Implications of Feature Realization in Hindi-Urdu: the case of Copular Sentences

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Bejar & Kahnemuyipour (2017) and Keine, Wagner & Coon (2018) have documented the existence of person hierarchy effects in copular sentences in Eastern Armenian and German respectively. In addition, Keine, Wagner & Coon (2018) point out the evidence of number hierarchy effects in this domain in German. We investigate copular sentences in Hindi-Urdu where we find hierarchy effects similar to the ones identified for German. But the distribution of the hierarchy effects is sensitive to not just the hierarchy but the realization of the agreement. In particular, person hierarchy effects disappear/weaken in the past tense which in Hindi-Urdu does not code person. Person hierarchy effects are also weakened in environments such as gapping and right node raising if the elliptical process in question allows for the offending agreeing head to go unrealized. We relate our results to Preminger (2019) which argues against agreement relationships that would lack realization.