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## SYNTACTIC LAYER OF COORDINATION AND CONJUNCTS AGREEMENT: EVIDENCE FROM PAKISTANI ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS

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### ABSTRACT

The architectural spin of linguistic elements is schematized as a projection from the lexicon and is considered as the universal machinery to account for all the linguistic phenomena according to generativist dictums. Pakistani English newspapers are ever under investigation from various linguistic angles, such as discourse analysis, code mixing, syntactic features, etc., but coordination and its agreement have always been ignored among Pakistani scholars. In the current study, the internal syntactic layer of conjoined phrases, clauses, and sentences has been hierarchically envisaged using empirical evidence from Pakistani English newspapers. This study adopts qualitative designed research and takes Murphy and Puškar (2018) as a framework to analyse coordination and agreement patterns in newspaper discourse. According to this framework, there are some syntactic operations (merge, agree, move) and steps to conjoin the phrases, clauses, and sentences in a uniform way. This study proposes that coordination and agreement are the recursive processes within the generative paradigm. The study furthermore predicts that the patterns of agreement within conjoined phrases, clauses, and sentences are first conjunct agreement (FCA), and last conjunct agreement (LCA) on various positions: subjective and objective conjoined expressions have been investigated, and these agreement patterns are due to the gender ( $\pi$ ) and number (#) agreement.

*Keywords: Conjuncts; Operations; Agreement; Number; Generative.*

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### INTRODUCTION

Pakistani English newspapers are scrutinizing with various angles such as discourse analysis, code mixing, syntactic features, use of phrases and clauses, and content and structural heads among various scholars (such as Saram et al., 2023; Qadir & Rasul, 2009; Saleem & Rahaman, 2019; Anwar et al., 2020; Nasir & Din, 2021; Ali et al., 2021; Jabbar et al., 2021; Arshad & Khan, 2022) under the various frameworks that are specific to the studies but a phenomenon of agreement within the coordinate structure (Munn, 1993; Zhang, 2009; Goodall, 2017; Shen, 2023; van Alem, 2023; Paparounas & Salzmman, 2023a; Paparounas & Salzmman, 2023b) of phrases, clauses, and sentences has been ignored hence; this study primarily focuses on Pakistani newspapers' English coordination structure and its internal layer's syntax.

Anwar (2009), Saleem and Rahaman (2019), Anwar et al. (2020), Jabbar et al. (2021), Ali et al. (2021), and Saram et al. (2023) focused on the phrases and clauses, content and structural heads, and syntactic features of Pakistani newspapers. This study is further an attempt to investigate the internal layer of conjuncts agreements observed in Pakistani English newspapers as in a noun phrase (NP), different elements are joined with a conjunction (and, or). In this way, two phrases, clauses, and sentences are mutually joined

together. The joined elements (JE) are called conjuncts, but they must agree with each other; this phenomenon is called conjuncts agreement (CA). They can be nouns, phrases, and sentences as well. The conjunction 'and' normally comes between the two or multiple conjuncts in English. For coordinating conjuncts, Rose (1967) proposed a system called coordination structure constraints (CSC), as cited in Shen (2023) in the following terms: In a coordinate structure, no conjunct may be moved, nor may any element contained in a conjunct be moved out of that conjunct. Coordinate structure constraint controls the conjuncts: first conjuncts and last conjuncts.

According to the proposed mechanism in Shen (2023), the coordination structure is controlled by the CSC because the conjunction has certain properties to agree the conjuncts with the verb and make them plural. The conjuncts agreement is important to make the system work and make meaningful and grammatically correct sentences on the recursive bases. This research study investigates only coordinating conjuncts its agreement patterns with 'and' and its various layers like heads and phrases. The examples of conjoined have been represented (a-c).

