

HIDDEN PERSON FEATURES: WHY GREEK ALLOWS UNAGREEMENT AND ITALIAN DOESN'T¹

Topic of the talk

Unagreement describes an (apparent) person mismatch between a 3PL subject and a 1/2PL verb found in some, but not all null subject languages.

- (1) Las mujeres denunciamos las injusticias.
the women denounced.1PL the injustices
'We women denounced the injustices.' (Hurtado 1985:187, (1))

Present proposal

- no actual feature mismatch, but zero-realisation of person features
- distribution of person features determines cross-linguistic variation

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1 A challenge to asymmetric agreement

Asymmetric agreement

There is a widespread (pre-theoretical) intuition that person, number, gender (ϕ -features) are properties of nouns rather than verbs.

- technical implementation, e.g. systems based on Chomsky's (2001) Agree and feature-copying
 - nominal ϕ -features interpretable
 - verbal ϕ -features uninterpretable and controlled by/copied from those of subject

Unagreement

- apparent feature mismatch
- 3PL subject DP controls 1PL/2PL verbal agreement
 ⇒ counterexample to asymmetric agreement?

1.1 Illustration of unagreement

Available with pre- and postverbal subjects e.g. Spanish

preverbal subject

- (2) Los lingüistas me habéis estado molestando con vuestras estúpidas preguntas.
 the linguists 1SG.ACC have.2PL been molesting with your stupid questions
 'You linguists have been annoying me with your stupid questions.'

postverbal subject

- (3) Firmamos los lingüistas la carta.
 signed.1PL the linguists the letter
 'The linguists among us signed the letter.'

Attested in various other languages

- (4) (Nosaltres) els estudiants vam fer un pastís.
 we the students AUX.1PL make a cake
 'We students baked a cake.' [Catalan]
- (5) Ftixate (eseis) oi chimikoi ena oraio keik.
 made.2PL you.PL DET.NOM.PL chemists a good cake
 'You chemists made a good cake.' [Greek]
- (6) (Nie) studenti-te izpekoxme keks.
 we student-DET baked.1PL cake
 'We students baked a cake.' [Bulgarian]
- (7) (Zu-ek) neska greziarr-ak polit-ak zarete.
 you-ABS.PL girl Greek-DET.PL.ABS beautiful-DET.PL.ABS AUX.2PL.ABS
 'You Greek girls are beautiful.' [Basque]

Crucially not in all null subject languages

- (8) Noi/*gli studenti abbiamo fatto una torta.
 we/the students have.1PL made a cake
 'We students baked a cake.' [Italian]

- (9) Nós/*os portugueses bebemos bom café.
 we/the portuguese drink.1PL good coffee
 ‘We portuguese drink good coffee.’ [Eur. Portuguese]

Quantificational unagreement

- (at least) in Spanish and Greek also with (some) quantifiers
 - overt pronouns ruled out
- (10) a. Algunos pacientes hemos/habéis llamado a la doctora.
 some patients have.1PL/2PL called the doctor
 ‘Some of us/you patients have called the doctor.’
 b. Todos niños creemos/creéis en los Reyes Magos.
 all kids believe.1PL/2PL in the Reyes Magos
 ‘All of us/you kids believe in the Magi.’ [Spanish]
 Ackema & Neeleman (in prep.:26, (52bd))
- (11) a. Merikoi foitites tha pame ekdromi.
 many.NOM.PL students FUT go.1PL trip
 ‘All of us students will go on a trip.’
 b. Oloi oi mathites tha pame ekdromi.
 all.NOM.PL DET.NOM.PL pupils FUT go.1PL trip
 ‘All of us pupils will go on a trip.’ [Greek]

Questions

- How should unagreement be analysed?
- Does it involve a feature mismatch?
- How can the cross-linguistics variation be explained?

