

Copular constructions, Move & Agree

Marcel den Dikken

*Department of English Linguistics • SEAS • Eötvös Loránd University
& Hungarian Research Centre for Linguistics • Budapest • Hungary*

1 Introduction

- In the realms of movement and agreement phenomena, copular constructions have a special significance because of the extraordinary palette of opportunities and restrictions that they evince in both domains.
- The puzzles surrounding movement and agreement in copular constructions are not confined to clauses: copular predication inside the complex noun phrase exhibits striking restrictions as well.
- I will attempt to cover the territory as exhaustively as is humanly possible — but truly achieving exhaustive coverage would require reams of text.
- The upcoming slides are intended to give a sense of the major and subsidiary issues in this complex domain.
- References to important contributions to the issues addressed are included in footnotes anchored to section titles.

2 The major issues

2.1 Move

- In connection with the behaviour of movement in copular sentences, the central issue is the syntax of the familiar word order alternation in specificational and equative copular sentences between 'subject – COP – predicate' and 'predicate – COP – subject'.
- In binominal noun phrases, similar movement-derived alternations arise, but the predicate nominal of a binominal noun phrase can not only end up to the left of its subject via movement but may also be base-generated in its surface position.

Q1

Is the word order alternation in copular constructions a deep alternation (without movement being involved) or a surface alternation (featuring movement of the predicate around its subject)?

Q2

If the latter, is the movement operation involved \bar{A} -movement or A-movement?

2.1.1 Copular sentences

2.1.1.1 Copular inversion¹

- For the word order flexibility of the copular sentences in (1)–(3) I will use the term ‘copular inversion’ in a descriptive, theory-neutral way.

- (1) a. the rise of fascism is the biggest problem
 b. the biggest problem is the rise of fascism
- (1') a. the rise of fascism is a(nother) big problem
 b. a(nother) big problem is the rise of fascism
- (2) a. losing in the first primary was particularly embarrassing
 b. particularly embarrassing was losing in the first primary
- (3) a. the guest room is at the end of the corridor
 b. at the end of the corridor is the guest room

1 Heggie (1988) treats the word order alternation in specificational copular sentences in terms of \bar{A} -movement of the predicate. For A-movement analyses and discussion of the copula and \bar{A} -extraction restrictions, see Moro (1997), Hoekstra & Mulder (1990), Den Dikken (2006). On specificational copular sentences, pseudoclefts and equatives, see Higgins (1977), Heycock & Kroch (1999), Mikkelsen (2005, 2011), Den Dikken et al. (2000), Den Dikken & O'Neill (2017), Den Dikken (2017), and references there. On it-clefts, see Reeve (2012), Den Dikken (2013).

- A subdomain of the grammar in which copular inversion is especially common is the so-called pseudocleft (or *wh*-cleft) construction.

- (4) a. the rise of fascism is what is (regarded as) the biggest problem
b. what is (regarded as) the biggest problem is the rise of fascism

- (5) a. losing in the first primary was what he considered particularly embarrassing
b. what he considered particularly embarrassing was losing in the first primary

- (6) a. the guest room is what you will find at the end of the corridor
b. what you will find at the end of the corridor is the guest room

- The English (*it*-)cleft shows no word order alternation: the a–sentences in (7)–(9), which have *it* in postcopular position, are unacceptable.
- In other Germanic languages (Dutch, German, Scandinavian), clefts do support a word order alternation (see (10)).

(7) a. *the rise of fascism is *it* that is (regarded as) the biggest problem
 b. *it* is the rise of fascism that is (regarded as) the biggest problem

(8) a. *losing in the first primary was *it* that he considered particularly embarrassing
 b. *it* was losing in the first primary that he considered particularly embarrassing

(9) a. *the guest room is *it* that you will find at the end of the corridor
 b. *it* is the guest room that you will find at the end of the corridor

(10) a. ik denk dat Jan *het* is die het gedaan heeft (Dutch)

I think that Jan it is who it done has

b. ik denk dat *het* Jan is die het gedaan heeft

I think that it Jan is who it done has

both: ‘I think that it is Jan who did it’

- One logically possible approach to the word order alternation in copular sentences is to take it to be the variable output of the base component of the grammar.
- This would appear to be particularly plausible for so-called equative copular sentences.

(11) a. my opinion of Montréal is your opinion of Vancouver
b. your opinion of Vancouver is my opinion of Montréal

(12) a. the Morning Star is the Evening Star
b. the Evening Star is the Morning Star

(13) a. Cicero is Tully
b. Tully is Cicero

- Equative copular sentences and *it*-clefts share an important syntactic restriction with inverse specificational copular sentences: a ban on serving as the non-finite complement to epistemic verbs such as *consider* in the absence of the copula.

(14) a. I consider the rise of fascism (to be) the biggest problem

b. I consider the biggest problem *(to be) the rise of fascism

(15) a. I consider the rise of fascism (to be) what is (regarded as) the biggest problem

b. I consider what is (regarded as) the biggest problem *(to be) the rise of fascism

(16) I consider *it* *(to be) the rise of fascism that is (regarded as) the biggest problem

(17) a. I consider my opinion of Montréal *(to be) your opinion of Vancouver

b. I consider your opinion of Vancouver *(to be) my opinion of Montréal

- The obligatoriness of the copula can be derived from a syntax that treats the word order in the b-sentences as the product of a movement operation applied to the predicate.

(18) $[\text{Predicate } \textit{the biggest problem}]_i \textit{*(to be)} [\text{Subject } \textit{the rise of fascism}] t_i$

(18) $[\text{Predicate } \textit{the biggest problem}]_i *(\textit{to be}) [\text{Subject } \textit{the rise of fascism}] t_i$

- Confirmation for the involvement in (18) of A-movement rather than \bar{A} -movement of the predicate comes from subject–auxiliary inversion in root yes/no-questions: (19b).

(19) a. the biggest problem is the rise of fascism
b. is the biggest problem the rise of fascism?

(19') a. a big problem is the rise of fascism
b. *is a big problem the rise of fascism?

- The difference between (19b) and (19b') might suggest that \bar{A} -movement is involved in the derivation of (19b') — but see (20):

(20) a. I consider [the rise of fascism to be a(nother) big problem]
b. I consider [a(nother) big problem to be the rise of fascism]

- An extension of the predicate movement analysis to *it*-clefts is desirable in light of the empirical parallels between them and inverse specificational copular sentences.
- Such an extension is feasible in light of the fact that *it* can serve as a pro-predicate (cf. *Coke is it*).
- For equative copular sentences, the fact that *both* members of the alternation exhibit the copula restriction in the same way may fall into place if both surface orders are derived from an underlying predication structure via copular inversion.

- (21) a. I consider my opinion of Montréal *(to be) your opinion of Vancouver
 b. I consider your opinion of Vancouver *(to be) my opinion of Montréal

- The abstractness of the predicate (e.g., a reduced free relative: [*WHAT Mr Jekyll IS*]_i *is Mr Hyde t_i*) may provide a rationale for fronting of the predicate around its subject.

2.1.1.2 \bar{A} -movement restrictions on inverse copular sentences

- Double-DP copular sentences, pseudoclefts and equative constructions restrict \bar{A} -extraction of the postcopular term: (22)–(24). The odd man out here is the *it*-cleft, which freely allows \bar{A} -extraction of the postcopular focus: (25).
- If *it*-clefts have the same syntactic derivation as the b-sentences in (22)–(24), this derivation is not as such an impediment to \bar{A} -extraction of the underlying subject of predication — *contra* accounts of the ungrammaticality of the b-examples in (22)–(24) in terms of some principle of syntax (the ECP, strong crossover, locality).
- If the root of the problem with the b-sentences in (22)–(24) is a ban on movement of the focus around its topic-marked predicate, (25) does not conflict with the other cases: the *it* of *it*-clefts is merely a pro-predicate for the focus; the notional predicate (in the relative clause) *follows* the extraction site of the focus in *it*-clefts.

