

Coordination of Unlikes: Some Minimalist Considerations

Coordination is one of the most frequent constructions of natural languages and at the same one of the most theoretically controversial, with no agreement across or even within grammatical frameworks about the basics of its syntax and semantics. One controversy concerns the extent to which coordinands (i.e., conjuncts) must be alike: do they have to bear the same cases (if any), the same grammatical categories, and the same grammatical functions? I will summarize recent research on this issue, much of which is concerned with Slavic languages, and I will show that it becomes generally accepted that coordinands do not have to be alike in any of these respects: they may bear different cases, different categories, and different functions.

I will give a relatively pre-theoretical explanation of the coordination of unlikes, a variant of so-called “Wasow's Generalization”. It is not difficult to see how this explanation may be translated into a formal account within Lexical Functional Grammar or Head-driven Phrase Structure Grammar, but it is much less clear how to account for it within Mainstream Generative Grammar (including Minimalism). I will present two recent attempts (by Neeleman et al. and by Bruening) and I will discuss the possibility of a more purely Minimalist approach to coordination.

Some of the material for this talk will be drawn from the following two recent publications, and some will be novel:

- Agnieszka Patejuk and Adam Przepiórkowski. Category mismatches in coordination vindicated. *Linguistic Inquiry*, 2022. Forthcoming. (https://direct.mit.edu/ling/article/doi/10.1162/ling_a_00438/103006/Category-Mismatches-in-Coordination-Vindicated)
- Adam Przepiórkowski. Coordination of unlike grammatical cases (and unlike categories). *Language*, 98(3):592–634, 2022. (<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/864636>)