

Noun Classification in Azeri

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1 Roadmap

1. How is individuation realized in Azeri and what is the role of the plural marker?
 - Individuation is licensed by a null head. Plural marker is generated in NumP, (section 3).
2. Where are classifiers and collective nouns generated?
 - Classifiers and collective nouns are generated in UnitP, (section 4).
3. How is the classifier and numeral dependency explained?
 - The combination of numeral and classifier creates a feature bundle that cannot be spelled out unless one is selected by the other, (section 5).

2 Exo-Skeletal map

- Lexical roots do not carry any morphosyntactic features (Borer, 2003).
- This allows the roots to take part in the syntactic structures disregarding their lexical features (Borer, 2003).

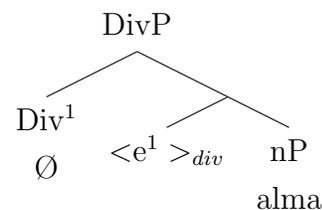
3 How is individuation realized in Azeri and what is the role of the plural marker?

- Question: What assigns division in (1)?

- (1) a. **Alma** dər-di-m
apple pick-PST-1SG
'I picked an apple/I picked apples.'
- b. **It** hur-ər
dog bark-HAB
'A dog barks/dogs bark.'

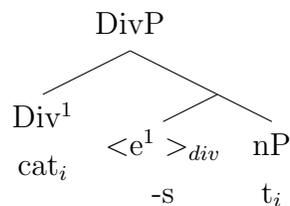
[Azeri]

- (2) [Proposal]



- In languages with an obligatory plural marking and in the presence of the obligatory functional category, plural marking is realized as a syntactic process.
- Plural marker is an atomizer and it assigns division to the noun. Illustrated in (3) for English (Borer, 2005).

- (3)



- Azeri has plural marking in its nominal constructions, which resembles English.

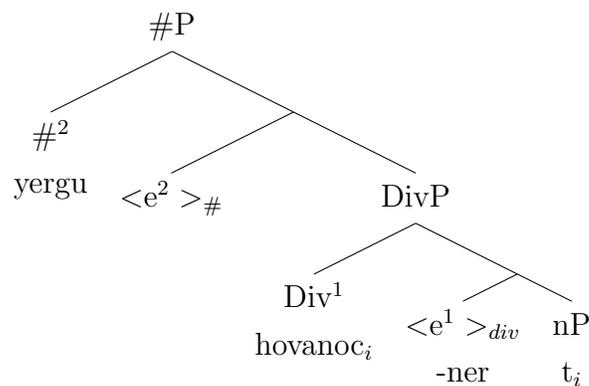
- (4) gül-**lər** nə gözəl-di-lər
flower-PL how beautiful-be-3PL
'How beautiful those flowers are!'

- There are languages where the presence of the plural marker is optional, illustrated in (5) and (6).

- (5) a. te Ihíxw swíweles
 DET three boy
 ‘the three boys.’
 b. te Ihíxw swóweles
 DET three boy-PL
 ‘the three boys.’ (Wiltschko, 2008) [Halkomelem]

- (6) a. **Yergu** hovanoc uni-m
 two umbrella have-1SG
 ‘I have two umbrellas.’
 b. **Yergu** hovanoc-ner uni-m
 two umbrella-PL have-1SG
 ‘I have two umbrellas.’ (Borer, 2005) [Armenian]

- (7) [Armenian]



- Azeri also has forms similar to Armenian, as in (8).

- (8) **iki** yumurta al-di-m
 two egg buy-PAST-1Sg
 ‘I bought two eggs.’ [Azeri]

- (9) **Yergu** hovanoc uni-m
 two umbrella have-1SG
 ‘I have two umbrellas.’ (Borer, 2005) [Armenain]

- Examples like (8) in Azeri and (9) in Armenain are instances of double range assignment. The numeral is assigning division and quantity (Borer, 2005).

3.1 Null Head Hypothesis

Summary of observations:

- Nouns can appear bare with the general number reading, in (15).

(15) **Alma** dər-di-m
 apple pick-PST-1SG
 ‘I picked an apple/I picked apples.’

- Nouns can take the plural marker in their structure and have plural reading, in (16).

(16) gül-lər nə gözəl-di-lər
 flower-PL how beautiful-be-3PL
 ‘How beautiful those flowers are!’

- Nouns should be marked to get singular reading, in (17).

(17) **Bir alma** dər-di-m
 an apple pick-PST-1SG
 ‘I picked an apple.’

- Zero and fraction with the plural marker in Azeri, as in (18) and (19).

(18) ***Sifir** adam-lar varyi-di-lar
 zero person-PL be-PAST-3PL
 ‘There were zero people.’

(19) **Bir-yarım** alma varyi-di
 one-half apple be-PAST.3SG
 ‘There were one and half apples.’