(22) a. which development do you think is the biggest problem?

b. *which development do you think the biggest problem is?

(23) a. which development do you think is what is (regarded as) the biggest problem?

b. *which development do you think what is (regarded as) the biggest problem is?

(24) a. whose opinion of Montréal do you think is your opinion of Vancouver?

b. *whose opinion of Montréal do you think your opinion of Vancouver is?

(25) which development is *it* that you consider to be the biggest problem?

2.1.2 Complex noun phrases²

- Predication relations can be established in structural domains that are not themselves (fully) clausal — including the complex DP.

(26) a. the book is John's

b. John's book

(27) a. that man is an idiot

b. that idiot of a man

(28) a. ce type est drôle

this guy is funny

(French)

b. ce drôle de type

this funny of guy

² On qualitative binominal noun phrases of various sorts, see Milner (1978), Hulk & Tellier (2000), Doetjes & Rooryck (2001) for French, Napoli (1989) for Italian, Español-Echevarría (1998) and Casillas Martínez (2001) for Spanish, Bennis, Corver & Den Dikken (1997), Leu (2008) for Germanic, Den Dikken & Lipták (1997) for Hungarian. See Den Dikken (2006:Ch. 5) for an integrated discussion and arguments for treating these binominal noun phrases as predication constructions, and analysing (the equivalents of) *of* as copular elements within DP.

- For *of* in (27b) and *de* in (28b) it is clear that they make no contribution to the meanings of the noun phrases that contain them.
- For 's in (26b) one might be inclined to think that it contributes the semantics of possession; but 's also shows up in noun phrases that are not semantically possessive (*yesterday's newspaper, the city's destruction, etc.*).

→ 's, *of* and *de* in (26)–(28) are semantically meaningless but syntactically significant copular elements.

(26) a. the book is John's

b. John's book

(27) a. that man is an idiot

b. that idiot of a man

(28) a. ce type est drôle

this guy is funny

b. ce drôle de type

this funny of guy

(French)

- \bar{A} -movement is not involved in the derivation of the noun phrases in (26)–(28).
- With the specifier position of the complex DP occupied in all of (29a–c), it is clear that *John, idiot* and *drôles* are not in SpecDP.

- (29)
- a. how many of John's books have you read?
 - b. the woman whose idiot of a husband keeps forgetting her birthday
is getting a divorce
 - c. combien de drôles de types as-tu rencontré? (French)
how.many of funny of types have-you met

- It is impossible to \bar{A} -extract the subject of predication from the complex DP, whether on its own or together with the linking element:

- (30)
- a. *books about linguistics, which I've read [John's *t*], are usually very difficult to read
 - b. *she hates men, which he in particular is [an idiot of (a) *t*]
*she hates men, of which he in particular is [an idiot *t*]
 - c. *elle déteste des types dont il est [un drôle *t*] (French)
she loathes indef.pl guys of.which he is a funny

- Ellipsis of the string to the right the Saxon genitive in (31a) and *one*-pronominalisation of the string to the right of *of* (including the indefinite article) in (31b) are possible.
- The ill-formedness of (30a) and the version of (30b) without *a* to the right of *of* is not caused by non-constituency: *book* in *John's book* and *a man* in *an idiot of a man* are constituents, but they are not eligible for \bar{A} -extraction across their raised predicates.

- (31)
- a. I like Mary's book, but I really hate John's *ec*
 - b. to keep the team consistently victorious, it takes a real genius of a coach,
and to lose so consistently, it takes a real dunce of *one*

2.2 Agree

2.2.1 Canonical copular sentences³

- The subject of a canonical copular predication construction usually agrees with the finite copula, regardless of the nature of the predicate:

- (32) a. the key to the cabinets is missing/rusty/in the drawer/the janitor's responsibility
b. the keys to the cabinet are missing/rusty/in the drawer/the janitor's responsibility

- Assuming that the copula is the spell-out of the functional head that mediates the predication relation between the two terms of the sentences in (32) leaves us with two logical possibilities for the representation of (33):

- (33) a. $[_{IP} [_{DP} \text{Subject}] [_{I'} I=\text{COP} [_{XP} \text{Predicate}]]]$
b. $[_{IP} [_{DP} \text{Subject}]_i [_{I'} I+Y=\text{COP}_j [_{YP} t_i [_{Y'} Y=t_j [_{XP} \text{Predicate}]]]]]$

3 For discussion of the base position of the copula, see esp. Williams (1980), Stowell (1983), Hoekstra & Mulder (1990), Moro (1997), and Den Dikken (2006). On upward vs downward Agree, see Bjorkman & Zeijlstra (2014, 2019), Preminger (2013), Barany & Van der Wal (2021).

- (32) a. the key to the cabinets is missing/rusty/in the drawer/the janitor's responsibility
 b. the keys to the cabinet are missing/rusty/in the drawer/the janitor's responsibility

- (33) a. $[_{IP} [_{DP} \text{Subject}] [_{I'} I=\text{COP} [_{XP} \text{Predicate}]]]$
 b. $[_{IP} [_{DP} \text{Subject}]_i [_{I'} I+Y=\text{COP}_j [_{YP} t_i [_{Y'} Y=t_j [_{XP} \text{Predicate}]]]]]]]$

- In (33a), the finite copula is merged directly under I, and I serves as the mediator of the predication relation between DP and XP.
- In (33b), the finite copula originates in a lower head, Y, which moves to I in the course of the derivation.
- The two syntaxes in (33) are both serious candidates for the analysis of the sentences in (32).
- They have directly opposite consequences for the syntactic treatment of the agreement relation between the subject and the finite copula.

- (33) a. $[_{IP} [_{DP} \text{Subject}] [_{I'} I=\text{COP} [_{XP} \text{Predicate}]]]$
 b. $[_{IP} [_{DP} \text{Subject}]_i [_{I'} I+Y=\text{COP}_j [_{YP} t_i [_{Y'} Y=t_j [_{XP} \text{Predicate}]]]]]]]$

- In (33b), the subject of the finite copular sentence originates in a position in the c-command domain of the head I.

→ Valuation of I's ϕ -features can take place under Agree.

- In (33a), the subject is base-generated in a position outside the (strict) c-command domain of I.

→ Valuation of I's ϕ -features cannot take place under downward Agree.

→ For (33a) we need to establish an 'upward looking' agreement relation between the head I and its specifier, usually referred to as Spec–Head agreement.

2.2.1.1 Long-distance agreement⁴

- Downward Agree is probably indispensable in the account of long-distance agreement (LDA).
- The Tsez example in (34b) illustrates LDA:

(34)	a.	eni-r	[už-ā	magalu	b-āc'-ru-ʔi]	r-iyxo	(Tsez)
		mother-dat	boy-erg	bread.III.abs	III-eat-ptc-nominal. <u>IV</u>	<u>IV</u> -knows	
		'the mother knows that they boy ate the bread'					
	b.	eni-r	[už-ā	magalu	b-āc'-ru-ʔi]	b-iyxo	
		mother-dat	boy-erg	bread. <u>III</u> .abs	III-eat-ptc-nominal.IV	<u>III</u> -knows	

- But downward Agree likely cannot be the only vehicle for the establishment of ϕ -feature agreement relationships in syntax: certain cases of 'special' agreement do not materialise under downward Agree.