- |  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| a. Boy <sub>NP</sub> and <sub>Conj</sub> girl <sub>NP</sub>                        | Head-to-Head       |
| b. A boy <sub>NP</sub> and <sub>Conj</sub> a girl <sub>NP</sub>                    | Heads-to-Heads     |
| c. A handsome Boy <sub>NP</sub> and <sub>Conj</sub> a beautiful girl <sub>NP</sub> | Phrases-to-Phrases |

The above-demonstrated examples (a,b,c) reveal that NPs can be either single head only, involve merging each other similarly phrases are merged via a conjunct head, i.e., *and* in the above-cited examples. Technically, NPs are conjuncts. The pre-conjuncts head NP is called first conjuncts, and the post-conjuncts head is called last conjuncts. In this way, we use the terms first conjuncts (FC) and last conjuncts (LC). The examples of clausal coordination have been represented in (d-e).

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| d. John eats pizza <sub>CP</sub> and <sub>Conj</sub> Cilia drinks juice <sub>CP</sub> .         | CP-to-CP |
| e. My sister walks daily <sub>CP</sub> and <sub>Conj</sub> My mother cooks rice <sub>CP</sub> . | CP-to-CP |

The above-demonstrated examples (d-e) reveal that CPs can be coordinated with a conjunction head. Technically, CPs are conjuncts; the pre-conjuncts head CP is called first conjuncts, and the post-conjuncts head is called last conjuncts. Here are the phenomena of conjuncts agreements at all levels: Head (H), phrase (P), and clause (C), but when it is used by second language learners in a newspaper. For this, this research study postulates the certain research objectives aligned below.

1. Is conjuncts-agreement found to be a recursive process among all the levels?
2. What are the conjuncts agreement patterns found in Pakistani English newspapers?

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Koutsoudas (1968) pointed out that there are many languages in the world in which two or more arguments are targeted to involve agreement. This phenomenon is called conjuncts agreement and typically closest conjuncts agreement (Munn, 1999; Benmamoun et al., 2009; Larson, 2013; Nevins & Weisser, 2019; An & Abeillé, 2022). Exploring this phenomenon across diverse languages, numerous studies in prior literature have explored into the intricacies of conjunct agreement. Extensive research has been conducted on the phenomenon, proposing various patterns based on the parametric value of language, specifically distinguishing between head-initial (VO) and head-final (OV) languages. Notable investigations include Arabic (Aoun et al., 1999), Polish (Citko, 2004), Dutch (van Koppen & Cremers, 2008), Slovenian (Marušič et al., 2015), Russian, and (Serbo-) Croatian (Bošković, 2009; Aljović & Begović, 2016). Conjunct agreement in head-final languages has been the subject of discussion, with studies examining Hindi (Benmamoun et al., 2009) and Hindi-Urdu (Bhatt and Walkow, 2013). In the previously examined research, the majority of the analysis pertaining to Conjunct Agreement has centered around its

syntactic aspects. Nevertheless, several recent proposals have anticipated that, at the very least, a portion of the agreement process extends beyond purely syntactic considerations.

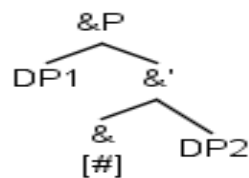
Among them, this study is opted to follow one of them to view the various conjuncts agreement patterns in Pakistani English newspapers. First, we will discuss the various proposals of conjuncts agreement.

## **METHODOLOGY**

For conducting this research study, a cyclically systematic process has been followed as Richards and Schmidt (2013) predicted a research activity fuses methods that are essential for the examination of any phenomena. To attain the aims of this research, a qualitative research method is selected as it is the most suitable for the study. Data has been collected from the Pakistani English newspapers, The News, The Nation, and Daily Times. A random sampling technique was adopted for collecting conjunct agreement with phrases and classes. The collected data has been analyzed according to the Equidistance and locality of agreement approach. In the process of data analysis, this research aligns with a contemporary syntactic framework that addresses conjunct agreement. The model draws inspiration from Serbo-Croatian data as presented by Marusic et al. (2015) and extends its application to Russian as demonstrated in Murphy and Puškar (2018). According to this framework, Forward Conjoint Agreement (FCA) and Long-distance Conjoint Agreement (LCA) arise from the interplay among different sub-components of the Agree operation, namely Probe, Match, and Value, as postulated by Chomsky (2014).

