

## NP2 copular agreement revisited: Evidence from presentational contexts

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NP1-NP2 predication clauses (*Mary is a doctor*) crosslinguistically display copular agreement with NP1 (*Mary*). However, specificational and identificational clauses (*The problem is the children/ The doctor is Max*) allow NP2 (*children/Max*) agreement in some languages (Moro 1991, a.o.). Existing accounts of NP2 agreement argue that NP2 in these constructions denotes an individual, and NP1 is not structurally accessible to agreement either because it is not the underlying subject (Mikkelsen 2005, Den Dikken 2006 a.o.), or because it is a more complex structure (e.g., concealed proposition; Romero 2005, Heycock 2012, a.o.). The crosslinguistic variation between NP1 and NP2 agreement is then reduced to differences in the feature composition of the probe (e.g., Béjar and Kahnemuyiopoour 2017, 2018). Hartmann and Heycock (2018, 2019, 2020, 2022), however, conclusively showed that these accounts incorrectly predict that NP2 agreement languages should never allow NP1 agreement. Yet, NP1 agreement is robustly attested with certain word orders. We contribute to this discussion by a novel data from Czech and German presentational clauses, a class of identificational clauses (*This book is a novel*; Higgins 1973, Mikkelsen 2005). These copular clauses display an unusual agreement and anaphoric behavior: (a) the copula can agree with NP1 or NP2, without any evidence of movement within the structure, (b) NP2 functions as a predicate, not an individual, irrespective of whether the copula agrees with NP1 or NP2, and (c) the  $\phi$ -features (number, gender) of an inter-sentential anaphor can match the  $\phi$ -features of NP1 or NP2, even if NP2 does not denote an individual. We argue that the agreement variability results from two underlying structures: (a) a regular predication clause that gives rise to an obligatory NP1 agreement, and a presentational clause where the NP2 agreement is mediated by a covert presentational pronoun (a trope, building on the insights of Moltmann 2013). NP1 is merged in the spec of TopicP which makes it inaccessible to a low agreement probe. However, when NP1 cannot be merged in TopicP either because the language lacks a middlefield TopicP (as in English), or because the position is occupied by another structural element, only NP1 agreement is possible. In turn, our proposal reduces these crosslinguistic differences to an independently motivated restrictions on the availability of argument positions in the structure. The rest is locality. **The puzzle:** In Czech, the copula in NP1-NP2 predication clauses must agree with NP1, (1). However, in presentational contexts where NP2 classifies NP1 agreement with NP2 is possible, while NP2 retains its predicate properties, (2). We call these clauses *classificatory clauses* (CCs) to distinguish them from identificational clauses with an individual-like NP2. [Here we only discuss Czech data because they display gender and number agreement in all relevant environments.]

- (1) Marie byla/ \*byl profesor na univerzitě  
Marie.F.SG was.F.SG/ was.M.SG professor.M.SG at university  
'Marie was a university professor.'
- (2) a. Tenhle strom byl/ byla lípa.  
this tree.M.SG was.M.SG/ was.F.SG linden\_tree.F.SG  
'This tree was a linden tree.' (e.g., while pointing at a tree stamp)
- b. Tenhle film byl/ byla komedie.  
this movie.M.SG was.M.SG/ was.F.SG comedy.F.SG  
'This movie was a comedy.' (e.g., while pointing at an old movie poster)

Strikingly, the  $\phi$ -features of an intra-sentential anaphor can match either NP1 or NP2. Speakers prefer the copular and anaphoric agreement to match but a mixed pattern is possible, (3).



be post-syntactic. We suggest that partial agreement patterns reported for Icelandic and Faroese in Hartmann & Heycock (2018) might confirm this prediction.