Scandinavian pancake sentences revisited

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This paper defends the analysis of Scandinavian 'pancake sentences' as semantic or referential agreement (Enger 2004). Alternative analyses assuming that pancake sentences are to be analysed as syntactic agreement (Josefsson 2009), have some drawbacks. Notably, the distinction between different kinds of gender is not well motivated; the connection between different uses of the neuter is lost, and the use of 'light verbs' and of invisible elements is problematic. The referential agreement analysis, in combination with the Agreement Hierarchy, yields diachronic predictions that turn out to be correct; the syntactic analysis does not yield anything equivalent. Furthermore, the agreement pattern for very 'general' nouns follows more naturally under the referential agreement analysis.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The problem − and three solutions

Sentences (1) and (2) exemplify a classical problem in Scandinavian grammar: How do we account for the 'unexpected' use of the singular neuter on the adjective?[1]

(1) Pannekak-er   er god-t.   (Norwegian Bokmål and Nynorsk)
     Pancake.F-PL is good-N.SG
     'Pancakes is good.'

(2) Vodka   er sun-t.   (Norwegian Bokmål and Nynorsk)
     Vodka.M is healthy-N.SG
     'Vodka is healthy.'

These sentences may be compared with (3) and (4), which show the 'expected' agreement pattern, in that the predicative agrees with the subject in gender and number, the way Scandinavian predicatives usually do.

(3) Pannekak-ene   er   god-e.   (Norwegian Bokmål and Nynorsk)
     pancake.F-DEF.PL are good-PL
     'The pancakes are good.'

(4)   Vodka-en   er sunn   (Norwegian Bokmål and Nynorsk)
      vodka-DEF.SG(M) is healthy.C.SG
      'The vodka is healthy.'

Examples such as (1) and (2), which have been referred to as 'pancake sentences', are common and grammatical in all three mainland Scandinavian languages, Danish, Norwegian and Swedish. In the current literature, the use of neuter form of the predicative in (1) and (2) is generally seen as agreement (and not as disagreement). Broadly, there are three different lines of account for this example of agreement:

   (A)   Default (e.g. Hellan 1986; Corbett 2006:150, 223).
   (B)   Semantic/'referential' agreement (e.g. Widmark 1966; Knudsen 1973:40; Teleman, Hellberg & Andersson 1999:344; Enger 2004).
   (C)   Syntactic agreement. In one version of this view, the neuter form of the predicative is used because the subject in (1) and (2) is underlyingly the object of a verb that has been deleted (e.g. Faarlund 1977; Faarlund, Lie & Vannebo 1997:767).

The purpose of this paper is to defend the referential agreement analysis (B) and show its advantages over the syntactic agreement analysis (C), even in Josefsson's (2009) recent and insightful version of the latter. The details of these alternatives are further explicated in Section 1.3, but we first look at the mainland Scandinavian gender system(s).

1.2 The Scandinavian gender systems

The gender systems of the mainland Scandinavian languages are similar in many respects, but different in some (see e.g. Braunmüller 2000). In 'standard' Danish, Norwegian and Swedish, gender is neutralised in the plural (as in German). In the singular, Norwegian can have three 'lexical' genders, masculine, feminine and neuter, on determiners and on certain adjectives. Compare examples (5)–(8):

(5)   Ei-n gut   er lit-en.   (Norwegian Nynorsk)
      a-M   boy(M) is small-M

(6)   Ei-n sykkel er lit-en.   (Norwegian Nynorsk)
      a-M   bike(M) is small-M

(7)   Ei   jent-e   er lit-a.   (Norwegian Nynorsk)
      a.F girl-INDEF.SG(F) is small-F

(8)   Ei-t hus   er lit-e.   (Norwegian Nynorsk)
      a-N   house(N) is small-N

By contrast, Swedish has two genders on determiners and adjectives, usually referred to as common (or uter) and neuter, compare (9)–(12):

(9) E-n pojke är lite-n.   (Swedish)
    a-C boy(C) is small-C

(10) E-n cykel är lite-n.   (Swedish)
    a-C bike(C) is small-C

(11) E-n flicka är lite-n.   (Swedish)
    a-C girl(C) is small-C

(12) Ett hus är lite-t.   (Swedish)
    a-N house(N) is small-N

When it comes to personal pronouns, the situation is different. In Swedish, there are four personal pronouns in the third person singular. Reference to male humans is usually made with the pronoun *han* 'he', to female humans with *hon* 'she'. Inanimate nouns that take the determiner *en* (i.e. those that belong to the common gender) are usually referred to with *de-n* 'it-C'; inanimate nouns that take *ett* (i.e. those that belong to the neuter gender) are usually referred to with *det* 'it.N'. Compare the noun–pronoun pairs in (13)–(16):

(13) pojk-en – han   (Swedish)
    boy-DEF.SG(C) – he

(14) flick-an – hon   (Swedish)
    girl-DEF.SG(C) – she

(15) cykel-n – de-n   (Swedish)
    bike-DEF.SG(C) – it-C

(16) hus-et – de-t   (Swedish)
    house-DEF.SG(N) – it-N

The situation is the same in Danish and Norwegian Bokmål as in Swedish, even if the concrete pronouns differ. By contrast, in Norwegian Nynorsk, there are in principle as many genders on pronouns as on determiners (three), and whatever gender the noun has on the determiner will also show up on the pronoun. Thus, both a boy and a bike will be referred to by using *han* 'he'. In other words, there is in principle no personal pronoun *den* in Norwegian Nynorsk.

    Agreement is never quite as simple as this, though. One complication has to do with sentences such as examples (17) and (18), which I have constructed in Norwegian Nynorsk, but analogous examples could be found in Norwegian Bokmål, Swedish and Danish.

(17) Han møtte ei-n unge.   Ho   sa   hei.   (Norwegian Nynorsk)
      he *met* *a-M* *child(M)* *she* *said* *hi*
      'He met a child. She said hi.'

(18) Ho møtte ei-t fjols.   Han sa   hei.   (Norwegian Nynorsk)
      she *met* *a-N* *fool(N)* *he*   *said* *hi*
      'She met a fool. He said hi.'

Many scholars would refer to the use of *ho* in (17) and *han* in (18) as 'semantic agreement'. That term may, however, be slightly unfortunate. The choice of *ho* in (17) and *han* in (18) is controlled by the sex of the referent, not by the semantics of the nouns *unge* 'child' and *fjols* 'fool', respectively. The fact that *fjols* is a neuter noun would presumably have to be accounted for by the observation that nouns denoting persons in a derogatory and downgrading way are often neuter in Norwegian (e.g. Trosterud 2001:36); *fjols* is rather derogatory. The choice of the pronoun *han* in (18) cannot be due to this semantically-based gender assignment rule, then, but to the properties of the referent. Similarly, nouns that denote persons of unspecified sex are usually masculine in Norwegian; the use of *ho* in (17) cannot be due to this semantically-based gender assignment rule. For reasons like these, I shall follow Dahl (2000a) in using the terms 'referential' rather than 'semantic' agreement.

