

Syntactic and semantic agreement in coordinated clauses*

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1. Introduction

Some formally singular DPs, such as ‘this team’, refer to pluralities, such as the members of the team. Sometimes these DPs may trigger plural agreement, in what Den Dikken (2001) refers to as ‘pluringulars’.

(1) **The committee** {**has**.SG/%**have**.PL} decided.

Plural agreement with a formally singular DP is sometimes called ‘semantic’ agreement, as opposed to purely ‘syntactic’ agreement. In this paper, we develop an analysis of new data from Icelandic sports commentary which supports the view that semantic agreement is in fact syntactically represented (as in, e.g., Wechsler and Zlatić 2000, 2003, Den Dikken 2001, Smith 2017, 2021, Pesetsky 2013). The sports team *Stjarnan* ‘the Star’ is formally feminine singular, but it can trigger singular or plural agreement. In our analysis, when a DP triggers plural agreement, it is embedded in a Semantic Phrase (SemP) with plural features, as schematized in (2).

(2) a. [DP **Stjarnan**(SG)] **er**(SG) með boltann.
b. [_{SemP} *Sem*⁰ [DP **Stjarnan**(SG)]] **eru**(PL) með boltann.
‘**The Star has/have** the ball.’

A key point driving our analysis stems from mismatches in semantic and syntactic subject-verb agreement across coordinated clauses. (3) shows the four logically possible agreement patterns in conjunction reduction structures (where the subject of the non-initial clause is not overtly present). In such cases, both verbs may be singular (**SG & SG**), as shown in

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(3a), and both may be plural (**PL** & **PL**), as shown in (3c). Mismatches are only allowed in one direction. When the first verb is singular, the second may be plural (**SG** & **PL**), as shown in (3b), but when the first verb is plural, the second may not be singular (**PL** & **SG**), as shown in (3d).

- (3) a. **Stjarnan**(SG) **er**(SG) með boltann og __ **sækir**(SG) fram.
 b. **Stjarnan**(SG) **er**(SG) með boltann og __ **sækja**(PL) fram.
 c. **Stjarnan**(SG) **eru**(PL) með boltann og __ **sækja**(PL) fram.
 d. ***Stjarnan**(SG) **eru**(PL) með boltann og __ **sækir**(SG) fram.
 ‘**The Star has/have** the ball and __ **is/are** advancing.’

These judgments are supported by a corpus study of written live sports commentary, the main results of which are summarized in the table in (4), which shows that we find every combination of numbers except for **PL** followed by **SG**.

(4) *Corpus results*

Coordination	Count (%)
SG & SG	86 (44%)
SG & PL	60 (31%)
PL & PL	50 (26%)
PL & SG	0 (0%)

This is thus a novel *3/4 pattern* (Bobaljik and Wurmbrand 2012) in number agreement.

In this paper, we focus empirically on agreement in Icelandic with the names or acronyms of sports teams which are formally singular or have no clear formal number, and develop an analysis that aims to shed light on where and when syntactic and semantic ϕ -features are introduced in the derivation, as well as where the features of the unpronounced subject in conjunction reduction are copied from. Our analysis draws on insights from various works on hybrid agreement (Pesetsky 2013, Landau 2016, E.F. Sigurðsson 2017, Smith 2017, 2021 and Messick 2020), including Head-driven Phrase Structure Grammar (HPSG) (Wechsler and Zlatić 2000, 2003) and H.Á. Sigurðsson’s (2011, 2014, 2019) theory of context linkers. The idea is that left-peripheral context linkers, which encode information about discourse context, provide an additional way for the silent *pro* subject of conjunction reduction to get plural features, even when the overt DP antecedent is singular and not embedded in a (plural) SemP.

The remainder of the paper is structured as follows. First, we discuss Icelandic conjunction reduction, and the different types of feature mismatches it allows, which supports the view that there is a silent *pro* subject in the non-initial conjunct. Then we lay out our assumptions for the syntax of semantic features. Finally, we present our analysis and the implications it has for *3/4* agreement crosslinguistically.