### **Framework of Conjuncts Agreement**

In noun coordination, we apply the test. The properties of the conjuncts must be the same. For instance, both conjuncts must be of the same number, singular and plural. We coordinate and substitute if the properties are the same. In the framework of the conjuncts agreement, we have to agree with. The spine of conjuncts agreement is represented formally as &P structure given below:

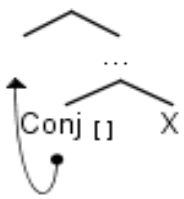


&P Structure

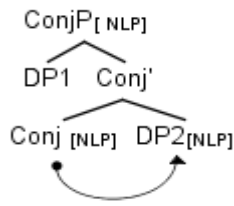
### **Murphy and Puškar (2018) Model**

In this section, the conjuncts agreement model has been presented. It is proposed by Marusic et al. (2015), and according to them, “the coordination of two singulars or a mixed instance of singular and plural results in the plural in most cases where the verb agrees with the conjunct phrase.” For making the unified operation of Marusic et al. (2015), we adopt a derivational model of the syntax of features based agree (1995). In this model, a fixed set of syntactic operations must be followed to generate any structure of the sentence and even the phrase. In this study it is an attempt to draw the conjuncts agreement structure. There is some structure building three operations: Merge (External Merge) checks (c)-selectional features (F), Move (internal Merge) applies freely. There are cyclic processes while driving the syntactic derivation. According to this model, there are operations: AGR, MERGE MOVE. In the first line the conj<sub>o</sub> head agrees upward (represented via arrow) and searches the DP but there is not DP at upper position and probe finds no DP on the upward position since no merge has occurred at this point. After that both conjuncts merge with conj head. The conj head agrees down to get feature from the second lower conjuncts as shown in (b) in this way the resulting conjP projects features of the second conjunct NLP mentioned in the feature position. In this way the whole derivation will be converged and fully generated. The three cyclic processes (agree-internal, merge, agree-external) have been presented below:

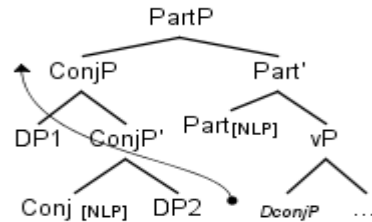
(a)  $\uparrow$ AGR $\uparrow$  (ConjP internal) (b) MERGE+ $\downarrow$ ARG $\downarrow$  (ConjP internal) (c)  $\uparrow$ AGR $\uparrow$  (ConjP External)



Agree (internal)



Merge



Agree (external)

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Conjunct Agreement in Pakistani English Newspapers

This study has selected three English newspapers for data collection and all the samples have been analysed section-wise. First of all, we analyse the conjuncts agreement when two heads are coordinated with a conjunction head (ConjP). For this see the syntactic layer of example (1)<sup>1</sup> given below:

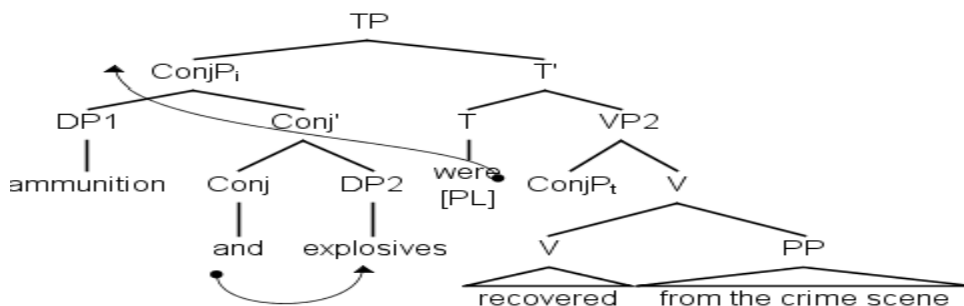
Syntactic Layer-1



1. Travellers and goods

In the above cited example (1), two conjuncts are attached via and, both the conjuncts are in the same form: Travellers and goods are both in plural form. It implies that English conjuncts used in the newspapers used follow the same syntactic formulation as a natural speaker of English follows. According to the prescribed model, in the first cycle, and agree with internal argument if find some items, it fine but here in this example, head finds no goal and in the second process, thee process starts. Merge agrees with downward conjuncts that is also in plural farm things. In this way, the whole process has cyclically been computed.