4 On long-distance agreement phenomena in several languages, see Butt (1995), Polinsky & Potsdam (2001), Bruening (2001), Branigan & McKenzie (2002), Bobaljik & Wurmbrand (2005), Bhatt (2005), Frank (2006).

2.2.1.2 Agreement attraction⁵

- (35)
- a. the key to the cabinets {is/!are} missing/rusty/in the drawer/the janitor's responsibility
 - b. a set of assumptions {is/!are} placed in the memory of the deductive device
 - c. the identity of these people {is/!are} to remain a secret
 - d. the path to the monuments {is/!are} littered with bottles
 - e. the new executive who oversaw the middle managers {was/!were} dishonest about the company's profits

- Agreement attraction cannot occur in (36), where the structural subject position is occupied by the 'expletive' *there* or a fronted locative predicate ('locative inversion'), causing the notional subject of these sentences to remain in a lower position in the tree.

- (36)
- a. there {is/*are} a key to the cabinets missing/in the drawer
 - b. in the drawer {is/*are} the key to the cabinets

5 On 'agreement attraction' in copular sentences, see Jespersen (1924), Bock & Miller (1991), Franck *et al.* (2006), Dillon *et al.* (2017), Den Dikken (2019), and references cited there.

2.2.1.3 *Committee-type noun phrases*⁶

- (37) the committee {is/%are} in the room/having a meeting
- (38) a. there {is/*are} a committee in the room/having a meeting
b. in the room {is/*are} the committee

- Again, ‘special’ agreement is possible under the Spec–Head relation but not under downward Agree.
- It is plausible to structurally represent plural-agreeing group-denoting noun phrases as being headed by a null plural pronoun, *pro*_{PL} (cf. [*they the committee*]) — as in agreement attraction, the agreement target for the finite verb is a subpart of a complex noun phrase (the plural common noun phrase in number ‘attraction’ cases, and the silent plural pronoun in *committee-type* plural agreement).

⁶ On agreement with *committee-type* noun phrases, see Den Dikken (2001) and references there.

2.2.1.4 Person agreement⁷

- Possibly, [PERSON] is structurally represented as a subpart of DP that is not directly visible on DP.

- (39) a. [e-sau ke-dei] e-tum e-tawa (Lokaa)
 7-fish ger/5-buy 7sg-be.very 7sg-be.difficult
 ‘buying fish is very difficult’
- b. *[min ke-funna] n-tum n-tawa
 1sg ger/5-surprise 1sg-be.very 1sg-be.difficult
 ‘surprising me is very difficult’

- (40) a. the identity of these people {is/!are} to remain a secret (= (35c))
 b. the identity of me {is/*am} to remain a secret
 c. the identity of you {is/*are} to remain a secret

(41) *Structural Condition on Person Agreement (SCOPA)*

a category F can bear the features +1 or +2 if and only if a projection of F merges with a phrase that has that feature and F is taken as the label of the resulting phrase

⁷ On person agreement and its special locality needs, see Baker (2011), Den Dikken (2019).

2.2.1.5 Agreement with the predicate nominal⁸

- Canonical copular sentences with a plural predicate nominal and a neuter singular pronominal subject can give rise to copular agreement with the predicate nominal:

- (42) a. dat/dit/het zijn kooplieden, wat wij ook zijn (Dutch)
that/this/it are merchants what we also are
'those/these/they are merchants, which we are, too'
- b. zijn dat kooplieden of zijn kooplieden dat?
are that merchants or are merchants that
'are they merchants, or are merchants (like) that?'
- c. men ziet dat/dit/het als struikelblokken voor een vreedzame oplossing
one sees that/this/it as stumbling.blocks for a peaceful solution
'people view those/these/them as stumbling blocks for a peaceful solution'
- (43) a. wat deze acteurs betreft, in deze film zijn {ze/het} helden (Dutch)
what these actors concerns in this movie are they/it heroes
'as regards these actors, in this movie they are heroes'
- b. wat deze acteurs betreft, in deze film spelen {ze/*het} helden
what these actors concerns in this movie play they/it heroes
'as regards these actors, in this movie they are playing heroes'

⁸ For discussion of '*kooplieden* sentences' and references, see Broekhuis & Den Dikken (2012:§8.2.3).

- In languages such as Dutch, number is a privative feature, marked for plurals but absent from the morphological feature bundle of singulars.
- In (44), the finite copula is the relator of the predication relation between the predicate and the subject; the two noun phrases are both immediate dependents of the copula, which makes it possible for the copula to Agree with the predicate nominal.
- In (45), the mediator of the subject and the predicate nominal is not the inflected verb (which is introduced outside the predication structure): the only DP local to the inflected verb in (45) is the subject of the predication structure; the inflected verb cannot Agree with the predicate nominal because of locality.

(44) [IP [DP Subject] [I' I=COP [XP Predicate]]]

(45) [VP V=*spelen* 'play' [YP [DP Subject] [Y' Y [XP Predicate]]]]

2.2.1.6 Plural agreement *ex nihilo*?

- (46) a. wie zijn dat/dit/het? ‘who are they?’ (Dutch)
 who are that/this/it
- b. wat zijn dat/dit/het? ‘what are they?’
 what are that/this/it
- (47) a. wie dat/dit/het zijn is onbekend ‘who they are is unknown’
 who that/this/it are is unknown
- b. wat dat/dit/het zijn is onbekend ‘what they are is unknown’
 what that/this/it are is unknown
- (48) a. wie heeft/hebben hem beïnvloed? ‘who influenced him?’
 who has/have him influenced
- b. wat heeft/*hebben hem beïnvloed? ‘what influenced him?’
 what has/have him influenced
- (49) [*wat* N_{PL}]

- ‘Bare’ *wat* cannot as easily bring about plural agreement in raising constructions with semi-copulas like *lijken* ‘seem’ and *schijnen* ‘appear’ (50), or in copular sentences containing modals (51).
- Plural-agreeing *wat* prefers to be a direct dependent of the ϕ -marked copula — the abstract noun N_{PL} in (49) appears to desire a very local licenser.

(49) [*wat* N_{PL}]

(50) a. *wat* { *lijkt*/[?]*lijken* } *dat/dit te zijn?* (Dutch)

what seems/seem.PL that/this to be

b. *wat* { *schijnt*/[?]*schijnen* } *dat/dit te zijn?*

what appears/appear.PL that/this to be

‘what does this seem to be?’

(51) a. *wat* { *kan*/[?]*kunnen* } *dat/dit zijn?* (Dutch)

what can/can.PL that/this be

b. *wat* { *zou*/[?]*zouden* } *dat/dit kunnen zijn?*

what would/would.PL that/this can.INF be

‘what could this be?’

(52) wat voor een dingen
 what for a things
 ‘what kind(s) of things’

(54) wat een schatten van een kinderen
 what a darlings of a children

- Alternative: the ‘spurious’ indefinite article *een* as the spell-out of the head mediating the predication relation between a predicate nominal and its subject.

(55) a. [[_{Subject} *schatten*] [*een* [_{Predicate} *wat*]]]
 b. [[_{Subject} *kinderen*] [*een* [_{Predicate} *wat een schatten*]]]

- An approach to ‘spurious’ *een* along the lines of (55) raises the prospect of articles serving the role of relating predicates to their subjects more generally in the context of complex nominal expressions.

2.2.2.2 'Spurious' definite articles

- In some of the Romance languages, definite articles can be used as mediators of DP-internal predications.

