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On collectives with numerals

Hungarian (1) and Dutch (2) present three puzzles regarding the collective expressions in italics. **PUZZLE I** concerns the combination of a comitative 'with'–PP and a plural subject ('we') without the PP adding to the total number of participants in the event. While this is the norm in Hungarian (apával mentünk moziba 'we went to the cinema with dad' can readily make reference to just a pair of movie-goers: dad and me), Dutch is not otherwise a comitative plural language. **PUZZLE II**, perhaps most eye-catching of the three, is the use, in both (1a) and (2a), of a possessive element (Hungarian -é, Dutch z'n) in the third person singular form, not showing person or number agreement with the first person plural subject of the clause. For Hungarian, this absence of person and number agreement with the subject is obligatory: (1b) is impossible. Dutch allows agreement: (2b) is acceptable; but (2a) sounds more natural. **PUZZLE III** is about the morphosyntactic status and function of the suffixes glossed as 'LM' (short for 'linking morph').

(1) a. mi *négy-es-é-vel*   mentünk nyaralni
       we four-LM-POSS:3SG-COMIT   went.1PL vacation.INF
       'we went on a holiday in a group of four'
   b. *mi *négy-es-ünk-kel*   mentünk nyaralni
        we four-LM-POSS:1PL-COMIT went.1PL vacation.INF

(2) a. we gingen *met z'n*   *vier-en* met vakantie
       we went   with POSS:3SG four-LM   with vacation
       'we went on a holiday in a group of four'
   b. we gingen *met ons*   *vier-en*   met vakantie
       we went   with POSS:1PL four-LM   with vacation

      The paper argues for the morphosyntactic structures in (3) and (4) for (1a) and (2a), resp. The LM (the protagonist of **PUZZLE III**) is treated as the surface exponent of a RELATOR head that establishes a predication relation between the numeral and a constituent headed by a collective denoting silent noun (represented hereinafter as 'GROUP'). Within this latter constituent, the noun GROUP is possessed by a reflexive morpheme ('SE'); the possessor and possessum are connected by a second RELATOR. In Dutch (2a), the initial alveolar fricative of *z'n* in Dutch (2a) is the exponent of SE, and *'n* spells out the RELATOR that connects SE to its possessum GROUP. In Hungarian (1a), SE itself is silent but its presence is morphologically registered by possessive inflection on the RELATOR, -é. Reflexive SE takes as its antecedent the numeral in the specifier of the higher RP, which is 3SG. This is central to solving **PUZZLE II**. The entire comitative PP is predicated, as a depictive, of a PRO controlled by the plural subject. This gives rise to the interpretation that the subject of the event is a collective of four. **PUZZLE I** falls out accordingly.

(3) [PP [DP Dø ... [RP *négy* [R′ REL=LM=-es [DP Dø [RP SE=ø [REL=-é [GROUP]]]]]]] P=-vel]

(4) [PP P=met [DP _ [D′ Dø [RP *vier* [R′ REL=LM=-en [DP Dø [RP SE=z' [REL='n [GROUP]]]]]]]]]

      In Hungarian (3), the silent collective noun GROUP finds a phonological host to its immediate right in the form of the (itself suffixal) comitative postposition, -vel. This allows the syntax in (3) to surface as is, as in (1a). In Dutch (4), silent GROUP remains unsupported in its local environment, forcing its DP container to shift leftward into the specifier of the higher DP, to the left of its subject (the numeral vier 'four'). With [DP Di [RP SE=z' [REL='n [GROUP]]]] moving to the left of vier, the surface word order (z'n before vier + REL=-en) is derived and the silent noun GROUP is licensed in a local relation with the D–head in whose specifier its DP lands.