1.3 Major differences between the referential agreement analysis (B) and the syntactic agreement analysis (C)

Not every difference between the referential agreement analysis (B) and the syntactic agreement analysis (C) can be commented upon here. The major differences relate to the view on agreement and gender.

To Enger (2004), who advocates the referential agreement analysis (B), and who follows Corbett (1991, 2006), pronominal gender is essentially the same thing as gender on attributive and predicative controllers.[2] That is, it is basically the same phenomenon at work in all the examples we have looked at, and different agreement effects that one and the same controller can have on different targets are explained by appeal to the Agreement Hierarchy (Corbett 1979, 2006). On this account, the Animacy Hierarchy (a.k.a. Individuation Hierarchy, see Sasse 1993) is also relevant. Subjects in pancake sentences are characterised by being inanimate or low in individuation, and that is their link to neuter agreement.

Under the referential agreement analysis (B), there is a reason why neuter should be possible with predicative adjectives and in personal pronouns. This has to do with the Agreement Hierarchy (Corbett 1979, 2006:206–237). Figure 1 shows my version of the hierarchy, containing three 'pegs' for three different kinds of agreement controllers.
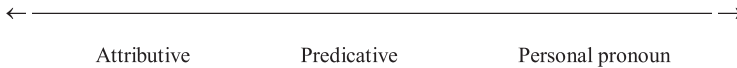
← —————————————————————————————— →

Attributive   Predicative   Personal pronoun

Figure 1. The Agreement Hierarchy, based on Corbett (2006:207), simplified.

For any controller that permits alternative agreements, the likelihood of referential (semantic) agreement will rise monotonically as we move towards the right along the Agreement Hierarchy (Corbett 2006:207). So if referential agreement is possible on the predicative, it will be possible on the personal pronoun too, but not necessarily the other way around. Importantly, gender agreement is subject to the Agreement Hierarchy, whether it shows itself on attributes, predicatives or pronouns.

My simplified version of the hierarchy differs from Corbett's original in that the relative pronoun is not included here. The relative pronoun is excluded because the Norwegian word *som*, traditionally referred to as a relative pronoun, is probably better seen as a subjunction (e.g. Faarlund et al. 1997:25; Lie 2008), and those words that are now seen as relative pronouns do not belong in any but the most formal (perhaps even obsolescent) versions of written Bokmål.

By contrast, for Josefsson (2009), who follows Teleman (1987), and who advocates syntactic agreement (C), two basically independent entities are involved:

[T]he 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. 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* 'itBOUNDED ENTITY' and *det* 'itUNBOUNDED ENTITY' represent the four semantic genders in Swedish. 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. Josefsson (2009:40; emphasis added here, footnotes left out)

Corbett (2006:21–22) makes the following statement:

> The question as to whether agreement is only a local phenomenon is rarely asked. Opposing views are stated, almost as facts, with little discussion. There is a divide here, though by no means an absolute one, between those who have treated agreement as a prime focus of study as opposed to those who come to it as one of a set of syntactic phenomena to be accounted for. The former ... typically assume that the feature values of anaphoric pronouns are determined by agreement mechanisms. ... On the other side, those who come to agreement as just one syntactic phenomenon of many often assume that it is a local phenomenon, and so exclude examples like (*Mary . . . she*). This is a convenient delineation for syntax, but we shall see evidence to question it. ... there is no one point at which agreement phenomena can be neatly divided into two in a principled way.

This view will be supported in this paper.

Enger (2004) presents arguments against C, in particular against the deletion analysis. Josefsson (2009) accepts much of this criticism, but argues that many of the problems may be solved by using Butt's (2003, 2010) concept of 'light verbs'. Josefsson's paper clearly represents real progress in a difficult area; for example, she disentangles specificity and definiteness in a way that Enger did not manage. In terms of the tripartite division of approaches to pancake sentences above, Josefsson carries on the syntactic agreement analysis (C), sharing Faarlund's (1977) view that the agreement pattern in (1) and (2) above is 'really' ordinary syntactic agreement:

> 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. (Josefsson 2009:38)

In brief, Josefsson's (2009:35, 38–40) claim is that the neuter in pancake sentences such as (1) and (2) is to be accounted for by a 'null neuter element' which is contained in the topmost XP (or NP, in more old-fashioned terms) of the subject phrase.

1.4 Contributions of the present paper

When a problem has become a classic, the way pancake sentences have (recall Section 1.1 above), it is usually a tricky one, and so may merit extended discussion. An additional reason for pursuing the Scandinavian pancake sentences in particular, however, is that there are different research traditions behind the different analyses. In brief, Enger (2004) borrows much from Corbett's (1979, 1991, 2006)

typologically-inspired work on gender and agreement and he borrows some ideas from functionalist approaches, while Josefsson is inspired by Teleman (1987) and minimalism. There is a difference in the view on agreement (whether it can be split neatly according to targets) and in the view on 'semantic agreement' (see Section 1.3 above); in my view, to analyse an agreement phenomenon as referential or semantic is fairly standard. Such differences in basic premises may make the discussion difficult, but hopefully also more interesting, from a theoretical point of view.

The present paper brings forward the following three new arguments in the debate:

- In diachrony, referential (semantic) agreement develops first with pronominal targets, and extends only later to targets higher on the Agreement Hierarchy (Section 4).
- Referential (semantic) agreement can be possible on predicative targets with nouns that have a very general meaning (Section 5), just as we would expect in a semantic account.
- Structures with an overt pronominal element in the topmost part of the NP that have been invoked as parallel to pancake sentences in Swedish do not exist in Norwegian, but pancake sentences exist in Norwegian nevertheless (Section 7).

Further, I argue that if gender on attributive and predicative targets and gender on anaphoric pronouns really were two distinct kinds of grammatical features, they would not be expected to correlate as much as they do (Section 2); splitting up the two kinds of gender is not well supported by the facts (Sections 3, 6). I suggest that the evidence for a phonetically null neuter element controlling neuter agreement on predicative adjectives in pancake sentences is exactly the neuter agreement on these predicative adjectives – in other words, that there is no independent justification for the putative explanation; the explanandum is used as an explanans (Section 7).

