

Multivaluation meets case variation: A case study of Tatar postpositions

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Annotation. In this paper we address agreement/case variation in Tatar postpositional constructions with coordinated noun phrases (Tatar > Turkic/Altaic). Tatar denominal postpositions display variation in possessive agreement with the complement, appearing either with a possessive agreeing *ezafe* marker or in an *ezafe*-less form. This variation correlates with differential case marking determined by the morphological and syntactic class of the nominal. We focus on configurations where two coordinated arguments belong to different morphological and syntactic classes and examine how person agreement is resolved in this case. Using experimental data, we explore whether correlation between agreement pattern and case marking strategy retains and whether linear position of the arguments influences it.

Background. The traditional Minimalist accounts treat case assignment as a result of agreement by ϕ -features. On the basis of observations on case and agreement asymmetries in coordination, Weisser (2020) proposes that case assignment and agreement by ϕ -features should be treated as distinct mechanisms. In particular, he claims that while ϕ -agreement can display asymmetries in conjunction, case marking in nominal coordination is always symmetric. The reason is that case assignment is a purely syntactic mechanism, and ϕ -agreement may happen either in syntax or post-syntactically: if ϕ -features valuation is syntactic, then default or resolved agreement is observed; if valuation is postponed to PF, the linearly closest target is chosen.

One of the counterexamples to the claim is *suspended affixation* found i.a. in Turkic languages — the differential case marking observed under coordination. Weisser (2020) treats it as a morphological phenomenon, and makes an empirical prediction that if NPs/DPs that systematically show different morphological case are conjoined, the suffixal case marker should always be found on the final conjunct. In this paper we examine whether there is a link between the choice of case marking of conjuncts and the choice of ϕ -agreement in Tatar and put Weisser's empirical prediction to test.

We study nominal coordination in Tatar PPs with focus on case and person agreement interaction. In Tatar PPs personal pronouns exhibit genitive case marking, while other pronouns and nominals remain unmarked (1)-(2) (Zakiev (ed.) 1993: 253, Lyutikova 2017). Besides, denominal postpositions attest possessive agreement: for 3rd person pronouns and nominals the possessive agreement marker (*ezafe* form) is obligatory (2c-d). The distribution of the *ezafe*-less form of denominal postpositions is generally restricted to personal pronouns (1a-b). The study of Tatar coordination with two conjuncts belonging to different morphosyntactic classes makes it possible to test whether there is any dependence of possessive agreement on case assignment. If Tatar follows other Turkic languages for which the generalization on symmetrical case assignment is valid we expect that case marking of NPs/DPs is maintained in a coordination, final DP bears case marker and there is either resolved or default person agreement.

Our **research questions** are: i) If two conjuncts belong to two different morphosyntactic classes, does the symmetry of case in conjunction hold in Tatar? ii) For both case-symmetrical and case-asymmetrical coordinated constructions, which conjunct controls person agreement with postposition? Is agreement resolved based on the morphosyntactic class of a conjunct, based on its linear position or both? iii) Is the correlation between agreement pattern and case marking observed in PPs with a single argument preserved in case of coordination? We assess these questions using symmetrical coordination with conjunction *häm* (A *häm* B 'A and B') (cf. asymmetrical coordination with *belän*: A B *belän* 'A with B').

Experiments. In Exp. 1 (109 resp.) we examined coordinated noun phrases with personal pronouns and proper nouns (*min häm Marat* 'me and Marat') varying the order of conjuncts (<pronoun, noun> vs. <noun, pronoun>). Respondents filled in gaps in sentences, choosing the most natural form for the components of the postpositional construction. In Exp. 2 (38 resp. from the same sample) we added to our examination coordinated noun phrases with two personal pronouns (*min häm sin* 'me and you'), and varied postposition agreement marker, as well as case marking of conjuncts (combinations of

values presented in Table 4). Respondents evaluated sentences with different configurations of postpositional phrases on a Likert scale from 1 to 5.

Results. The first argument of the coordinated construction shows a clear tendency to be used in the unmarked form. However, if the first argument is a 1st/2nd person pronoun, respondents choose the genitive in half of the cases (Table 1). The observed distribution differs significantly from the distribution that we would expect to observe if personal pronouns were always marked GEN and nominals like Marat remained unmarked (χ^2 goodness of fit, p -value < 0.01). Moreover, we observe that both conjuncts can bear the same case marker or remain unmarked and there is no constraint on order of the conjuncts. Respondents prefer the 3rd person possessive agreement marker, regardless of whether the closest conjunct is 3rd person or not and regardless of case marking (Tables 2, 3). In 21% of cases the non-agreeing form was chosen. The results of Exp. 2 show that the 3rd person possessive agreement marker should be considered a default agreement pattern: when both conjuncts are personal pronouns, agreement with the second conjunct is considered unacceptable (Table 4, Repeated Measures ANOVA yields p -value << 0.001 for factors AGREEMENT TYPE and CASE COMBINATION and their interaction).