2. Icelandic conjunction reduction

Icelandic conjunction reduction has been noted to show various kinds of feature mismatches between conjuncts (see Rögnvaldsson 1982, 1993). Case-agreement patterns show

that the subject of the second clause (SubjConj2) is a syntactically active DP, distinct from the subject of the first clause (SubjConj1). Most importantly for this claim, the unpronounced subject of the second conjunct does not have to be in the same case as the subject of the first conjunct. To see why, consider examples like (5).

- (5) a. Þeir sjá stúlkuna og ___ finnst hún álitleg.
they.NOM see.3PL girl.the and **pro.DAT** find.DFLT she.NOM promising
 ‘They see the girl and consider her promising.’
- b. Þeim líkar maturinn og ___ borða mikið.
they.DAT like.DFLT food.the and **pro.NOM** eat.3PL much
 ‘They like the food and eat heartily.’ (Rögnvaldsson 1982:559–560)

(5a) coordinates a sentence headed by the verb *sjá* ‘see’ with a sentence headed by the verb *finnst* ‘find/consider’, which takes a dative subject and a nominative object. The finite verb cannot agree with the dative subject; it either agrees with the nominative object or takes default third-person singular agreement.¹ (See Hartmann and Heycock 2022 for a recent empirical study.) The fact that the verb in the second conjunct of (5a) is in its default or 3rd singular form shows that there is a non-overt dative subject. (5b) coordinates a sentence headed by a dative-nominative verb *líka* ‘like’ with a sentence headed by a nominative-accusative verb *borða* ‘eat’. The fact that the verb in the second conjunct of (5b) is in the agreeing 3rd person plural form shows that there is a non-overt nominative subject.

Rögnvaldsson (1982) argued that the Icelandic facts supported the existence of a conjunction reduction rule that deletes the subject of the second clause. Essentially, his point was that conjunction reduction couldn’t be analyzed as coordination of a smaller constituent (e.g. T’ in more modern terms) that excluded the subject. In later work, Rögnvaldsson (1993) argued that the second subject is little *pro*, licensed by the finite verb (cf. Rizzi’s 1986 analysis of Italian *pro*), but whose features are not identified by it (explaining why Icelandic is not usually *pro*-drop in the canonical sense). Instead, they are identified by the subject of the first verb. This explains why Icelandic does not have *pro* generally (it could be licensed but, unlike, e.g., Italian, could not be identified), but can have *pro* in conjunction reduction sentences.

The case facts provide the most straightforward support for the *pro* analysis of conjunction reduction, but other feature mismatches point in the same direction. Conjunction reduction across speakers can show a mismatch between 1st/3rd person singular and 2nd person singular, as in the interaction between A and B in (7).

- (6) Eins og ég segi alltaf: Ég held með FH og ___ er stoltur af því.
 as I say always I **support.1SG** FH and **pro am.1/3SG** proud of it
 ‘As I always say: I support FH and I am proud of it.’

¹Since the nominative in (5a) is third-person singular, these options are not distinguishable, but the point for the present argument is that the verb is not third-person plural, which would be expected if the subject were the overt nominative.

- (7) A: Eins og ég segi alltaf: Ég **held með** FH ...
 as I say always I **support.1SG** FH
 ‘As I always say: I support FH ...’
 B: ... og __ **ert** stoltur af því. Ég veit, pabbi.
 and **pro are.2SG** proud of it I know Daddy
 ‘... and you’re proud of it. I know, Daddy.’

With this background in mind, we turn to the primary focus of the present paper, namely number mismatches triggered by an apparent difference in syntactic versus semantic agreement. This occurs in everyday Icelandic, and is not restricted to sports (see Thráinsson et al. 2015, Xu 2020). An example discussing actress Lindsay Lohan and her husband from the online version of the Icelandic newspaper *Morgunblaðið* is shown in (8).