- (56) a. cet imbécile de médecin (French)
that imbecile of doctor
b. *cet imbécile du médecin
that imbecile of.the doctor
- (57) a. quell' ignorante di dottore (Italian)
that ignoramus of doctor
b. quell' ignorante del dottore
that ignoramus of-the doctor
- (58) a. ese ignorante de doctor (Spanish)
this ignoramus of doctor
b. %ese ignorante del doctor
this ignoramus of.the doctor

- The definite article contracted onto *di/de* in (57b) and (58b) makes no contribution to the definiteness of the noun phrase.
- The article does nonetheless make an indirect contribution to the interpretation of the noun phrase of which it is a part: it signals that a canonical predication relationship is established between *dottore/doctor* and *ignorante*, a relationship which is inverted in the course of the syntactic derivation ('predicate inversion'), with concomitant raising of the mediator of the predication relation (the definite article) up to *di/de*.
- In (57a) and (58a), by contrast, the attributive relationship between *ignorante* and *dottore/doctor* does not give rise to an overt realisation of the mediator of predication (because no overt realisation is needed to signal inversion).

- (57) a. *quell' ignorante di dottore* (Italian)
 that ignoramus of doctor
- b. *quell' ignorante del dottore*
 that ignoramus of-the doctor
- (58) a. *ese ignorante de doctor* (Spanish)
 this ignoramus of doctor
- b. *%ese ignorante del doctor*
 this ignoramus of.the doctor

2.2.2.3 Gender and number agreement in binominal noun phrases

(59) a. mon vache de frère (French)

my.M cow.F of brother.M
'my severe brother'

b. ma vache de frère
my.F cow.F of brother.M
'my meanie of a brother'

(60) a. el rata de tu hermano (Spanish)

the.M rat.F of your brother.M
'your stingy brother'

b. la rata de tu hermano
the.F rat.F of your brother.M
'your rat of a brother, your evil brother'

- In (59b) and (60b), the possessor/definite article preceding N1 must agree in gender with that noun, not with the semantic head of the complex noun phrase.
- The syntax of (59b) and (60b) involves an underlying canonical predication relation between the two constituent noun phrases, inverted in the course of the derivation.
- Inversion makes N1 the local goal for the ϕ -probe in D, and makes N2 inaccessible to D.

(61) $[_{DP} D [_{YP} [_{NP1} \text{Predicate}]_i [Y [_{XP} [_{NP2} \text{Subject}] [X t_i]]]]]$

- (59) a. mon vache de frère (French)
 my.M cow.F of brother.M
 ‘my severe brother’
 b. ma vache de frère
 my.F cow.F of brother.M
 ‘my meanie of a brother’
- (60) a. el rata de tu hermano (Spanish)
 the.M rat.F of your brother.M
 ‘your stingy brother’
 b. la rata de tu hermano
 the.F rat.F of your brother.M
 ‘your rat of a brother, your evil brother’

- In attributive (59a) and (60a), N2 is accessible to the outer D-layer.
- (62b) (a reverse predication structure) creates a syntactic home for the connective element (*de/di*) that shows up between the two nouns; the adjunction structure in (62a) does not.

- (62) a. $[_{DP} D [_{NP2} [_{NP1} \text{Attribute}] [_{NP2} \text{Modifiee}]]]$
 b. $[_{DP} D [_{XP} [_{NP1} \text{Attribute}] [X [_{NP2} \text{Modifiee}]]]]]$

2.2.3 Inverse copular sentences

2.2.3.1 Number agreement in inverse copular sentences with two common noun phrases¹⁰

- (i) the predicate is singular and the subject is plural
 - (ii) the subject is singular and the predicate is plural (a *plurale tantum*)
- *re: (i)* In standard English canonical copular sentences with a singular predicate and plural subject, the subject invariably controls number agreement on the finite copula: (63a,a').
 - But when the relative order of the predicate and the subject is inverted, as in (63b) and (63b'), the empirical picture is not homogeneous.

- (63) a. the agreement facts {are/*is} the biggest problem
- b. the biggest problem {is/*are} the agreement facts
- (63') a. the agreement facts {are/*is} a(nother) big problem
- b. a(nother) big problem {are/*is} the agreement facts

¹⁰ On copular agreement in specificational copular sentences with two common noun phrases (including pseudoclefts with a free relative as the *wh*-clause), see Moro (1997), Heycock (2012), Hartmann & Heycock (2017–2020) (the Icelandic *plurale tantum* cases are from their 2018 paper), Béjar & Kahnemuyipour (2017), Den Dikken (1998, 2017, 2019). On silent-headed DP1 (cf. (68)), see esp. Guéron (1992), Den Dikken (2006, 2017).

(63b) the biggest problem {is/*are} the agreement facts

(63b') a(nother) big problem {are/*is} the agreement facts

- That (63b') disallows number agreement between the fronted predicate nominal and the copula fits other evidence suggesting that the indefinite predicate nominal is not raised into the structural subject position (SpecIP).
- The number agreement facts in (63b), with a definite predicate nominal, can be understood if in copular inversion constructions in which the predicate raises to SpecIP, the copula qua ϕ -probe cannot access the subject of predication.

- One possible hypothesis is that in English, the I-head probes upwards to its specifier and establishes a Spec–Head agreement relationship with it, whereas in Dutch it does not.
- In English (63b), whose derivation is shown in (65), the copula (in I) unequivocally ϕ -agrees with the raised predicate in SpecIP.
- In Dutch, the closest A-position with which the copula in I can establish a ϕ -agreement relationship is the SpecXP position in (65) — i.e., the base position of the subject.

(63b) the biggest problem {is/*are} the agreement facts

(65) [_{IP} [_{DP1} Predicate]_i [I=COP [_{XP} [_{DP2} Subject] [X *t*_i]]]]]

- Italian is like Dutch in having the copula agree in number with the postcopular notional subject rather than with the precopular predicate nominal.

(66) a. la causa della rivolta {sono/*è} le foto del muro (Italian)

the cause of.the riot are/is the pictures of.the wall

b. [_{IP} *la causa della rivolta* [_{IP} *pro*_{{φ}i} [_{I'} *copula*_{{φ}i} [_{subject}_{{φ}i} (...)]]]]

- The number agreement facts in the inverse copular sentences of Eastern Armenian and Persian mimic those seen in Dutch and Italian: in (67a,b), as in (64) and (66a), the finite copula agrees in number with the plural subject of predication.

(67) a. moshkel-e asli rahbar-aa-ye enghelaab-∅-an (Persian)

problem-ez main leaders-ez revolution-be-3pl

b. iskakan problem-ə heqapoxutyān metz-er-ən en (Eastern Armenian)

main problem-sp revolution.gen chief-pl-sp are

both: 'the main problem is (lit., are) the leaders the revolution'

- It has been proposed that the initial noun phrase is enveloped in a complex structure whose silent head has no ϕ -features of its own, forcing the copula to ϕ -agree instead with the second noun phrase.

(68) $[_{IP} [_{\text{Predicate}} \emptyset [_{DP1} \dots]]_i [I=COP [_{XP} [_{DP2} \text{Subject}] [X t_i]]]]]$

- This hypothesis will cover the English facts if (a) the copula in English inverse copular sentences cannot agree with the postcopular subject and (b) if the third person singular inflection seen on the copula in these kinds of sentences is default inflection.

- The hypothesis that the first noun phrase in double-DP inverse copular sentences is a subpart of a more complex noun phrase may receive support from the observation that agreement attraction is impossible with copular inversion:

- (69) a. the key to the problems {is/%are} here
 b. the key to the problems {is/*are} this

- If *the key to the problems* in (69b) is enveloped in a silent ‘cloak’, this will cause the plural DP *the problems* to be structurally more distant from the matrix I-head in (69b) than in (69a).
- Agreement attraction deteriorates with structural distance.

