

# Peas and pancakes: On apparent disagreement and (null) light verbs in Swedish

Gunlög Josefsson

Two variants of what looks like disagreement between a subject and a predicative adjective are explored:

- (i) Senap                      är gul-t.                      = Construction  
*mustard.COMMON is yellow-NEUT NOM(inal)*  
'Mustard is yellow.'
- (ii) Två älskare                      är omoralisk-t.                      = Construction  
*[two lovers]COMMON.PL is immoral-NEUT PROP(ositional)*  
'To have two lovers is immoral.'

Having shown how Construction NOM and Construction PROP differ, I demonstrate that the subject of Construction PROP is clausal. I argue that the topmost XP of the subject phrase of both constructions contains a null neuter element. This accounts for the neuter predicative agreement; hence the idea of default agreement or semantic agreement can be dismissed. I also argue that the subject in (ii) contains a vP, the head of which is a null light verb. Other instances of null light verbs in Swedish are identified too. Finally, I propose an analysis that accounts for the close relation between Construction PROP and the corresponding construction with a *med*-phrase 'with-phrase'.

**Keywords** agreement, *Ärter är gott*-sentences, default gender, disagreement, light verb, *med*-phrase, neuter, *Pannekaker er godt*-sentences, *passepapouts*, semantic agreement

*Gunlög Josefsson, Scandinavian Languages, Centre for Languages and Literature, Lund University, Box 201, 221 00 Lund, Sweden. gunlog.josefsson@nordlund.lu.se*

In Swedish predicative adjectives agree with the subject (or the object) in grammatical gender and number:

- (1) a. Bil-en                      är grön-Ø.  
*car-DEF.COMMON.SG is green-COMMON.SG*  
'The car is green.'
- b. Hus-et                      är grön-t.  
*house-DEF.NEUT.SG is green-NEUT.SG*  
'The house is green.'

- c. Bilar-na/hus-en                      *är grön-a.*  
*car-DEF.COMMON.PL/house-DEF.NEUT.PL is green-PL*  
 ‘The cars/houses are green.’

There are, however, contexts where the predicative adjective and the subject seem to disagree. As will be shown, there are two variants of this construction, which I will refer to as Construction NOM, which is short for the Nominal Construction, and Construction PROP, which is short for the Propositional Construction.<sup>1</sup> Consider (2) for two examples:<sup>2</sup>

- (2) a. *Senap*                      *är gul-t.*                      = Construction NOM  
*Mustard.COMMON is yellow-NEUT*  
 ‘Mustard is yellow.’
- b. *Två älskare*                      *är*                      *omoralisk-t.* = Construction PROP  
*[two lovers]COMMON.PL be.PRES immoral-NEUT*  
 ‘To have two lovers is immoral.’

Both *senap* and *älskare* are lexically common gender nouns – nevertheless agreement is in the neuter on the predicative adjectives in (2a, b). Consequently, the agreement morphology, *-t*, is the same as on the predicative adjective in (1b). In (2a) the subject *senap* has a mass reading, whereas the subject in (2b), *två älskare*, has a propositional reading: ‘to have two lovers’. The predicative adjectives in (2) thus seem to display disagreement in gender and/or number. Traditionally the construction in (2) is referred to as *Ärter är gott*-konstruktionen (‘peas is good’ construction) in Swedish and *Pannekaker er godt*-konstruksjonen (‘pancakes is good’ construction) in Norwegian, hence the title of this paper. The construction is found also in Danish, and a Danish example of the construction is *Sild er godt* ‘Herring is good’. It should be stressed that it would be somewhat unintuitive to think of the predicative adjectives in (2a) and (2b) as displaying disagreement, since ‘canonical agreement’ is not really an option in these cases. For (2a) agreement on  $-\emptyset$  would simply be ungrammatical; for (2b) plural agreement, i.e. on *-a*, would not be ungrammatical as such, but a different reading would be triggered, ‘the two lovers are immoral’, implying that immorality is a property of each one of the lovers. In this article I will show that the ‘disagreement’ in cases like (2) is only apparent – in fact agreement holds. Counter to the traditional assumption, I will also show that the agreement pattern is not default, but motivated by morphosyntactic features on the subject.

Having argued that agreement holds in (2a) and (2b), I will focus on Construction PROP. First of all I will show that the subject of (2b) is not a simple noun phrase, but a clause-like constituent, where the DP *två älskare* ‘two lovers’ is the syntactic object. Evidence showing this is case properties, the possibility of adding VP-adverbials without inducing a V2 violation, and properties of anaphors. Secondly, I will argue

that there is a null verbal element responsible for the propositional reading of (2b). The null verb in question is located in the head of a *vP*, a ‘small *vP*’. This element is the null equivalent of a light verb such as *ha* ‘have’ as well as the preposition *med* ‘with’, and it assigns accusative case to the DP.

The outline of the paper is as follows. In section 1, I demonstrate the properties of Construction NOM and Construction PROP. The purpose is to point out similarities and differences between the two constructions. A brief overview of earlier work on the constructions is also given. The focus of section 2 is Construction PROP (as in (2b) above). I will show that the subject in this type of sentences is clausal, and that there is a range of readings for the ‘missing’ predicate, corresponding to a set of verbs that are usually referred to as light verbs. I also propose licensing and identification mechanisms for this null element. In section 3, I discuss properties of the *med*-phrase ‘*with*-phrase’, which may replace the subject in (2b), if combined with an expletive *det* ‘it’ as subject:<sup>3</sup>

- (3) *Det är omoralisk-t med två älskare.*  
*it is immoral-NEUT with two lovers*  
 ‘It’s immoral to have two lovers.’

Section 4 contains a concluding discussion.

## 1. THE TWO ‘DISAGREEMENT’ CONSTRUCTIONS: AN OVERVIEW

The agreement pattern illustrated in (2a) and (2b) is not exclusive to Swedish, but found also in e.g. Norwegian and Danish, as pointed out above.<sup>4</sup> It has been the subject of a vivid discussion in the literature, see Wellander 1949, 1973 [1985]; Heinertz 1953; Teleman 1965, 1969; Widmark 1966, 1971; Faarlund 1977; Malmgren 1990 [1984]; Hellan 1986; Källström 1993; Teleman, Hellberg & Andersson (1999, part 3:702ff.); and Faarlund, Lie & Vannebo (1997:776–779) (for a detailed overview, see Källström 1993).

More recently Enger (2004) has discussed the construction in Norwegian, and Josefsson (2006) from the point of view of Swedish. Enger’s main claim is that the agreement in question is semantic, i.e. that it reflects the semantic properties of the subject. The semantic interpretation that he claims to be the trigger of neuter predicative agreement is ‘low degree of individuation’ (p. 26); in other words, the subjects in question ‘rank low on the individuation scale’ (p. 26). Enger rejects – in my view on good grounds – the idea that the subject of ‘pancake’-sentences are pruned infinitival clauses, as has been suggested by Faarlund (1977) and Faarlund et al. (1997:767) for example. However – and this is crucial – Enger also rejects the possibility of analysing the agreement in question syntactically: His view is that the agreement in question is semantic, hence ‘agreement of a kind

that cannot be described by standard syntactic features' (Enger 2004:21). It is this standpoint that I question in this paper. In my view, the introduction of semantic agreement in the sense 'non-syntactic agreement' is an undesirable solution, a device that could be applied only if standard analyses fail. This is not the case here.

As we shall see below, we have good reason to believe that there are two distinct construction types, which I will refer to as Construction NOM(inal) and Construction PROP(ositional). The subject of Construction PROP is clausal, whereas the subject of Construction NOM is a noun phrase. When the subject is propositional, i.e. clausal, agreement in neuter is what we expect. Construction NOM sentences, where the subject appears to be a noun phrase, will be given an analysis along the same lines.

It should be stressed that I do not reject the idea that agreement in neuter is semantic in nature *per se*. What is rejected is the idea that it is the semantic interpretation of the subject that triggers agreement. With the solution that I propose the semantics of the subject is a function of the feature content of the subject, and this content is mirrored by the feature makeup of the predicative adjective – in the way agreement generally works in the grammar. Agreement is thus 'semantic' in the proposed analysis too, but in a trivial sense, and it works in the same way as number, for example: a subject in the plural, such as *bilarna* 'the cars' and *husen* 'the houses' in (1c), has the semantic interpretation 'more than one', and this interpretation is reflected in the plural agreement of the predicative adjective, which, consequently, also carries the meaning 'more than one'.

As pointed out above, one of the main points of Josefsson (2006) is that the 'disagreement construction' falls into two distinct categories, which I have called Construction NOM and Construction PROP. There are basically four ways in which Construction NOM (see (2a) above) and Construction PROP (see (2b)) differ: (i) the subject of Construction PROP can be paraphrased by an infinitival phrase, which is not possible for the subject of Construction NOM; (ii) Construction NOM cannot be paraphrased by expletive *det* 'it' + a *med*-phrase 'with-phrase', which is possible for Construction PROP (see (3) above); (iii) definite subjects are ungrammatical in Construction I, whereas they are allowed in Construction PROP (though marginally, a fact that will be discussed in detail below); and (iv) the subject of Construction NOM disallows attributive adjectives, whereas this is grammatical for subjects in Construction II.<sup>5</sup> An overview of these differences is given in Table 1.

In previous studies (Josefsson 1999, 2006) I have argued that the subject of Construction NOM sentences contains a null pronominal element, marked +neuter, in the topmost projection of the subject noun phrase. This analysis will be used as the point of departure in this paper. The pronoun in question is responsible for the

	Construction NOM	Construction PROP
Subject paraphrased as an infinitival phrase	Senap är gul-t. <i>mustard is yellow-NEUT</i> ≠Att ha senap är gul-t. (nonsense)	Två älskare är omoralisk-t. <i>Two lovers is immoral-NEUT</i> = Att ha två älskare är omoralisk-t. 'To have two lovers is immoral.'
Subject paraphrased with <i>det + med</i> -phrase	*Det är gul-t med <i>it is yellow-NEUT as</i> senap. <i>mustard</i> (nonsense)	Det är omoralisk-t med <i>it is immoral-NEUT with</i> två älskare. <i>two lovers</i> 'It's immoral to have two lovers.'
Definite subjects	*Senap-en är <i>mustard-COMMON.DEF is</i> gul-t. <i>yellow-NEUT</i>	Väska-n på ryggen <i>bag-COMMON.DEF on back.DEF</i> är modern-t i år. <i>is modern-NEUT in year</i> 'It's modern to have the bag on the back this year.'
Attributive adjectives	*Fransk senap <i>French.COMMON mustard</i> är gul-t. <i>is yellow-NEUT</i>	Två franska älskare är omoralisk-t. <i>two French lovers is immoral-NEUT</i>  'It's immoral to have two French lovers.'

