Az értekezés angol nyelvű összefoglalója

The Theses of the doctoral (PhD) dissertation

Types of Agreement in Finno-Ugrian Languages (Hungarian, Finnish, Estonian, Northern Sami)

The dissertation examines the types of agreement from a comparative point of view in four Finno-Ugrian languages (Hungarian, Finnish, Estonian and Northern Sami). The original idea for my thesis covered agreement issues in Hungarian and Northern Sami to which I gradually added Finno-Baltic languages such as Finnish and Estonian.

The aim of my dissertation is to examine the internal agreement between the attribute and the head noun in the NP phrase and the agreement between the subject and the predicate (NP – VP/Kop – NP/AP). The scope of the analysis is the sentence. The aim of the comparison is to display the observed similarities and differences between the languages under examination.

For that purpose I described and analysed the main types of agreement common to all four languages while I systematised the findings in a table. Hungarian is the base language of my research; the types of agreement found in it are compared with the agreement practice in three distant genetically related languages. Moreover, where necessary I gave examples from Indo-European languages (i.e. English) while at the end of the articles I show the agreement practice in a Slavonic language (ie. Bulgarian). All languages under examination are foreign to me and I used Bulgarian as a language of reference when discussing types of agreement.

Apart from the cited literature I used newspaper articles and fiction while in some cases native speaker informants provided me with useful information. Where I could not find original sentences or where necessary, I had the original Hungarian sentences translated into the other three languages under examination with the help of native speakers.

During the examination, I applied traditional methods and terminology relating to Finno-Ugrian comparative linguistics.

The dissertation consists of six units broadly falling into two bigger parts. In the first part I give an overview of the history of research and an analysis of agreement phenomena.

Chapter 3 dedicated to grammatical *versus* semantic agreement explains the mechanisms of grammatical agreement with examples from Wechsler–Zlatić's theory based on their research in Serbo-Croat. I concentrated in particular on semantic agreement as different factors

contribute towards agreement mismatch. The second part starts with chapter 4 which constitutes the essence of my dissertation.

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 follow the same structure. Hungarian is always the base language followed by Finnish, Estonian and Sami. First I introduce agreement between the modifier and the head noun in NP phrases. I examine the behaviour of the modifiers in attributive constructions. In Chapter 5 which is the biggest chapter of all, I examine the cases of agreement in number between the subject and the verb in all four languages. The chapter is subdivided into two smaller chapters: the first one shows the agreement of the verb with one subject while the second deals with verb agreement with conjoined nouns. Chapter 6 deals with agreement in person between the subject and the verb.

Most of the empirical material in the dissertation is taken from grammars and publications relating to Finno-Ugrian languages. I gathered and systematised the examples. My second source is fiction and the language of quality newspapers. The cited examples originate from written sources, I referred to the spoken language only in the case of possessive constructions in Finnish.

On the basis of Steele's definition and of my research, the following working definition could be given: Agreement is the relationship between two elements determined by the fact that a constituent (controller) in the sentence affects morphosyntactically another constituent (target).

When we discuss subject –verb agreement we discuss it in terms of grammatical (syntactic) agreement, semantic agreement and agreement by proximity. We talk about subject-verb grammatical agreement where the verb agrees with the subject in number and person. In all other cases in which there is no such 'mechanical'agreement, it means that there is grammatical incongruence. The relationship between the syntagmas is not grammantical but logical or semantic.

We may conclude that it is semantic agreement that makes agreement phenomena an interesting and challenging area of research because it is an area in which languages differ mostly.

Although I have examined genetically-related languages and had great expectations about huge similarities, it is quite interesting to notice that there are remarkable differences related to agreement. It is true that Hungarian has its own specific ways of dealing with agreement

and is quite different from the rest of the languages but even related languages such as Finnish and Estonian show differences in some aspects.

The results of the dissertation could be used as a starting-point in contrastive and typology research as well as in foreign language teaching for foreign students. The present dissertation could also serve as an useful teaching material for Bulgarian native speakers engaged in Hungarian or Scandinavian Studies at University. The examples found in the paper could be used in translation practice as most of the Hungarian sentences are translated into Finnish, Estonian and Sami.