2. THE CONNECTION BETWEEN NEUTER AND NEUTER

To begin with, there is a connection between different uses of the neuter that seems to be lost under the syntactic agreement analysis (C). Consider first examples (19) and (20):

(19) Vodka,   det drikker Peter.   (Norwegian Bokmål)
     vodka(M) it.N drinks Peter
     'Vodka, that Peter drinks.'

(20) Vodka   er god-t   å drikke.   (Norwegian Bokmål and Nynorsk)
     vodka(M) is good-N.SG to drink
     'Vodka is good to drink./It's good to drink vodka.'

As already noted above, Josefsson (2009) is inspired by Teleman (1987), who argues that there are two gender systems in Swedish. One is semantic and found mainly with pronouns, and the other is grammatical, found in the NP; the two are claimed to be almost completely independent of each other (Teleman 1987:108). On this view, the neuter is meaningful for pronouns, but, apparently, not for predicative adjectives, and clearly not inside the NP. That is why the neuter in (2) or (20) would be accounted for differently from the neuter in (19); they are seen as different things.

And yet, if these neuters are so different, we would not expect them to correlate, but they usually do. Consider first examples (21)–(24):

(21) Vodka   er god-t,   og de-t/*de-n drikker jeg gjerne
     vodka(M) is good-N.SG and it-N/it-C drink   I   with.pleasure
     til pøls-er.   (Norwegian Bokmål)
     to sausage.FIN-PL
     'Vodka is good. I drink it with pleasure with sausages.'

(22) Denne   vodka-en   er god,   og de-n/*de-t drikker
     DEM.C.SG vodka-DEF.SG(M) is good-C.SG and it-C/it-N   drink
     jeg gjerne   til pøls-er.
     I   with.pleasure to sausage.FIN-PL   (Norwegian Bokmål)
     'This vodka is good. I drink it with pleasure with sausages.'

(23) Pannekak-er er god-t,   og de-t er deilig   etter
     pancake.F-PL is good-N.SG and it-N is delicious after
     ertesuppe.   (Norwegian Bokmål and Nynorsk)
     pea.soup
     'Pancakes is good, and it is delicious after pea soup'

(24) Mors   pannekak-er er god-e, og de er deilig-e   med
     Mother's pancake.F-PL are good-PL and they are delicious-PL with
     blåbærsyltetøy.   (Norwegian Bokmål)
     blueberry.jam
     'Mother's pancakes are good, and they are delicious with blueberry jam.'

The difference in the pronouns in the English translations – *it* in (23), *they* in (24) – is meant to show that in (23), reference is made to pancakes as 'stuff', and in (24) to a specific set of pancakes. Consider next the ungrammaticality of (25)–(26):

(25) *Pannekak-er er god-t,   og de er deilig-e   etter
     pancake.F-PL are good-N.SG and they are delicious-PL after
     ertesuppe.   (Norwegian Bokmål)
     pea.soup
     'Pancakes are good, and they are delicious after pea soup.'

(26) *Vodka   er sun-t,   og de-n drikk-er jeg gjerne
  vodka(M) is healthy-N.SG and it-C drink   I   with.pleasure
  til pøls-er.   (Norwegian Bokmål)
  to sausage.FIN-PL
  'Vodka is healthy, and I drink it with pleasure with sausages.'

The ungrammaticality of (25) should be contrasted with the grammaticality of (23), (26) with (21) and (2).

In examples (21)–(24), the neuter form of the predicative adjective correlates with neuter on the pronoun. If two things are unrelated, we do not expect them to correlate so systematically. If (25)–(26) were acceptable, they would count in favour of an analysis by which gender is 'split' in two, but they are not.

'Splitting' gender into one semantic and one non-semantic part implies, in my view, describing one phenomenon as two. Such splitting has the drawback that the Scandinavian lexical gender system emerges as completely asemantic – unlike EVERY other gender system we know, for which the claim of a 'semantic core' holds (Corbett 1991:8). In Scandinavian, as in ALL other languages attested so far, nouns denoting humans are assigned their gender predominantly on semantic grounds. NO language is known in which the 'gender subsystems' are completely independent, see Dahl (2000b), yet that is what Teleman and Josefsson appear to claim for Swedish. We return to the semantics of gender in Section 6.

According to the referential (semantic) agreement analysis, by contrast, the claim is that we are dealing with what is essentially one phenomenon; the different kinds of gender are expected to correlate broadly. Already Widmark (1966:111) says that if an anaphoric pronoun can be thought of as a manifestation of the inherent gender of the noun (a traditional view in Scandinavian grammar), there is no reason to explain the predicative adjective differently.[3]

According to the referential agreement analysis (B) – and, for that matter, also to the default agreement analysis (A) – there is no ordinary syntactic agreement in examples (1) and (2). Also the neuter form of the predicative would be very unlikely to occur with a non-neuter form of the pronoun, recall (25) and (26).

This has to do with the Agreement Hierarchy (Section 1.3 above); a language that allows semantic/referential agreement on the predicative adjective while disallowing it on the pronoun is simply ruled out. That is, the referential agreement analysis (B) is restrictive, and in a way that fits the realities on the ground. If we assume that gender is something entirely different on pronouns than on predicatives, we shall have to do some additional 'patching up' in order to explain why these effects, which line so well up with the hierarchy, are found.

3. THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN AGREEMENT ON PREDICATIVE ADJECTIVES AND ON PRONOUNS IS NOT SHARP

My point is not to deny the differences between the agreement on predicative adjectives and on pronouns. The claim is only that the difference is a gradual one, so that drawing a sharp border-line will entail arbitrariness. This is in line with Corbett (2006:229):

> Whichever way we attempt to split agreement into two phenomena, we do not thereby solve the problem of the distribution of agreement options. . . . Most importantly, agreement choices can be found at the extreme ends of the Agreement Hierarchy.
>
> Attributive modifiers must surely come within the domain of local agreement [unlike 'anaphoric agreement', that is], if such a distinction is drawn, and yet we can find semantic agreement here . . . On the other hand, the personal pronoun would be expected to fall under anaphoric agreement, and yet syntactic agreement can be found here . . . I conclude that there are no good grounds for dividing agreement domains into two.

3.1 Syntactic agreement in the pronominal domain

Corbett's view fits the Scandinavian facts. 'Syntactic agreement' is possible also on pronouns, as the following noun–pronoun pairs illustrate:

(27) a. barn-et – de-t   (Norwegian Bokmål, syntactic agreement)
          child-DEF.SG(N) – it-N
      b. barn-et – han/hun   (Norwegian Bokmål, referential agreement)
          child-DEF.SG(N) – he/she
(28) a. vittn-et – de-t   (Swedish, syntactic agreement)
          witness-DEF.SG(N) – it-N
      b. vittn-et – hon/han   (Swedish, referential agreement)
          witness-DEF.SG(N) – she/he

3.2 Referential agreement inside the NP

Conversely, 'referential agreement' is possible also within the noun phrase. We first turn to a construction that is found especially in the spoken language. It is difficult to give an idiomatic, English translation of examples like these, so my suggestions are tentative.