- Question: Is plural marker in division head?

– Not necessarily, since we have instances of bare nouns, as in (15).

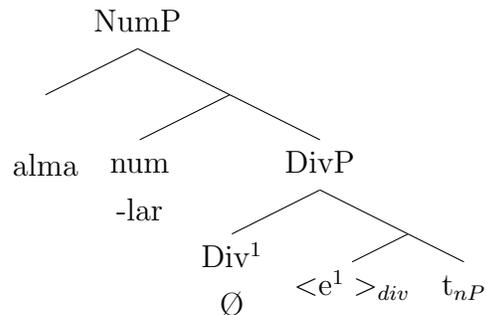
- Proposal: To be able to explain the general number reading, I propose the existence of a null division head in Azeri.

(20)

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \text{CL}^{max} \\
 \swarrow \quad \searrow \\
 \text{CL}^1 \quad \text{nP} \\
 \emptyset \quad \langle e^1 \rangle_{div} \quad \text{alma}
 \end{array}$$

- Question: Where should we place the plural marker?
 - It looks like NumP is accommodating *-lar*, introducing plural marking. So they need to be generated in NumP.

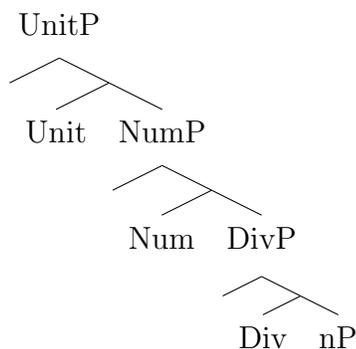
(21)



- This argument is in line with Mathieu and Zareikar (2015) in considering the plural marker to be a higher plural rather than a dividing one.

4 Where are classifiers and collective nouns generated?

(22) [Proposal]

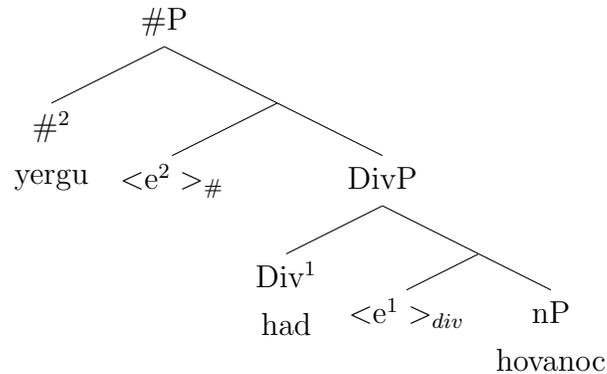


- A further example in Armenian shows that classifiers are also able to assign division and they are in complimentary distribution with the plural marker, as in (23) and (24) for Armenian.

(23) Yergu **had** hovanoc uni-m
 two CL umbrella have-1SG
 'I have two umbrellas.'

[Armenian]

(24) [Armenian]



- On the other hand, in Azeri, plural forms are not fine with cardinals alone, in (25), but the combination of cardinals and classifiers create a grammatical construction that accommodates the plural marker, shown in (26) and (27).

(25) ***iki** kitap-**lar**-1 oku-du-m
 two book-PL-ACC read-PAST-1SG
 ‘I read those two books.’ [Azeri]

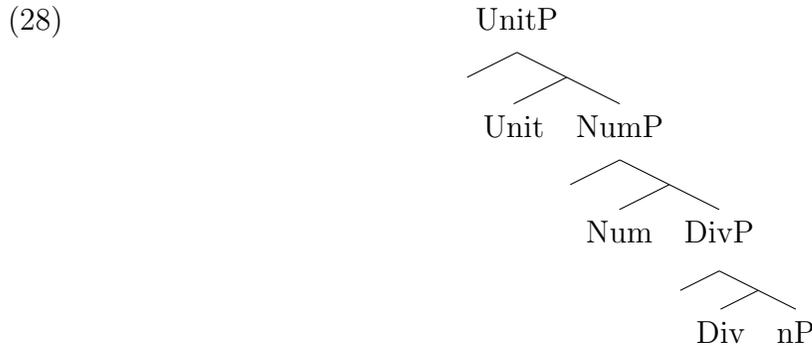
(26) **iki dənə** kitap-**lar**-1 oku-du-m
 two CL book-PL-ACC read-PAST-1SG
 ‘I read those two books.’ [Azeri]

(27) **iki dənə** kitap oku-du-m
 two CL book read-PAST-1SG
 ‘I read two books.’ [Azeri]

- If the numerals/plural marker/classifiers are considered to be generated under DivP, then the appearance of all of them is problematic since the occurrence of them is expected to be in complementary distribution.

Quick conclusion: Azeri is not a classifier language and having a classifier that assigns division is not required to enforce an individuated reading.