Discussion. We observe that the most frequent agreement pattern is default 3rd person agreement, although the non-agreeing form and agreement with the 1st conjunct or plural agreement might be acceptable. Closest conjunct agreement pattern is ruled out in all cases except for when the final conjunct is personal pronoun: then the non-agreeing form of the postposition can be used. Crucially, we observe a lot more variability than is predicted based on Weisser's generalization. In light of symmetrical approach to case this variability cannot be explained the same way as *suspended affixation*: the latter can trigger stem allomorphy that can serve as a sign of deletion; in case of Tatar there are no such signs.

Nevertheless, we suppose that this variability is best explained in terms of morphology. We adhere to the proposal by Lyskawa (2021) that in coordination constructions the agreement morphology is chosen due to grammar-external mechanisms. Importantly, the morphological features that are chosen in case of agreement with coordination can be absent in syntax: these features are never used when there are syntactic features available (e.g. in case of agreement with 1st/2nd person pronoun the default form is never used). The grammar-external approach explains equal acceptability scores of four agreement patterns in case of coordination *me and you*, which we claim is the result of ineffability resolution: the observed ratings can hardly be considered as *(fully) acceptable*. That is, our study argues in favor of unavailability of grammar-internal agreement mechanism in case of coordination constructions in Tatar.

- (1) ezafe-less form
- | | | | |
|----|---------------|--------------------|---------------|
| a. | <i>minem</i> | <i>arkada</i> | |
| | I.GEN | because | |
| b. | <i>sinej</i> | <i>arkada</i> | |
| | you.GEN | because | |
| c. | <i>anij</i> | <i>/* ul</i> | <i>arkada</i> |
| | (s)he.GEN | /(s)he.NOM | because |
| d. | <i>*Marat</i> | <i>/*Marat-nij</i> | <i>arkada</i> |
| | Marat.NOM | / Marat. GEN | because |
- ‘because of me / because of you / because of her / because of brother’

- (2) ezafe form
- | | | | |
|----|--------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| a. | <i>minem</i> | <i>arka-m-da</i> | <i>/* arka-si-nda</i> |
| | I.GEN | because-1SG | / because-3 |
| b. | <i>sinej</i> | <i>arka-ŋ-da</i> | <i>/* arka-si-nda</i> |
| | you.GEN | because-2SG | / because-3 |
| c. | <i>anij</i> | <i>/* ul</i> | <i>arka-si-nda</i> |
| | (s)he.GEN | /(s)he.NOM | because-3 |
| d. | <i>Marat</i> | <i>/*Marat-nij</i> | <i>arka-si-nda</i> |
| | Marat.NOM | / Marat.GEN | because-3 |
- ‘because of me / because of you / because of her / because of brother’

Table 1. *Experiment 1 results: case marking of conjuncts.*

	NOM NOM	NOM GEN	GEN NOM	GEN GEN
<i>Marat and me</i>	22	156	0	13
<i>Me and Marat</i>	64	7	103	25

Table 2. *Experiment 1 results: possessive agreement and case marking.*

	<i>Marat and me</i>			
	NOM NOM	NOM GEN	GEN NOM	GEN GEN
Non-agreeing form	1	36	0	3
1 st conjunct/default	21	111	0	9
2 nd conjunct	0	7	0	1
Coordination	0	2	0	0

Table 3. *Experiment 1 results: possessive agreement and case marking.*

	<i>Me and Marat</i>			
	NOM NOM	NOM GEN	GEN NOM	GEN GEN
Non-agreeing form	0	0	0	0
1 st conjunct	0	0	0	0
2 nd conjunct/default	64	7	102	25
Coordination	0	0	1	0

Table 4. *Experiment 2 results for nominal coordination with two personal pronouns.*

<i>me and you</i>	NOM NOM	NOM GEN	GEN NOM	GEN GEN
Non-agreeing form	1,42	2,08	1,89	2,89
2 nd conjunct	1,63	1,79	1,53	1,55
Default (3SG)	1,71	1,66	2	3,05
1 st conjunct	1,71	1,55	1,53	3
Coordination (PL)	1,34	1,97	1,76	3,5

References

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