1.2 Three approaches to an analysis

Three approaches . . . and their problems

1. Symmetric agreement (Ackema & Neeleman in prep.)
 - ϕ -features on nominals and verbs generated independently
 - both interpretable
 - correspondence mechanism to ensure compatibility **but** underspecified features (3rd) can be superseded by (compatible) more specified ones by feature spreading
 - e.g. lexicalist theories like LFG (Bresnan 2001), HPSG (Müller 2008)
 - conceptual issues: abandons asymmetry of agreement, ϕ -features associated with phrasal constituent (instead of heads)
 - empirical: cross-linguistic variation through variation in availability of feature spreading \Rightarrow (as it stands) not much explanatory value
2. “Hidden subject”
 - related by A-bar chain/left dislocation (Hurtado 1985; Torrego 1996)
 - Why is person mismatch allowed in *this* configuration?
These girls, they know their stuff vs. **These girls, we know our stuff*
 - or apposition (Bosque & Moreno 1984; Rodrigues 2008)
 - conceptual: Cardinaletti & Starke (1999) exclude apposition to empty categories

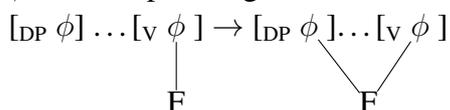
– empirical: lacking intonational cues to apposition

3. “Hidden features” (Choi to appear; possibly Stavrou 1995)

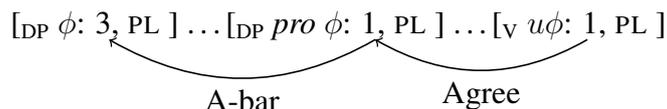
- appropriate person feature on/in controller DP without morphological reflex, agreement as usual
- is *pro* a head or a phrasal constituent?

(12) ϕ -feature spreading

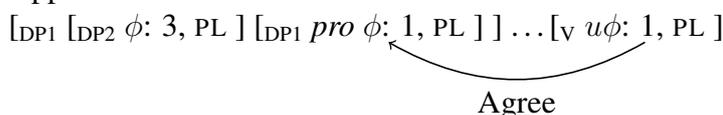
(Ackema & Neeleman in prep.:11f., (19))



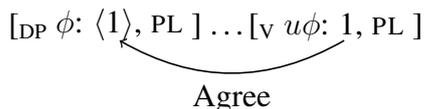
(13) Left Dislocation



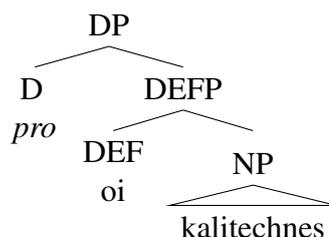
(14) Apposition



(15) Hidden Feature



(16) *the artists*



... seem to offer a good chance of explaining cross-linguistic variation.

2 The correlation with adnominal pronoun constructions

Adnominal Pronoun Constructions (APCs)

- descriptive cover term for “we linguists”-type expressions
- minimally involve a pronominal expression and a descriptive noun
- (possibly not universally available?)

APCs and unagreement

Potential complications aside, the following correlation between the structure of APCs and the availability of unagreement emerges:

A (tentative) APC-unagreement correlation

For languages with null subjects and definite articles

- definite article illicit in APCs → no unagreement
- obligatory definite article in APCs → unagreement

Greek	emeis *(oi) foitites we DET.PL students
Spanish	nosotros *(los) estudiantes we DET.PL students
Catalan	nosaltres *(els) estudiants we DET.PL students
Bulgarian	nie studenti- *(te) we students-DET
Basque	gu ikasle- *(ok) we student-DET.PROX

Table 1: Null subject languages with unagreement

Europ. Port.	nós (*os) estudantes we (DET.PL) students
Italian	noi (*gli) studenti we (DET.PL) students

Table 2: Null subject languages without unagreement

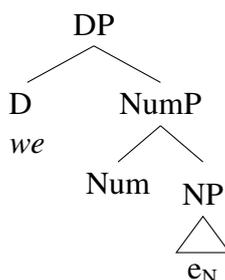
3 Tracing unagreement to nominal structure