- (8) **Parið** **hefur** verið saman í þrjú ár og __ **búa** í Dubaí [...]
 couple.the has.SG been together for three years and *pro* live.PL in Dubai
 ‘The couple has been together for three years and live in Dubai ...’
 (mbl.is, 4 July 2022)

Even though such number mismatches occur in everyday language, Icelandic live sports commentary does provide a particularly convenient source for number mismatches. Sports club names which are formally singular, such as *Stjarnan* ‘the Star’; acronyms, such as *KR* ‘Reykjavík Football Club’ and *FH* ‘Hafnarfjörður Gymnastics Club’; or formally singular place names, such as *Keflavík*, *Grindavík* and *Selfoss*, can trigger plural agreement. Formal feature mismatch is usually due to the fact that commentators are referring to the teams on the field and their players, rather than the club itself. It is unclear whether acronyms like *KR* or *FH* have specific ϕ -feature values, such as singular number. It is interesting that sports club acronyms trigger plural agreement to a higher degree than names that are formally singular, as shown in (9) and (10) below (see the **PL & PL** pattern), where we have broken down the numbers from (4) (the tables in (9) and (10) do not include foreign names or names that are not unambiguously formally singular or acronyms). This might suggest that acronyms are unspecified for at least number. We leave this for future research, however.

(9) *Acronyms*

Coordination	Count (%)
SG & SG	18 (31%)
SG & PL	14 (24%)
PL & PL	27 (46%)
PL & SG	0 (0%)

(10) *Formally singular names*

Coordination	Count (%)
SG & SG	63 (49%)
SG & PL	45 (35%)
PL & PL	21 (16%)
PL & SG	0 (0%)

Note that overt pronouns are frequently used to refer to teams in, e.g., live sports commentary. These are typically in the plural and not in the singular, such as in (11).

- (11) a. **Próttur gerði** sér ferð á Sauðárkrók[...] og **gerðu þær** jafntefli[...]
 Próttur made.SG REFL trip to Sauðárkrókur and made.PL they.F draw
 ‘Próttur traveled to Sauðárkrókur ... and they made a draw ...’
 (Fótbolti.net, 15 May 2021)

Syntactic and semantic agreement

- b. **Stjarnan** er enn í leit að sínum fyrsta sigri. **Þær mættu** Valur [...]
 Stjarnan is still in search for REFL.POSS first win they.F met.PL Valur
 ‘Stjarnan is still in search for its/their first win. They faced Valur ...’
 (Vísir.is, 15 May 2021)

This is different from *pro* in conjunction reduction examples as in (3) above, where *pro* can either trigger singular or plural agreement. We do not discuss examples as in (11) further.

For our study, we collected data from two online Icelandic news websites which offer written live commentary (Vísir.is and Fótbolti.net)—we collected data from football (soccer) and basketball commentary. It should be noted that we have only looked at a small subset of all the written live commentary that is available on these websites. In our search queries, we focused on conjunction reduction with overt coordinating conjunctions, *og* ‘and’ or *en* ‘but’, and finite verb agreement. Every combination of {**SG, PL**} & {**SG, PL**} occurs in our corpus, except for plural followed by singular, i.e., **PL-SG** (see the tables in (4), (9) and (10)). Attested **SG-SG** examples are shown in (12)–(13); attested **PL-PL** examples are shown in (14)–(15); and attested **SG-PL** examples are shown in (16)–(17).²

- (12) Stjarnan **sækir** hratt og __ **setur** boltan inní [...]
 Stjarnan attacks.PRES.SG quickly and *pro* puts.PRES.SG ball.the in
 ‘Stjarnan attacks quickly and puts the ball inside ...’ (Fótbolti.net, 15 May 2021)
- (13) FH **sækir** þó stöðugt og __ **er** að reyna að
 FH attacks.PRES.SG though constantly and *pro* is.PRES.SG to try.INF to
 ógna markinu.
 threaten.INF goal.the
 ‘FH is constantly attacking and is trying to threaten the goal.’
 (Fótbolti.net, 23 June 2021)
- (14) [...] Keflavík **nýta** sér það og __ **keyra** upp.
 Keflavík use.PRES.PL REFL it and *pro* drive.PRES.PL up
 ‘... Keflavík takes the advantage and powers through.’ (Fótbolti.net, 19 May 2021)
- (15) [...] KR **vinna** boltann og __ **sækja** hratt á HK [...]
 KR win.PRES.PL ball.the and *pro* attack.PRES.PL quickly on HK
 ‘... KR wins the ball and quickly attacks HK ...’ (Fótbolti.net, 25 May 2021)
- (16) Grindavík **fær** horn og __ **taka** stutta útfærslu núna [...]
 Grindavík gets.PRES.SG corner and *pro* take.PRES.PL short execution now
 ‘Grindavík gets a corner kick and now takes a short execution ...’
 (Fótbolti.net, 16 July 2021)