- (i) the predicate is singular and the subject is plural
- (ii) the subject is singular and the predicate is plural (a *plurale tantum*)

- *re: (ii)* For English, the nouns *misgivings*, *tidings*, *proceeds* and *spoils* are good candidates — (70) and (71) present some naturally occurring specimens of the relevant sort:

- (70)
 - a. the Crime and Corruption Commission (CCC) says that a \$28 million order against two central Queensland bikie gang members is the biggest proceeds of crime order in the state's history
 - b. the Environment Agency says that the 917,000 Hugh O'Donnell has been ordered to pay is the biggest proceeds of crime order ever secured by the organisation against 1 individual
- (71)
 - a. my only short-term misgivings are the continued stress in residential and commercial real estate markets
 - b. my misgivings are the underlying but erroneous assumption which is that the 'dominant [*sic*] hemisphere' does everything
 - c. possibly the best tidings are the news that the Leibniz Nachlass was spared the fate of Schelling's
 - d. the spoils of the war is the acceleration of our personal transition and change

- In (71), the *plurale tantum* predicate nominal is in the structural subject position.
- Number agreement with the plural predicate is common here: indeed, in three of the four examples in (71), we find *are*; only in (71d) do we see the postcopular subject of predication hold sway over the copula's number inflection.

- (71)
- a. my only short-term misgivings are the continued stress in residential and commercial real estate markets
 - b. my misgivings are the underlying but erroneous assumption which is that the 'dominant [*sic*] hemisphere' does everything
 - c. possibly the best tidings are the news that the Leibniz Nachlass was spared the fate of Schelling's
 - d. the spoils of the war is the acceleration of our personal transition and change

- Icelandic presents basically the same picture as English: the copula agrees in number with the physical occupant of the structural subject position — i.e., with the singular subject in canonical (72a), and with the raised predicate in (72b). (There is a certain degree of speaker variation in the Icelandic judgements.)

- (72) a. þau spurðu hvort þurrkurinn {væri/??væru} ekki eldsupptökin (Icelandic)
 they asked whether drought.the be.sbj.3sg/3pl not fire.causes
 ‘they asked whether the drought wasn’t the cause of the fire’
- b. þau spurðu hvort eldsupptökin {*væri/væru} ekki þurrkurinn
 they asked whether fire.causes be.sbj.3sg/pl not drought.the
 ‘they asked whether the cause of the fire wasn’t the drought’

- In Dutch, the judgements on (73b) and (74a) seem clear; but (73a) and (74b) are virtually ineffable.

(73) a. de verzekering {*is/?zijn} de hoogste kosten van het project (Dutch)
 the insurance is/are the highest costs of the project
 b. de hoogste kosten van het project {*is/zijn} de verzekering
 the highest costs of the project is/are the insurance

(74) a. ik denk dat de verzekering de hoogste kosten van het project {*is/zijn}
 I think that the insurance the highest costs of the project is/are
 b. ik denk dat de hoogste kosten van het project de verzekering {*is/?zijn}
 I think that the highest costs of the project the insurance is/are

- The empirical generalisation appears to be that when the singular subject of the *plurale tantum* predicate is left-adjacent to the copula neither choice of inflection feels perfect.

2.2.3.3 Person agreement in inverse copular sentences¹²

- (66) a. la causa della rivolta {sono/*è} le foto del muro (Italian)
the cause of.the riot are/is the pictures of.the wall
b. [_{IP} *la causa della rivolta* [_{IP} *pro*_{{φ}i} [_{T'} *copula*_{{φ}i} [_{subject}_{{φ}i} (...)]]]]
- (76) a. il colpevole {sono/*è} io (Italian)
the culprit am/is I
b. il colpevole {sei/*è} tu
the culprit are/is you
- (77) a. qaatel to-∅-yi (Persian)
murderer you-be-2sg
b. mart^haspan-ə du es (Eastern Armenian)
murderer-sp you be.pres.2sg
both: 'the murderer is you'
- (78) a. the culprit {is/*am} me/!I
b. the culprit {is/*are} you

12 On person agreement in inverse copular sentences, see Moro (1997) for Italian, Béjar & Kahnemuyipour (2017) for Persian and East Armenian, Hartmann & Heycock (2017–2020) for Scandinavian, German and Dutch. Hartmann & Heycock (2020) conducted the experimental studies on Icelandic. The judgement and production studies on Dutch are from Hartmann & Heycock (2019). Regarding the Dutch facts, see also Ackema & Neeleman (2018) and Den Dikken (2019). For SCOPA, see Baker (2008, 2011).

- German and Dutch present a more complex picture in the realm of person agreement in inverse copular sentences.

(79) a. ze denken/betwifelen dat de schuldige ik {*ben/*is} (Dutch)

they think/doubt that the culprit I am/is

b. ze denken/betwifelen dat de schuldige jij {*bent/*is}

they think/doubt that the culprit you are/is

(79') a. ?ze denken/betwifelen dat de schuldige ik was (Dutch)

they think/doubt that the culprit I was

b. ?ze denken/betwifelen dat de schuldige jij was

they think/doubt that the culprit you was

(79'') a. ?ze denken/betwifelen dat de schuldige hij was (Dutch)

they think/doubt that the culprit he was

b. ?ze denken/betwifelen dat de schuldige zij was

they think/doubt that the culprit she was

- Agreement for first and second person cannot take place under downward Agree but requires the Spec–Head relation: (41).

(41) *Structural Condition on Person Agreement (SCOPA)*
 a category F can bear the features +1 or +2 if and only if a
 projection of F merges with a phrase that has that feature and
 F is taken as the label of the resulting phrase

- In the syntax of inverse copular sentences in (68) (repeated below), the subject of predication remains in its base position, and could establish an agreement relationship with I only under (downward) Agree.
- For number, this is sufficient (in Dutch); but for person, it is not.

(68) $[_{IP} [_{\text{Predicate}} \emptyset [_{DP1} \dots]]_i [I=COP [_{XP} [_{DP2} \text{Subject}] [X t_i]]]]]$

- The ‘number-only’ effect in Faroese and Icelandic:

(81) Hann var að velta fyrir sér hvort aðalvandamálið {væri/væruð/væru} þið (Icelandic)
 he was wondering if main.problem.def was.3sg/2pl/3pl you_{PL}
 ‘he was wondering whether the main problem was you_{PL}’

- All inflectional options given in (81) are attested to some extent, with *væri* ‘was.3sg’ being the most common — a reflex of agreement with the precopular predicate nominal.
- The most interesting option is *væru* ‘was.3pl’: number agreement between the copula and the postcopular subject, but no person agreement between the two.
- This is expected in light of (41).
- But the facts of Icelandic and Faroese ϕ -agreement in inverse specificational copular sentences are not an unmitigated success for (41): the fact that person-agreeing *væruð* is possible in (81) is unexpected from the point of view of (41).

2.2.4 Copular sentences with two pronouns¹³

- Two sets of cases:

(i) one of the terms is *it/this/that*, the other is a personal pronoun: (82)–(83).

(82)	a.	it/this/that is me	it/this/that is you
	b.	I am it/this/that	you are it/this/that

(83)	a.	it/this/that is him	it/this/that is her
	b.	he is it/this/that	she is it/this/that

(ii) both terms are personal pronouns: (84)–(87) + tautologies (88).