**Table 1.** A survey of the differences between Construction NOM and Construction PROP.

neuter agreement on the predicative adjective, as well as the SUBSTANCE reading of the subject. The presence of a null pronominal element of this kind is motivated by a parallel construction in Swedish, with an overt pronoun. An example of the latter type is shown in (4a), in which the pronoun, *hon* 'she' occupies a position above the DP, i.e. it precedes the definite article.<sup>6</sup> Josefsson (1999, 2006) refers to this pronoun *hon* in (4a) as a PRENOMINAL APPPOSITION.<sup>7</sup>

- (4) a. [<sub>SemP</sub> hon [<sub>DP</sub> den nya professor-n]]  
*she the new professor-DEF*  
 'she/the new professor'
- b. [<sub>SemP</sub>∅ [<sub>NP</sub> senap]]  
*mustard*  
 'mustard'

The pronominal apposition, *hon* in (4a), is probably in many ways similar both to the proprial article in northern Swedish and to the obligatory or near-obligatory use of personal pronouns together with proper names in Icelandic; in argument positions *hún Lísa* (she Lisa) 'she/Lisa' is preferred over the simplex *Lísa*.<sup>8</sup> The important

property of (4a) is that *hon* ‘she’ adds a semantic feature, +feminine, which is not a part of meaning of the noun *professor*. Josefsson (1999, 2006) refers to the phrase hosting the pronoun *hon* in (4a) (and consequently also the null pronominal element in (4b)) as a Semantic phrase, a SemP, since the pronouns specify the semantic gender of the whole phrase.

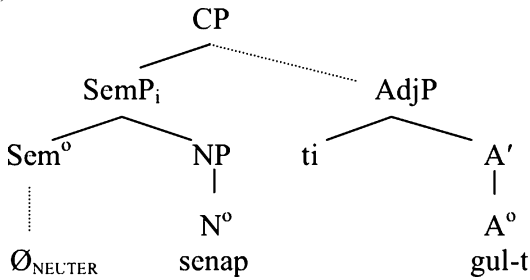
It should be pointed out that a functional projection on top of the DP, hosting personal pronouns, is not unique to the proposed analysis. Similar solutions are suggested for instance by Platzack (2004:85, 2008), who refers to the phrase in question as a Person phrase, a PersP.<sup>9,10</sup>

A difference between the leftmost pronominal element in (4a) and (4b) is not only the distinction overt vs. null, but also the size of the noun phrase, which is *hon* + a full DP in (4a), but presumably  $\emptyset$  + an NP in (4b).<sup>11</sup> The proposed analysis resembles in many ways the one in Platzack (2004:85), where it is suggested that the PersP (which, as pointed out above, corresponds to the SemP in this paper) could host free pronouns or bound agreement elements, and that these pronominal elements can be both +phonological and null.

According to Josefsson (1999, 2006) the neuter feature has a dual nature. First of all it is a morphosyntactic feature associated with nouns, in other words a ‘lexical gender feature’. As such the neuter gender does not carry any meaning; there is simply no element of meaning shared by all neuter nouns.<sup>12</sup> Information about the lexical gender is necessary for the spell-out of the definiteness and indefiniteness articles, as well as for agreement on adjectives (at least in their singular forms). This means that the lexical gender is operative within the boundaries of the DP. In the pronominal system, however, neuter vs. common gender may have a meaning. The pronouns *den* (it.COMMON) ‘it’ and *det* (it.NEUTER) ‘it’ can be used as deictic pronouns, namely in cases when they make reference directly to entities in the world, without going by way of a noun or a noun phrase. As deictic pronouns, the difference between *den* and *det* is that *den* refers to a bounded entity, whereas *det* refers to an unbounded entity, more specifically a substance or a proposition. In Josefsson (1999, 2006) *han* ‘he’, *hon* ‘she’, *den* ‘it<sub>BOUNDED ENTITY</sub>’ and *det* ‘it<sub>UNBOUNDED ENTITY</sub>’ represent the four semantic genders in Swedish.<sup>13</sup> The details of this gender system are not of direct relevance here; what is important is that neuter is a meaningful category within the pronominal domain.<sup>14</sup>

The null hypothesis is that a DP or a SemP subject of a Construction NOM sentence starts out as the argument of the predicative adjective, and that predicative agreement between the adjective and this phrase is established in the canonical way, for instance in a Spec-head configuration in the AP, as proposed in Chomsky (1995:354).<sup>15</sup> As previewed, this means that agreement in neuter in (2) is motivated by features of the subject, it is neither default nor triggered by the semantic interpretation of the noun. The structure of (2a) is shown in (5). (The dotted lines indicate omitted structure.)

(5)



What is important in (5) is that the neuter feature is not a property of the noun itself, but part of the extended projection containing the noun.<sup>16</sup>  $\text{Sem}^\circ$  is the head of the subject phrase, which means that it projects and defines the properties of the phrase as a whole.

The proposed analysis explains why the subject in a Construction NOM sentence can take neither definiteness inflection nor an adjectival modifier (see Table 1 above). If a definiteness feature were present on the noun, this feature would also require the presence of a lexical gender feature maybe only for the sake of phonology, since a definiteness suffix in the non-plural is always marked for a grammatical gender. (The definiteness suffix *-n/-en* is used for common gender nouns and *-t/-et* for neuter nouns.) Consequently, a definite common gender noun as a subject of an (ungrammatical) Construction NOM sentence, e.g. \**Senapen är gul-t* (mustard.COMMON.DEF is yellow.NEUT) would have to have a +common (lexical) gender feature on the noun and a +neuter feature in the  $\text{SemP}$ , its topmost projection, according to Josefsson (2006). This would presumably cause a gender conflict within the noun phrase – the upstairs projection, the  $\text{SemP}$ , would carry the neuter feature, whereas the downstairs projection, the DP/NP, would carry a common gender feature – causing the derivation to crash. (For a more detailed account, see Josefsson 2006.<sup>17</sup>) However, a +definite noun in Construction PROP sentences is acceptable, as shown in Table 1, though there are certain restrictions, which will be discussed in detail in section 2.3 below. Within the proposed framework this is expected, since the definite DP in such cases is not the subject, but an object, embedded inside a clausal structure, hence there will be no conflict between the neuter feature of the  $\text{SemP}$  and the common gender feature of the (object) DP.

Adjectival agreement, at least in the non-plural, is marked for grammatical gender, and a gender conflict similar to the one described for definite DPs will arise if an attributive adjective is added to the subject of a Construction NOM sentence. The background assumption is that an attributive adjective needs access to the lexical gender of its head noun in order for agreement to be spelled out. Hence, \**Fransk senap är gul-t* (French.COMMON mustard is yellow-NEUT) is out, according

to Josefsson (2006), because the common gender feature on the attributive adjective *fransk* clashes with the neuter feature hosted in the SemP.<sup>18</sup> With subjects such as *fransk senap* ‘French mustard’, the canonical  $\emptyset$ -agreement is fine, as expected: *Fransk senap är gul- $\emptyset$* . In such cases we have no reason to believe that a SemP is present on top of the DP *fransk senap*. Speaking in general terms, the possibility of having definiteness inflection and adjectival modifiers on the noun depends on how deeply embedded the nominal head is. If the noun is embedded in a clausal structure, definiteness inflection and adjectival modification is fine, otherwise it is not. As we shall see in section 2, we have good reasons to believe that the overt noun phrase in Construction PROP subjects is really more deeply embedded than the corresponding noun in Construction I.

So far I have discussed the fact that definite subjects and adjectival modifiers are disallowed in Construction NOM subjects. Table 1 lists two more differences between Construction NOM and Construction PROP: Construction PROP subjects may be paraphrased by an infinitival phrase, and by a *med*-phrase ‘with-phrase’ + expletive *det*, possibilities that are unavailable for Construction NOM sentences. These properties will be discussed in sections 2 and 3.

The traditional explanation for neuter agreement on Construction NOM and PROP sentences is that neuter is default. This is suggested for instance by Corbett (1991:216), although he prefers to call it ‘neutral agreement’, and Källström (1993:244).<sup>19</sup> The Swedish Academy Grammar (part 2:226) refers to this type of agreement as ‘non-agreeing predicative’. (The Swedish wording is ‘icke kongruensböjd predikativ’.) In fact, we have good reasons to assume that default agreement (‘retreat to the general case’, in terms of Distributed Morphology, see Halle & Marantz 1993) is not *-t*, but  $-\emptyset$  in Swedish. One piece of evidence is that agreement is generalised to  $-\emptyset$ , not *-t*, in the plural of the northern Swedish dialects. If the default form had been *-t* we would have expected this agreement form to have been generalised instead. When it comes to Norwegian, Trosterud (2001:34–35) has shown that masculine, not neuter is the default gender. Even though Norwegian is a different language, the argument can be carried over to Swedish; there is no indication that neuter is a default gender in any sense in Swedish.

## 2. CONSTRUCTION PROP

### 2.1 The subject is clausal

The DP *två älskare* ‘two lovers’ is the surface subject in (2b), repeated below. I will claim that the DP is not really a subject, but rather an object, embedded in a clausal structure, which, in turn, is used as a subject.<sup>20</sup>



The first argument is that the subject can be paraphrased by an infinitival phrase, where the DP shows up as the syntactic object, as shown in (6).

- (2) b. Två älskare                      är              omoralisk-t.  
       *[two lovers]COMMON.PL be.PRES immoral-NEUT*  
       ‘To have two lovers is immoral.’
- (6) Att ha    två   älskare är omoralisk-t.  
       *to have two lovers is immoral-NEUT*  
       ‘To have two lovers is immoral.’

The example in (6) shows that the subject in (2b) has a propositional reading. In earlier versions of generative theory, Construction PROP was analysed in terms of pruning or deletion, as indicated in (2b') (see Faarlund 1977; see also Faarlund et al. 1997:767).

- (2) b'. Att-~~ha~~ två älskare är omoralisk-t.