²Tense does not seem to make a difference; attested examples are mostly in the present tense (as in (12)–(17)) but past tense examples also occur in our corpus, as shown in (i).

- (i) Selfoss **spilaði** síðast við Fjölni en __ **töpuðu** 2-1 á útivelli [...]
 Selfoss played.PST.SG last with Fjölnir but *pro* lost.PST.PL 2-1 at away.field
 ‘Selfoss last played against Fjölnir but they lost 2-1 away ...’ (Fótbolti.net, 15 July 2021)

- (17) Selfoss **er** á mikilli siglingu og ___ **ætla** að bæta upp fyrir
 Selfoss is.PRES.SG on great sailing and *pro* intend.PRES.PL to make up for
 stóru orðin sem ekki stóðust síðasta sumar.
 big words.the which not were.kept last summer
 ‘Selfoss is currently doing great and is going to make up for those lofty promises
 last summer that were not kept.’ (Fótbolti.net, 15 May 2021)

The speakers we have consulted (including the first two authors of the present paper) share the intuition that **PL-SG** examples—and only that combination—is ungrammatical; see the constructed ***PL-SG** examples in (18)–(20).

- (18) *Stjarnan **sækja** hratt og ___ **setur** boltann inn í.
 Stjarnan attack.PRES.PL quickly and *pro* puts.PRES.SG ball.the in
 Intended: ‘Stjarnan quickly attacks and puts the ball inside.’
- (19) *Keflavík **nýta** sér það og ___ **keyrir** upp.
 Keflavík use.PRES.PL REFL it and *pro* drives.PRES.SG up
 Intended: ‘Keflavík takes the advantage and powers through.’
- (20) *Grindavík **fá** horn og ___ **tekur** stutta útfærslu núna.
 Grindavík get.PRES.PL corner and *pro* takes.PRES.SG short execution now
 Intended: ‘Grindavík gets a corner kick and now takes a short execution.’

These judgments dovetail perfectly with our corpus results (see the table in (4)), where no such cases were found.³ This 3/4 pattern is also uniquely *cross-clausal*, unlike other patterns mentioned in this paper (see section 5). Assuming Icelandic conjunction reduction has *pro* in the second conjunct, it is this *pro* which differs from the first subject and causes the agreement mismatches that we find. However, it is not yet clear why there is a 3/4 pattern: why is it that the features of *pro* can only differ from the overt DP in one order, where **singular** precedes **plural**, and not the other order, where **plural** precedes **singular**? We turn to this issue in the next section.⁴

³We have, however, come across three examples where a sports club name which is formally plural, like *Haukar* ‘Hawks’ in (i), triggers plural finite verb agreement in SubjConj1 whereas the finite verb in SubjConj2 is in the singular, resulting in a **PL-SG** pattern, otherwise not found in our data. However, these are not included in the table in (4) as we only looked for examples where the name of the sports club is formally singular or an acronym. Future work might include formally plural names to see to what degree these ever trigger singular finite verb agreement. It should be noted that we find examples like (i) ungrammatical.

- (i) **Haukar skelltu sér** til Grindavíkur og ___ **gerði** þar 1-1 jafntefli.
 Haukar went.3PL to Grindavík and *pro* made.3SG there 1-1 draw
 ‘Haukar went to Grindavík and made a 1-1 draw there.’ (Fótbolti.net, 22 May 2021)

⁴Some instances of apparent agreement mismatches in Icelandic could be explained with elided or silent nouns, see, e.g., (i) where a masculine plural noun *englar* ‘angels’ (a part of a book title) is followed by singular (finite verb *er*) and feminine singular (participle *komin*) agreement. E.F. Sigurðsson, Ingimundarson and Whelpton (2022) argue that this can be explained by assuming a silent noun in the feminine singular, **BÓKIN** ‘the book’ (written in all caps in parentheses in (i)).