Syntactic Layer (2)



2. Ammunition and explosives were recovered from the crime scene.

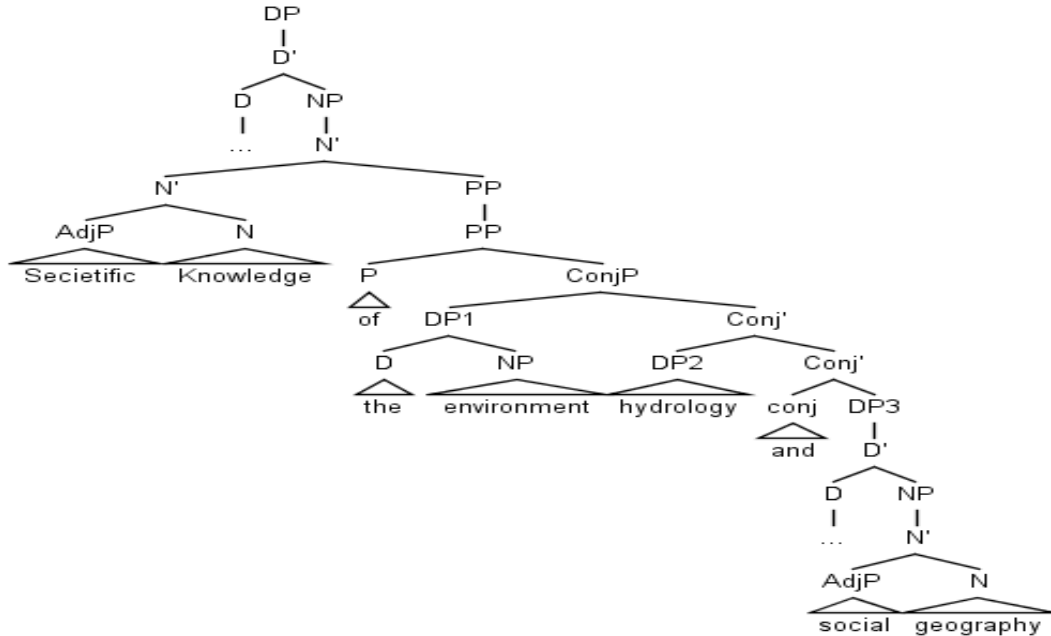
Example (2) and syntactic layer (2) represent the interesting points, i.e., the first conjunct bears a singular farm and last conjunct has a plural farm but the sentential agreement has been created in accordance with last conjunct not the first conjuncts because it is the c-the (sectional) domain of the T and here upward

<sup>1</sup> For representing data in this study, bold farm is used for conjuncts head (ConjP), italics are used for coordinated conjuncts, first and last conjuncts.

agree operation has been applied. It implies that Conjuncts heads vary and bear various features. The syntactic diagram-4 indicates the structure.

3. Scientific knowledge of the environment, ecosystem, hydrology and social geography was limited when the IWT was signed.