Free or unrestricted deletion/pruning of this kind is of course unappealing. Furthermore, as Enger (2004:7) points out, an important question remains with a deletion analysis, namely which verb is deleted. In many cases different lexical items could be supplied:

- (2) b''. Att *se/få/ha*        arga    hundar är hemsk-t.  
       *to see/get/have angry dogs is awful-NEUT*

The second argument in favour of analysing the surface subject as an object is the possibility of having reflexives. The anaphoric pronouns *sin/sina* in (7) indicate the presence of a subject antecedent. Crucially, the antecedent is not the overt DP. (Example (7c) is inspired by Teleman & al. (1999, part 3:703))

- (7) a. Familjebildning                      utanför sin    klan              är  
       *family+establishing.COMMON outside REFL clan.COMMON is*  
       olaglig-t    i Yttre Mongoliet.  
       *illegal-NEUT in Outer Mongolia*  
       ‘The establishing of a family externally to one’s clan is illegal in Outer Mongolia.’
- b. Hemfärd                                      till USA utan    sin  
       *hometravel.COMMON to USA without REFL*  
       dotter                                      var omöjlig-t,              tyckte Sally F.  
       *daughter.COMMON was impossible-NEUT thought Sally F.*  
       ‘Returning to the USA without her daughter was impossible, Sally F. thought.’
- c. En blomma                                      till sina närmaste  
       *a flower.COMMON to REFL closest*

medhjälpare vid julen är självklar-t.  
*co-workers.COMMON.PL at Christmas is natural-NEUT*  
 ‘To give a flower to one’s closest co-workers at Christmas is natural.’

- d. Två älskare utöver sin make  
*two lovers.COMMON.PL in-addition-to REFL husband.COMMON*  
 är omoralisk-t.  
*is immoral-NEUT*  
 ‘To have two lovers in addition to one’s husband is immoral.’

The use of a reflexive within an ordinary noun phrase subject is straightforwardly ungrammatical:<sup>21</sup>

- (8) \*Blommor från sitt hemland doftar underbar-t.  
*flowers from REFL homeland smell wonderful-NEUT*  
 Intended reading: ‘Flowers from a person’s homeland smell wonderful.’

I will refrain from discussing the nature of the subject within the subject phrase in the sentences in (7) in detail, but a plausible candidate for the binder of the reflexives is generic PRO, which we know can bind reflexives in infinitival clauses. This is illustrated in (9). For the sake of convenience – especially since the true nature of the subject in question is not of crucial relevance for me – I will assume that the subject is an instance of generic PRO.

- (9) Att PRO vaxa sin bil är jobbig-t.  
*to wax REFL car is hard-NEUT*  
 ‘To wax one’s car is a lot of hard work.’

The third argument indicating that the noun phrase in the subject position is an embedded object is that it has non-nominative case, which is evident if it is a pronoun:<sup>22</sup>

- (10) [One cannibal to the other:]  
 Henne med senap och ketchup vore läcker-t.  
*her with mustard and ketchup would.be delicious-NEUT*  
 ‘To get/have/eat her with mustard and ketchup would be delicious.’

It is possible to use the corresponding pronoun in nominative as subject, i.e. *hon* ‘she’, as shown in (11).

- (11) Hon med senap och ketchup är läcker.  
*she with mustard and ketchup is delicious.COMMON*  
 ‘The woman/girl with mustard and ketchup is delicious.’

Notice, however, that (11) differs in meaning from (10). In (11) the PP *med senap och ketchup* is construed as an attributive to the noun: ‘the girl/woman who has/holds mustard and ketchup’. In this case, agreement between the pronoun *hon*, and the adjective *läcker* ‘delicious’ is the canonical one. Crucially the propositional

meaning ‘to have’ or ‘to eat’ is absent in (11), which means the sentence is trivial, consisting of the subject *hon med senap och ketchup* ‘she/the female with mustard and ketchup’ + verb + agreeing predicative adjective.<sup>23</sup>

Fourthly, more than one phrase can precede the finite verb in Construction PROP sentences without inducing a V2-violation. If the same constituent is used sentence initially with an ordinary predicate like *bruka ge* ‘usually give’ or *ha* ‘have’, the sentence turns ungrammatical:

- (12) a. \*En blomma till våra närmaste medhjälpare vid julen  
*a flower to our closest coworkers at Christmas*  
 brukar vi självklar-t ge.  
*do.generally we natural-NEUT give*
- b. \*Pengar i madrassen hade hon placerat.  
*money.PL in mattress.THE had she placed*
- cf. Pengar i madrassen är dum-t.  
*money.PL in mattress.THE is stupid-NEUT*  
 ‘It’s stupid to have/put money in one’s mattress.’
- c. \*Vitlök i kylskåpet har vi inte.  
*garlic in fridge.THE have we not*
- cf. Vitlök i kylskåpet är dum-t.  
*garlic in refrigerator.THE is silly-neut*  
 ‘It’s stupid to keep/put garlic in the refrigerator.’

The examples in (12) show that the subjects of Construction PROP sentences are not ordinary DPs, but larger phrases, containing an overt DP.<sup>24</sup>

The main point so far is that the surface DP subject of Construction PROP sentences is not simply a noun phrase, but a larger structure, presumably a clausal constituent. It contains a non-overt subject, presumably a generic PRO, a predicate and an object. VP-adverbials can be present too. In 2.2 we shall take a closer look at the structure of this clausal subject.

## 2.2 The structure of the clausal subject

The examples in (7) show that there is a hidden subject within the subject phrase and (10) that the structure contains a case assigner, responsible for the accusative case to the pronoun. The propositional reading of the subject indicates that the case assigner is a verbal element. As pointed out above it was proposed in earlier days of generative theory that the subject in Construction PROP sentences is an infinitival phrase, where the leftmost part is deleted. Enger (2004:7–9) argues that such an analysis is untenable, since we in that case would be unable to identify the deleted

element; different verbs can be supplied in this position.

- (13) Att ha/få/se/möta arga hundar är obehaglig-t.  
*to have/get/see/meet angry dogs is unpleasant-NEUT*

In my view, we have no reason to assume that the verb is deleted; instead the verb is null, i.e. devoid of phonological features. The idea is that the null verb is, more specifically, a light verb, corresponding to a basic concept, which we may, at a first attempt, gloss as HAVE. In order to show that a null light verb would not be a unique possibility for this construction, we shall first take a look at a different construction where the presence of a null light verb has been suggested. The construction in question consists of subject + modal + directional PP or adverbial (see Josefsson 1998:118–120):

- (14) a. Jag vill Ø till Rom.  
*I want to Rome*  
 ‘I want to go to Rome.’  
 b. De ska absolut Ø därifrån den här veckan.  
*they shall absolutely thence this here week*  
 ‘They definitely need to be removed from that place this week.’

The only overt verb in (14a) is the modal *vill* ‘want to’ and in (14b) the modal, *ska* ‘shall, will’, both of which are unambiguous modal auxiliaries in Swedish. Normally these modals combine with main verbs, and are unable to take complements headed by the infinitival marker *att* ‘to’, a fact that provides clear evidence of their status as modals. Thus, (14) shows that a main verb that includes the meaning GO can be left out, provided a modal is present, and provided there is a directional PP or adverbial. Different actual verbs could be supplied in (14): *åka* ‘go’, *fara* ‘go’, *resa* ‘travel’, etc. Josefsson (1998:118–120) argues that the null main verb in (14a, b) is licit if properly licensed and identified in the sense of Rizzi (1986). The licensing requirement is fulfilled by the auxiliary and the identification requirement by the directional PP/adverbial, which identifies the content of the null verb. The concept GO does not correspond straightforwardly to any particular lexical item in Swedish, but there is a cluster of verbs with this concept as a core part of their meaning, as pointed out above.

The verb GO is a good candidate for a light verb. It is neither a modal nor an auxiliary, and it corresponds to a basic concept, which we may illustrate by the SOURCE, GOAL, and PATH schema as follows:

- (15)
- PATH
- SOURCE       $\xrightarrow{\hspace{10em}}$       GOAL

The representation in (15) is unspecified for agentivity, which means that the entity that is transferred from a source to a goal could be a human, acting volitionally, or an entity, human or non-human, that is being transported.

Drawing on a light verb analysis of examples such as (14), I propose that Construction PROP has a similar structure. Thus, no deletion has taken place; the null head corresponds to the basic concept HAVE, which, just like the concept GO, can be phonologically realised by different language-specific lexemes, for example *ha* ‘have’, *få* ‘get’ and *äta* ‘eat’, yielding sentences like (6), repeated here as (16), which, accordingly, should be compared to (2b).

- (16) Att ha två älskare är omoralisk-t.  
*to have two lovers is immoral-NEUT*

The function of infinitival marker in (16) will not be explored in this paper, but I assume that it is related to tense (which could have a plus or a minus value).

The important point so far is that what appears to be the subject of Construction PROP sentences is an object DP embedded in a clausal constituent. The verb is null, and in the cases discussed so far it corresponds to the basic concept HAVE:

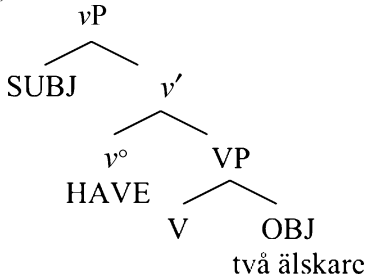
- (17) HAVE två älskare är omoralisk-t.  
*have [two lovers]COMMON.PL be.PRES immoral-NEUT*

The next question concerns the precise nature of the null verb.

The notion of light verb has been the focus of attention in recent literature. The concept was introduced already by Otto Jespersen, who pointed at examples consisting of *have, take* and *give* + NP, for example *have a rest/a read/a cry, take a sneak/a drive/a walk/a plunge, give a sigh/a shout/a shiver/a pull/a ring* (Jespersen 1965 [1909–1949], vol. VI:117). The term light verb was coined by Grimshaw & Mester (1988), who examined the Japanese verb *suru* ‘do’. Butt (1995) provides an extensive overview of ‘the light verb jungle’ in a variety of languages, and she shows that in a language like Urdu verbs like *take, give, let, fall, go* and *hit* seem to be light verbs. Other languages have similar sets of light verbs. Lundin (2002:131ff.) suggests that *låta* ‘let’ and *få* ‘get’ are light verbs in Swedish, and Thurén (2008:chapter 4) analyses Swedish *komma* ‘come’ in conjunction with participles, for instance in the construction *komma gående* (come walk.PRESENT.PARTICIPLE), as a light verb. Butt (2003:13) argues that light verbs are in a sense the same verbs as the corresponding main verbs. Diachronically, the two have coexisted, which means that light verbs do not simply constitute a stage in a grammaticalisation process, where a main verb gradually transforms into an auxiliary. Finally, according to Butt (2003:18), light verbs are PASSEPARTOUTS: ‘their lexical semantic specifications are so general that they can be used in a multitude of contexts, that is, they “fit” many constellations’. Butt & Lahiri (2004:36) posit ‘that a handful of verbs universally act as *passeprouts*. These verbs are always drawn from the lexically “simplest” part of the lexicon . . . i.e. they mainly encompass motion verbs and basic relations such as “give”, “take”, “put”, “make” and “do”’. Also *have* is mentioned by Butt & Lahiri as a light verb.<sup>25</sup>

I will adopt the idea that light verbs are *passepertout* verbs, as suggested in Butt (2003) and Butt & Lahiri (2004), as well as Adger's assumption that light verbs are instances of little *v* (Adger 2003:134). If this is correct, a subject in a Construction PROP sentence is at least as large as a *vP*. The diagram in (18) shows the first approximation of the structure of the subject in (2b).