3. The syntax of semantic features

Hybrid agreement patterns are often taken to be semantic in nature as well as (morpho)-syntactic (e.g., Corbett 1979, Wechsler and Zlatić 2000). The current work argues that semantic agreement is, in fact, subject to syntactic locality constraints, suggesting that it is syntactically represented. We assume for present purposes that a single head can only bear one set of ϕ -features—hybrid agreement results from a clear division between the locus of semantic and syntactic agreement.

We propose that the locus of ϕ -features is (i) within the DP, and (ii) at the phasal edge. We adopt the notion of **context linkers** from H.Á. Sigurðsson (2011, 2014, 2019; et seq.). H.Á. Sigurðsson (2011:281) argues that “the C-domain contains silent but probing (i.e., syntactically active) “speaker” and “hearer” features”, the so-called logophoric agent (Λ_A) and logophoric patient (Λ_P). These, together with Λ_3 (3rd person), are **context linkers (CLn)** and match arguments in the clause.

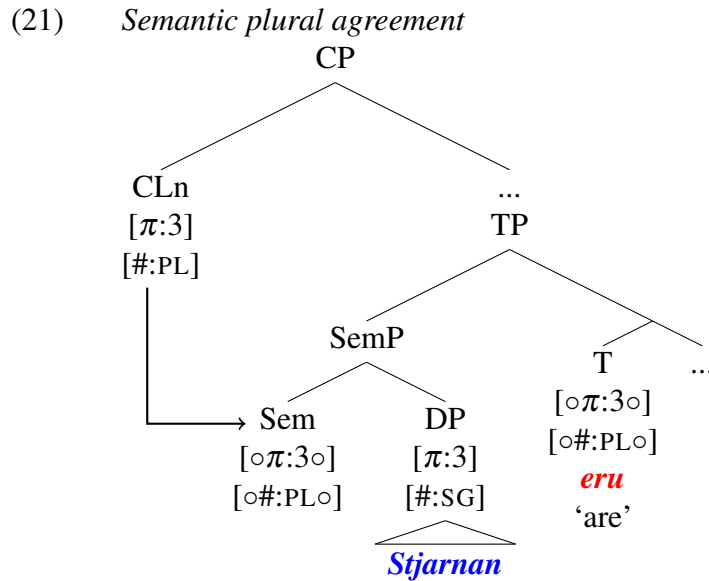
We propose that the *pro* subject of the second clause enters the derivation devoid of ϕ -features, which must be filled in by either (i) the features of SubjConj1, or (ii) the features of a left-peripheral CLn (H.Á. Sigurðsson 2011, 2014; see also Frascarelli 2007). This can result in a 3/4 pattern, where a certain Semantic-Morphological combination is excluded (see also Messick’s (2020) *Monotonicity Agreement Constraint*): Semantic features *can be introduced after* a dependency with the formal features has been established. However, formal features *cannot be accessed* once semantic feature dependency has been established.

4. Analysis

Following Pesetsky’s (2013) analysis of Russian 3/4 agreement patterns, which we discuss further below, semantic agreement stems from a dedicated semantic head in the nominal phrase, structurally higher than the formal, morphosyntactic features. Once such a head is present—see the Sem(antic) head in (21)—the lower formal features are no longer accessible to other dependencies in the derivation. Sem’s function is essentially to force feature valuation by a CLn. We furthermore assume that semantic feature values are assigned by left-peripheral CLns.

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- (i) (BÓKIN) Englar alheimsins [...] er komin út á ensku [...]
 BOOK.the.FEM.SG angels.MASC.PL universe.the.GEN is.SG come.FEM.SG out in English
 ‘The Angels of the universe [by Einar Már Guðmundsson] has been published in English.’