(29) Han   gut-en . . . .   (Norwegian Nynorsk)
      he   boy-DEF.SG(M)
      'That boy, he . . .'

(30) Hun   lærer-en . . .   (Norwegian Bokmål)
    she.NOM teacher-DEF.SG(M)
    'That teacher, she . . . '

Examples (29)–(30) indicate, in my view, that the distinction between referential and syntactic agreement does not warrant drawing a sharp distinction between inside and outside the NP (or, for that matter, at ANY one particular point in the Agreement Hierarchy, see Section 1.3 above).

    The issue is tricky, however. There are good reasons to assume that the apparently similar (31) is not one NP but two in Swedish (Josefsson 2009), and likewise, that (32) is not one NP but two in Danish (Sten Vikner, p.c.) .

(31) Hon   professor-n . . .   (Swedish)
    she.NOM professor-DEF.SG(C)
    'That professor, she . . . . '

(32) Ham   professor-en . . .   (Danish)
    he.ACC professor-DEF.SG(C)
    'That professor, he . . . '

In those languages, one may insert a definite determiner after the pronoun, compare (33) and (34).

(33) Ham   de-n   professor . . .   (Danish)
    he.ACC that-C professor(C)
    'That professor, he . . . '

(34) Hon   de-n   professor-n . . .   (Swedish)
    she.NOM that-C professor-DEF.SG(C)
    'That professor, she . . . '

However, as shown by Johannessen (2008:173 et passim), in Norwegian (and Icelandic), the determiner, in her terms (pronoun in my terms), is internal to the NP, while in Danish and Swedish, it is not.[4] In Norwegian (as in Icelandic), the pronoun cannot co-occur with other preposed definite determiners, and Johannessen concludes that nothing

> forces us to conclude that the PDD [pronominal distal demonstrative, i.e. the pronoun] should be DP-external. On the contrary, the fact that the PDD and the preposed definite determiner never co-occur indicates that they occupy the same syntactic position. (Johannessen 2008:179)

Thus, examples like (29)–(30) above do not necessarily carry over from Norwegian to Danish and Swedish, since they are one phrase in Norwegian and not in Swedish and Danish. But neither do analyses of Danish and Swedish, where two phrases may be assumed, necessarily carry over to Norwegian.

It is, admittedly, unusual to analyse (29)–(30) as referential or semantic agreement. In the literature, a pronoun such as *han* in (29) is often referred to as a pronominal psychological demonstrative. Still, the reason for choosing *han*, *ho* in pre-nominal position in (29)–(30) is the same as that for choosing *han*, *hon* in examples such as (35)–(36):

(35) Gut-en,   han går   no.   (Norwegian Nynorsk)
     boy-DEF.SG(M) he   leaves now
     'The boy, he is leaving now.'

(36) Professor-n,   hon går   nu.   (Swedish)
     professor-DEF.SG(C) she leaves now
     'The professor, she is leaving now.'

In both cases, the use of *han*, *hon* has to do with the sex of the referent.

We also find a second, much more marginal type of referential agreement inside the NP in Norwegian Bokmål:

(37) ei   venn   (Norwegian Bokmål; Korsæth 2010, Enger 2013)
     a.F friend(M)

The noun phrase in (37), with a feminine determiner preceding a masculine noun, is clearly a marginal example in Norwegian. When I was first made aware of it, my immediate reaction was to call it wrong; many colleagues have reacted similarly, presumably because (37) conflicts with intuitions of many speakers. But this and similar examples do occur in web texts (see Enger 2013), if only infrequently, so presumably, they do not conflict with the intuitions of all speakers. Korsæth (2010), the first to draw attention to examples like these, says simply that such sentences smack of semantic agreement. While examples such as (37) are marginal in Norwegian and not relevant at all for Swedish, they support the conclusion to be drawn from examples (29)–(30): Referential (semantic) agreement inside the NP is possible in Norwegian.

The same is the case for Danish, as a third kind of examples show. Compare (38) and (39), where the usually common nouns *mælk* 'milk' and *vodka* 'vodka' are used with neuter agreement:

(38) I denne artikel vil vi beskrive, hvordan du sørger   for, at   di-t
     in this   article will we describe how   you make.sure for that your-N
     barn   får   al-t **det mælk**, som det behøver.   (Danish)
     child(N) gets all-N it-N milk(C) that it-N needs
     'In this article, we will describe how you make sure that your child
     will get all the milk that it needs.'
                 (http://www.babyklar.dk/amme/hvor-ofte-skal-jeg-amme.html)

(39) Og hvad med **det** **vodka** som er tilbage i flaske-n? (Danish)
     and what with that-N vodka(C) that is back in bottle-DEF.SG(C)
     'And what about the vodka that is left in the bottle?'
                                (http://www.saltvandsforum.dk/viewtopic.php?f=1&t=14535)

See also Hansen & Heltoft (2011:232).

 While (29)–(32) concerned sex, (38)–(39) have to do with individuation. Examples like (38) and (39) are, to the best of my knowledge, ruled out in both Swedish and Norwegian, at least in the standard languages. However, the point is that the neuter form of the article is used together with a mass reading in these Danish examples, just as in the Norwegian examples such as (2) and (4), presented at the outset and repeated here as (40) and (41), respectively, for the reader's convenience:

(40) Vodka er sun-t.   (Norwegian Bokmål and Nynorsk; = (2))
     vodka(M) is healthy-N.SG
     'Vodka is healthy.'

(41) Vodkaen   er sunn.   (Norwegian Bokmål and Nynorsk; = (4))
     vodka-DEF.SG(M) is healthy-C.SG
     'The vodka is healthy.'

The neuter correlates with 'stuff' reading, the common with a more individuated reading – whether inside the Danish NP, as in (38)–(39), or outside the Norwegian NP, as in (40)–(41).

 Under the syntactic agreement analysis (C), the opposition between Danish *det mælk* and *mælken* (and *det vodka* and *vodkaen*) should presumably not be semantic, since it is inside the NP. (There are no arguments for a two-phrase analysis of *det mælk* in (38) and *det vodka* in (39).)

