How can a verb agree with a verb?
The cases of reanalysis and pseudocoordination in Norwegian

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Anward 1988 and Wiklund 2007 argue that there is verbal feature agreement in Swedish, and that this phenomenon can be found in (at least) two different constructions. Norwegian is close to Swedish concerning the relevant data, and this paper is based upon Norwegian. It will be shown that when relevant data are considered, there are two different kinds of (what might be called) verbal feature agreement, which require different grammatical treatment.

There are two main groups of constructions assumed to show verbal feature agreement in Wiklund 2007, illustrated in (1) and (2). (All example sentences are Norwegian.)

(1) Sitt   og les!
sit.IMPERATIVE and read.IMPERATIV   'Sit reading!'
(2) Prøv   å les!
try.IMPERATIVE to read.IMPERATIV   'Try to read!'

The type (1) occurs with a small number of verbs that take so-called pseudocoordinations. These sentences look like coordinations, but do not behave like coordinations. They are a classical favorite in Scandinavian grammar, and it is a standard observation that the two verbs must have the same form. The type (2) occurs with a small number of reanalysis (or restructuring) verbs. These verbs show reanalysis effects (such as the long passive) in several languages (e.g. Cinque 2006). With pseudocoordinations, verbal feature agreement is always obligatory. With reanalysis verbs, on the other hand, the linguistic and sociolinguistic distribution of agreement is complicated, and the details are not known. Imperative agreement seems to be the most common type, followed by participle agreement, while present and preterit agreement is possible for some speakers only.

It has never been observed in the literature —except in Lødrup 2014a, 2014b — that both types (1) and (2) also show agreement in passivity. Norwegian has two ways of realizing the passive: the morphological passive with the suffix -s, and the periphrastic passive with an auxiliary and a passive participle. In general, the choice of passive realization is not fully understood, and it seems to be rather arbitrary in some cases. (For example, the two passive realizations can be coordinated in regular coordinations.) However, a passive following an active first verb in a pseudocoordination must be the periphrastic passive, as shown in example (3) below. When the first verb in a pseudocoordination takes the periphrastic passive, it is realized as a perfect participle, and the next verb must also have this form, cf. (4). When the first verb takes the morphological passive, the next verb must also have this form, cf. (5).

(3) Der står   bilen   og blir lakkert /*lakkeres
there stands car-DEF and is painted   /paint-PAS 'The car is standing there being painted'
(4) Men det blir sittet og produsert/*produseres
but there is sat   and produced/ produce-PASS   'One sits producing'
(5) Men det sittes   og produseres /   *blir produsert
but there sit-PASS and produce-PASS / is produced   'One sits producing'

The Scandinavian morphological passive is usually considered an inflectional form of the verb. The generalization for agreement in pseudocoordinations is then simply that the first verb must have the same inflectional form as the first verb following the grammatical word *og*. This agreeing verb can be a main verb or a (passive or future or perfect) auxiliary. In example 3 above, the morphological passive is ungrammatical, because the present active and the present passive are two different inflectional forms. The periphrastic passive in 3 is grammatical, because both the posture verb and the passive auxiliary are present actives.

Agreement works in a different way with passive reanalysis verbs. Norwegian long passives often (but not always) show passive agreement on the second verb, as in (6) below (Lødrup 2014a). However, with reanalysis verbs, passive agreement is not only a question of inflectional forms. Long passives sometimes have the periphrastic passive with one verb, or more seldom both. This means that the passive agreement is not on the level of inflectional forms, but rather on a level of grammatical features. Cf. (7)-(9).

(6) Det må huskes   å gjøres
it must remember-PASS to do-PASS   'One must remember doing it'

(7) operativsystemet   er prøvd å skjules
     operating.system-DEF is tried to hide-PASS 'They have tried hiding the operating system'
(8) DEHP (..) skal unngås   å bli brukt
     DEHP   shall avoid-PASS to be used   'One should avoid using DEHP'
(9) Verket   ble forsøkt å bli stoppet
     publication-DEF was tried   to be stopped   'They tried to stop the publication'

The acceptability of (7)-(9) might be a bit uncertain to some speakers. However, in a Norwegian corpus, about 30% of the sentences with passive agreement had (at least) one periphrastic passive. The contrast to pseudocoordinations is clear — passive agreement with one periphrastic and one morphological passive is completely impossible in pseudocoordinations, as shown in (4)-(5) above. [It could be mentioned that long passives with periphrastic passives and passive agreement can also be found in English, e.g. O*thers were attempted to be killed* (Whitman 2013), and in French.]

The question is then how to account for these facts. Sells 2004 and Wiklund 2007 say that verbal feature agreement occurs in sentences with reanalysis. Within the framework of LFG, reanalysis verbs such as *prøve* 'try' must have the option of combining with their embedded verb, to form a complex predicate, which gives a monoclausal f-structure (e.g. Butt 1995, Alsina 1996). Feature agreement then follows by itself. In a monoclausal f-structure, two instances of a grammatical feature unify. This means that there can be two of them, or just one (assuming that the infinitive has no features). How this works is discussed in Niño 1997 and Sells 2004; the latter also proposes relevant OT restrictions to handle overgeneration. Sells 2004 accounts for a case of passive agreement in Scandinavian which is different from the ones discussed here: some raising verbs can agree with their dependent verb in passivity, as in *Dette behøves å gjøres* 'this need-PASS to do-PASS'.

Passive agreement in sentences with the periphrastic passive such as (7)-(9) follows when the passive auxiliary is a functional head, which contributes a grammatical feature to f-structure. A morphological passive and a periphrastic passive then have (practically) the same f-structure. Both the passive suffix and the passive auxiliary contribute a passive feature, which unifies with another passive feature when there is agreement.

Pseudocoordinations are different. Wiklund 2007 and others assume that pseudocoordinations are reanalysis constructions. This position is argued against in Lødrup 2014b My position is that pseudocoordinations with reanalysis exist (e.g. those with *ta* 'take' as a first verb), but most pseudocoordinations are biclausal subordination constructions. There are several arguments for this position, including the fact that one verb in a pseudocoordination allows a lexical rule independently of the other verb. Examples are passive sentences such as (3) above, and presentational focus sentences (such as *Det satt en mann her og leste* 'there sat a man here and read'). If all pseudocoordinations were treated as monoclausal complex predicate constructions, the starred forms in (4)-(5) above would be predicted to be grammatical. Agreement in pseudocoordinations concerns inflectional form only. Another difference from the reanalysis type is that the agreeing forms keep their regular morphosyntactic content. The relevant level to account for this agreement is m-structure (Butt et al. 1996). What is required is an annotation with each verb that takes pseudocoordinations that its dependent verb should have the same inflectional feature as itself at m-structure.

We see, then, that there are two different ways that verbs might be said to agree, which can both be accounted for using standard LFG mechanisms. One difference between them is, however, that one follows from the nature of reanalysis, while the other remains a stipulation with pseudocoordinations. One could ask if it is really agreement we find in the two cases discussed here. The pseudocoordination type shows similarities to feature assignment under government. The reanalysis type can involve periphrastic forms, while regular agreement concerns word forms (but see Corbett 2006:13-14, 268)

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