Dutch (5a) is semantically equivalent to (2a), but differs from it in two apparently correlated morphological respects: the presence of the diminutive suffix -*tje*, and the choice of a different LM (-*s* instead of -*en*) in the higher RELATOR. The diminutive is associated with the collective noun phrase of GROUP, and marks that the group in question is small; this accounts for the fact that (5a) is felicitous only with paucal numerals (n<6). Lacking a host inside the DP that it originates in, the diminutive head-moves up to the higher RELATOR, determining the latter's exponent (-*s*) in the DIM+REL complex. Subsequent movement of the DP of GROUP delivers as the output of (5b) a string in which P=*met* is followed by *z'n*, then *vier*, and finally the complex -*tje-s*. The -*n* of (2a) and the -*s* of (5a) are phonologically identical with plural markers but distribute differently: cf. met *z'n zevenen/negenen* 'in a group of 7/9' with *zevens/negens* '7s/9s'. For plural -*n*/-*s*, we pursue a reanalysis as LMs in a predication structure involving a plural prosubject: [DP D [#P #[+PL] [RP *pro*[+PL] [R' REL=LM=-*n*/-*s* [NP N]]]]]; see below for related discussion.

(5) a. we gingen *met z'n*   *vier-tje-s*   met vakantie
     we went   with POSS:3SG four-DIM-LM with vacation

   b. [PP P [DP _ [Dø [RP *vier* [R' REL=LM=-*s* [DP Dø [DIM=*tje* [RP SE=*z'* [REL='*n* [GROUP]]]]]]]]]]
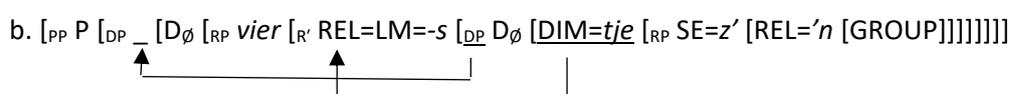
Hungarian (6a,b) differ from (1a) in the choice of P-element: -*vel* (1a), -*ben* (6a) or -*en* (6b). Both (6a) and (6b) lack possessive morphology (the -*é* of (1a)): the predicate for the numeral *négy* 'four' here is a non-possessed projection of collective GROUP. In addition, choosing -*en*, as in (6b), forces the silence of the RELATOR of the predication of which *négy* 'four' is the subject. Dékány & Csirmaz (2018) call the -*en* of (6b) a 'collective suffix', which we interpret as saying that it is the exponent of the combination of a suffixal superessive P (-*Vn*) and the silent collective predicate GROUP. This portmanteau is the phrasal spell-out of the entire PP (out of which *négy* 'four' moves leftward), whence the fact the RELATOR cannot be spelled out discretely as LM=-*es*. As Hungarian (7a) and Dutch (7b) expone the collective predicate by itself (as *csoport* 'group' and *ge*-), no phrasal spell-out is involved in these examples, and the RELATOR of the predication whose predicate is the collective is exponed in its own right, as LM=-*os*Hung/-*en*Dutch.

(6) a. *négy-es-ben* mentünk   nyaralni   b. *négy-en*   mentünk   nyaralni
     four-LM-INE went.1PL vacation.INF   four-SUP   went.1PL vacation.INF

     ['INE'=inessive; 'SUP'=superessive]   *négy*i [PP [RP *t*i [R' REL [GROUP]]] PSUP]

(7) a. *csoport-os-an* mentünk nyaralni   b. we gingen *ge-vier-en*   met vakantie
     group-LM-SUP went.1PL vacation.INF   we went   GE-four-LM with vacation

In collective (8a), the numeral hosts a plural marker. This is remarkable as Hungarian numerals otherwise systematically fail to trigger plural marking on the head noun: (8b). We assign (8a) the syntax in (9a), with *négy* predicated of a silent pronominal element (*pro*). The number head (#) agrees with *pro*, which is [+PL], leading to exponence of # as -*k*. In (9b), *négy* is attributively related to *ember* 'person'; here no [+PL] element is available as an agreement target for #.

(8) a. a   négy-*ek*   b. a   négy ember(*-*ek*)
     the four-PL   the four person-PL
     'the group of four'   'the four persons'

(9) a. [DP D [#P # [RP *pro*[+PL] [R' REL [*négy*]]]]]   b. [DP D [#P # [RP *négy* [R' REL [*ember*]]]]]

References

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