(18)



This structure provides a position for the antecedent subject (assumed above to be an instance of arbitrary PRO) for reflexives. The propositional meaning of the subject and the absence of a violation of the V2-constraint when a VP-adverbial is added also follow straightforwardly from the proposed analysis (given the assumption that VP-adverbials are adjoined to the VP, which seems to be a reasonable assumption).

The difference between the subject in (2a), *två älskare* 'two lovers', and the corresponding infinitival paraphrase in (16) is not only the presence vs. the absence of the infinitival marker. The verb in (16) is in the infinitival form. Drawing on Chomsky (1999) I will assume that a verb in the infinitival carries tense information, more specifically it is a form marked -tense, which means that the tense is either defective or unspecified. This would imply that the subject *att ha två älskare* in (6)/(16) is at least as large as a TP. In Construction PROP sentences, such as (2b), we have no reason to assume that the subject phrase is a TP.<sup>26</sup> The main reason is that there is no place for lower adverbs, such as negation.<sup>27</sup>

(19) \*Inte två älskare är moralisk-t.

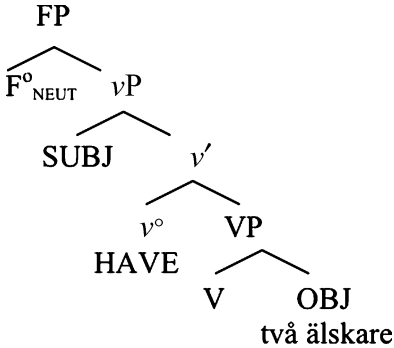
*not two lovers is moral-NEUT*

Intended reading: 'Not to have two lovers is moral.'

Assuming either that the NegP immediately dominates the *vP* or that the negation is adjoined to the *vP*, which should be uncontroversial, the conclusion is that the structure is in fact no larger than a *vP*. As pointed out in section 1, it is unsatisfactory to assume that the neuter agreement in Construction PROP sentences is default; hence we need to give a proper account for this type of agreement. Gender is a nominal feature, and the head of a *vP* is verbal. This makes it unappealing to assume that the gender feature will combine with the verb. To solve this problem we may tentatively assume the presence of a nominal head,  $F^\circ$ , hosting the nominal gender feature that

triggers predicative agreement in the neuter:

(20)



The structure in (20) is supported by a construction that we have reason to believe has a parallel structure – though with an overtly realised head. Assuming that the analysis of the example in (4a) above is correct, it is fully reasonable to assume that the FP in (20) is identical to the SemP in *[[hon] den nya professorn]*, and that the feature content of  $F^\circ$  is what triggers agreement in neuter in Construction PROP sentences. This would also allow us to account for the similarities and difference between Construction NOM and Construction PROP sentences in a more precise way: the subject of Construction NOM sentences is a SemP taking an NP complement, whereas the subject of a Construction PROP sentence is a SemP taking a vP complement. In both cases the neuter feature is hosted in  $Sem^\circ$ . This feature triggers agreement on the predicative adjective. The meaning associated with this feature is that of the fourth gender in the four-way semantic gender system, proposed in Josefsson (2006), i.e. SUBSTANCE or UNBOUNDED ENTITY.

I will remain agnostic as to the more precise relation between the head  $F^\circ$  in (20), the head  $C^\circ$  in finite and non-finite embedded clauses. We may conclude, however, that the feature contents of  $F^\circ$  and of  $C^\circ$  in infinitival clauses are not identical, since  $F^\circ$  cannot be lexicalised with *att*:

- (21) \*Att två älskare är omoralisk-t.  
*to two lovers is immoral-NEUT*

So far I have discussed Construction PROP sentences with the null light verb HAVE ‘have’, which alternatively may have the flavour ‘get’, which is a dynamic version of the stative HAVE. In addition, there seem to be cases with a null GIVE:<sup>28</sup>

- (22) Den där buketten till svärmor i  
*that there bunch.of.flowers.COMMON.DEF to mother.in.law in*  
 lördags var slug-t.  
*Saturday was cunning-NEUT*  
 ‘To give your mother-in-law those flowers last Saturday was cunning.’

The reason why the null verb is identified as GIVE is the presence of the PP *till svärmor* ‘to mother-in-law’, which carries the theta role GOAL. Since this theta role in the unmarked case has a sibling role, THEME, in ditransitives, the null verb can be identified. In a way similar to null HAVE, different verbal lexemes can be supplied, for example, *ge* ‘give’, *överlämna* ‘give’, and *överräcka* ‘hand over’.

The sentence in (23) shows that PERCEIVE may be used as a null verb.

- (23) *Våldsfilmer är skadlig-t.*  
*violence.films is harmful-NEUT*  
 ‘It’s harmful to see films with violence.’

Examples such as (22) and (23) raise the question of the identification of the null verb. It looks as though not only adverbials play a role. Our world knowledge (films are normally watched, not eaten, for instance) helps us to retrieve the meaning of the null light verb such as PERCEIVE or possibly even the more specific SEE. It might even be the case that the identity of the null light verb may remain underdetermined, thus ‘oscillating’ between different readings:

- (24) *Arga kunder är otrevlig-t.*  
*angry customers is unpleasant-NEUT*

The sentence in (24) could mean that it is unpleasant to listen to angry customers on the phone, to see them in the store, or to just have them around. One possibility is to assume that HAVE has a very broad meaning, including, ‘eat’, ‘see’, ‘listen to’, ‘smell’, ‘hold in the hand’, ‘control’, etc. The other option is that there is a range of concepts with which the null element may be associated, and that a sentence can be undetermined as to exactly which one.

It is possible that there is a null light verb corresponding to TAKE too:<sup>29</sup>

- (25) *Bilen till Stockholm blir för dyr-t.*  
*car.COMMON.DEF to Stockholm will.be too expensive-NEUT*  
 ‘It would be too expensive to drive the car to Stockholm.’

The example in (25) should be compared to that in (26):

- (26) *Att ta bilen till Stockholm blir för dyr-t.*  
*to take car.COMMON.DEF to Stockholm will.be too expensive-NEUT*  
 ‘It would be too expensive to drive the car to Stockholm.’

The light verb discussed in Grimshaw & Mester (1988) is the Japanese verb *suru* ‘do’. DO and MAKE seem to be the lightest of all light verbs, i.e. the prototypical light verbs. A null DO seems to be an option in Swedish as well:

- (27) a. *Delbetalning av lånet är klok-t.*  
*partial.pay.ING.COMMON of loan.THE is wise-NEUT*  
 ‘It is wise to do partial paying of the loan.’



- b. Vattentvättning är riskabel-t.  
*water.wash.ING.COMMON is risky-NEUT*  
 ‘It’s risky to wash X in water.’
- c. Avrättningar är omoralisk-t.  
*execute.ING.COMMON.PLURAL is immoral-NEUT*  
 ‘To do executions is immoral.’

All the initial DPs in (27), *delbetalning*, *vattentvättning* and *avrättning*, are typical event nouns. However, only for (27a) is a paraphrase with the verb *göra* ‘do’ impeccable:

- (28) Att göra delbetalning av lånet är klok-t.  
*to do partial.pay.ing of loan.THE is wise-NEUT*  
 ‘It is wise to do partial paying of the loan.’

However, as pointed out above, the null light verbs discussed in this paper do not necessarily correspond to actual language-specific verbs. They are, to borrow the term used by Butt & Lahiri, *passeprouts*: a group of verbs that encompass ‘motion verbs and basic relations such as “give”, “take”, “put”, “make” and “do”’ (Butt & Lahiri 2004:36). The range of actual verbs in a language that fit into the light verb position is language-specific.

In addition to the null light verbs discussed so far at least two more options seem to be available: *hålla* ‘hold’ and *sätta* ‘put’:

- (29) a. Äktenskapslöften är viktig-t.  
*marriage.promise.PL is important-NEUT*  
 ‘To keep promises of marriage is important.’
- b. Målrelaterade betyg på en liten grupp är svår-t.  
*outcome.related grades on a small group is difficult-NEUT*  
 ‘To set grades related to learning outcomes on a small group is difficult.’

The sentences in (29) should be compared to those in (30):

- (30) a. Att hålla äktenskapslöften är viktig-t.  
*to hold marriage.promise.PL is important-NEUT*  
 ‘To keep promises of marriage is important.’
- b. Att sätta målrelaterade betyg på en liten grupp är svår-t.  
*to set learning.outcome.related grades on a small group is difficult-NEUT*  
 ‘To set grades related to learning outcomes on a small group is difficult.’

So far I have proposed a number of null light verbs in Swedish, HAVE, PERCEIVE, GIVE, TAKE, DO, HOLD and PUT. Following Josefsson’s (1998)

proposal, the verb GO should be added to this list, even though the term light verb is not mentioned in that article. I will leave the question open as to the precise membership of the list of Swedish null light verbs. The proposed analysis directly addresses Enger's (2004) objection to a deletion analysis of the apparent disagreement construction. The 'missing' verb is a light verb, which means that the number of verbs that could fit in is restricted. According to a strong version of a general theory of light verbs, this class of verbs would be the same cross-linguistically, probably because they encode basic human activities, acts, and experiences.<sup>30</sup>

The light verb in constructions such as *take a bath*, *take a rest*, *give a shout*, etc. seems to have very little concrete meaning associated with *take* and *give* in examples such as *take a pencil* and *give flowers to someone*. However, Ekberg (1993) shows clearly that there is a very close link between the 'concrete' main verb *ta* 'take' and the more abstract *ta*, used as 'a function verb' (which I take to refer to the same category of verbs as light verbs). Thus, it should pose no problem that the null light verbs proposed in this paper retain a 'concrete' lexical meaning component. A similar objection could be raised for another class of verbs, namely those used in pseudocoordinations, exemplified in (31) below. Wiklund (2005:chapter 6) proposes that the first verb in pseudocoordinations, such as *sitter* 'sits' and *körde* 'drove' in (31), is a light verb.

- (31) a. Peter sitter och fiskar.  
*Peter sits and fishes*  
 'Peter is fishing.'
- b. Maria körde och handlade jordgubbar.  
*Maria drove and bought strawberries*  
 ≈ 'Maria drove away to buy strawberries.'

