Hungarian and Mari canonical partitives display subject-object asymmetries

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Subset-superset relations can be encoded either by canonical or pseudo partitive constructions: *two of **the students*** vs *a pair of **students***. Canonical partitive phrases are defined by (1).

(1) [$_{DP1}$ two [$_{NP}$ silent N head [$_{PP/KP}$ of [$_{DP2}$ Det [$_{NP}$ students]]]]] (following Falco&Zamparelli 2019:11)

As opposed to SAE and Finnic-Saamic languages, the partitive relation can be marked on DP1 in Uralic (the subset). The exponent is possessive suffixes bearing number-person features of the superset (DP2). The superset is hereby overt or covert. There is language-specific variation based on the feature "human". Hungarian is more restricted than Mari. In Hungarian, 1) the referent of a possessively marked numeral is thereby almost always [+human] as in (2a), and 2) DP2 cannot be overtly expressed if its features are reflected on DP1 (2b). In Mari, no such limitations exist, as shown in (3a-b). (Tóth et al. 2024.)

(2)   a. {Context: *Itt van három könyv.*} [here be.3SG three book] 'Here are three books.'

        *(Közül-**ük**)*   *kettő-t /*   **Kettő-**jé**-t*   *elolvastam.*

        among-3PL   two-ACC /   *two-PX.3SG-ACC   read.PST.1SG

        'I read two of them.' [–human] / Lit.: *'I read his/her two.'

     b. {Context: *Itt van három diák.*} [here be.3SG three student] 'Here are three students.'

        *Kettő-**jük**-et /*   **közül-**ük***   *kettő-**jük**-et*   *vendégül*   *látom.*

        two-PX.3PL-ACC / *among-3PL   two-PX.3PL-ACC   as_guest   see.1SG

        'I host two of them.' DP2 expressed   **(Hungarian)**

        / Lit.: *'I host their two from among them as guests.' DP2 cannot be expressed

(3) a. {Context: *Tyšte kum kn'iga ulo.*} [here three book be.3SG] 'Here are three books.'

       Kokyt-šy-m ludynam. [two-PX.3SG-ACC read.2PST.1SG] 'I have read two of them.'

   b. {Context: *Tyšte kum student ulo.}* [here three student be.3SG] 'Here are three students.'

       Kokyt-šy-m / Nunyn koklašty(-št)   *kokyt-šy-m*   *unala*   *üžam.*

       two-PX.3SG-ACC / they.GEN among(-3PL)   two-PX.3SG-ACC as_guest see.1SG

       'I host two of them.'   **(Mari)**

Hungarian and Mari also diverge in the subjecthood of canonical partitive phrases like *kettő-jük* 'two of them' from example (2b) (with no overt superset) and *kokyt-šo* 'id.' from (3b) (with or without an overt superset). Partitive quantifier phrases can be subjects in Mari, similarly to Finnish or English, irrespective of their semantic (+/–human) and morphosyntactic (+/– overt superset) properties (4). In contrast, Hungarian tends to avoid canonical partitive quantifier subjects (PX- inflected numerals) (5a), favoring the *-(A)n* numerical state adverbial suffix, (5b).

The suffix *-(A)n* has been considered a collective suffix (e.g., Dékány&Csirmaz 2018), a case suffix marking numerical state adverbials (e.g., Bencédy et al. 1974) and an indefinite plural nominal predicate (Schvarcz 2022). The contexts for examples (4) to (8) and (2b) and (3b) match. Mari has "collective numerals" ending in *-(y)n* (Riese et al. 2022); (6) can be used for (4).

(4)   *Kokyt-šo /   Nunyn   koklašty(-št)   **kokyt-šo**   provalitlen.*
         two-PX.3SG /   they.GEN   among(-3PL)   two-PX.3SG   fail.2PST.3SG
         'Two of them failed.'   **(Mari)**

(5) a. *?? Kettő-jük   megbukott.   b.   Közülük   kett-en   megbuktak.*
        two-PX.3PL   fail.PST.3SG   among-3PL   two-NUM.STATE.ADV   fail.PST.3PL
        'Two of them failed.'   **(Hungarian)**

(6)   *Kokt-**yn** / Nunyn   koklašty(-št) kokt-yn provalitleny**t**.*   **(Mari)**
         two-ADV / they.GEN   among(-3PL) two-ADV fail.2PST.3PL 'Two of them failed.'

While the PX-partitive triggers singular agreement (4, 5a), adverbials appear with plural agreement in the adverbial forms, (5b, 6). However, inserting a plural subject-DP into (5b, 6) is not grammatical (7, 8). Incompatibility with nominative subjects points towards subject-like properties. Substituting the superset-phrases *közülük* and *nunyn koklašty(št)* 'from among them' in (5b, 6) with a personal pronoun, "degrades" the adverbials *ketten/koktyn* into appositive modifiers (9), (10).

(7)   **Közül-ük   kett-en   **(a) diákok**   megbuktak.*
         among-3PL   two-NUM.STATE.ADV the student.PL fail.PST.3PL
         Intended to mean: 'Two of them / the students failed.'   **(Hungarian)**

(8)   **Kokt-yn   student-vlak /*Nunyn   koklašty(-št) kokt-yn student-vlak provalitlenyt.*
         two-ADV student-PL / they.GEN   among(-3PL) two-ADV student-PL fail.2PST.3PL
         Intended to mean: 'Two of them / the students failed.'   **(Mari)**

(9)   **Hungarian:**   (10)   **Mari:**
         Ők kett-en   megbuktak.   *Nuno kokt-yn provalitlenyt.*
         they two-NUM.STATE.ADV fail.PST.3PL   they two-ADV fail.2PST.3PL
         'The two of them / they two failed.'

We aim to provide elicitations of the subject-object asymmetries in Hungarian and Mari.

Abbreviations: 2PST 2nd past tense, DP1 subset, DP2 superset, K case, NUM.STATE numeric state, P postposition, PX person suffix

References: Bencédy et al. 1974 *A mai magyar.* Dékány&Csirmaz 2018 *Numerals and Quantifiers.* Falco&Zamparelli 2019 *Partitives.* Riese et al. 2022 *Mari.* Schvarcz 2022 *Presuppositional analysis.* Tóth et al 2024 *Possessive partitive strategies in Uralic.*