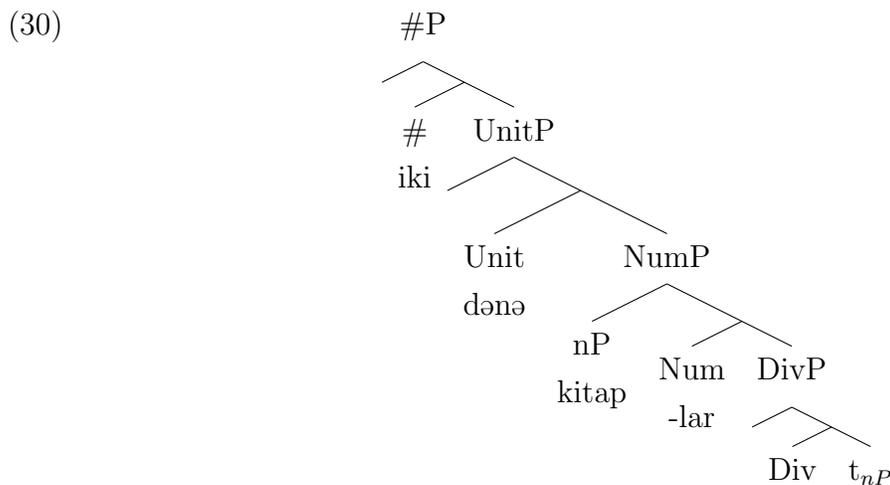
- The conclusion introduces UnitP into the derivation. This is illustrated in (28).



- This conclusion supports the proposal to have a null division assignment.
- Unit heads are suggested for other languages, e.g., German (Ott, 2011).
- This structure can correspond to the movement of the noun to left adjoin to the plural marker in count and mass constructions, *numeral* > *mass noun* > *measure* > *plural* in (29) and tree (30), and mass reading construction, *numeral* > *measure* > *count noun* > *plural* in (31) and the tree (32).

(29) iki dənə **kitap**-lar-ı oku-du-m
 two CL book-PL-ACC read-PAST-1SG
 ‘I read those two books.’

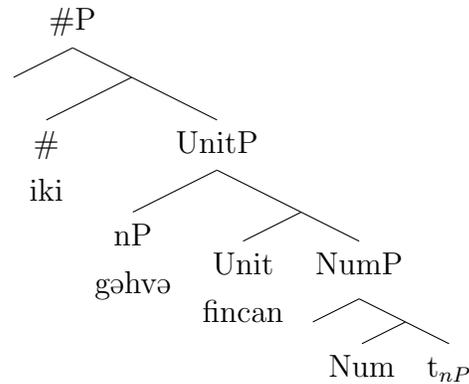
[Azeri]



(31) iki **gəhvə** fincan-lar-ı-nı gət-di-m
 two coffee cup-PL-POSS-ACC bring-PAST-1SG
 ‘I brought those two coffee cups.’

[Azeri]

(32)



- The movement in both cases respects the locality condition.

Further Observation:

- The unit head in the structures above can accommodate the collective nouns too.
- Collective nouns are putting the noun in groups/units.

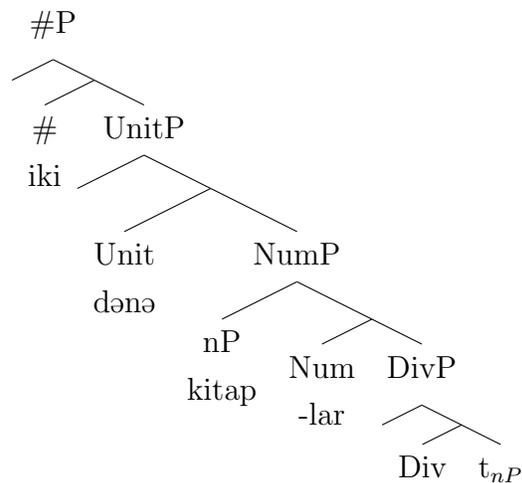
(33) iki **sürü** davar
 two herd sheep
 ‘two herd(s) of sheep’

[Azeri]

5 How is the classifier and numeral dependency explained?

- Numerals are generated under the quantity head.

(34)



- Numerals are generated in the quantity head and license the projection of the classifiers/units.
- This approach takes away the need for a double NP in the structure when the classifier and plural marker co-occur.

7 Further Remarks

- Some functional heads have selectional features to select certain other functional heads.
- The entire functional structure in the nominal domain is uniting the noun and there is a semantic correlation between these functional heads. This is in line with Chomsky (2008:9): “C is shorthand for the region that Rizzi (1997) calls the “left periphery,” possibly involving feature spread from fewer functional heads (maybe only one), ...” (Ramchand and Svenonius, 2014).

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