Verb 1 in pseudocoordinations is often a motion or a posture verb, for instance *sitta* 'sit' or *köra* 'drive', as in (31). Josefsson (1991:136) showed that even though the pseudocoordination determines the aspect/aktionsart of the sentence, yielding something that looks like a progressive form in (31a) or an instigation of an event in (31b), the concrete meaning of the verb is retained. This means that Peter actually sits in (31a) and that Maria drives in (31b). Thus, in my view, light verbs can indeed have a light lexical meaning, that is, they encode basic human activities, acts, and experiences, such as doing, taking, getting, holding, perceiving, going, but they can also take the step up and become ultra-light, as in the case of Japanese *suru* 'do' (Grimshaw & Mester 1988).

### 2.3 Definite DPs in the subject of Construction PROP sentences

It has been noted in the literature that definite DPs are heavily constrained as subjects (or rather as DP objects within the clausal subject) in Construction PROP sentences

(see e.g. Wellander 1949:109f., Faarlund 1977, Källström 1993:196). Faarlund (1977) even states that definite DPs are ungrammatical in Norwegian. An ungrammatical example of this type is shown in (32).

- (32) \*Älskarna är omoralisk-t.  
*lover.PL.DEF is immoral-NEUT*

The restriction against definite DPs is not absolute, however, as witnessed by examples such as (10) and (22), repeated below, as well as (33), and (34)–(35) (the latter two are authentic, found on the Internet).

- (10) [One cannibal to the other:]  
 Henne med senap och ketchup vore läcker-t.  
*her with mustard and ketchup would.be delicious-NEUT*  
 ‘To get/have/eat her with mustard and ketchup would be delicious.’
- (22) Den där buketten till svärmor  
*that there bunch.of.flowers.COMMON.DEF to mother.in.law*  
 i lördags var slug-t.  
*in Saturday was cunning-NEUT*  
 ‘To give your mother-in-law those flowers last Saturday was cunning.’
- (33) Väskan på ryggen är modern-t i år.  
*bag.COMMON.DEF on back.THE is modern-NEUT in year*  
 ‘Its modern to have the bag on the back this year.’
- (34) Kvalitet-en är viktig-t.  
*quality-COMMON.DEF.SG is important-NEUT*  
 ‘Quality is important.’
- (35) Den kommunala sponsring-en till bandyklubbar är  
*the public sponsoring-COMMON.DEF to bandy.clubs is*  
 vanlig-t.  
*common-NEUT*  
 ‘Public sponsoring of bandy clubs is common.’

Regarding the ungrammatical example in (32), I will argue that it is not definiteness *per se* that is problematic, but specificity. Thus, (33)–(35) are grammatical because *väskan*, *kvaliteten* and *den kommunala sponsringen* are non-specific; those DPs do not refer to a specific bag, quality, or sponsorship, but to such elements in general. In the unmarked case definite DPs in Swedish have a specific interpretation; non-specific DPs are normally indefinite or bare. This is the reason why it might be difficult to construct examples such as the ones in (34) and (35). Evidence that it is specificity and not definiteness that restricts definite DPs is that an indefinite DP, such as *en chokladbit* ‘a piece of chocolate’ in the subject of Construction PROP sentences can only receive a non-specific interpretation; consider (36).

- (36) En chokladbit är trevlig-t.  
*a chocolate.piece is nice-NEUT*  
 ‘It’s nice with a piece of chocolate.’

The restriction against specific DPs in the clausal subject of Construction PROP sentences remains to be explained, however. In my view, this restriction could be linked to the more general role of DP objects in the syntax. Arad (1996:219–220) shows that DP objects – more specifically specific DPs – typically play the role of delimiting an Event. They are, in other words, Event measurers. (See also Krifka 1992 and Tenny 1992.) For example, a sentence like *Peter eats the apple* is construed in such a way that the specific DP object, *the apple*, is successively consumed until it is all gone. In order for a specific DP object to be licit in a Construction PROP sentence, the predicate has to be dynamic. Since stative HAVE – the typical predicate in the construction under discussion – is not dynamic by definition, it cannot combine with a specific, definite DP.<sup>31</sup>

Specific, definite DPs are found in (10) and (22) above. The predicates in those examples are dynamic, GIVE and HAVE/GET, and, consequently, specific (and definite) DPs that play the role of Event measurers, are grammatical. The conclusion seems to be that there are two cases where a definite DP is licit in Construction PROP sentences. The first case is stative HAVE + non-specific, but definite DP object. The second case is a dynamic predicate + a specific, definite DP.<sup>32</sup>

The proposed analysis explains another property of Construction PROP sentences, namely that definite DPs are more likely to combine with irrealis *vore* ‘were’ or past tense *var* ‘was’, than present tense *är* ‘is’ in a sentence such as (10). Compare (10), repeated here again, (37) and (38):

- (10) [One cannibal to the other:]  
 Henne med senap och ketchup vore läcker-t.  
*her with mustard and ketchup would.be delicious-NEUT*  
 ‘To get her with mustard and ketchup would be delicious.’
- (37) Henne med senap och ketchup var läcker-t.  
*her with mustard and ketchup was delicious-NEUT*  
 ‘To get/have/eat her with mustard and ketchup was delicious.’
- (38) ??Henne med senap och ketchup är läcker-t.  
*her with mustard and ketchup is delicious-NEUT*  
 ‘To get/have/eat her with mustard and ketchup is delicious.’

The fact that (38) is odd has to do with the temporal interpretation of the null predicate within the clausal subject. This interpretation is in a way similar to that of a verb in infinitive. Infinitive is not a tense form *per se* but, drawing on Chomsky (1999), I assume that the infinitive has ‘defective’ tense. In my view, this implies that the temporal interpretation of a verb in infinitive is dependent on the temporal and modal

interpretation of the matrix verb.<sup>33</sup> Consider (39), which illustrates this (the arrow should be read as ‘is interpreted as’).

- (39) a. Att segla är<sub>PRES</sub> nödvändig-t → Att segla<sub>PRES</sub> är<sub>PRES</sub> nödvändig-t.  
*to sail is<sub>PRES</sub> necessary-NEUT → to sail<sub>PRES</sub> is<sub>PRES</sub> necessary-NEUT*  
 b. Att segla var<sub>PAST</sub> nödvändig-t → Att segla<sub>PAST</sub> var<sub>PAST</sub> nödvändig-t.  
*to sail was<sub>PAST</sub> necessary-NEUT → to sail<sub>PAST</sub> was<sub>PAST</sub> necessary-NEUT*  
 c. Att segla vore<sub>IRREAL</sub> nödvändig-t → Att segla<sub>IRREAL</sub> vore<sub>IRREAL</sub> nödvändig-t.  
*to sail vore<sub>IRREAL</sub> necessary-NEUT → to sail<sub>IRREAL</sub> be<sub>IRREAL</sub> necessary-NEUT*

Informally we may say that (39) shows that the temporal/modal interpretation of the matrix verb spreads to the embedded infinitival predicate. If this analysis is on the right track, the difference in acceptability between (10) and (37), on the one hand, and (38) on the other, is due to the temporal interpretation of the embedded null predicate.

Consider (40)–(42):

- (40) [One cannibal to the other:]  
 FÅ henne med senap och ketchup vore  
*GET<sub>IRREALIS</sub> her with mustard and ketchup would.be<sub>IRREAL</sub>*  
 läcker-t.  
*delicious-NEUT*  
 ‘To get/have/eat her with mustard and ketchup would be delicious.’ (cf. (10))
- (41) FÅ henne med senap och ketchup var läcker-t.  
*GET<sub>PAST</sub> her with mustard and ketchup was<sub>PAST</sub> delicious-NEUT*  
 ‘To get/have/eat her with mustard and ketchup was delicious.’ (cf. (37))
- (42) ??FÅ henne med senap och ketchup är läcker-t.  
*GET<sub>INF</sub> her with mustard and ketchup is<sub>PRESENT</sub> delicious-NEUT*  
 ‘To get/have/eat her with mustard and ketchup is delicious.’ (cf. (38))

The reason why (42) is odd is that the present tense interpretation of the null dynamic predicate within the clausal subject + a DP with specific reference, ‘her’, makes it necessary to interpret the utterance as a comment on an ongoing event, uttered by one of the consumers (since only a consumer could evaluate the tastiness of what is being consumed). The oddity of the utterance is thus due to pragmatics. The event referred to by the clausal subject in (41) is interpreted as having taken place in the past, whereas the event described by the clausal subject in (40) is in the irrealis mood. From a pragmatic point of view, (40) and (41) are more likely to occur.<sup>34</sup>

We may conclude that restrictions regarding the definiteness of the DP within the subject and tense/mode on the matrix verb are interrelated. A definite, non-specific

DP is fine, if the null predicate is stative or, rather, if it can be construed as stative. Definite specific objects are licit only if the null predicate is dynamic or, rather, can be construed as dynamic. The tense/mood of the matrix clause is restricted by pragmatics, since matrix tense/mode interpretation ‘spreads’ to the null predicate in the clausal subject. It seems as though the possibility of construing a null predicate as stative or dynamic has to do with the identification of the predicate, which will be discussed in more detail in section 2.4.

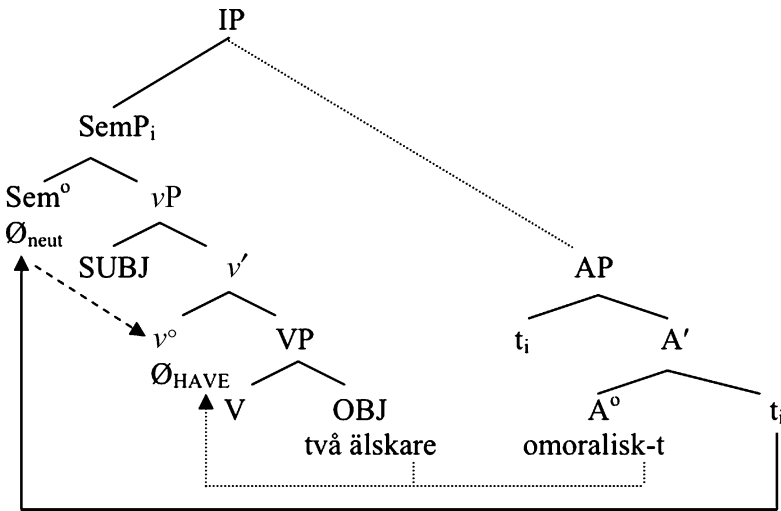
## 2.4 *The licensing and identification of null verbs in Construction PROP sentences*

We now turn to the licensing and identification of the null verbal predicates assumed in Construction PROP sentences. Josefsson (1998:118–120) suggests that sentences like (14) above, repeated below, contain a null GO, and that this null verbal predicate has to be properly licensed and identified in the sense of Rizzi (1986).

- (14) a. Jag vill Ø till Rom.  
*I want to Rome*  
 ‘I want to go to Rome.’
- b. De ska absolut Ø därifrån den här veckan.  
*they shall absolutely thence this here week*  
 ‘They definitely need to be removed from that place this week.’

