chickens' Imre, 1971, p. 314., c.f. also Végh, 1959; Kiss, 2006

In Dékány (2011) I argue that the plural of demonstratives is also the spellout of uNum on K.

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