3.1 Framework

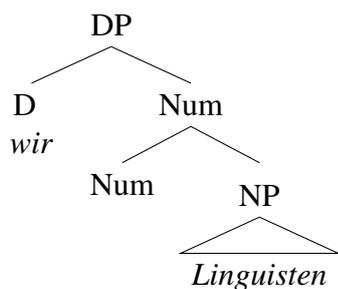
Assumptions

- Distributed Morphology (Halle & Marantz 1993; Embick 2010)
 - syntactic structure all the way down
 - underspecification of vocabulary items
 - late insertion of functional morphemes
- complex internal structure for pronouns, cf. Panagiotidis (2002)
- pronominal determiners, cf. Postal (1969); Rauh (2003); Roehrs (2005), *pace* Cardinaletti (1994)

(17)



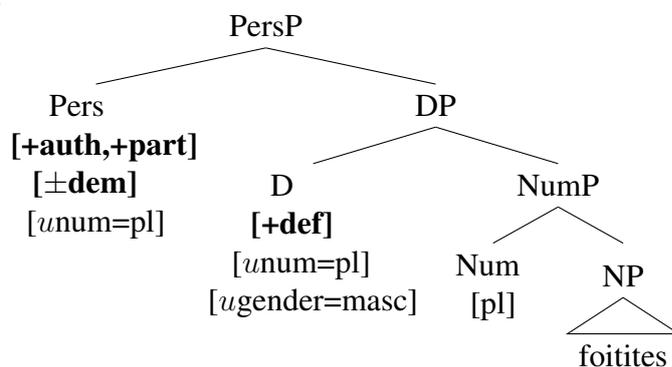
(18) German



3.2 Two locations for person features

Unagreement configuration

(19) e.g. Greek



(20) $D[+def] \leftrightarrow \emptyset / __]_\phi$
 $D[+def,pl,masc] \leftrightarrow oi$

(21) $Pers[-dem] \leftrightarrow \emptyset$
 $Pers[+auth,+part,pl,+dem] \leftrightarrow emeis$

How does this relate to unagreement?

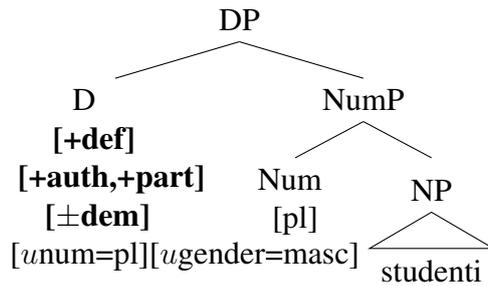
- overtiness of NumP (rather, head noun) depends on lexical choice (overt noun/adjective vs. e_N)
- overtiness of Pers depends on choice of [±dem]
- overtiness of definite D is contextually restricted (overtiness of NumP)
- two independent variables → four options of (non-)spell-out

(22) Possible realisations of xnP

	overt Pers	silent Pers
overt NumP	APC	unagreement/reg. DP
silent NumP (e_N)	pronoun	<i>pro</i>

Anti-unagreement configuration

(23) Italian



- (24) D[+def,-dem] ↔ ∅ / ___]_φ
 D[+auth,+part,+def,pl] ↔ *noi*
 D[(-auth,-part,+def,pl,masc)] ↔ *gli*

Why does this block unagreement?

Get unagreement by zero spell-out of D?

- predicts bare nouns as unagreeing (definite) subjects
- bare nouns are generally not definite in languages like Italian
- also, it's wrong (**studenti abbiamo fatto una torta*)

Why shouldn't bare nouns be unagreeing subjects?