According to Josefsson (1998), the licensing requirement in cases such as (14) is fulfilled by the auxiliary, and the identification requirement, by the PP/adverbial. The same kind of constraint seems to hold for the null verbal predicates in Construction PROP sentences. The intuition behind the proposed licensing requirement is that some element has to indicate that the structure is larger than shown by the phonological properties of the clause or phrase, i.e. that there is a slot in the structure for a null element. As pointed out above, the modal auxiliary is what indicates a position for a null main verb GO in (14a, b). In Construction PROP sentences, different types of licensers seem to be operating. First of all, the neuter agreement on the predicative adjective indicates the presence of a functional projection hosting the neuter feature. The idea is that gender is a nominal feature, which implies that the functional projection hosting this feature is nominal. In this case the neuter feature carries a meaning, namely the semantics related to the fourth semantic gender in the sense of Josefsson (2006), namely SUBSTANCE/UNBOUNDED ENTITY. The *-t* agreement on the predicative adjective in examples such as (2b) – and in fact also (2a) – thus both license and identify the null head of the SemP. The solid arrow in (43) indicates this relation. (Intermediate projections, as well as the CP level are omitted.)

(43)



I have suggested that the fourth semantic gender encompasses events and substances. Events are expressed by *v*Ps and substances by NPs, hence the adjective *omoralisk* ‘immoral’ disambiguates the *x*P selected by the null head of the SemP as being a *v*P, not an NP. (An adjective like ‘immoral’ does not normally characterise a substance, but is more likely to describe a stative event.) We could thus assume that Sem<sup>0</sup> licenses the null verb (a relation indicated by the broken-line arrow in (43)), whereas the adjective *omoralisk* identifies it as a particular light verb, presumably in conjunction with the fact that the DP (*två älskare* ‘two lovers’ in (2b)) carries a theta role, assigned by this null light verb. The identification of the null light verb is indicated by the dotted arrow in (43).

The typical verb used in Construction PROP sentences is stative HAVE. In non-prototypical Construction PROP sentences, i.e. with other types of null predicate verbs, the identification requirements seem to be stricter. In (10), for instance, a PP like *med senap och ketchup* ‘with mustard and ketchup’ is obligatory, probably since the DP *henne* ‘her’ is not typical food, hence the null light verb is not normally identifiable as HAVE, with the special meaning ‘eat, consume’. The PP could be exchanged for a location adverbial, for instance *i en sportbil* ‘in a sports car’, as illustrated by (44).

- (44) Henne i en sportbil vore läcker-t.  
*her in a sportscar would.be gorgeous-NEUT*  
 ‘To have her/see her in a sports car would be gorgeous.’

The null light verb in the subject clause in (44) would presumably be identified as HAVE/PERCEIVE/SEE.

In (22) the Goal PP *till svärmor* ‘to mother-in-law’ identifies the null verb as GIVE, and in (33) the DP *väska* ‘the bag’ in conjunction with the PP *på ryggen* ‘on the back’ identifies the null verb as HAVE. In this case the definite form requires a location PP in order for the non-specific reading of the definite DP *väska* ‘the bag’ to be available.<sup>35</sup>

### 3. CONSTRUCTION PROP SENTENCES AND THE *MED*-PHRASE PARAPHRASE

As noted above, Construction PROP sentences can be paraphrased by *det* ‘it’ + a *med*-phrase, i.e. a PP with the preposition *med* ‘with’. The example illustrating this point given in (3) above is repeated here:

- (3) Det är omoralisk-t med två älskare.  
*it is immoral-NEUT with two lovers*  
 ‘It’s immoral to have two lovers.’

As we shall see, we have reasons to believe that the *med*-phrase has a structure that is parallel to the *vP* assumed for Construction PROP sentences.

It is well known that the verb *ha* ‘have’ and the preposition *med* ‘with’ are closely related (see Benveniste 1966, Kayne 1993). In traditional grammar a construction with *med* + DP + location adverbial/predicative is analysed as a non-finite clause (‘satsförkortning’ or ‘satsekvivalent’ in Swedish), see for example Teleman et al. (1999, part 3:697ff.). The verb substituting for the preposition *med* is *ha* ‘have’. (45a) gives an example where *med* takes two phrases in its complement, a DP, *handen* ‘the hand’, and a PP-adverbial, *i bandage* ‘in a bandage’. (45b) paraphrases (45a), but the *med*-phrase is exchanged for a full clause with the verb *ha* ‘have’:

- (45) a. Hon steg ur bussen med handen i bandage.  
*she stepped off bus.THE with hand.THE in bandage*  
 ‘She stepped out of the bus with her hand in a bandage.’  
 b. Hon steg ur bussen, och hon hade handen i bandage.  
*she stepped off bus.THE and she had hand.THE in bandage*  
 ‘She stepped out of the bus and she had her hand in a bandage.’

From this we can gather that *med* + DP + PP/adverbial has some kind of clausal properties. The fact that *två älskare* ‘two lovers’ in (2b) and *med två älskare* ‘with two lovers’ in (3) have the same basic reading suggests that also simple *med*-phrases, i.e. *med*-phrases with only a single phrase as its complement, have or may have



clausal properties. Another indication is that such phrases may contain a reflexive pronoun, as shown in (46).

- (46) Det är omoralisk-t med två älskare utöver sin make.  
*it is immoral-NEUT with two lovers in.addition.to REFL husband*  
 ‘It’s immoral to have two lovers in addition to one’s husband.’

The reflexive pronoun *sin* in (46) indicates that there is a subject inside the *med*-phrase, binding the reflexive. In view of this, it would seem quite natural to analyse Swedish *ha* ‘have’ as the spell-out of BE + preposition, as argued for English by Kayne (1993); null HA would in a sense be BE + the preposition *med* ‘with’. (The reading would in that case be ‘be two lovers at/with DP’.) However, not only *ha* ‘have’ seems to alternate with the preposition *med*; this holds true for the other assumed null light verbs too, a fact that calls for a slightly different analysis than the kaynian one. Consider (47), which includes examples related to some cited earlier in the present paper.

- (47) a. GIVE  
 Det var slug-t med den där  
*it was cunning-NEUT with it there*  
 buketten till svärmor i lördags.  
*bunch.of.flowers.COMMON.DEF to mother.in.law in Saturday*  
 ‘It was cunning to give those flowers to your mother-in-law last Saturday.’  
 (cf. (22))
- b. PERCEIVE  
 Det är skadlig-t med våldsfilm.  
*it is harmful-NEUT with violence.films*  
 ‘It’s harmful to see films with violence.’ (cf. (23))
- c. HAVE  
 Det är otrevlig-t med arga kunder.  
*it is unpleasant-NEUT with angry customers*  
 ‘It is unpleasant to have angry customers.’ (cf. (24))
- d. TAKE  
 Det blir för dyr-t med bilen till Stockholm.  
*it will.be too expensive-NEUT with car.THE to Stockholm*  
 ‘It would be too expensive to take the car to Stockholm.’ (cf. (25))
- e. DO  
 Det är klok-t med delbetalning av lånet.  
*it is wise-NEUT with partial.paying of loan.THE*  
 ‘It is wise to do partial paying of the loan.’ (cf. (27a))

## f. HOLD

Det är viktig-t med äktenskapslöften.  
*it is important-NEUT with marriage.promise.PL*  
 'To keep promises of marriage is important.' (cf. (29a))

## g. HAVE/GET

[One cannibal to the other:]

Det vore läcker-t med henne med senap  
*it would be delicious-NEUT with her with mustard*  
 och ketchup.  
*and ketchup*  
 'To get/have/eat her with mustard and ketchup would be delicious.'  
 (cf. (10))

As is shown in (48), all the examples in (47) can be paraphrased by sentences where *med* is replaced by *att* 'to' + a VP with the verb in the infinitival form.<sup>36</sup>

## (48) a. GIVE

Det var slug-t att ge den där buketten  
*it was cunning-NEUT to give it there bunch.of.flowers*  
 till svärmor i lördags.  
*to mother.in.law in Saturday*  
 'It was cunning to give those flowers to your mother-in-law last Saturday.'  
 (cf. (22))

## b. PERCEIVE

Det är skadlig-t att se våldsfilm.  
*it is harmful-NEUT to watch violence.films*  
 'It's harmful to watch films with violence.' (cf.(23))

## c. HAVE

De är otrevlig-t att ha arga kunder.  
*it is unpleasant-NEUT to have angry customers*  
 'It is unpleasant to have angry customers.' (cf. (24))

## d. TAKE

Det blir för dyr-t att ta bilen.  
*it will.be too expensive-NEUT to take car.the*  
 till Stockholm.  
*to Stockholm*  
 'It would be too expensive to take the car to Stockholm.' (cf. (25))

## e. DO

Det är klok-t att göra delbetalning av lånet.  
*it is wise-NEUT to do partial.paying of loan.THE*  
 'It is wise to do partial paying of the loan.' (cf. (27a))

f. HOLD

det är viktig-t                    att hålla äktenskapslöften.  
*it is important-NEUT to hold marriage.promise.PL*  
 ‘To keep promises of marriage is important.’ (cf. (29a))

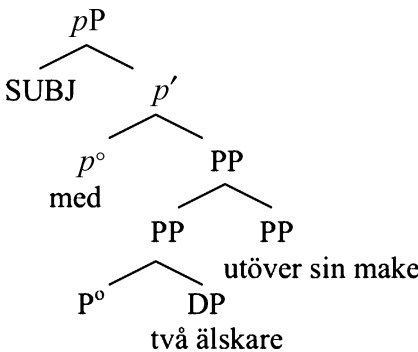
g. HAVE/GET

[One cannibal to the other:]  
 Det vore            läcker-t            att få/äta henne med  
*it would.be delicious-NEUT to get/eat her with*  
 senap    och    ketchup.  
*mustard and ketchup*  
 ‘To get/have/eat her with mustard and ketchup would be delicious.’  
 (cf. (10))

It should be pointed out that not all the sentences in (48) are equally well formed, maybe they are not as natural as those in (47), which are all unproblematic. However, all of them are grammatical in Swedish.