This is a less plausible explanation for the live sports commentary mismatches since it is not at all clear what noun would be elided—the masculine plural LEIKMENN(IRNIR) ‘(the) players’ could, for example, account for semantic agreement with male teams but not feminine agreement with female teams. Also, silent nouns like BÓKIN in (i) can generally be made overt (e.g., *Bókin Englar alheimsins er komin út* ‘The book The Angels of the Universe has been published’) but that is not trivial in semantic agreement examples like, e.g., (3) or (8). For further discussion, see E.F. Sigurðsson, Ingimundarson and Whelpton (2022).



In (21), $\circ\pi:3\circ$ and $\circ\#:PL\circ$ (i.e., with bullets) on Sem means that person (π) and number (#) have received the values 3 and plural, respectively, from another syntactic object in the structure. When T agrees with SemP, it gets these same values.

The derivation for examples like (22) (= 3) can proceed in the following ways.

- (22)
- a. **Stjarnan**(SG) **er**(SG) með boltann og ___ **sækir**(SG) fram.
 - b. **Stjarnan**(SG) **er**(SG) með boltann og ___ **sækja**(PL) fram.
 - c. **Stjarnan**(SG) **eru**(PL) með boltann og ___ **sækja**(PL) fram.
 - d. ***Stjarnan**(SG) **eru**(PL) með boltann og ___ **sækir**(SG) fram.
 ‘**Stjarnan has/have** the ball and ___ **is/are** advancing.’

In (23) (=22a), SubjConj1 triggers morphosyntactic feature agreement on the finite verb. The silent *pro* SubjConj2, which consists of unvalued ϕ -features only, copies these ϕ -feature values, resulting in the same kind of subject-verb agreement in the second conjunct. Note that even though both DPs are formally singular, the context linkers are plural, because they are still understood as indexing a plural entity in the discourse. This holds whether they value the features internal to the clause or not.

$$(23) \quad [_{CP} CLn_{i_{PL}} \dots [_{TP} DP_{i_{SG}} \dots]] \ \& \ [_{CP} CLn_{i_{PL}} \dots [_{TP} pro_{SG} \dots]] \quad (=22a)$$

In (24) (=22b), SubjConj1 behaves the same way, but SubjConj2 gets its values from the CLn, resulting in semantic agreement.

$$(24) \quad [_{CP} CLn_{i_{PL}} \dots [_{TP} DP_{i_{SG}} \dots]] \ \& \ [_{CP} CLn_{i_{PL}} \dots [_{TP} pro_{PL} \dots]] \quad (=22b)$$

In (25) (=22c), a Semantic Phrase (SemP) merges on top of the DP. Its features come from a CLn, and since the referent in these is semantically plural (the players of the team), it gets

a plural number value. From this point, if SubjConj2 gets its features from SubjConj1, as in the derivation of (22a), the result will be plural. If it gets its features from the CLn, as in (22b), the result will still be plural.

$$(25) \quad [CP \underbrace{CLn_{iPL} \dots [TP [SemP \text{ Sem}_{PL} DP_{iSG}] \dots]}_{\uparrow}] \& [CP \underbrace{CLn_{iPL} \dots [TP \text{ pro}_{PL} \dots]}_{\uparrow}]$$

$$(26) \quad [CP \underbrace{CLn_{iPL} \dots [TP [SemP \text{ Sem}_{PL} DP_{iSG}] \dots]}_{\uparrow}] \& [CP \underbrace{CLn_{iPL} \dots [TP \text{ pro}_{PL} \dots]}_{\uparrow}] \quad (=22c)$$

Either strategy leads to the form in (22c), and there is no way to derive (22d).

In order to derive (22d), the singular features embedded inside SemP would have to be accessed. However, it is generally assumed that within a given DP, only the highest features of the same kind are accessible (see Kramer 2015 on gender). Independent support for the claim that the singular features on the DP embedded inside SemP are inaccessible comes from pseudo-partitive constructions. Consider the examples in (27).

- (27) Tvö glös af rauðvíni dattu í gólfíð og ...
 two glasses of red.wine fell.3PL on floor.the and ...
 ‘Two glasses of red wine fell on the floor and...’
- a. ___ {lágu / *lá} þar allt kvöldið.
pro {lay.3PL / *lay.3SG} there all evening
 ‘...lay there all evening.’
- b. {rauðvínið / það} {*lágu / lá} þar allt kvöldið.
 {red.wine.the / it} {*lay.3PL / lay.3SG} there all evening
 ‘{the red wine / it} lay there all evening.’

