

Hungarian *Mint* as Conj⁰

1. The phenomenon. Hungarian *mint*₁ ('than') is generally taken to be a complementiser (C⁰) introducing finite, comparative subordinate clauses (cf. Kenesei 1992, Keszler 2000, Bácskai-Atkári 2011). Still, *mint* can also be non-clausal in a different construction:

- (1) a. Apámat mint 'áldozatot hallgatták ki.
my.father-ACC as victim-ACC they.listened VERB MODIFIER (VM)
'My father was interrogated as the victim.'
b. Jánossal mint gyanúsítottal beszéltek.
John-COM as accused-COM they.talked
'They talked to John as the accused.'

This construction is not well-attested in the literature. One of the puzzles is case assignment: only nominals can appear before and after *mint*, and they must be assigned the same case; also, the second nominal acts as a pragmatic predicate with the first one as its logical subject.

2. The proposal. I propose that *mint*₂ in (1) is a binary conjunction generating ordinary balanced coordination (parataxis), in which the same features are realised on both conjuncts (cf. Bánréti 2007 and Johannessen 1998). This approach is elegant, since there is no need to purport the existence of obligatory deletion concerning the domain following *mint*₂ (unlike in the case of *mint*₁), and the case assignment puzzle is also explained, since the same case features are realised on both conjuncts (Johannessen 1998). Apart from these, the following reasons also support *mint*₂'s being a binary conjunction.

First, the number of the conjuncts coordinated by Boolean, *n*-ary conjunctions (e.g., *and* in *I saw John and Mary*) is not fixed. However, non-Boolean, binary conjunctions can join only two conjuncts (e.g. *de* 'but'; cf. Bánréti 2007); *mint* can also coordinate only two conjuncts. Second, while *n*-ary conjunctions can have covert forms (e.g. *X and Y and Z*), binary conjunctions cannot (*ibid.*); *mint*₂ has no covert counterpart either. Third, predicates, structural extensions of predicates or predicative constituents always appear in binary coordination (*ibid.*: 55). This is true for *mint*₂ too, as can be seen below:

- (2) Én mint tanár bementem beszélni az igazgatóval.
I as teacher VM.went to.talk the headmaster-INS
'I went to talk to the headmaster as a teacher.'

In (2), *tanár* as a bare noun is predicative and can logically predicate over the first conjunct, *én*. Fourth, the meaning of binary conjunctions is a conventional implicature (e.g., *but* in *she is a top movie star, but she is humble*; clash between being a top movie star and being humble; cf. Grice 1975, Bánréti 2007). In fact, paratactic *mint*₂ encodes two conventional implicatures: **(A)** the first conjunct DP can be predicated over by the second one (e.g. in (1a), 'my father is a victim, regardless of being interrogated or not'), and **(B)** the second conjunct refers to a state/characteristic of the individual in the first conjunct, which is a cause/basis of the event defined by the proposition ('they interrogated my father because he was the victim' in (1a), 'they talked to John because he was suspected of being guilty' in (1b)). Fifth, constructions that can be coordinated with binary conjunctions can be grammatical without an overt conjunction too; however, this modifies their interpretation (Bánréti 2007: 56):

- (6) a. Apám mint helyi megbízott elment az iparkamara értekezletére.
my.father as local representative VM.went the industry.chamber meeting-SUBL
'My father went to the meeting of the Chamber of Industry as a local representative.'
b. Apám, a helyi megbízott, elment az iparkamara értekezletére.
my.father the local representative VM.went the industry.chamber meeting-SUBL
'My father, the local representative, went to the meeting of the Chamber of Industry.'

3. *Mint*₂ versus other categories. First, *mint*₂ is not likely to be a preposition, since Hungarian generally has no prepositions. Second, it is not a C⁰, because *mint* *áldozatot* receives main stress in (1a), followed by the reverse order of the verb and the verb modifier,

indicating that the *mint*₂ construction is focussed, but no CP can appear in a focussed constituent (cf. É. Kiss 2002). Third, *mint*₂ is probably not a postposition either, as case assignment properties of postpositions are lexically determined:

- (8) a. a föld alatt b. a folyón keresztül c. a kutyával együtt
 the ground under the river-SUP through the dog-INS together
 ‘under the ground’ ‘across the river’ ‘together with the dog’

Still, in *mint*₂ constructions, the conjuncts are assigned the same case, which is determined by the case assigner of the first conjunct; e.g. nominative (1b), accusative (1a), comitative (9) etc.