- contextual condition: D[+def,-dem] ↔ ∅ / ___]_φ
- D only silent if no overt material in PF-domain (i.e. silent NumP)
- reduced spell-out options, unagreement cannot arise

(25) Possible realisations of *x*nP

	overt D _{pers}	silent D _{pers}
overt NumP	APC/reg. DP	—
silent NumP (e _N)	pronoun	<i>pro</i>

3.3 Predictions

Some predictions

1. If [±dem] is indeed connected to demonstrativity, unagreement should be incompatible with demonstratives, as it depends on a [-dem] specification.
2. Similarly, non-definite expressions should not appear with overt (i.e. [+dem]) pronouns.
→ quantificational unagreement
3. Unagreement is not a “property” of a language *per se*, but results from a specific structural configuration (and spell-out variation). If a language for some reason expresses definiteness and person separately in some cases, those cases should allow unagreement.
→ European Portuguese numerals
4. Since unagreement is traced to properties of the nominal domain, it should be detectable in other instances of verbal agreement.
→ object unagreement

No demonstratives in unagreement

Spanish

(26) *Estos lingüistas me habéis estado molestando con vuestras estúpidas preguntas
 these linguists 1SG.ACC have.2PL been molesting with your stupid questions

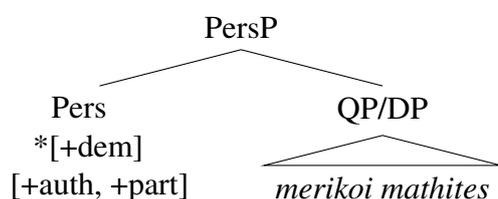
Greek

(27) *(Aftoi oi odigoi) de tha pioume/pieite.
 these DET.NOM.PL drivers NEG FUT drink.1PL/2PL

No overt pronouns with quantificational unagreement

(28) a. (*Emeis) merikoi mathites tha pame ekdromi.
 we some pupils FUT go.1PL trip
 ‘Some of us pupils will go on a trip.’

b.



- these quantified expressions are non-definite
- by assumption, Pers is overt only if [+dem]
- non-definite expressions cannot be demonstrative
- hence Pers cannot be overt in a quantified *xnP*

European Portuguese exceptional unagreement

- EP generally lacks unagreement
- seems to be licit in context where APC has separate definite article and pronoun

(29) a. nós os dois
 we the two

b. Ficamos os dois estudantes em casa.
 stayed.1PL the two students in house
 ‘We two students stayed at home.’

Object unagreement

- clitic doubling of direct objects in Spanish licit in S-American variants only, cf. (31)
- object unagreement licit even in Iberian Spanish (Hurtado 1985)

(30) La policia nos dio a los familiares las malas noticias.
 the police 1PL gave to the.PL relatives the.PL bad.PL news.PL
 ‘The police gave us relatives the bad news.’ (IO)

(31) *Lo vimos a Guille.
 CI-ACC saw-1PL a Guille
 ‘We saw Guille.’ (DO)

[Standard Spanish]
 (Anagnostopoulou 2006:535, (35a))

- (32) Nos denunciaron a las mujeres.
 1PL denounced.3PL to the.PL women
 ‘They denounced us women.’ (DO) (Hurtado 1985:202, (20a))

4 Conclusion

Results

To the extent that presented theory is correct

- unagreement results from the same process giving rise to null subjects
- contextual restriction on zero definite D
- if that applies to person features (Italian) → unagreement unavailable
- no phrasal spell-out
- *pro* results from zero spell-out of all elements in an *xnP*

Open issues

- extend empirical basis
- languages without overt articles (Serbocroatian vs. Georgian)
- clarify relation to general theory of null arguments
- clarify the nature of the restriction on zero spell-out of D
- number mismatches (not only) with Spanish “ninguo”

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A Null articles

Languages without overt articles

- e.g. Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian, Turkish without unagreement
- while Georgian seems to have unagreement

(33)

- a. (čven,) monadire-eb-ma irem-i da-v-i-č’ir-e-t
 we.ERG.PL hunter-PL-ERG deer-NOM PV-SUBJ.1-CV-catch-AOR-SUBJ.1.PL
 ‘We hunters caught the deer.’
- b. (tkven čven) utxsoel-eb-s ra-s mo-gv-ts-em-t
 you.PL us foreigner-PL-DAT what-DAT PV-us-give-THEMATIC-PL
 ‘What will you(pl) give us foreigners?’ [Georgian]