Despite the fact that *rauðvín* ‘red wine’ is singular (as a mass noun), and forms a perfectly coherent subject in the second conjunct, either as a full DP or as a pronoun, it cannot be used to copy 3rd person singular features to *pro*, because it is embedded in a larger DP that is plural. Similarly, when a singular DP is embedded in a plural SemP, the features of the singular DP cannot be copied to *pro*.

5. Related proposals

In this section, we briefly compare our analysis to similar proposals in the literature. A variety of 3/4 patterns and analyses have been presented (e.g. Pesetsky 2013, Wood and E.F. Sigurðsson 2014, Landau 2016, Akkuş 2017, E.F. Sigurðsson 2017, Smith 2017, 2021, Messick 2020). Our approach is reminiscent of Pesetsky’s (2013) analysis of Russian gender mismatch and Lebanese Arabic number mismatch: Semantic agreement stems from a dedicated **semantic head** in the NP, *structurally higher* than the formal, morphosyntactic features. He calls this head \mathfrak{K} for feminine gender and # for plural number. We use the more neutral label ‘Sem’ for ‘semantic’ features. For Pesetsky (2013), this is an optional

singular agreement or semantic plural agreement on the finite verb. For a closer comparison with the Icelandic data, we also elicited British English conjunction reduction examples with a football club—Manchester United—and a number mismatch. As in Icelandic, the British English speakers who we have consulted accept every number combination but one.⁵ A singular verb in the second conjunct can follow a singular verb in the first conjunct (31a), and similarly, a plural verb can follow another plural verb (31b). However, while a plural verb can follow a singular verb (31c), a singular verb cannot follow a plural verb (31d). This is the same 3/4 pattern as in Icelandic.

- (31) a. Manchester United **has** sold a striker and **is** now going to buy a goalkeeper.
b. Manchester United **have** sold a striker and **are** now going to buy a goalkeeper.
c. Manchester United **has** sold a striker and **are** now going to buy a goalkeeper.
d. *Manchester United **have** sold a striker and **is** now going to buy a goalkeeper.

Den Dikken (2001) analyzes the British English pattern as involving a silent plural pronoun *pro* that forms a constituent with the overt DP. Smith (2017, 2021) argues that the semantic features are syntactically represented in a different way, proposing that DPs have both uninterpretable formal features and interpretable semantic features. Both accounts, through different means, predict that semantic agreement is impossible in existential constructions where the verb c-commands the DP in question, as illustrated in (32).

- (32) a. There **is** a committee deciding the budget for next year.
b. *There **are** a committee deciding the budget for next year. (Smith 2017:825)

For Den Dikken (2001), this follows from the fact that pronouns cannot occur in the low, associate position of an existential construction. For Smith (2017), this follows from a constraint to the effect that interpretable features must c-command uninterpretable features if they serve as the target of an agreement relation.

However, Smith's analysis cannot apply to Icelandic since cleft constructions with semantic plural agreement are grammatical in that language, where the target of agreement does not c-command the finite verb. An example from live sports commentary is shown in (33) where a (formally singular) expletive and a plural verb precede the acronym *KR*.⁶

- (33) Það **eru** KR sem **byrja** þennan leik.
there are.PL KR that begin.PL this match
'It is KR which starts this match.' (Fótbolti.net, 8 August 2021)

The British English data show another 3/4 pattern that is worth discussing. In this pattern, a reflexive pronoun following the verb can either show the same agreement as the verb,

⁵We thank Liam McKnight, Adam Nicholas and Tristan Lee (and speakers they consulted), Romany Amber, Andrew Weir and Richard Stockwell for discussion of the paradigm in (31).

⁶Den Dikken's (2001) analysis is compatible with this example, since pronouns can also be clefted. We leave a closer comparison with Den Dikken's (2001) analysis and the wealth of detail discussed there for future research.

singular (34a) or plural (34b), or diverge from a singular verb and show plural agreement (34c). However, the pronoun cannot be singular if the verb is plural (34d).