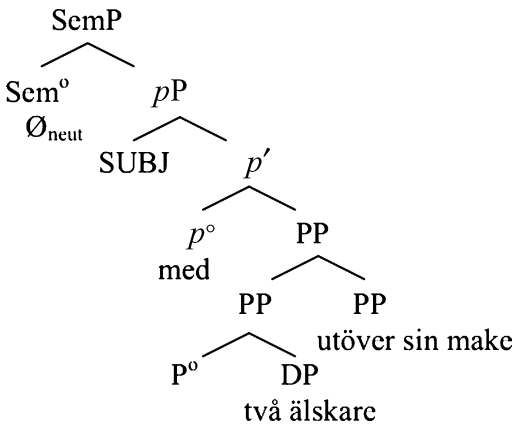
Given the semantic and structural similarity between the assumed null light verbs and the preposition *med* ‘with’ we may hypothesise that *med* and the null light verbs are located in the ‘same’ position, i.e. in the head of a small lexico-functional projection that corresponds to the *vP*, with the important difference that the head is not *v°* but *p°* (‘little *p*’), in other words a *pP*.<sup>37</sup> If this is correct we arrive at the structure in (49).<sup>38</sup>

(49)



I have proposed that a SemP can be added on top of a *vP*, hosting the neuter feature that triggers agreement in the neuter on the predicative adjective, as shown in (2b). This agreement is not default, but semantically motivated, since the neuter feature carries a meaning that corresponds to SUBSTANCE, or UNBOUNDED ENTITY. In a parallel fashion it is reasonable to assume that we should be able to add a SemP on top of the *pP*, yielding (50):

(50)



A question brought about by the proposed analysis is why an overt *det* 'it' cannot be spelled out in the SemP, yielding (51). As shown in (52), which should be compared to (4a), the pronoun *hon* can be spelled out in the corresponding position:

(51) *Det med två älskare är omoraliskt.*

*it with two lovers is immoral-NEUT*

(52) [<sub>SemP</sub> *Hon* [<sub>DP</sub> *den nya professorn*]] är glad.

*she the new professor.THE is happy*

'She/the new professor is happy.'

It should be pointed out that (51) is not ungrammatical as such, but *det* 'it' has a referential reading in this context, meaning 'that' or 'that thing', hence *det* is presumably not spelled out in Sem°. I do not have a full answer as to why *det* cannot be spelled out in Sem°, whereas *hon* 'she' can, but it is reasonable to assume that it is due to the spell-out convention for pronouns. Since *det* in (51) can be exchanged for demonstrative *det där* 'that', we may hypothesise that it is spelled out in the head of the DemP (or the functional projection hosting demonstratives). Generalising this idea, we may assume that all instances of overt *det* combined with a PP as a modifier (which presumably is generated in the complement of N°) are instances of demonstrative *det* + PP. This analysis is supported by the fact that the topicalisation of the *med*-phrase across an expletive *det* makes the weak pronoun referential:

(53) *Med två älskare är det omoralisk-t.*

*with two lovers is that immoral-NEUT*

The reading of (53) is 'With two lovers that/that thing becomes immoral'. The example in (53) shows in fact that the PP *med två älskare* cannot be raised across an expletive subject *det*; *det* in (53) is not an expletive.

The idea that *det* in (53) is different from *det* in (3) is supported by the observation that *det* in (53) could be exchanged for the demonstrative *det där* ‘that’. This is the same reading that would be obtained for (3) as well, if we used *det där* as subject instead:

- (54) Det där är omoralisk-t med två älskare.  
*it there is immoral-NEUT with two lovers*  
 ‘That/that thing is immoral with two lovers.’

The natural way of accounting for the fact that *med två älskare* cannot be in sentence-initial position in (53) without the subject *det* receiving a referential reading is that the raising of  $\emptyset_{\text{NEUT}}$  *med två älskare* across subject *det* would induce a cross-over effect; a subject would be raised over a subject with the same referential index. In my view, the presented data suggest that *med två älskare* in (53) and (54) are bare adjunct PPs, i.e. PPs with no SemP on top. The t-agreement on *omoraliskt* in (53) and (54) is thus triggered by *det/det där* in the subject position in a canonical way.

A final question that needs to be addressed is why a SemP taking a *vP* complement with a null head is fine as a subject, but not a SemP + a *pP*, as witnessed by (55). (The background assumption is that a *pP* can indeed have a SemP on top, with a nominal head.) In other words, why is (55) ungrammatical?

- (55) [ $\emptyset_{\text{NEUT}}$  \*Med två älskare] är omoralisk-t.  
*with two lovers is immoral-NEUT*

It is a well-known fact that PPs cannot be subjects in Swedish.<sup>39</sup> The ungrammaticality of (55), as well as the ungrammaticality of PPs more generally in the subject position, is probably due to the nature of EPP on SpecIP/SpecTP. EPP is a visibility criterion, which means that the structure is sensitive to the category of the phonological head of the phrase in this position; the visible head must be nominal. Hence even though a *pP* may have a null nominal projection on its top, it cannot function as subject. The reason is that this neuter feature lacks overt realisation.

#### 4. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

I have proposed that the apparent disagreement between the two types of construction, called Construction NOM and Construction PROP, is not a case of disagreement – instead agreement holds. In Construction PROP sentences the subject is clausal and in Construction NOM sentences the neuter feature is a feature of the noun phrase, not a feature of the nominal head. In both Construction NOM and Construction PROP sentences the topmost projection within the subject is a SemP, hosting the neuter feature that triggers agreement in the neuter on the predicative adjective.

A grammatical gender feature may be generated low in the NP, on the lexical head, but it may also be merged above the DP, presumably in the SemP. When the

neuter gender feature is merged low, for instance in the noun *hus-et* in *Hus-et är grön-t* (house.DEF.NEUT.SG is green.NEUT.SG) ‘The house is green’ (see (1b) above) it carries no meaning. When the neuter feature is generated high, as in *Senap är gul-t* ‘Mustard is yellow’ and *Två älskare är omoralisk-t* ‘To have two lovers is immoral’, as in (2), the neuter feature corresponds to the meaning of what in earlier work I have called the fourth semantic gender – SUBSTANCE, UNBOUNDED ENTITY (Josefsson 2006). The proposed analysis thus suggests that one and the same feature may be located in different positions, and that this feature may have different meanings – or no meaning at all – depending on its location. This conclusion should come as no surprise; the same system is at work in the context of numbers notated through Arabic digits. There are ten different digits, but the value of a digit in a calculation depends on where it is located hierarchically and linearly. Thus, the digit 1 corresponds to the value ‘one’ in isolation, but to the value ‘ten’ if it appears in the second position to the left, etc.

The second conclusion concerns the nature of the subject in Construction PROP sentences. I have argued that the subject of this type of clauses is a SemP, taking a *vP* as its complement. The subject within the subject phrase is phonologically null, presumably an instance of generic PRO. The main reason for assuming that the subject is clausal in Construction PROP sentences, in turn containing an embedded null subject, is the fact that reflexives are fine. This means that the overt DP is in fact an embedded object. The head position, *v*, is filled by a null verb, which I have identified as a light verb. In the typical case this light verb is HAVE, but it could also be construed as GET, GIVE, PERCEIVE, TAKE, HOLD, and PUT. The verbs in question are almost exactly identical to the set of light verbs, from point of meaning analysed as PASSEPARTOUT VERBS, listed in Butt & Lahiri (2004:36). My proposal is that light verbs can indeed be null in Swedish, provided they are properly licensed and identified. Whether this suggestion holds for other languages and other types of constructions remains to be investigated.

I have argued that the assumed restriction against definite DPs in Construction PROP sentences is in fact a restriction against specific DP objects. This restriction holds for cases where the predicate is a stative HAVE, which cannot combine with specific DP objects. Specific DP objects can combine only with dynamic null predicates. I have proposed a system where the null elements are licensed and identified in the sense of Rizzi (1986).

In the last section I proposed that the preposition *med* ‘with’ typically corresponds to the light verb HAVE, though devoid of the verbal features hosted in *v*. By being prepositional it cannot head the projection occupying the subject position. This is the reason why an expletive *det* will have to be present in order to satisfy the EPP feature on the subject position. The ‘expletive’ *det* is chain-related to the SemP, which explains why the ‘with-phrase’ cannot raise across it.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## NOTES

1. The term ‘construction’ is used in a loose and non-technical sense. It is merely descriptive and has no theoretical status.
2. Example (2b) is taken from Källström (1993:214). Since English does not have the equivalent of the construction under discussion, the idiomatic translation of (2b) and subsequent examples include a verb, *have* in (2b), and the infinitival marker *att* ‘to’, both of which are not present in the glossing.
3. The relation between Construction PROP and the *med*-phrase ‘*with*-phrase’ in (3) has been recognised earlier in the literature, for instance by Faarlund (1977).
4. In a recent paper, Pereltsvaig (2006) has shown that similar constructions are found also in Russian (although she provides a different analysis of the construction). See also Källström (1993:241–246) for more cross-linguistic comparisons.
5. According to one of the anonymous reviewers the fourth difference between Construction NOM and Construction PROP seems not to be applicable to Danish. There might be other differences between the Mainland Scandinavian languages as well. In what follows the discussion will be based mainly on Swedish data.
6. It should be pointed out that there is no intonation break between the pronoun and the rest of the subject in (4a), which implies that *den nya professorn* does not have an apposition reading. If an intonation break is supplied between *hon* and *den nya professorn*, the result is that *den nya professorn* gets an appositional reading, hence presumably has a different structure.
7. An anonymous referee points out that the proposed analysis erroneously predicts that *\*den den nya bilen* (it.COMMON.DEF it.COMMON.DEF new car.COMMON.DEF) would be grammatical. It is true that *den* (it.COMMON.DEF) and *det* (it.NEUT.DEF) cannot be reduplicated, and that this calls for an explanation. I do not have a full answer to the question why this is the case, but the question is discussed in Josefsson (2006).
8. See Delsing (1993:134) on the proprial article and on the pronoun + proper name construction in Icelandic.
9. Platzack (2008) assumes that *that*-clauses used as subjects have a null pronominal element with a + neuter feature in its topmost projection.
10. Platzack (2004) bases his analysis on Ritter (1995), who suggests that the DP is dominated by a Person Phrase.
11. Josefsson (2006) suggests tentatively that the SemP could host classifier-like element such as *ämnet* (SUBSTANCE.NEUTER.DEF) ‘the substance’, which seems to be the source of neuter predicative agreement in sentences like *Ämnet olja är kladdig-t* (SUBSTANCE.NEUTER.DEF

oil is sticky-NEUT) ‘The substance oil is sticky’. Note that the noun *olja* ‘oil’ is lexically a common gender noun.

12. As pointed out many times in the literature though, there is a strong tendency for inanimate nouns and nouns denoting substances to carry the lexical gender feature neuter.
13. A common property of substance-denoting nouns, (complex) event nouns, and clauses is that they do not trigger agreement in the plural on predicative adjectives:

(i) Gräddes och mjölk är vit-t/\*vit-a

*cream and milk is white-NEUT/white-PL*

‘Cream and milk is white.’

(ii) Målning och läsning är trevlig-t/\*trevlig-a.