 Admittedly, arguments based on (38) and (39) above are based on Danish data and do not necessarily carry over to the analysis of Norwegian and Swedish, but they are good arguments against the claim that gender inside the NP is asemantic – at least in Danish. Related Norwegian examples where mass-noun status would seem relevant for neuter agreement inside the NP are found in (42a, b):[5]

(42) a. Der er ikkje nok-a   steik å sjå.   (Norwegian Nynorsk)
        there is not any-F.SG steak(F) to see
        'There is not a steak in sight.'
     b. Du får ikkje nok-o   steik for ei krone. (Norwegian Nynorsk)
        you get not any-N.SG steak(F) for a.F krone
        'You will not get any steak for one Norwegian krone.'

These are examples where there is a real choice of agreement within the NP in Norwegian (42). The choice has to do with meaning; choosing neuter indicates that the usually 'common' controller is conceptualised as a mass, as something lower on the Animacy/Individuation Hierarchy, just as in the Danish examples (38) and

(39).This is referential agreement; it does not square with the claim that gender inside the NP does not have any meaning.

Consider now (43) and (44):

(43) De-n   ny-e   professor-en   er   lit-a.   Likevel har ho
     DEM-C new-DEF   professor-DEF.SG(M) is   small-F.SG still   she has
     ei-n   imponerande autoritet.   (Norwegian Nynorsk)
     an-M   impressive   authority(M)
     'The new professor is small. Still she has an impressive authority.'

(44) De-n   ny-e   professor-en   er   liten.   Likevel har han
     DEM-C new-DEF   professor-DEF.SG(M) is   small-M.SG still   he   has
     ei-n   imponerande autoritet.   (Norwegian Nynorsk)
     an-M   impressive   authority(M)
     'The new teacher is small. Still he has an impressive authority.'

If gender on pronouns is due to a mechanism different from the mechanism assigning gender to predicative adjectives, then *lita* and *ho* in (43) have to be accounted for by two entirely different mechanisms, as must *liten* and *han* in (44). That seems unappealing. These Nynorsk examples do not carry over to Swedish, admittedly, but the problem remains essentially the same in at least one fairly standard variety of Swedish, described in the *Swedish Academy Grammar* (Teleman et al. 1999:227):

(45) Alexander, som är de-n ny-e   närpolis-en,   är trevlig,
     Alexander who is the-C new-DEF.M local.police.officer-DEF.SG(C) is nice.C.SG
     men han är inte så duktig.   (Swedish)
     but he   is   not so skilful.C.SG
     'Alexander, who is the new local cop, is nice, but he is not so skilful.'

(46) Alexandra, som är de-n ny-a   närpolis-en
     Alexandra who is the-C new-DEF.F local.police.officer-DEF.SG(C)
     är trevlig, men hon är inte så duktig.   (Swedish)
     is nice.C.SG but she is   not so skilful.C.SG
     'Alexandra, who is the new local cop, is nice, but she is not so skilful.'

The point is simple: The choice of *han* depends on the same factor as the choice of *nye* – animacy and sex of the referent, and *nye* is an example of referential agreement inside the NP.[6]

We have now reviewed evidence from constructions restricted to Norwegian Nynorsk and Bokmål (in (29)–(30)), Bokmål (in (37)), Danish (in (38)–(39)), Nynorsk (in (42)) and Swedish (in (45)–(46)), which indicates that there can be referential agreement inside the NP. My conclusion is therefore that the distinction between referential and syntactic agreement does not warrant drawing a sharp distinction between inside and outside the NP (or, for that matter, at ANY one particular point in the Agreement Hierarchy).

As observed above, Corbett (2006:21–22, 228–230) argues against 'splitting' agreement, one of the main arguments being that agreement by means of anaphoric

pronouns is of the same kind as agreement with more 'canonical' targets. That is what I have argued in this section. A second argument for Corbett's view, relating to the Agreement Hierarchy and diachrony, is the topic of Section 4, after a brief excursus.

3.3 Excursus: Number behaves like gender

The possibility of referential agreement is not restricted to gender. It is also found on number:

(47) Det   søte   ekteparet   ser
     DEM-N.SG   *cute-DEF*   *married.couple-DEF.SG(N)*   *seem*
     lykkelige   ut.   (Norwegian Bokmål)
     happy-PL   *out*
     'The cute married couple seem happy.'

(48) *De   søte   ekteparet   ser
     DEM.PL   *cute-DEF*   *married.couple-DEF.SG(N)*   *seem*
     lykkelig   ut.   (Norwegian Bokmål)
     happy-SG   *out*
     'The married couple seems happy.'

The noun *ektepar* will, as a rule, take plural agreement on the predicative adjective, according to Vinje (2002: 217), from whom the example in (47) is taken. I have adapted the example somewhat. It is important to note that plural agreement on the demonstrative is, by contrast, clearly out, as shown in (48). It is the same factors behind the plural verb *seem* in the English translation of (47) as behind the plural adjective *lykkelige* in Norwegian. What (47)–(48) indicate is that referential (or semantic) agreement for number is subject to the same kind of possibilities and restrictions as for gender. Referential agreement is possible on predicatives, but not on attributive determiners, in a way that is compatible with the Agreement Hierarchy (Section 1.3 above). Thus the possibility of 'unexpected' agreement behaviour is not restricted to gender, and should therefore be subject to a more general analysis.[7]

4. THE AGREEMENT HIERARCHY AND DIACHRONY

Under the referential agreement analysis (B), there is a reason why neuter should be possible with predicative adjectives and in personal pronouns. The diagram representing the Agreement Hierarchy (introduced in Section 1.3 above) is repeated here for the reader's convenience:
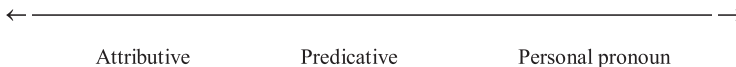
$$\longleftarrow \rule{12cm}{0.4pt} \longrightarrow$$

Attributive   Predicative   Personal pronoun

Figure 1. The Agreement Hierarchy, based on Corbett (2006:207), simplified.

The possibility for referential/semantic agreement will rise monotonically towards the right (Corbett 2006:207). The possibility of referential agreement on attributive determiners and pronouns was noted in Section 3. Such a possibility is, by the Agreement Hierarchy, less likely than referential agreement on the predicative, which again is less likely than referential agreement on the pronoun. That is indeed what we find in Scandinavian.