- (9) Péterrel mint barátommal ültembe egy kávéra, és nem mint főnökömmel.
 Peter-COM as my.friend-COM sat VM a coffee-SUBL and not as my.boss-COM
 ‘I had a coffee with Peter as my best friend, not as my boss.’

Fourth, it can happen that the first conjunct is missing:

- (10) a. A: Kihallgatták apádat? B: Ja, mint áldozatot.
 they.interrogated your.father-ACC Yup, as victim-ACC
 A: ‘Did they interrogate your father?’ B: ‘Yup, as a victim.’

However, this is an instance of a pragmatic conjunction, when the first conjunct can be empty (e.g., *But why are you leaving?*; cf. Németh T. 1998).

Fifth, *mint*₂ constructions can violate the Coordinate Structure Constraint (CSC; Ross 1967). In fact, Boolean conjunctions observe CSC, while non-Boolean conjunctions do not:

- (11) a. How many courses_i can we expect our graduate students to teach _{t_i} and (still) finish a dissertation on time? (Reich 2007, ex. 7a)
 b. How many counterexamples_i can the Coordinate Structure Constraint sustain _{t_i} and still be assumed? (Lakoff 1986)

And is non-Boolean in (11) above (cf. Lakoff 1986, Culicover and Jackendoff 1997). Since *mint*₂ is also non-Boolean, CSC should not be a problem. That is why the first conjunct and the conjunction + second conjunct can be discontinuous, assuming an asymmetric ConjP:

- (12) Apámat behívták a rendőrségre mint tanút.
 my.father-ACC they.summoned the police-SUBL as witness-ACC
 ‘My father was summoned to the police as a witness.’

The last question is about the difference between *mint*₂ and appositives of identification:

- (13) a. Meghívtam Pistát, a barátomat. b. Meghívtam a barátomat, Pistát.
 I.invited Steve-ACC the my.friend-ACC I.invited the my.friend-ACC Steve-ACC
 ‘I invited my friend, Steve.’ ‘I invited Steve, my friend.’

As can be seen, a crucial difference is that the order of the constituents in appositives of identification is not fixed, as opposed to *mint*₂ constructions.

Selected references: **Bácskai-Atkári, J.** (2011) A komparatív operátor esete a mondatbevezetővel. In: K. É. Kiss & A. Hegedűs eds. *Nyelvelmélet és Diakronia*. Budapest-Piliscsaba: PPKE. 103–119. **Bánréti, Z.** (2007) A mellérendelés és az ellipszis nyelvtana a magyarban. Budapest: Tinta. **Culicover, P.W. & R. Jackendoff** (1997) Semantic Subordination despite Syntactic Coordination. *Linguistic Inquiry* 28.2: 195–217. **É. Kiss, K.** (2002) The Syntax of Hungarian. Oxford: OUP. **Grice, P.H.** (1975) Logic and Conversation. In: P. Cole and J.L. Morgan eds. *Syntax and Semantics* 3. New York: Academic Press. 41–58. **Johannessen, J.B.** (1998) *Coordination*. Oxford: OUP. **Kenesei, I.** (1992) On Hungarian Complementizers. In: I. Kenesei & Cs. Pléh eds. *Approaches to Hungarian* 4 :37-50. Szeged: JATE. **Keszler, B.** ed. (2000) Magyar grammatika. Budapest: Nemzeti Tankönyvkiadó. **Lakoff, G.** (1986) Frame semantic control of the Coordinate Structure Constraint. *CLS* 22: 152–167. Chicago Linguistic Society. **Németh T., E.** (1998) A hát, így, tehát, mert kötőszók pragmatikai funkciójának vizsgálata. *Magyar Nyelv* 94: 324–331. **Reich, I.** (2007) From Phases to "across the board movement". *Proceedings of CLS* 43.2:217–232. **Ross, J.R.** (1967) Constraints on Variables in Syntax. MIT dissertation.