*painting and reading is nice-NEUT/nice-PL*

‘Reading and painting is nice.’

(iii) [Att Bo super] och [att Carl röker] är tråkig-t /\*tråkig-a.

*that Bo drinks and that Carl smokes is sad-NEUT/sad-PL*

‘It is sad that Bo drinks and that Carl smokes.’

Drawing on Grimshaw (1990), Josefsson (2006) argues that the lack of plural agreement in (i)–(iii) indicates that SUBSTANCES (as in (i)) and EVENTS/PROPOSITIONS (as in (ii) and (iii)) belong to the same semantic category (‘gender’), which is characterised by the lack of spatial boundaries.

14. The idea of a split between grammatical and semantic genders suggested in Josefsson (2006) is based on Teleman (1987). The important difference between the two analyses is that Teleman does not take into consideration the difference between the anaphoric and the deictic uses of *den* and *det*. This means that his system cannot describe the semantic difference between *den* and *det*, when these pronouns are used deictically.
15. An alternative solution is to assume that the DP argument of a predicative adjective is generated in the specifier of a PredP, as proposed in e.g. Bowers (2001). Since nothing in my proposal hinges on exactly where the argument of a predicative adjective is generated, I will not take a stand on this issue.
16. The distinction between lexical gender and semantic gender is proposed in Josefsson (1999). A similar split between the gender of the noun and the gender of the noun phrase is suggested in Dahl (2000:106). Dahl uses the term referential gender, instead of semantic gender.
17. An alternative worth considering is that the features hosted in the downstairs projection, i.e. NP in (5), could not percolate, and thus that the features of the upstairs projection, i.e. the SemP, would override any features further down in the tree. Independent evidence indicates that this is not the case; see Josefsson (2006) for more discussion.
18. An alternative explanation of the ungrammaticality of \**Fransk senap är gul-t* (French mustard is yellow-NEUT) could be that the adjective would block the reading of ‘unbounded substance’, since it would induce a kind reading where boundaries are assumed: ‘the French kind of mustard’ vs. ‘other kinds of mustard’. According to some speakers, a non-head-like *eko-* ‘ecological’ induces a similar kind of ungrammaticality: \**Ekosenap är gul-t*, which would be ungrammatical for the same reason; *eko-* would induce a kind reading, hence also presuppose boundaries.
19. The possibility that neuter agreement is default is discussed by Enger (2004), and dismissed, on good grounds.
20. This is also the position taken in Teleman et al. (1999, part 3:702–704). Malmgren (1990 [1984]:108) also points out that the subject seems to be a reduced (infinitival) clause.



21. The issue of reflexives inside DPs is, however, more complex. Attributive PPs containing a *med*-phrase ‘with-phrase’ or *utan*-phrase ‘without-phrase’ containing a reflexive pronoun, are fine:

- (i) *Kvinnan med sina barn försvann i lördags.*  
*woman.THE with REFL children disappeared in Saturday*  
 ‘The woman with her children disappeared last Saturday.’
- (ii) *Män utan sina mobiltelefoner är olyckliga*  
 men without REFL cell.phones are unhappy.  
 ‘Men without their cell phones are unhappy.’

As will be further developed in section 3, it seems that *med*- and *utan*-phrases, as exemplified in (i), are clausal. In traditional grammar only phrases consisting of *med* + DP + adverbial/predicative, such as *med sitt barn på ryggen* in (iii), have clausal properties (see Teleman et al. 1999, part 3:697).

- (iii) *En kvinna med sitt barn på ryggen kom gående på gatan.*  
*a woman with REFL child on back.THE came walking on street.THE*  
 ‘A woman with her child on her back came walking down the street.’

The use of reflexive pronouns is of course even more complex. See Lødrup (2007) for an extensive discussion.

22. The use of subjunctive *vore* ‘would be’ in Construction PROP sentences will be discussed in more detail in section 2.3. It should also be pointed out that nominative is the default case in Swedish (as opposed to English and, to a certain extent, Danish). Only a nominative form of a pronoun is grammatical in the subject position. Thus, (10) clearly indicates the presence of an accusative case assigner preceding the pronoun *henne*.
23. An anonymous reviewer points out that a construction type resembling or identical to Construction PROP is found in German, although it is not the predicative agreement that is of interest, but the case features on the DP:

- (i) *Der Mann zum Frühstück wäre super.*  
*THE.MASC.NOM man for breakfast would.be super*  
 ‘To have the man for breakfast would be super.’
- (ii) *Den Mann zum Frühstück wäre super.*  
*THE.MASC.ACC man for breakfast would.be super*  
 ‘To have the man for breakfast would be super.’

As (i) and (ii) show, there is a choice between the nominative form, *der Mann*, and the accusative, *den Mann*. The fact that accusative case on the DP is an option supports the proposed idea of a null verbal case assigner, but the possibility of using nominative case shows that the issue is more intricate. To what extent this piece of data, along with other German variants of the construction provided by the anonymous reviewer, has bearing on Swedish cannot, for reasons of time and space, be explored in this paper. However, it is evident that a cross-linguistic investigation of the phenomenon is highly desirable.

24. The sentences in (12) could be reinterpreted in such a way that the PPs within the subject are understood as attributives. If for example *medhjälpare vid julen* in (12a) is construed as a DP with *medhjälpare* as the head noun and *vid julen* as an attributive, this example is impeccable. This is expected from the analysis.

25. Telemann et al. (1999, part 3:344) point out that a paraphrase of the subject in constructions of the type discussed here may involve a verb with little meaning, for example *ha* ‘have’, *få* ‘get’, and *ge* ‘give’. Although the term ‘light verb’ is not mentioned in this work, the concept seems to be similar.
26. An argument supporting this claim, pointed out by an anonymous referee, concerns the impossibility of a split time reference. Consider (i):

(i) Mässling som barn är farligt i vuxen ålder.  
*measles as child is dangerous.NEUT in adult age*

The proposed analysis predicts that (i) cannot have distinct time reference, i.e. it cannot mean ‘To have had the measles as a child is dangerous when one is an adult’. This prediction is borne out; this meaning is not available, even though it would be the natural interpretation from a pragmatic point of view.

27. It should be pointed out that it is only sentential negation that is ruled out in the subject, not ‘constituent negation’, i.e. negation that takes scope over the noun phrase only.
28. Thanks to Valeria Molnár for providing me with this example.
29. A sentence like (i) is also acceptable:

(i) Till Stockholm blir alldeles för dyr-t.  
*to Stockholm will.be far too expensive-NEUT*  
 ‘It will be far too expensive to go to Stockholm.’

Presumably, (i) contains a null light verb GO.

30. The idea that light verbs encode basic human activities, acts, and experiences motivates grouping them together and is what makes them different cognitively/semantically from tense, modal, and aspectual auxiliaries.
31. Experiencer DPs seem to have a different syntactic role; in examples such as *Ida betraktade bilden* ‘Ida watched the picture’ the DP object *bilden* ‘the picture’ does not play the role of Event measurer. Hence we would expect that a null SEE/PERCEIVE would be able to combine with a definite, specific DP. However, it seems as though a null SEE/PERCEIVE requires heavier licensing than a stative HAVE (see 2.4 for more discussion on the licensing and identification of the null elements in Construction PROP sentences). Thus, (i) is not straightforwardly ungrammatical, but marginal:

(i) ??Henne ensam på lastbilsflaket var förfärlig-t.  
*her alone on truck+platform.THE was terrible-NEUT*

In my view, (ii) is much better, maybe because the null SEE/PERCEIVE is identified by the noun *syn* ‘sight’.

(ii) Henne ensam på lastbilsflaket var en förfärlig syn.  
*her alone on truck+platform.THE was a terrible sight*  
 ‘To see her alone on the truck platform was a terrible sight.’

However, since the predicative in (ii) is a noun phrase, *en förfärlig syn*, I do not have conclusive evidence that the subject in (ii) is headed by a SemP with a neuter feature in its head.

32. Enger (2004) mentions this restriction against definite DPs in Construction NOM and PROP, but does not seem to separate definiteness from the concept of specificity: ‘One may wonder why . . . it is the case that the more specified the subject is, the more likely ordinary agreement is. . . . The more specified the controller is, the more individualised

it is, and the more likely it is that the controller refers to an entity that is high on the continuum [of individuation]' (p. 24).

33. The idea that infinitival tense is dependent on the matrix tense in the constructions discussed here does not imply that infinitival tense is always identical to that of the matrix, even though this seems to be the case here.
34. It is reasonable to assume that the temporal interpretation of infinitives takes place by way of the checking of tense features in  $T^\circ$ . I have argued that the clausal subject is a  $vP$ , and not a  $TP$ , which means that checking in a  $T^\circ$  node cannot take place. However, it is commonly assumed that  $v^\circ$  too carries tense features. I assume that a temporal interpretation can also take place via those features.
35. I have restricted the discussion of Construction PROP sentences to cases where the predicative is an AP. As pointed out in note 31, also predicative NPs can be used in this construction:

- (i) Honom i en sportbil vore en läcker syn.  
*him in a sports.car would.be a tasty sight*  
 'To see him in a sports car would be a tasty sight.'

In (i) the noun *syn* 'sight' seems to identify the null verb in the clausal subject as SEE/PERCEIVE. However, not even this type of 'heavy' licensing seems to be enough to identify a single pronominal DP in the subject:

- (ii) \*Honom vore en läcker syn.  
*him would.be a tasty sight*

36. Note that the second *med* in (47g) could be exchanged for *tillsammans med* 'together with', which indicates that it is a different preposition, possibly with a simpler structure.
37. That PPs may have a lexico-functional projection on top, a  $pP$ , has been suggested in e.g. Ramchand & Svenonius (2004).
38. The PP in (49) could probably be analysed as a small clause as well. The exact nature of the XP complement of *med* is not crucial for my analysis.
39. Falk (1987:1) shows that locative PPs are (marginally) acceptable in a sentence-initial position:

- (i) I gräset kan finnas ormar.  
*in grass.THE can be snakes*  
 'There might be snakes in the grass.'

The locative PPs in question are ungrammatical in the canonical subject position:

- (ii) \*?Säkerligen kan i gräset finnas ormar.  
*surely can in grass.THE be snakes*

Sentences like (ii), combined with the fact that the DP, *ormar* in (i), is subject to the definiteness constraint indicate that there is a null expletive in the subject position in (i), corresponding to overt *det* 'it':

- (iii) I gräset kan det finnas ormar.  
*in grass.THE can it be snakes*  
 'There might be snakes in the grass.'

Thus, sentences such as (i) and (ii) do not show that Swedish can have PP subjects, but presumably that null expletive subjects are (marginally) acceptable in Swedish.

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