

Patterns of agreement with coordinate noun phrases in Hungarian

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Abstract The paper examines the agreement behavior of coordinate phrases (&Ps) on the basis of Hungarian data. It examines subject-verb agreement in number (and, in the case of pronominal subjects, also in person), and object-verb agreement in definiteness. Its primary goal is to account for the different agreement behavior of IP-internal and left-peripheral &Ps. It argues that because & has no φ -features of its own, &P assumes the φ -features projected by its conjuncts in formal agreement relations, and the features of its discourse referent in semantically motivated relations such as binding. In Hungarian, IP-internal agreement relations are formal relations, in which &P participates with the φ -features of its conjuncts. A left-peripheral &P, on the other hand, can be associated with a resumptive pro sharing its semantic features, and can be represented in agreement relations by its pro associate.

An IP-internal &P elicits plural agreement on the verb if and only if either the specifier or the complement of &, or both, project a [plural] feature to &P. Since—as argued by Farkas and de Swart (2010) on the basis of Hungarian facts—only plural noun phrases have a number feature, the possibility of a number feature conflict does not arise. When the conjuncts project contradictory person features or definiteness features to &P, the feature conflict must be eliminated for agreement to be possible. An option is the left dislocation of &P, and agreement with the resumptive pro associated with it. In the case of conjoined objects with conflicting definiteness features, Hungarian speakers prefer closest conjunct agreement, which is presumably licensed at the syntax-phonology interface.

Keywords Agreement · Partial agreement · Closest conjunct agreement · Coordination · Resumptive pro

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