¹³ Important discussion of agreement in copular sentences with two pronouns is found in Sigurðsson (2006) and Djärv (2021). The biclausal analysis for double-nominative constructions discussed in section 2.2.4.2 is rooted in Djärv (2021). Sigurðsson concentrates entirely on Germanic; Djärv reproduces some examples from the literature on Slavic as well. The discussion of Dutch in sections 2.2.4.1 and 2.2.4.2 is primarily based on my own judgements.

(ii) both terms are personal pronouns: (84)–(87) + tautologies (88).

(84) a. I am you
b. you are me

(85) a. I am him/her
b. (s)he is me

(86) a. you are him/her
b. (s)he is you

(87) a. he is her
b. she is him

(88) a. I am me
b. you are you

2.2.4.1 'It is I/me'

- (89) a. dat zijn wij (Dutch)
that are we_{NOM}
- b. das sind wir (German)
that are we_{NOM}
- c. det är vi (Swedish)
that COP we_{NOM}
- d. það erum við (Icelandic)
that are we_{NOM}
- e. tað eru vit (Faroese)
that are we_{NOM}
- (90) a. it is us (English)
- b. dāt as üs (Northern Frisian)
it is us_{ACC}
- c. det er os (Danish)
it COP us_{ACC}
- d. det er oss (Norwegian)
it COP us_{ACC}

- We are not dealing with a language-based split between nominative and accusative case for the second pronoun: the situation is considerably more complex.
- Danish, Norwegian and English are essentially categorical in demanding accusative case (I set aside largely prescriptive occurrences of *it is I* in English and *det er vi* ‘it is we’ in Norwegian).
- In the other Germanic languages, we find language-internal variation as a function of a number of factors, at least a subset of which appear to be morphosyntactic in nature — one such factor is the strong/weak distinction in third person cases (see the next slide).

- (91) a. dat is hij (Dutch)
 that is he_{strong}
 a'. dat is {'m/*hem}
 that is him_{weak}
 b. dat is hy (West Frisian)
 that is he_{strong}
 b'. dat is {'m/*hem}
 that is him_{weak}
 c. das isch (e)n och (Alemannic)
 that is him_{weak} DPRT
- (92) a. *dat zal hij zijn (Dutch)
 that will he_{strong} be
 a'. dat zal 'm zijn
 that will him_{weak} be
 'that'll be him'
 b. *dat zullen zij zijn
 that will they_{strong} be
 b'. dat zullen ze zijn
 that will they_{weak} be
 'that'll be them'
- c. *dat zal/zul jij zijn
 that will you_{strong} be
 c'. dat zal je zijn
 that will you_{weak} be
 'that'll be you'

- Verb Second needs to be factored out of the picture: (93) is misleading.

(93) a. ik ben dit en jij bent dat (Dutch)

I am this and you are that

b. dit ben ik en dat ben jij

this am I and that are you

(94) a. ze denken/betwifelen dat ik dit ben en dat jij dat bent

they think/doubt that I this am and that you that are

b. *ze denken/betwifelen dat dit ik ben en dat dat jij bent

they think/doubt that this I am and that that you are

(95) a. ben ik dit/dat? ben jij dit/dat?

am I this/that are you this/that

b. *ben dit/dat ik? *ben dit/dat jij?

am this/that I are this/that you

- The same picture emerges when the nominative pronoun is *hij/zij* ‘he/she’:

(96) a. hij is dit en zij is dat (Dutch)

he is this and she is that

b. dit is hij en dat is zij

this is he and that is she

(97) a. ze denken/betwifelen dat hij dit is en dat zij dat is

they think/doubt that he this is and that she that is

b. *ze denken/betwifelen dat dit hij is en dat dat zij is

they think/doubt that this he is and that that she is

(98) a. is hij dit/dat? is zij dit/dat?

is he this/that is she this/that

b. *is dit/dat hij? *is dit/dat zij?

is this/that he is this/that she

- For pronouns, ‘third person’ is ‘real’ person: third person nominative pronouns must person-agree with I, which they fail to do in (97b) and (98b).

2.2.4.2 'You are me'

- (99) a. ik ben jij/?jou en jij bent ik/?mij (Dutch)
I am you_{NOM}/you_{ACC} and you_{NOM} are I/me
- b. jou/*jij ben ik en mij/*ik ben jij
you_{ACC}/you_{NOM} am I and me/I are you_{NOM}
- (100) a. ik ben haar/*zij en zij is mij/*ik
I am her/she and she is me/I
- b. haar ben ik en mij is zij
her am I and me is she
- (101) a. jij bent hem/*hij en hij is jou/*jij
you are him/he and he is you_{ACC}/you_{NOM}
- b. hem ben jij en jou is hij
him are you and you is he

- The sentences in (99)–(101) are root clauses with Verb Second, which often paint a distorted picture of the case and agreement pattern of copular sentences.

- (102) a. ze denken/betwifelen dat ik jij/jou ben en dat jij ik/mij bent (Dutch)
 they think/doubt that I you_{NOM}/you_{ACC} am and that you_{NOM} I/me are
- b. *ze denken/betwifelen dat jou ik ben en dat mij jij bent
 they think/doubt that you_{ACC} I am and that me you_{NOM} are
- (103) a. ben ik jij/jou of ben jij ik/mij?
 am I you_{NOM}/you_{ACC} or are you_{NOM} I/me
- b. *ben jou ik of ben mij jij?
 am you_{ACC} I or are me you_{NOM}

- In (102a) and (103a), the accusative is no worse (indeed, probably better) than the nominative.
- When the accusative personal pronoun precedes the nominative pronoun in non-root clauses (102b) or root yes/no-questions with I-to-C movement (103b), the nominative pronoun cannot agree with the finite verb.

- (104) a. ik zal jou/*jij zijn en jij zult mij/*ik zijn (Dutch)
 I will you_{ACC}/you_{NOM} be and you_{NOM} will me/I be
 b. ik wil jou/*jij zijn en jij wilt mij/*ik zijn
 I want you_{ACC}/you_{NOM} be and you_{NOM} want me/I be
 c. ik kan immers niet jou/*jij zijn en jij kunt niet mij/*ik zijn
 I want after.all not you_{ACC}/you_{NOM} be and you_{NOM} can not me/I be

- In counterfactuals, too, the pronoun that does not control agreement with the finite copula must be accusative:

- (105) a. als ik jou/*jij was en als jij mij/*ik was (Dutch)
 if I you_{ACC}/you_{NOM} were and if you_{NOM} me/I were
 b. *als jou ik was en als mij jij was
 if you_{ACC} I were and if me you_{NOM} will me/I be

- When the syntax features a projection of mood or modality between I and the projection of the copula (as in (106b)), I can engage in a case-Agree relation with the first pronoun (under Spec-Head agreement) but not with the second.

- (106) a. [_{IP} [pronoun₁] [_{I'} I=COP [pronoun₂]]]
 b. [_{IP} [pronoun₁] [_{I'} I [_{MoodP/ModalP} Mood/Modal [_{XP} t₁ [X=COP [pronoun₂]]]]]]]

- In Dutch (and West Frisian as well), the nominative case form of the *non*-agreeing pronoun is just as much dependent on a relationship with I as the nominative case form of the agreeing pronoun.
- In Dutch (and West Frisian) copular sentences with two nominative personal pronouns, finite I engages in a case-valuation dependency with *both* pronouns.
- It is not plausible for Dutch (and West Frisian) to postulate a biclausal syntax for copular constructions with two nominative personal pronouns according to which each nominative is in a case-valuation relation with its own I-head.

