

## Agreement with coordinate phrases: morphosyntactic versus semantic identity

### 1. Goal

The talk examines the agreement behavior of coordinate phrases, which, lacking a lexical head, have no phi-features of their own. It will be claimed that they participate in agreement with the morphosyntactic features of their conjuncts, and they participate in binding and coreference with the semantic features of their discourse referent. &Ps whose agreement behavior appears to be semantically determined are left-dislocated expressions represented in agreement processes by a resumptive pro sharing their semantic features.

### 2. Facts to be explained

The discussion will be based on Hungarian material. In Hungarian, the agreement behavior of coordinate singular subjects depends on their IP-internal versus left-peripheral position. IP-internally, they only allow singular agreement on the verb:

(1)a. [<sub>IP</sub> **Egy fiú és egy lány** érkezett /\*érkeztek]

*a boy and a girl arrived-SG/arrived-PL*

b. Tegnap össze vezett /\*veztek **János és Mari.**

*yesterday PRT quarrelled-3SG/quarrelled-3PL John and Mary*

An &P in topic position can elicit either plural or singular agreement (2). In the case of an &P in focus position the possibility of plural agreement depends on the referentiality of the conjuncts (3a,b).

(2) [<sub>TopP</sub> **János és Mari** tegnap össze vezett /veztek.

*Johnos and Mary yesterday PRT quarrelled-3SG/quarrelled-3PL*

(3)a. [<sub>FocP</sub> **JÁNOS ÉS MARI** vezett /veztek össze]

*John and Mary quarrelled-3SG/quarrelled-3PL PRT*

b. [<sub>FocP</sub> **MELYIK FIÚ ÉS MELYIK LÁNY** vezett /\*veztek össze]

*which boy and which girl quarrelled-3SG/quarrelled-3PL PRT*

### 3. Shared morphosyntactic features in verbal agreement

The singular agreement attested in the case of postverbal coordinated singular subjects is usually interpreted as partial agreement: agreement with the specifier of &P in some theories, and agreement with the closest conjunct in others. As the talk will demonstrate, the partial agreement theory is untenable in Hungarian, because &P elicits plural agreement if either one of the conjuncts bears a plural suffix:

(4) Tegnap össze \*vezett /veztek **János és a lányok/a lányok és János.**

*yesterday PRT quarrelled-3SG/quarrelled-3PL John and the girls /the girls and John*

It will be claimed that &P, having no phi-features of its own, participates in agreement with the phi-features of its conjuncts. Both conjuncts pass their features on to &P. As [plural] is a privative feature (NPs are not marked for [singular] – cf. Farkas and de Swart (2010)), feature projection from the specifier and the complement of & never results in a feature conflict.

In Hungarian, [plural] is a morphosyntactic feature of NPs bearing a *-k* plural suffix. Plural agreement on the verb (also involving a *-k*) is elicited by a [plural] NP. Semantic plurality plays no role; NPs with a numerical modifier, not bearing any plural suffix, do not elicit plural agreement:

(5) **Három lány/sok lány** össze vezett /\*veztek.

*three girl /many girl PRT quarrelled-3SG/quarrelled-3PL*

IP-internally, the agreement behavior of &P depends on whether any of the conjuncts has passed on a [plural] feature to &P. In (1a,b), &P has no number feature; in (4), on the other hand, it has assumed the [plural] feature of one of its conjuncts, hence it elicits plural agreement.

#### 4. Shared semantic features in coreference relations

The talk will claim that an &P with singular conjuncts seemingly eliciting plural agreement is a hanging topic, associated with a resumptive pro. Whereas &P participates in verbal agreement with the morphosyntactic features inherited from its conjuncts, it participates in coreference with the semantic features of its plural discourse referent. The plural agreement on the verb is elicited by the plural pro associate of &P.

It follows that the possibility of singular and plural agreement in (2a) derives from structural ambiguity. The hypothesized structures are supported by independent evidence:

(6)a. [Az pro<sub>k</sub> edzője és a pro<sub>k</sub> gyúrója]<sub>i</sub> mindegyik sportolót<sub>k</sub> elkísérte <sub>t<sub>i</sub></sub>.  
*the (his) trainer-3SG and the (his) masseur-3SG each athlete-ACC accompanied-3SG*  
'His<sub>k</sub> trainer and his<sub>k</sub> masseur accompanied each athlete<sub>k</sub>.'

b.\*[Az pro<sub>k</sub> edzője és a pro<sub>k</sub> gyúrója]<sub>i</sub> mindegyik sportolót<sub>k</sub> elkísérték pro<sub>PL</sub><sub>i</sub>.  
*the (his) trainer-3SG and the (his) masseur-3SG each athlete-ACC accompanied-3PL*  
'\*His<sub>k</sub> trainer and his<sub>k</sub> masseur, they accompanied each athlete<sub>k</sub>.'

In (6a), the singular verb agrees with the trace/lower copy of &P. The Q-raised object c-commands this lower copy, binding the pronominal genitives of the conjuncts. In (6b), plural agreement on the verb indicates that &P is a hanging topic, and the verb agrees with its pro associate. Since the pronominal genitives are not c-commanded by the Q-raised object at any stage of the derivation, they have no bound reading.

Not only topics but also foci can be coreferent with a resumptive pro, provided they are referential. In (3a,b), the possibility of plural agreement with the focused &P depends on its (co)reference potential.

#### 5. Extending the proposal

The proposal will also be extended to subject-verb agreement in person. Hungarian being a pro-drop language, conjoined personal pronouns occur in the left or right periphery as topics or foci, where they are associated with a resumptive pro:

(7) [Te és én] mindig el késünk pro-1PL.  
*you and I always PRT late-be-1PL*

As argued by Farkas and Zec (1995), the semantic features of personal pronouns include the features [+/-speaker], [+/-participant], and [+/-group]. The composite referent of &P, having the features [+speaker], [+participant], and [+group], is associated with a silent 1st person plural pronoun with the same features, eliciting first person plural agreement.

In Hungarian, the verb agrees with the object in definiteness. In the case of conjoined objects with different definiteness features, feature projection to &P is blocked. IP-internally, the feature conflict is resolved by closer conjunct agreement. In the case of left-peripheral objects, definiteness agreement with a resumptive pro is also an option. In arguing for the latter claim, I will show that (i) the resumptive pro, the silent equivalent of *azt* 'that' appearing in contrastive left dislocation, is [+/-definite], sharing the definiteness feature of the left-dislocated NP. (ii) An &P involving a definite and an indefinite conjunct is semantically definite and is coreferent with a definite pronoun. (iii) In the case of a left-peripheral &P with a definite first conjunct and an indefinite second conjunct, definite agreement on the verb is indicative of agreement with a resumptive pro (because the alternative strategy of closer conjunct agreement would yield indefinite conjugation).

#### References

- Farkas, D., & de Swart, H. (2010). The semantics and pragmatics of plurals. *Semantics and Pragmatics*, 3, 6: 1-54.
- Farkas, D., & Zec, D. (1995). Agreement and pronominal reference. In G. Cinque, & G. Giusti (Eds.), *Advances in Roumanian linguistics*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.