

## Welsh Prenominals and the Syntax-Morphology Interface

Welsh is a head-initial VSO language — unsurprisingly the limited material that *can* appear before a nominal head (determiners, numerals and a limited number of adjectives) shows some unusual behaviour. The data we present here have previously only partially been described and pose a challenge to linguistic analysis and raise issues which are largely unaddressed in previous lexicalist (specifically LFG) work.

### 1 Data

Weak determiner forms (the definite article and possessives) can only have narrow scope if followed by a coordination and must be repeated (1). In contrast, a strong determiner form such as *pa* ‘which?’ can have wide scope (2). (3-4) show more complex NPs: if an adjective intervenes between a weak determiner and a coordination of nouns, the determiner is not repeated (3); on the other hand, if the first coordination in the NP is adjectival (not acceptable for many speakers) or involves ordinal numerals, the determiner appears on each conjunct (4).

Cardinal numerals, when directly followed by a coordination of (SG) nouns, cannot have wide scope (5), but if a pre-nominal adjective is interpolated between the numeral and the noun coordination, a wide scope reading becomes significantly more acceptable (6).

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| (1) <i>y tadau a *('r) meibion</i><br>the fathers and the sons                       | (2) <i>pa unigolion a sefydliadau</i><br>which individuals and institutions  |
| (3) <i>y gwahanol afiechydon a chlefydau</i><br>the different illnesses and diseases | (4) <i>y trydydd a *('r) pedwerydd mis</i><br>the third and the fourth month |
| (5) <i>*pum [llyfr a ffilm]</i><br>five [book.SG and film.SG]                        | (6) <i>pum hoff [lyfr a ffilm]</i><br>five favourite [book.SG and film.SG]   |

### 2 Proposed Analysis

The behaviour of weak form determiners (“clitics”) as in (1) is an often-stated fact in descriptions of Welsh, but the *prima facie* contradictory pattern in (3), the peculiar pattern of repetition in (4), the contrast to strong form determiners as in (2), not to mention the fact that numerals as in (5) can only have narrow scope but wide scope is more acceptable in examples like (6), seem to have escaped notice and, to our knowledge, still await linguistic analysis.

We examine the data above from the non-transformational, lexicalist point of view of Lexical Functional Grammar (LFG; Bresnan 2001, Dalrymple 2001), which distinguishes two levels of syntactic description, c(onstituent)-structure and f(unctional)-structure.

In LFG the numeral’s narrow scope in (5) *could* be functionally constrained, but an f-structure approach is not feasible or desirable for the data in (1, 3-4) and crucially predicts that (6) should be ungrammatical, raising doubts about the validity of any functional approach to constrain narrow scope *per se* for prenominal material (determiners, numerals and adjectives). Rather we argue that this data should be accounted for in terms of the c-structure and its relationship to morphology. We find that the heuristic value of coordination as a criterion to determine constituency (“syntactic atomhood”), probably most explicitly addressed

by Miller (1992a, 1992b), assumes a more central role than often assumed.

Taking into account recent work in LFG on possible (and apparent) mismatches between morphosyntax and syntax (Luís and Otaguro 2006 on European Portuguese pronominal clitics, which owes much to Anderson's (2008 and earlier) notion of phrasal affixation), Wescoat (2002) on Lexical Sharing, Toivonen (2003) on non-projecting words), we come to the conclusion that Welsh weak form determiners are not independent syntactic atoms and are morphological affixes whose host selection is phrasally determined. However, we argue that parameters such as syntactic atomhood, morphological affixhood, host selection need *a priori* need to be considered independently: a specific combination of these properties explains (3) and (4), as a consequence of which the conjuncts of a coordination appearing phrase-initially must match in the morphosyntactic feature of determinedness.

Our approach suggests that in constructions like (5-6) the numeral is not an independent syntactic atom but a dependent compound member and that the compounds involved are syntactically opaque. Unusually, the numeral appears to combine with whatever follows, noun or adjective, which determine syntactic class membership. Thus a Num-Adj compound (6) may have wide scope like simple pronominal adjectives (3), and in a syntactically opaque Num-N compound the numeral cannot scope over another N conjunct (5). However, the fact that what the numeral combines with is dependent on adjacency may suggest that the numeral is an independent morphological token and that compounding takes place at the mapping stage from morphology to syntax; we would thus be dealing with a two-to-one mismatch between morphology and syntax such as was (for inflection) proposed by Luís and Otaguro for the Hindi future tense.

## References

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