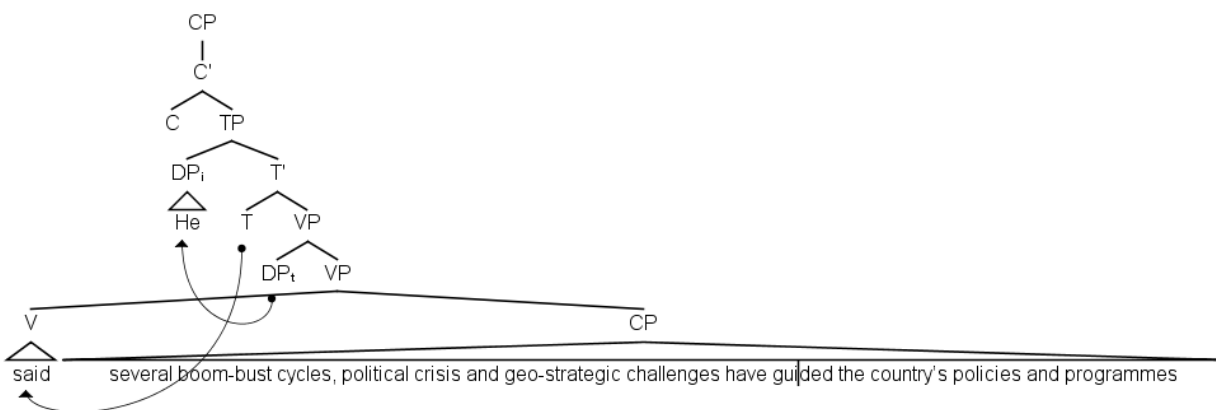
Syntactic Layer-3



In the above documented example (3) reveals that within the DP, the conj head add multiple DPs but all the DPs are under control of conj head. The cited example (1) is interesting in this way that it has agreement with T as the conj head is the closest and c-(selectional) domain. It agrees upward as the demonstrated arrow reveals upward agree. In the DP layer the PP (*of the.....*) is the complement of the PP and within the PP, P head selects DP here not the DP is selected but conjP is selected within the complement domain and the in this DP layer that is under PP, bears multiples DPs that is headed by conjP. See the syntactic formulation of this phrasal layer.

4. He said several boom-bust cycles, political crisis and geo-strategic challenges have guided the country's policies and programmes.

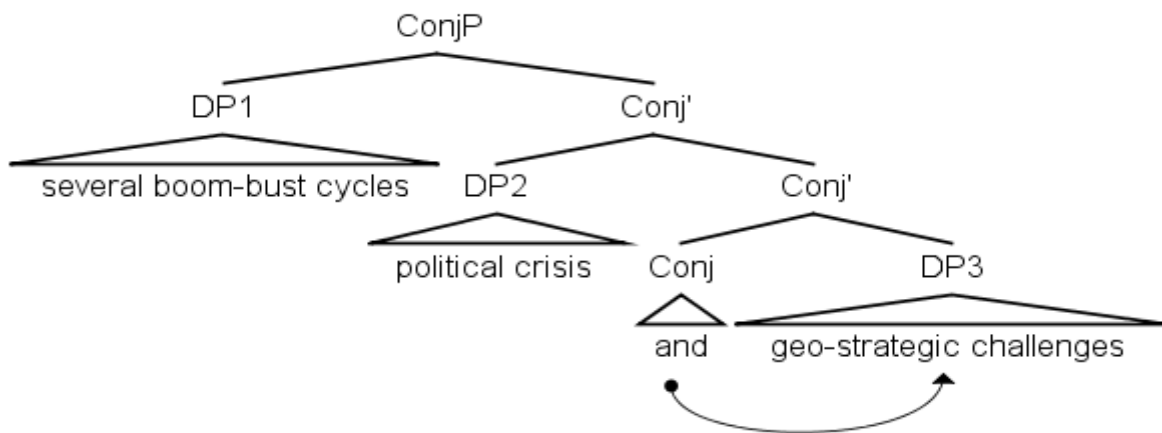
Syntactic Layer-4



In the above mentioned sentence (4), it is the multiple clauses CPs, matrix CP and embedded CP. Our focus in this sentence is only embedded CP as within it, two positions subject DPs and object DPs. Both DPs

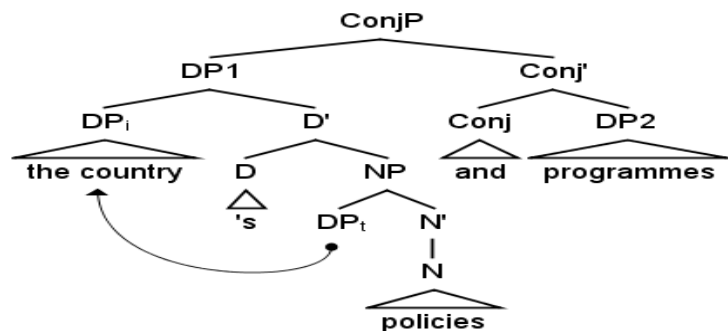
(subject and object) bear conjuncts. Within the subject DPs, there are multiple DPs headed by conjP and create an agreement relation to the TP.