B Interpretation

The semantics of person features

- person features introduce presupposition about inclusion of speaker/hearer in denoted entity/set (Heim 2008)
- independent of overtiness of Pers head expressing those features

(34) (s=speaker, h=hearer)

$\llbracket [+auth, +part] \rrbracket^c = \lambda x_e: x \text{ includes } s_c.x$

$\llbracket [-auth, +part] \rrbracket^c = \lambda x_e: x \text{ includes } h_c \text{ and excludes } s_c.x$

(35) *emeis oi foitites* ‘we students’

$\llbracket [\text{PersP } [+auth, +pers] [\text{DP } oi \text{ foitites }]] \rrbracket^c$
 = $[\lambda x_c: x \text{ includes } s_c.x]$ (the salient set of students in c)
 = The salient set S of students in c **iff** $s_c \in S$, **undefined otherwise.**

... = the semantics of unagreement

(36) $\llbracket Oi \text{ foitites } ftiaxame \text{ ena } oraio \text{ keik } \rrbracket^c = 1$ iff the salient set S of students in c baked a good cake, **undefined if** $s_c \notin S$.

i.e. the utterance is felicitous only if the speaker is a student herself

The semantics of quantificational unagreement

(37) a. *Merikoi mathites tha pame ekdromi.*

some pupils FUT go.1PL trip

‘Some of us pupils will go on a trip.’

b. $\llbracket a. \rrbracket^c = 1$ iff there is a contextually salient set P of entities and a set R of pupils in c and a set T of entities going on a trip in c and $(P \cap R) \cap T \neq \emptyset$, undefined if $s_c \notin (P \cap R)$.

(38) *Merikoi mathites tha pame ekdromi kai merikoi tha katsoume spiti.*

some pupils FUT go.1PL trip and some FUT sit.1PL home

‘Some of us pupils will go on a trip and some (of us) will stay home.’

C Clitic articles

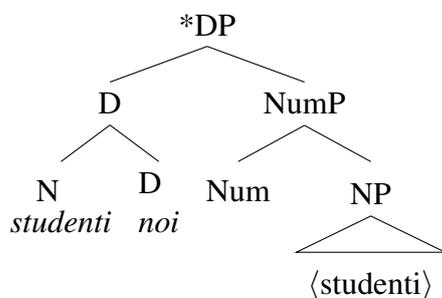
The lack of proper APCs in Romanian

- seems to correlate with presence of suffixal article and inavailability of unagreement
- assume that R, like Italian, hosts person and definiteness features on same head
- suffixal article derived by head movement of N to D

Romanian

- possibly generates string **studenti-noi* ‘students-we’, ruled out then because *noi* cannot be realized as an affix?

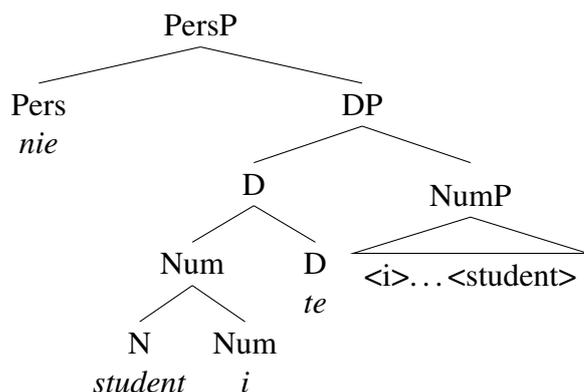
(39)



Bulgarian

- has suffixal articles, unagreement and APCs
- spell-out of Pers head is independent of affixal article

(40)



D Person marking on DPs crosslinguistically unattested?