There is a diachronic point to be made here. By the Agreement Hierarchy combined with the referential agreement analysis, it is to be expected that referential agreement should be possible with pronouns EARLIER THAN with predicative adjectives. As Semplicini (2012:142) puts it, 'any change in a gender system towards a higher semanticity should have its starting point in the pronominal domain'. Again, that is what we find in Scandinavian. Already in Old Norse, in which pancake sentences appear to be categorically excluded, neuter pronouns can be used to make reference to non-neuter noun phrases. Nygaard (1905:81) presents a number of examples, only two are given here:

(49) hann bjó   í ey þeirri,   er   Þjótta heitir;
     he   live.PST in island(F).DAT.SG DEM.F.DAT.SG which Þjótta call.PRS
     þat   er   á   Hálogaland   (Old Norse)
     that-N.SG be.PRS.3SG on Hálogaland
     'He lived in an island(F) called Þjótta; that(N) is on Hálogaland'

(50) annan   sal   gerðu   þeir, þat
     another-M.ACC room(M) make.PST.3.PL they-M that-N.SG
     var   hǫrgr   (Old Norse)
     be.PRT.SG god.house
     'They made another(M) room; that (N) was the altar-room.'

In short, the diachronic development is as predicted by the default and the referential (semantic) agreement analyses (A, B), while the alternative, syntactic agreement analysis (C) makes no claim as to the diachronic development.

It is perhaps worth pointing out that there are parallels in other Germanic languages. Thus, De Vogelaer & De Sutter (2011:204) observe that in both English and Dutch,

> the dominant tendency in resemanticization processes appears to be the increasing usage of neuter pronouns to refer to non-neuter nouns, especially when these nouns are mass nouns.

This fits nicely with the referential agreement analysis (B).

5. NOUNS THAT HAVE A VERY GENERAL MEANING TRIGGER 'PANCAKE AGREEMENT'

An additional argument for the referential agreement analysis (B) concerns some facts that have so far not been addressed in the debate. The agreement pattern

for a couple of nouns with a very 'schematic' or general sense is shown in (51)–(53):

(51) E-n   ting   er sikker-t.   (Norwegian Bokmål)
     one-M thing(M) is certain-N.SG
     'One thing is for sure.'

(52) E-n   del   er positiv-t.   (Norwegian Bokmål)
     one-M part(M)   is positive-N.SG
     'Something is positive/good.'

(53) En   sak   är säker-t.   (Swedish)
     one.C thing(C) is certain-N.SG
     'One thing is for sure.'

(51)–(53) may be compared to (5) and (10), repeated here, respectively, as (54) and (55) for the reader's convenience:

(54) Ei-n   gut   er lit-en.   (Norwegian Nynorsk; = (5))
     a-M   boy(M)   is small-M

(55) E-n   cykel   är lite-n.   (Swedish; = (10))
     a-C   bike(C) is small-C

The point is that (51)–(53) illustrate the normal agreement pattern for the noun *ting* 'thing' and two near-synonyms in Norwegian and Swedish, (54) for normal masculines in Norwegian, and (55) for normal common-gender nouns in Swedish. The sentences in (51)–(53) show pancake agreement; given the gender of the controller, the problem is how to account for the 'unexpected' neuter on the predicative (recall Section 1.1 above), which at least in Norwegian seems quite standard. Faarlund et al. (1997:768) point out that the noun *del*, which normally means 'share, part', will induce the neuter form of the predicative only when used in a general or abstract sense, as illustrated in (51). Consider (51)–(53) above and (56)–(57):

(56) E-n   del   er god-t/??god.   (Norwegian Bokmål)
     one-M part(M)   is good-N.SG/good.C
     'Something is good.'

(57) E-n   del   av denne kak-a   er god/*god-t. (Norwegian Bokmål)
     one-M part(M)   of this.C cake-DEF.SG(F) is good.C/good-N.SG
     'One part of this cake is good.'

When used genuinely partitively, as in (57), the noun *del* 'part' takes ordinary syntactic agreement in line with its lexical gender (masculine) on the target, and when used with a more general (schematic) meaning, *del* takes referential agreement with neuter on the target. These facts follow naturally from an analysis in terms of referential (or semantic) agreement, as the gist of that analysis is that neuter agreement

in pancake sentences should be related to a low degree of individuation (Enger 2004; see Section 1.2 above). It is hard to see how a syntactic analysis would account for the observation that the very general noun *ting* 'thing' – and its near-synonym *sak* – and *del*, but ONLY when used in a sense nearly synonymous to *ting* and *sak* – should trigger pancake agreement in a way different from other nouns. Compare also (58)–(59):

(58) E-n   masse   er klar.   (Norwegian Bokmål)
     one-M mass(M) is ready.C   [mass = e.g. a dough]
     'A mass (dough) is ready.'

(59) E-n   masse   er klar-t.   (Norwegian Bokmål)
     one-M mass(M) is ready-N.SG
     'Much is ready/clear.'

Sceptics may ask how we can determine that a noun has a very general meaning. My answer would be that if nouns B, C and D normally imply A, but not necessarily the other way around, then A is more general than the others. In a taxonomic hierarchy, hyperonyms are more general than hyponyms. For example, *animal* is more general than *cairn terrier*, since the latter would normally imply the former, but not the other way around – a cairn terrier is by definition an animal, but an animal can be many other things than a cairn terrier. Furthermore, if B, C and D belong to different 'semantic fields', then A probably has a very general meaning. Thus, *ting* could be implied by *seng* 'bed', *inntektsskatt* 'income tax', *transformasjonsgrammatikk* 'transformational grammar', *pils* 'lager beer' and *hveteøl* 'wheat beer'. A hyperonym like *øl* 'beer' could be implied by *pils* and *hveteøl*, but not by nouns from other semantic fields, such as *seng*, *inntektsskatt*, *transformasjonsgrammatikk*. *Ting* can be implied by (or replace) most nouns that are low on the Animacy Hierarchy. That is why *ting* triggers neuter agreement, even though it is a masculine, lexically.

6. THE RELATION TO LEXICAL GENDER

Following Teleman (1987), Josefsson (2006, 2009) rejects the idea that lexical genders have any meaning. However, they both concede that Swedish nouns denoting human beings are as a rule not neuters, and that inanimates and masses tend to be neuter. In other words, nouns at the top of the Animacy Hierarchy tend to belong to the common gender, nouns at the bottom tend to belong to the neuter; this observation is valuable and not restricted to Swedish (see Faarlund et al. (1997:153–156) and Trosterud 2001 on Norwegian), and it does not support the conclusion that lexical gender has no meaning at all. Rather, it indicates that in parts of the lexicon, gender assignment is 'predominantly semantic', in Corbett's (1991) terminology. On the

whole, lexical gender clearly does have 'less meaning' than pronominal gender, but that is a difference in degree, and not in kind (see Dahl 2000a, b).

In fact, we can even find the relevance of the Individuation/Animacy Hierarchy reflected in some 'minimal pairs' of gender assignment. In Norwegian Bokmål, such pairs are well known and include *en gap* 'a jester, joker' (masculine) versus *et gap* 'fun' (neuter), *en fant* 'a vagabond/crook' versus *et fant* 'a trick', *en øl* 'a (glass of) beer' versus *et øl* 'a (kind of) beer' (see Faarlund et al. 1997:158). Conzett (2010) shows that such pairs are not as few as previously assumed; they show that exactly the same semantics can be at play in lexical and referential gender, thus undermining the 'splitting' approach.

