Beyond b-subjects: testing subjecthood in Croatian modal constructions
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Keenan's multifactoral model of subjecthood focuses on what he calls ‚semantically basic sentences' (b-sentences) and their subjects (b-subjects), respectively. In our paper we would like to address the subject properties in sentence structures which do not belong to these b-sentences but are both semantically and formally more complex. Keenan claims that „[…] in any given L(anguage), subjects of non-basic sentences frequently do not have quite as full a complement of the subject properties as do subjects of b-sentences" (Keenan 1976, 323). Taking this hypothesis as a point of departure we are going to discuss coding and behaviour properties of b-subjects in Croatian (partially described by Kučanda 1998) and compare them with derived subjects in constructions with a **modal predicate** MOD and a lexical complement (**m-subjects**). MOD encompasses personal and impersonal verbs like *moći* 'can', *valjati* ‚one should' and others. Our analysis is exclusively based on natural data extracted from the huge tagged web corpus hrWaC 2.0 which allows for specific search queries testing our hypotheses. In our paper we claim that b-subjects and m-subjects show the same **coding properties**: they allow for canonically marked subjects in the Nominative and for non-canonical subjects in the Dative triggering the same subject-predicate agreement patterns, compare ex. (1) and (2) with m-subjects:

(1) *Ovu   stranicu   valja$_{3sg}$ nam$_{dat}$ gledati   kao   komercijalnu   (…)*
     this   page   one.should   us.DAT   accept.INF   as   commercial   (…)
     'We have to treat this site as commercial.' (www.zadarskilist.hr)

(2) *Zato   mi$_{nom}$ trebamo$_{1.Pl}$ otići$_{inf}$ do   Ministarstva   kulture*
     therefore   we   must   go.INF   to   ministry.GEN   culture.GEN
     'Therefore we have to go to the Ministry of Culture.' (www.hnd.hr)

As to **behaviour properties**, however, b- and m-subjects diverge. b-subjects show the following three features: i) the subject and only the subject controls the reference of **reflexive** pronouns, ii) the subject and only the subject **controls** the reference of the non-overt first argument **(PRO) of converb phrases**, and iii) the subject cannot co-refer with the overt pronoun in the final clause (**obviation**, see experimental evidence in Miličević&Kraš 2013). We will provide evidence that m-subjects only show the last two properties. This means that both **canonical and non-canonical m-subjects** can control PRO in converb phrases (3,4) and show the obviation effect in final clauses (5):

(3) *Isto   tako   PRO$_{i/*j}$ koristeći se   primjerima,   odgajatelji$_i$ trebaju*
     likewise   use.CVB   REFL   example.INS   nurse.PL   should.3PL

     uputiti   roditelje$_j$
     explain.INF   parents.ACC
     'In the same way the nurses should instruct the parents using examples [...]' (www.dvck.hr)

(4) **PRO$_{i/*j}$** *Pozdravljajući slijepu   ili   slabovidnu   osobu   Ø$_i$ treba*
                 greet.CVB   blind.ACC or   visually.impaired   person   should.3SG

     joj$_j$ kazati   svoje   ime.
     she.DAT   say.INF   REFL   name.
     'Greeting a blind or visually impaired person one has to say one's name.'(www.zadarskilist.hr)

(5)   ***Ø_i***   *Treba*   *ući*   *u*   ***EU_j***   *da*   *bi*   *nas*

              should.3SG   enter.INF   in   EU   COMP   COND   we.ACC

       ona_{*i/j}   *spasila*   *od*   *balkanskih*   *integracija.*

       she   save.PST.M.SG   from   Balkan   integration.GEN

       'We should join the EU in order to avoid Balkan integration.' (www.hkv.hr)

References

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