Person marking in Nama

Rust (1965:18) notes:

Das Substantiv wird auch mit den Suffixen der 1. und 2. Person verbunden. [...] Wir haben ja auch im Deutschen solche Verbindungen wie ‘ich Mann’, ‘du Mann’, ‘wir Hirten’ u.s.w. (*The noun is also linked with the suffixes of first and second person. [...] We have similar expressions in German like “I man”, “you man”, “we sheperds” etc.*)

(41) Lyons (1999:143)

tii kxðe-ta	(I person-1SG+M)	‘*I man’
saá kxðe-ts	(you person-2SG+M)	‘*you man’
kxðe-p	(person-3SG+M)	‘the man’
sí kxðe-ke	(we person-1PL+M)	‘we men’
saá kxðe-kò	(you person-2PL+M)	‘you men’
kxðe-ku	(person-3PL+M)	‘the men’

E Number mismatches and unagreement?

Singular unagreement in Greek

(42) a. We wanted to meet early in the morning for our day trip...

b. *...alla o odigos argisa.
but DET.NOM.SG driver was.late.1SG
intended: ‘but I, the driver, was late.’

c. ...ma o malakas argisa.
but DET.NOM.SG idiot was.late.1SG
‘but stupidly I [=*I idiot] was late.’

(43) a. I went to the market to buy some vegetables...

b. ...kai xechasa o vlakas tis domates.
and forgot.1SG DET.NOM.SG idiot DET.ACC.PL tomatoes
‘and I stupidly [=*I idiot] forgot the tomatoes.’

2sg unagreement

- generally restricted possibility in Greek, presumably for pragmatic reasons (comparison with vocative expressions)
- seems to be marginally possible however

(44)

- a. ?*O vlakas den pires tis domates.
 DET.NOMSG idiot NEG took.2SG DET.ACC.PL tomatoes
 intended: ‘You idiot didn’t take the tomatoes!’
- b. Re vlaka, den pires tis domates!
 PRT idiot.VOC NEG took.2SG DET.ACC.PL tomatoes
 ‘You idiot, you didn’t take the tomatoes!’

Speaker A is infatuated with C and talks to B about how he is always missing chances to talk to her. The utterance of speaker B should be understood as a continuation of A’s incomplete sentence. There is no intonational break after *efyges*.

(45)

- a. A: ... Just when I had to leave the house to attend the talk of Prof. L. Inguist, she came in. Just like last time. ...!
- b. B: Ti? Pali efyges o malakas?
 what again left.2SG DET.NOM.SG idiot
 ‘What? You idiot left again?’

A contrast between Spanish and Greek

morphologically singular quantifiers unagree only in Spanish

(46) Spanish

- a. Ninguno hablamos varios idiomas.
 no one.SG speak.1PL several languages
 ‘No one of us speaks several languages.’
- b. Cada alumno hablamos diferente.
 each student.SG talk.1PL differently
 ‘Each of us students talks differently.’

(Rivero 2008:230, (31bc))

(Ackema & Neeleman in prep.:25, (48))

(47) Greek

- a. *Kaneis de milame polles glosses.
 nobody NEG speak.1PL many languages
- b. *(O) kathe mathitis milame diaforetika.
 DET.NOM.SG each pupil speak.1PL differently

Number mismatches Spanish

- unagreement with (morph.) singular quantifiers and collective Ns
- interpretable num features in Pers (distinct from value of Num)?

(48) Ninguno hablamos varios idiomas.
 no one.SG speak.1PL several languages
 ‘No one of us speaks several languages.’

- (49) Cada vez más sentimos la gente mayor que perdemos el tiempo.
 each time more feel.1PL the people older that waste.1PL the time
 ‘Ever more frequently we older people people feel that we are wasting our time.’

Collective nouns and number mismatches Greek

- more restrictive than Spanish wrt. singular quantifiers
- allows number unagreement with collective nouns

- (50) a. Oloena ke perissotero niothume i palia jenija oti spatame
 ever more feel.1PL DET.NOM.SG old generation that waste.1PL
 to xrono mas.
 DET.ACC.SG time our
 ‘Ever more frequently we old folks feel that we are wasting our time.’
- b. ?*Oloena ke perissotero niothume i jenija mas oti spatame
 ever more feel.1PL DET.NOM.SG generation our that waste.1PL
 to xrono mas.
 DET.ACC.SG time our
 *‘Ever more frequently we our generation feel that we are wasting our time.’