(34) *British English*

- a. **The government has** offered **itself** up for criticism (with this economic policy).
- b. **The government have** offered **themselves** up for criticism.
- c. ?**The government has** offered **themselves** up for criticism.
- d. ***The government have** offered **itself** up for criticism. (Smith 2017:826)

This type of pattern, in particular example (34c), offers a puzzle to the approaches discussed in this section. How is it that *the government* has remained ‘singular’ enough throughout the derivation to trigger singular finite verb agreement, while nevertheless being able to antecede a plural reflexive pronoun? On the current approach, *themselves* has access to the CLNs, either at a VoiceP-phase edge or at the edge of CP (see also E.F. Sigurðsson 2017), even if Sem is not merged on the antecedent.

- (35) a. ?The government has offered themselves up for criticism.
 b. [CP CLN_{iPL} ... [TP [DP_j the gov't] has ... [VoiceP CLN_{iPL} ... <DP_j> ... themselves]]]
-

However, this paradigm, together with the sports-team data discussed in this paper, and the British English paradigm in (31), may be problematic for Smith’s (2021) account of 3/4 patterns. Smith (2021) argues that interpretable features, for the relevant DPs, may be ‘active’ or ‘inactive’ in the derivation. When they are active, they—and not the uninterpretable formal features—must be the targets of Agree. At that point, they may be optionally deactivated, and in fact, they must be deactivated in order for the uninterpretable formal features to be targets for Agree. Smith (2021) argues that agreement between anaphors and antecedents can occur prior to agreement between T and subject DPs. Thus, in (34c), *the government* and *themselves* enter into Agree, the active interpretable features on *the government* are deactivated, and only the uninterpretable features are left for T.⁷ In (34d), the interpretable features are evidently not active when anaphor agreement takes place, and therefore, they cannot be available later in the derivation for agreement with T.

Although Smith’s account on its own grounds rests on a number of assumptions that are far from self-evident, it is hard to see how it could be extended to the conjunction reduction data. It would seem to require an Agree relation between the subject of one CP and the subject of another CP, which is not something that Agree as it is generally conceived of is able to do, and such a claim would be empirically incorrect on independent grounds as well.⁸ In contrast, our account does not involve any deactivation, and there is no Agree relation between the overt DP and the *pro* subject of the second conjunct. Instead, the

⁷In (34a), they are inactive all along and in (34b), Agree occurs simultaneously between the subject and the anaphor, on the one hand, and the subject and T, on the other.

⁸Notice, for example, that even when the subject of the second conjunct is *pro*, we already saw mismatches in person and case; these cannot be due to the derivational timing of any deactivation mechanism.

features of *pro* are copied either from the context linker or from the antecedent directly. Although we claim that this copying should not be understood as Agree, the crucial part has to do with timing of whatever operation that is. For Smith's account, one would have to say that this copying of semantic features occurs *prior* to agreement with T. Since we are dealing with conjoined CPs, however, this would mean that the copying would take place before the two CPs even form a single syntactic object (let alone form the kind of object that usually allows an Agree or concord relation). Moreover, one would have to prevent the copying from taking place after the features have been deactivated; otherwise, T could agree with the interpretable features, deactivate them, and then copy the leftover formal features to *pro*, generating the unattested pattern. In our account, there is no need for generating features that are deactivated; the features are either there or not. The fact that it is specifically the *semantic* features that show up in the mismatch derives from the fact that they come from the discourse-grounded context linker, and not directly from the antecedent.

6. Conclusion

Number mismatch in Icelandic conjunction reduction follows a 3/4 agreement pattern. In contrast with many 3/4 patterns discussed in previous literature, the Icelandic pattern is *cross-clausal*. Further, Icelandic semantic agreement is subject to syntactic locality constraints and prevents further formal morphosyntactic agreement from being accessed. Based on these facts, we proposed a context linker analysis which accounts for the Icelandic data, and shows promising signs of being able to be extended to previous 3/4 agreement patterns as well.

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