- (107) a. ik ben wat jij/*jou bent (Dutch)
 I am what you_{NOM}/you_{ACC} are
- b. ik kan niet zijn wat jij/*jou bent
 I can not be what you_{NOM}/you_{ACC} are
- c. als ik was wat jij/*jou bent
 if I were what you_{NOM}/you_{ACC} are

- But an analysis of copular sentences with two nominative pronouns that treats them as biclausal constructions, with each nominative engaging in an Agree relation with an I-head of its own, may be beneficial for languages in which the second pronoun remains nominative even in the presence of a modal or subjunctive mood, such as Afrikaans and (to a lesser extent) Swedish.

- (108) a. ek wil jy wees, jy kan ek wees (Afrikaans)
 I want you_{NOM} be you can I be
- b. as ek jy was
 if I you_{NOM} were
- (109) a. i mitt näste liv vill jag vara dig/du (Swedish)
 in my next life want I be you_{ACC/NOM}
- b. om jag vore du/?dig
 if I were you_{NOM}/you_{ACC}

- In the syntax of the role-play examples, the non-agreeing pronoun is contained in a structure that makes an accusative case assigner available for the second pronoun in the form of a silent P.

- (112) a. he is speaking as the president of the organisation, not as a private individual
b. the prince wants you for his wife; I take you for a fool
c. he looks/seems like a nice guy
- (113) I am IN THE ROLE OF you

- Outside role-play contexts, the assignment of accusative case to the second pronoun (whether across the board, as in English, Danish, (colloquial) Norwegian and Northern Frisian, or only in the presence of mood or modality) may suggest a link with instrumental case on the predicate in Polish and Russian, assigned by the functional head that mediates the predication relation.

- (114) a. Jan to (jest) lekarz/*lekarz-em (Polish)
 Jan pron is doctor.nom/doctor-inst
- b. Jan jest lekarz-em/*lekarz
 Jan is doctor-inst/doctor.nom
 both: 'Jan is a doctor'
- (115) a. moj najlepszy przyjaciel to Jan
 my best friend.nom pron Jan
- b. mójim najlepszym przyjaciel-em jest Jan
 my best friend-inst is Jan
 both: 'my best friend is Jan'

- Alternatively, dependent accusative case may be involved, in order to morphologically distinguish the second pronoun from the first.
- Languages that systematically employ accusative case on the second pronoun (English, Northern Frisian, Danish, colloquial Norwegian) can then be distinguished from languages which realise this pronoun with nominative case by saying that the latter languages exploit head-based case valuation while the former are dependent case systems.

2.2.4.3 'I am me': Tautologies

- (116) a. I am me
b. we are us

(117) jeg er mig/*jeg og du er dig/*du (Danish)
I am me/I and you are you_{ACC}/you_{NOM}

(118) jag är jag/*mig och du är du/*dig (Swedish)
I am I/me and you are you_{NOM}/you_{ACC}

(119) ik ben ik/*mij en jij bent jij/*jou (Dutch)
I am I/me and you are you_{NOM}/you_{ACC}

- Modality plays no role in the case realisation of the second pronoun in tautologies — unlike what we saw in (104) (repeated below), the presence of a modal auxiliary does not alter the preference for a nominative second pronoun in (120).

(104) a. ik zal jou/*jij zijn en jij zult mij/*ik zijn (Dutch)

I will you_{ACC}/you_{NOM} be and you_{NOM} will me/I be

b. ik wil jou/*jij zijn en jij wilt mij/*ik zijn

I want you_{ACC}/you_{NOM} be and you_{NOM} want me/I be

c. ik kan immers niet jou/*jij zijn en jij kunt niet mij/*ik zijn

I want after.all not you_{ACC}/you_{NOM} be and you_{NOM} can not me/I be

(120) a. ik ben ik/*mij en jij bent jij/*jou (Dutch)

hij is hij/*hem en zij is zij/*haar

b. ik zal altijd ik/*mij zijn en jij zult altijd jij/*jou zijn

hij zal altijd hij/*hem zijn en zij zal altijd zij/*haar zijn

3 Further issues in the syntax of Move and Agree in copular sentences

3.1 Agreement in pseudoclefts and their ilk

- The *wh*-clause of pseudoclefts can be treated in either of two ways:
 - (a) as a free relative that serves as the predicate of the copular sentence (with the focused constituent as the subject of predication), as in (122); or
 - (b) as a non-root *wh*-question whose answer is the other term of the copular construction, an elliptical clause that is linked to the *wh*-question by the copula, as in (123).

- (122) a. $[_{XP} [_{\text{Subject}} \text{focus}] [_{X'} X=\text{COP} [_{\text{Predicate}} \text{free relative}]]]$
b. $[_{YP} [_{\text{Predicate}} \text{free relative}]_i [_{Y'} Y+X=\text{COP} [_{XP} [_{\text{Subject}} \text{focus}] [_{X'} t_X t_i]]]]]$
- (123) $[_{\text{TopP}} [_{\text{CP}} \text{wh-question}] [_{\text{Top}'} \text{Top}=\text{COP} [_{\text{IP}=\text{Answer}} \dots \text{focus} \dots]]]$

- There are circumstances under which pseudoclefts are known to support only a QAP syntax of the type in (123).

- (124) a. what nobody bought was any wine
 what they didn't buy was any wine
- b. [_{TopP} [_{CP} *what nobody bought*] [_{Top'} Top=COP [_{IP=Answer} ~~nobody bought any wine~~]]]
 [_{TopP} [_{CP} *what they didn't buy*] [_{Top'} Top=COP [_{IP=Answer} ~~they didn't buy any wine~~]]]

- (125) a. who ordered what was John (ordered) a beer and Bill a coffee
- b. wer hier wem geholfen hat war die Hilde dem Heinz (und nicht umgekehrt)
 who here whom helped has was the Hilde the Heinz and not *vice versa*
 'who helped whom here was Hilde (helped) Heinz (and not the other way around)'
- c. wie wie moet helpen is jij mij (en niet andersom)
 who who must help is you me and not *vice versa*
 'who should help whom is you (should help) me (and not the other way around)'

3.1.2 Person agreement in semi-clefts¹⁵

- (128) a. *telefonei fui eu*
 called.1SG was.1SG I
 b. ^{??}*telefonei foi eu*
 called.1SG was.3SG I
 c. ^{(?)?}*telefonou fui eu*
 called.3SG was.1SG I
 d. *telefonou foi eu*
 called.1SG was.1SG I

- (129) a. **quem telefonei fui eu*
 who called.1SG was.1SG I
 b. **quem telefonei foi eu*
 who called.1SG was.3SG I
 c. *quem telefonou fui eu*
 who called.3SG was.1SG I
 d. *quem telefonou foi eu*
 who called.1SG was.1SG I

(130) $[_{IP} [_{VP} \textit{telefonei}] [_{I+v}=\textit{fui} [_{vP} \textit{eu} [t_v t_{VP}]]]]]$

(131) $[_{TopP} [_{CP} \textit{quem telefonou}] [_{Top'} \textit{Top}=\textit{foi} [_{IP} \textit{eu telefonei}]]]]]$

15 See Resenes & Den Dikken (2012) (and references cited there for data on languages other than Brazilian Portuguese, which the text examples represent). To my knowledge this 2012 paper is the only work in the generative framework that has provided a full empirical account and theoretical explanation for the person agreement facts of semi-clefts.