Syntactic Layer-5



In the tree diagram above, only subject DPs are represented syntactically. Within all the DPs only one head (conj) regulates the agreement the closet head is lower DP3 (geo-strategic challenges) agrees with downward and within the structure of the whole sentence all sentential agreement is mapped within the T head that bears number, case features.

Syntactic Layer-6



In the above-mentioned syntactic tree diagram (6), only object DPs are being represented. They are also under control of conj head (and) which make the plural of the two conjuncts first (policies) and last conjunct (programmes) but here it an important point to consider that possession ('s) is only merged with first conjuncts' sub-part of the DP. In this example, conjP also has potential to merge possessor but takes only one clitic no clitic doubling is adopted in English. Here clitic doubling is a new emerging domain of inquiry. Within this domain also, agreement plays a very important role just like in conjuncts agreement.

**Discussion**

The architectural spin of the X-bar theoretic is universal machinery observed in the constituent levels. The primary purpose of this study is to examine the patterns and agreement in conjoined phrases within clausal and intra-clausal (Jabbar et al., 2021). The empirical evidence taken from Pakistani English newspapers has been envisaged in this study with respect to conjoined categories (Uriagereka, 2022) under the theoretical formulation of minimalism (as cited in Ali et al., 2021). Newspaper discourse (Liu & Huang, 2023) is ever under consideration among scholars. Many previous studies by Pakistani scholars (Malik, 2017; Jabbar et al., 2021; Ali et al., 2020; 2021; Ashraf et al., 2021; Saram et al., 2023) have investigated various aspects of Pakistani English newspapers. Anwar et al. (2020) tried to investigate the syntactic features of newspaper discourse. This study deviates from Anwar et al. (2020) as they did not focus on the coordination structure of Pakistani newspapers' discourse. Their focus is only on the syntactic feature

(Zaynitdinovna, 2023), but they did not investigate the syntactic features of coordination and agreement. Focusing on the syntactic domain of linguistics, Saleem and Rahaman (2019) also worked on the heads and headedness properties of comparing two mediums of discourse: Urdu Newspapers and English newspapers. According to their findings, functional heads are crucial as they bear some parametric values to linearize the syntax of any fictional, non-fictional, and pure discourse. Saleem and Rahaman (2019) followed a theoretical framework of a minimalist program (2014) to support their study. This study furthermore took a leap ahead and followed the generative theory (Chomsky, 2014; Ali et al., 2021; Ashraf et al., 2021), but no pure generative theory is potentially sufficient to account for coordination structure and agreement patterns. The minimalist program (2014) is not a solidly packed framework to deal with all the linguistic phenomena, so scholars must leave the orthodox tradition and try to think, keeping in view emerging trends in society and linguistic phenomena.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Coordination (Zhang, 2009) within phrases, clauses, and sentences is a recursive (Chomsky, 2014) phenomenon, and its agreement (Preminger, 2011) patterns have been reported in syntactic literature among various scholars. According to studies conducted by Shen (2023), van Alem (2023), and Paparounas and Salzmman (2023b) on natural languages, first conjuncts agreement and last conjuncts agreement have been merged into closest conjunct agreement (CCA). These studies have reported many patterns of agreement in syntactic literature in various languages and discourse, but our results reveal that conjoined phrases, clauses, and sentences follow the fully recursive process, and this study predicts that two patterns of agreement have been found in Pakistani English newspapers: (a) first conjunct agreement (FCA) and (b) last conjuncts agreement (LCA) not only within the phrasal level but also in sentential level.

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