Somewhat surprisingly, Josefsson (2009:66, footnote 16) finds Dahl's distinction between lexical and referential gender 'similar' to her own, whereas Dahl (2000a:106) is at pains to emphasise that

> [his distinction does NOT coincide with] that between semantic and nonsemantic gender: Whereas referential gender is in principle always semantic, lexical gender may be motivated by semantic and/or fomal [*sic*] factors or be assigned on an arbitrary, lexeme-specific basis.

Thus, Dahl is not saying that lexical gender has no meaning. In fact, Dahl (2000b:586f.) is explicitly critical towards an important aspect of Teleman's (1987) – and thereby Josefsson's – analysis:

> The empirical claim . . . is that the uter:neuter distinction is, in the words of Teleman (1987), 'basically semantics-free'. This is of course in direct contradiction to the generalization made by Aksenov . . . and quoted by Corbett (1991: 8) that all gender systems have a semantic core. As noted by Källström (1996), the claim about the non-semantic character of the uter:neuter distinction is in fact false.

I think it is fair to conclude that Dahl's view is more similar to, and compatible with, the referential agreement analysis (B) than with the syntactic agreement analysis (C).

Let us return for a moment to the claim mentioned in Section 2, that neuter is 'a morphosyntactic feature associated with nouns . . . As such the neuter gender DOES NOT CARRY ANY meaning; there is simply no element of meaning shared by all neuter nouns' (Josefsson 2009:40; emphasis added). The claim that there is no element of meaning shared by all neuter nouns is probably correct, but it does not follow that the neuter gender does not carry any meaning. Consider, for illustration, a highly polysemous noun such as Norwegian *krone* 'crown', which can be used to denote a coin, the ornamental head dress worn by a monarch, and the top of a tree, among other things. Unless we posit a highly abstract *Gesamtbedeutung* (which may be both unfalsifiable and unlearnable), there is, presumably, no element of meaning shared by the various uses. Yet it does not follow that the noun *crown* does not have any

meaning.[8] An element of meaning shared by many neuter nouns, which recurs in the pancake sentences, is that of being low on the Animacy/Individuation Hierarchy.

7. THE USE OF LIGHT VERBS AND INVISIBLE ELEMENTS

As noted in Section 1.3 above, two central concepts used in Josefsson's (2009) revision of the syntactic agreement analysis (C) are 'light verbs' and an invisible feature. This section will explore these ideas.

The status of 'invisible' elements may trigger an almost everlasting debate, and there are many possible positions here. My claim is not that one cannot posit invisible elements; only that they must be established on independent grounds. One may talk of 'light verbs' where they can be observed, as does Butt (2003, 2010), mainly with South Asian examples. It is an entirely different matter to posit them where they cannot be observed, which is what Josefsson does in the context of Swedish and related languages.

Like Enger, Josefsson (2009:46) is skeptical about Faarlund's (1977) deletion analysis, according to which the use of the neuter form in (1) above was analysed as due to the use of the neuter in the underlying *å ete pannekaker er god-t* 'to eat pancakes is good-N', but, she says that 'we have no reason to assume that the verb is deleted; instead the verb is null, i.e. devoid of phonological features'. Now, whether the use of the neuter form is due to a verb that first was there and then was deleted (as Faarlund argued), or to an invisible verb that has been there all along (as Josefsson argues), is not necessarily a very significant difference, at least not to my mind. A more interesting similarity, pointed out by Wechsler (2011), is that both Josefsson and Faarlund assume a 'Silent Head Hypothesis', by which the head of the controlling element is not there. One of Enger's (2004:8) arguments against Faarlund's analysis was that it seemed 'somewhat suspicious that there are so many possible different sources of the derivation'. This point is accepted by Josefsson, but she thinks the criticism can be evaded by the concept of 'light verbs':

> 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. (Josefsson 2009:52)

It is also claimed that 'the identity of the null light verb may remain underdetermined, thus "oscillating" between different readings' (Josefsson 2009:50).

To sum up, the list of light verbs has been left open, even language-specifically for Swedish, AND the identity of the light verb MAY remain underdetermined OR EVEN 'oscillate'. Taken together, these moves deprive of empirical content the claim that the number of verbs that could fit in is restricted. What remains is not a very strong alternative to referential or semantic agreement. In fact, Josefsson

> [does] 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) [*bilarna är gröna – husen är gröna*], 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'. (Josefsson 2009:38)

On this account, pancake sentences are just like other sentences involving straightforward syntactic agreement, apparently. The problem with this claim is that in pancake sentences, the agreement is with an invisible element, in sentences involving straightforward agreement (like *bilarna är gröna* 'the cars are green'), it is not.

There are further problems here. We first turn to examples (60) and (61), taken from Knudsen (1973:40):

(60) Sjalu   menn(,   de)   er   fæl-e.   (Norwegian Bokmål)
     jealous husband.PL they are awful-PL
     'Jealous husbands(, they) are awful.'

(61) Sjalu   menn(,   det)   er   fæl-t.   (Norwegian Bokmål)
     jealous husband.PL it.N is awful-N.SG
     'Jealous husbands is awful/(It) is awful with jealous husbands.'

Josefsson's claim is that an invisible feature determines the agreement pattern on the adjective, but one and the same noun phrase, apparently, is compatible with both plural in (60) and neuter singular in (61) on the adjective. The claim is that

> the topmost XP of the subject phrase contains a null neuter element. This ACCOUNTS FOR the neuter predicative agreement; hence the idea of default agreement or semantic agreement can be dismissed. (Josefsson 2009:35; emphasis added)

The problem with this claim is simply that it is not a theory-independent empirical observation that the topmost XP contains a null neuter element. THE ARGUMENT FOR POSTULATING THE NULL ELEMENT IS EXACTLY AND ONLY THAT WHICH THE NULL ELEMENT IS TO ACCOUNT FOR. In other words, this is not an explanation, but a re-phrasing of an observation, formulated as an explanation of the very same observation. Given Occam's razor, the onus of argument for the null neuter element rests on those who wish to posit it, but convincing evidence remains to be produced.

A more technical objection is that the slot within which the null element is to reside is justified (by Josefsson 2009:49) with reference to the Swedish construction in (62):

(62) Hon   den   nya   professorn.
     she   DEM-C   new-F.SG.DEF   professor-DEF.SG(C)
     'The new professor, she'

<div align="right">(example from Josefsson 2009:49)</div>

While such constructions may be perfectly acceptable in Swedish, they are impossible in Norwegian (Section 3.1 above, Johannessen 2008:178–179). Still, Norwegian can have pancake sentences. That indicates that (62) is probably not the key to the analysis of pancake sentences.

