

SEMANTIC VARIATION IN GREEK AND BULGARIAN QUANTIFIER UNAGREEMENT

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Unagreement describes configurations of (apparently) third person noun phrases cross-referenced by non-third person verbal agreement. This is available in some null subject languages like Greek, Spanish or Bulgarian, but not in others like Italian (Ackema & Neeleman 2018; Choi 2014; Höhn 2016). Quantified noun phrases can occur in unagreement (1) and I present a new semantic contrast among unagreement languages.

(1) a. ... njakoi zheni sme rabotili po 24 chasa... Bulgarian
some women AUX.1PL worked for 24 hours

‘... some (of us) women have worked for 24 hours...’ (attested online)

b. Kapjes jinekes exume dhulepsi ja 24 ores. Greek
some women AUX.1PL worked for 24 hours

‘Some (of us) women have worked for 24 hours.’

Leaving aside tense, the assertion of either sentence in (1) is that the intersection of the maximal sets of women and of individuals who worked for 24 hours is not empty, see (2). I argue that person features introduce presuppositions concerning the membership of the author (first person) or addressee (second person) in the context C in the reference set of nominal expressions. Following Sudo (2012), presuppositions can apply to the nuclear scope set of existential quantifiers (2a)—here requiring the author to be a woman and to have worked for 24 hours—or to the restrictor set (2b), in which case the author needs to be a woman, but does not need to have worked for 24 hours herself.

(2) **Assertion:** $\exists R \exists N [\max(\mathbf{women}) = R \wedge (\max(\mathbf{work.for.24h}) \cap R) = N \wedge N \neq \emptyset]$

a. **Presupposition**_{v1}: $\text{author}_C \in N$ *nuclear scope presupposition (NSP)*

b. **Presupposition**_{v2}: $\text{author}_C \in R$ *restrictor presupposition (RP)*

Contrast I propose that Bulgarian allows only the strong NSP in (2a), accounting for the infelicity of continuing (1a) by (3). Greek, however, allows the continuation in (4), suggesting that the weaker RP reading in (2b) is available.

(3) #Az imax kăzmet i trjabvashe da rabotja “samo” 18 chasa... BG
I had.1SG luck and must.PST SBJV work.1SG only 18 hours

‘I was lucky and had to work for “only” 18 hours...’

(4) Egho imun tixeri ke eprepe na dhulevo mono 18 ores... GR
I was.1SG lucky.F and must.PST.3SG SBJV work.1SG only 18 hours

‘I was lucky and had to work for “only” 18 hours...’

Further data from coordinated sentences with first person quantificational unagreement corroborate the proposed contrast. Note that while all 8 Greek consultants accepted the RP readings, Bulgarian may display internal variation. Of 5 Bulgarian consultants, 4 clearly rejected the RP readings (among them 2 bilinguals who accepted RP readings in Greek), but one also allowed RP readings. Patterns similar to Greek are found in Pomak (Slavic) and southern Calabrese (Romance), possibly due to language contact. So far, no other linguistic features have been identified as correlating with the (un)availability of the RP reading (2b), so this could be a *sui generis* point of semantic variation among languages with unagreement.

References

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