3.1.3 Tense agreement in specificational copular sentences¹⁶

- (132) a. what you *are* holding in your hand *is* a small brown butterfly [pred/spec]
b. what you *are* holding in your hand *was* a small brown butterfly [pred]
c. what you *are* holding in your hand *will be* a small brown butterfly [pred]
- (133) a. his *old* job *was* building radars at Lincoln Labs
b. *his *old* job *is* building radars at Lincoln Labs
c. *his *old* job *will be* building radars at Lincoln Labs
- (134) a. where John *met* Mary *was* in the park
b. in the park *is* where John *met* Mary
- (122) a. [_{XP} [_{Subject} focus] [_{X'} X=COP [_{Predicate} free relative]]]
b. [_{YP} [_{Predicate} free relative]_i [_{Y'} Y+X=COP [_{XP} [_{Subject} focus] [_{X'} t_X t_i]]]]]
- (123) [_{TopP} [_{CP} *wh*-question] [_{Top'} Top=COP [_{IP=Answer} ... focus ...]]]

16 See Akmajian (1979:169–70) for the original observations in (132) and (133), and Heggie (1988) for the facts in (134). There is some discussion of tense agreement in specificational copular sentences in O’Neill (2015), but the topic remains mostly unexplored.

3.1.4 'Double-is' and copular amalgams¹⁷

- (135) a. my problem is, is I ran out of cash
b. what troubles me is, is I ran out of cash
- (136) that's what I worry about is my finances

- On its face, (135a) seems similar to a Romance-style semi-cleft (section 3.1.2) in that a perfectly ordinary sentence with only one finite verbal element is 'infused' with an additional expression of finiteness in the form of a finite copula.
- Such 'infusion' can happen even in sentences that are explicitly pseudoclefts, as shown in (135b), where there are three finite verbs (*troubles* and two tokens of *is*).
- This shows that it is unlikely that (135a) can be treated as a partial spell-out of a pseudocleft (i.e., a reduction of *what my problem is is I ran out of cash*): for (135b) there is no 'unreduced' pseudocleft underlier (**what [what troubles me] is is I ran out of cash*).

17 On 'double *is*', see Massam (1999, 2013), Coppock & Staum-Casasanto (2004), O'Neill (2015). This last work also discusses other types of copular amalgam sentences at length, including their tense agreement behaviours.

3.2 Agreement in relative clauses attached to a pronoun¹⁸

- (137) a. I, who {am/?is} tall, was forced to squeeze into that VW
b. you_{SG}, who {are/?is} tall, were forced to squeeze into that VW
b'. you_{PL}, who {are/*is} tall, were forced to squeeze into that VW

- (138) a. I, who Mary claims {is/*am} responsible, was not even there at the time
b. you_{SG}, who Mary claims {is/*are} responsible, were not even there at the time
b'. you_{PL}, who Mary claims {are/*is} responsible, were not even there at the time

- Concord between the relative clause (a predicate) and the head (its subject): (139).

- (139) $[_{RP} [_{\#P} \# [_{NP} N]]_{\{\phi, CASE\}} [_{R'} RELATOR [_{CP} RELCLAUSE]_{\{\phi, CASE\}}]]$
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(140) he assigned the job to me, who {is/*am} tall

(141) it is ME who {is/*am} tall

18 For relevant discussion and empirical material, see Akmajian (1970:153–4), Ross (1970:251), Heck & Cuartero (2012), Douglas (2015), Den Dikken 2019). On the idea that English *you* is grammatically plural, see Kayne (2000). On the agreement facts in (177)–(178), see Kimball & Aissen (1971), Kayne (2000), Baker (2011), Den Dikken (2019).

3.3 Agreeing adverbials as underlying copular sentences

3.3.1 Agreeing 'how' and 'thus' in Bantu¹⁹

- (142) a. ny-emba en-die? (Lusaamia)
1sg-sing 1sg-how
'how do I sing?'
- b. w-emba o-tie?
2sg-sing 2sg-how
'how do you sing?'
- b'. w-emba o-rio
2sg-sing 2sg-thus
'you sing thus'

19 For data and discussion of two different analytical perspectives, see Carstens & Diercks (2013), Den Dikken & O'Neill (2020).

3.3 Agreeing adverbials as underlying copular sentences

3.3.2 Agreeing manner adverbials in Tundra Nenets²⁰

- (144) a. mən'° s'it° m'in°xə-n'i/*m'in°xə-nt° xanaə-dəm-s'° (Tundra Nenets)
1sg you.acc quickly-1sg/quickly-2sg take-1sg-pst
'I quickly took you away'
- b. m'in°xə-n'i/*m'in°xə-t'ih mən'° xo-we-xəyu-n°
quickly-1sg/quickly-3du 1sg find-pass-du-1sg
'they (dual) were quickly found by me'

20 The data reported here are from Nikolaeva (2014:179). The biclausal analysis suggested here is original to the present paper.

3.3 Agreeing adverbials as underlying copular sentences

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2sg-sing 2sg-how
'how do you sing?'
- b'. w-emba o-rio
2sg-sing 2sg-thus
'you sing thus'
- (143) o-riena? (Lubukusu)
2sg-how
'how are you?'

3.3 Agreeing adverbials as underlying copular sentences

3.3.2 Agreeing manner adverbials in Tundra Nenets

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'I quickly took you away'
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quickly-1sg/quickly-3du 1sg find-pass-du-1sg
'they (dual) were quickly found by me'
- (145) a. I was quick to take you away
b. I was quick to get them found

3.4 The role of agreement in licensing ellipsis in copular sentences (and beyond)²¹

3.4.1 Copular inversion and ellipsis

- (146) a. for this theory, the agreement facts have turned out to be my biggest worry;
for that theory, the ellipsis facts have ___
- b. *for this theory, my biggest worry has turned out to be the agreement facts;
for that theory, your biggest worry has ___
- (147) a. twenty years ago, Austen and Heller were my favourite authors; nowadays,
Tolstoy and Chekhov are ____
- b. twenty years ago, my favourite authors were Austen and Heller; nowadays,
my daughter's favourite authors are __, too

21 The discussion in this section is based on Griffiths & Den Dikken (2021). The examples in (190), of plural agreement in specificational copular sentences with conjoined proper names as the subject, are from Heycock (2012).

3.4 The role of agreement in licensing ellipsis in copular sentences (and beyond)

3.4.2 Locative inversion and ellipsis

- (148) a. the Confederate flag used to fly on this building
b. on this building used to fly the Confederate flag

(149) [_{PP} *on this building*] [_{IP} \emptyset_i [_{I'} I [... [_{RP} *the Confederate flag t_i*]]]

(150) *on this building used to fly the Confederate flag; on that building did __, too

4 Concluding remarks

- There can be no doubt that copular elements play an essential role in mediating the predication relation between the predicate and its subject.
- It is equally uncontroversial (by now) that predication relations in copular constructions can be inverted, and that such inversion can involve movement of the predicate into the structural subject position.
- Predicate raising has clear and overall cross-linguistically constant effects on the mobility and ϕ -agreement behaviour of the subject of predication.
- In the realm of ϕ -agreement, number and person behave markedly differently in inverse copular constructions, which motivates a restriction on person agreement that implicates the Spec–Head relation.
- Spec–Head agreement also seems implicated in the licensing of ellipsis in copular constructions.
- Finally, a number of otherwise peculiar agreement phenomena (especially apparent subject agreement with adverbial expressions) can be better understood if the constructions in question are analysed as biclausal, with one of the constituent clauses being a copular sentence.

Thank you very much! — Merci beaucoup!

*Hungarian Research Centre for Linguistics
Benczúr u. 33
H-1068 Budapest
Hungary*

*Department of English Linguistics, ELTE
Rákóczi út 5
H-1088 Budapest
Hungary*

<https://marceldendikken.wordpress.com>

marcel.den.dikken@nytud.hu