Two final points of objection are the following: Firstly, if pancake sentences are ordinary agreement, as claimed in the quotations above, then why are the subjects unusual? Subjects in Scandinavian pancake sentences tend to be indefinite, and they usually denote masses, propositions and inanimates. By contrast, ordinary subjects in sentences with ordinary agreement tend to be definite, and they very often denote humans (and countable things). The intuition that pancake sentences have unusual subjects was elegantly captured by Faarlund's (1977) analysis, in which subjects in pancake sentences were underlyingly objects, because objects are, as a rule, non-animate and indefinite. The intuition is also captured by linking pancake sentences to the lower part of the animacy/individuation hierarchy, as done in the referential agreement analysis (B) (Section 1.2 above, Enger 2004), and, for that matter, in the default analysis (see Corbett 2006:150, 223–224). If pancake sentences basically have the same agreement as others, this intuition is lost.

Secondly, while it is the case in canonical agreement that the feature content of the controller is matched by that of the target, there are several examples where such matching does not occur (Corbett 2006:143 et passim). If we insist that 'the feature content of the subject . . . is mirrored by the feature makeup of the predicative adjective' (Josefsson 2009:38), we end up in some fairly difficult waters. A familiar argument going back to Pollard & Sag (1994: 62) concerns examples such as (63)–(64):

(63) Eg   er   lit-a.   (Norwegian Nynorsk)
      I   be.PRS small-F.SG
      'I am small.' [the speaker is a woman]

(64) Eg   er   lit-en.   (Norwegian Nynorsk)
      I   be.PRS small-M.SG
      'I am small.' [the speaker is a man]

By a referential account (analysis B), the difference in agreement patterns between (63) and (64) is not terribly difficult; in (63), the adjective is in the masculine because the speaker is a man, in (64) it is in the feminine because the speaker is a woman. Yet it is hard to see how we are to make further progress along the syntactic agreement analysis (C) if we insist that the difference in the predicative adjectives must 'mirror' or reflect the feature content of the respect subjects. One would have to assume that the pronoun *eg* 'I' in (63) carries the gender feature [+ masculine] and that in (64) the gender feature is [+ feminine]. Also for the pronoun *du* 'you' it would be necessary to assume different gender specifications depending on the agreement. Unfortunately, the consequence is a proliferation of lexical entries, and it is unclear how to link them. (It seems unappealing to treat the two instances of *eg* as homonyms, for example.) The idea that all agreement must (or even can) be accounted for by means of 'mirroring', i.e., derivation or feature copying, is open to objection (see Pollard & Sag 1994:62–67). In his recent survey, Corbett (2012:37) notes that copying is not used in GPSG/HPSG and LFG, and that so far the notion of 'checking', employed within some Minimalist studies lacks a full formalisation (see also Asudeh & Toivonen 2006). In that perspective, the claim that mirroring is the way agreement generally works seems debatable, in my view.

8. SUMMING UP

While the analysis advocated by Josefsson (2009) clearly has its merits, such as highlighting what counts as a pancake sentence and clarifying the role of specificity, it also has a number of drawbacks when set against the referential agreement analysis (B):

- The connection between different neuters is lost (Section 2).
- The distinction between different genders is not well motivated (Sections 3 and 6).
- Certain diachronic predictions are lost (Section 4).
- The agreement patterns for very 'general' nouns (Section 5) follows more naturally on analysis B (referential agreement).
- The use of the notion of light verbs and invisible elements is debatable (Section 7).

Finally, despite the term pancake sentences, the sentences in (1) and (2) are not so peculiar. They fit a well-established typological pattern. Siemund (2002, 2008), Audring (2009) and De Vogelaer & De Sutter (2011) show parallels in other Germanic languages, applying the agreement and animacy (individuation) hierarchies (see also Corbett 2006).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

NOTES

1. In the examples, I by and large adhere to the Leipzig Glossing Rules, but in addition, I have used C to indicate common gender in Swedish and Danish. Many Norwegian adjectives and determiners do not distinguish between masculine and feminine; in such cases, I have also used C. Definiteness suffixes in the singular indicate the gender of the noun (see e.g. Dahl 2000b:583–584), but they are not exponents of gender in the strict sense (Enger & Corbett 2012:292, 321). Therefore, I use a parenthesis around the gender value in definiteness suffixes, as in example (4) and elsewhere.
2. For Nynorsk, that would seem fairly uncontroversial, see Section 1.2 above.
3. Admittedly, pronouns are not prototypical exponents of gender (see e.g. Corbett 2006, Siemund 2008). Choice of pronoun may have to do with deixis, gender does not normally have to do with deixis. This does not mean that pronouns have nothing to do with gender, however.
4. With respect to case on the pronoun/determiner, the three languages also differ. Details are laid out by Johannessen (2008:179), who concludes that 'Danish and Swedish have a case system for their pronouns, while their PDDs are invariant ... Norwegian is quite different'.
5. The link between mass, count and gender is further explored on a cross-linguistic basis by Siemund (2002, 2008).
6. Admittedly, the fact that there is a particular masculine agreement inside the NP in (43) is rather strange in the Swedish agreement system overall (see Section 1.2 above), and it is never obligatory. But the possibility is there.
7. Adherents of the syntactic agreement analysis (C) would presumably be reluctant to posit two kinds of number, analogous to the two kinds of gender, but it is not for me to say how they would deal with the parallelism.
8. An anonymous referee objects that this argument 'hinges on what theory of lexical semantics one adheres to. One could well argue that the notion of lexemes is only an epiphenomenon which embraces all the different meanings (or uses) of different homophonous lexical items. On this account, *krone* "crown", *krone* "coin", *krone* ... and so on are different lexical

items, and thus one cannot argue that there is one "noun" *krone* which has a lot of different meanings. There is thus no need to posit a *Gesamtbedeutung*'. This objection is well taken, but it raises a large discussion, as a decision to reject polysemy involves a radical break with a central principle of structural semantics; the maximisation of polysemy over homonymy (see Lyons 1977:Section 13.4; Dyvik 1980). Thus, this alternative is no less controversial than my starting-point, and the objection concerns the illustration rather than the point. The observation that X, Y and Z do not share one common element of meaning does not NECESSARILY warrant the conclusion that they have no meaning in common; this hinges on what theory of semantics one adheres to. Secondly, the *Gesamtbedeutung* solution is clearly more in line with the general theoretical stand behind analysis C than is adopting a cognitive semantics a la Cruse.

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