

LAZY AGREEMENT IN THE LADIN DP

SABRINA Rasom
University of Padua, Italy
sabry.rasom@tin.it

Résumé : I will analyze the syntactic derivation of lazy agreement in the Ladin (a dialect of Northern Italy) DP, basing my assumptions on Cinque (2005)'s theory about the dual source of adjectives and phrasal movement in the Romance DP. I will try to demonstrate how the morphology of the Ladin lazy agreement disambiguates the ambiguous interpretation of Romance postnominal adjectives.

Mots-clés : syntax, DP, lazy agreement, Italian dialects, Romance languages

1. Lazy agreement in the Ladin DP

The main goal of my doctorate study is to analyze the syntactic derivation of the phenomenon called by Haiman – Benincà (1992) “Ladin lazy agreement rule”, which I think could provide means to better understand the syntax of the DP and of the interface between morphology and syntax on the one side and syntax and semantics on the other. I base my analysis on the theory of the dual source of adjectives and phrasal movement in the Romance DP worked out by Cinque (2005).

According to the “Ladin lazy agreement rule” (LLAR), in Fassan Ladin feminine plural NPs receive the mark of number -(e)s only in the last member of the phrase, while all other members are only marked with the feature of gender. Three different constructions are allowed in this context:

construction:	interpretation:
1. La pìcola cèses “The small[+f.-pl.] houses[+f.+pl.]	“the houses, which are all small”
2. La cèses pìcoles. “The houses[+f.+pl.] small[+f.+pl.]	“the houses, which are all small”
3. La cèsa pìcoles. “The hose[+f.-pl.] small[+f.+pl.]”	“those houses that are small”

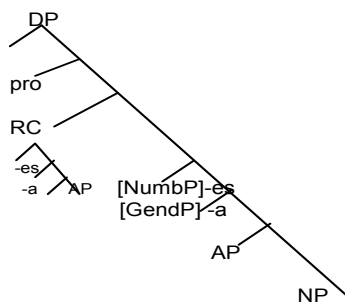
The interpretation of (2), (with no LLAR) corresponds exactly to that of (1). The fourth logical possibility (4) is excluded under all interpretations in this Central Ladin variety:

4. *Les pìcoles cèses.

I will adopt and provide empirical support for Cinque's (2005) idea that adjectives have a “dual source”: “They enter the DP either as specifiers of dedicated functional projections in the ‘extended projection’ of the NP – direct modification –, or as (reduced) relative clauses – indirect modification”. Adjectives in indirect modification (RC) are higher than the ones in direct modification (AP1, AP2) although they are both generated higher than the NP. Furthermore, Cinque (2005) notes that “prenominal and postnominal adjectives differ in

interpretation with respect to a number of well-known semantic distinctions” (ex. individual level//stage level, non-restrictive//restrictive, relative//absolute).

I intend to show that the constructions generated by the LLAR correspond exactly to these different semantic interpretations, thus disambiguating them not only through syntax



(prenominal vs. postnominal position) but also through morphology (presence or absence of -(e)s). In particular the indirect modification interpretation is given by the absence of the mark of number on the noun (as in (3)), whereas the direct modification is distinguished by its presence (as in (1) and (2)). Like in the other Romance varieties, in Fassan Ladin postnominal adjectives

can have both direct or indirect modification interpretation, while prenominal adjectives only allow for direct modification interpretation.

The strong morphosyntactic and semantic interaction between the noun and its adjectives inside the DP in Fassan Ladin could provide evidence for Cinque (2005)’s theory according to which the prenominal and postnominal positions and the related semantic interpretations of the adjectives are due to the movement of the entire NP inside the DP. Cinque argues that as a consequence of this movements the (restricted) RC adjectives always end up postnominally, and after all the eventual postnominal direct modification APs, because of their nature of relative clause. Therefore, basing on Cinque’s theory about the dual source of adjectives, I propose that while APs in direct modification receive the feature of number in the functional projections directly higher than the NP, the adjectives deriving from a reduced relative clause, (Red)RC, inherit the feature of number from the adjective of the adjectival predicate of the relative clause they derive from. Starting from these assumptions I propose the following syntactic movements for the three constructions of the LLAR:

La bela cèses

The adjective ‘bel’ in AP raises to gender and subsequently to number with pied piping of the whole remnant:

$DP[la_{numbP}[(gendP[bel_x-a]_{AP}[t_x] [D'[D] NP[cèsai])_{remnant} z-es] t_{remnant} z]$

The remnant movement provides also evidence for the impossibility of a construction like (4) ‘les beles cèses’, because the AP, after receiving gender, raises directly to number with the entire NP, and in this way only the last element of the construction, i.e. the NP, receives the feature of number.

La cèses beles

The adjective ‘bel’ in AP raises to gender, then the NP raises to number and, as in this position it c-commands the adjective below, there is a percolation of features which allows also the adjective to get feature of number:

$DP[la_{numbP}[cès-es]_{gendP} [bel_x-a]_{AP}[t_x] [D'[D] NP[t_i]]]$

La cèsa beles

The NP is attracted over the (Red)RC projection to a position reserved to the antecedent of the relative clause (pro) without checking the feature of number, whereas the adjective in RC raises to check the features of gender and number inherited from the adjectival predicate:

$DP[la_{pro}[cèsa_i] \ RC[numbP[bel_x-es] \ gendP[t_x -a] \ APrc[t_x]] \ [D'[D] \ NP[t_i]]]$

This work shows how morphology mediated through syntactic movement can disambiguate potentially ambiguous structures; furthermore it provides evidence for a more detailed structure of the functional projections in the DP and for the existence of remnant movement inside the DP.

References

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